

Brooklyn Community Board 9
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225
ULURP/Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2022

Meeting ID:

Attendance (Board Members): Pat Moses, Committee Chair; Warren Berke, Vice Chair; Suki Cheong, recording secretary; Felice Robertson; Lorianne Wolseley

Attendance (Community Resident Members): Nicola Cox; John Craver; Esteban Giron; Thomas Thomas

Absent (Board Members): None

Absent (Community Resident Members): None

Guests: Abigail Timm, Community Resident; Jannice Grannum, community resident, Karen (?), Asher (?)

CB9 Staff: Mia N. Hilton, Assistant District Manager

- I. Meeting called to order by Chair Moses at 7:10pm
 - a. Chair Moses waives reading of Rules of Order and provides general meeting etiquette
- II. Old Business
 - a. **Fenimore Street Rezoning** – Chair Moses and Mia Hilton state that there have been no updates on the rezoning from either the Department of City Planning or the Fenimore Street Block Association
 - b. **1 Sullivan Place**
 - i. Esteban has not been able to get in touch with the tenants yet.
 - ii. John Craver says that the developer has left a pathway as a fire exit for the tenants. It is not uncommon only to leave such an alleyway. Cantilevers are uncommon for Brooklyn but they are common in Manhattan and we may see more and more of them. They have structural steel supports and they are safe.
 - iii. Mia sent out information to the committee on an open ECB violation on the property for inadequate safety measures related to the use of a crane. Work continues on the property.
- III. New Business
 - a. Open Discussion - Committee Members

- i. **1 Sullivan and 1046 President** - Suki's research shows these developments are claiming additional square footage under the Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors program, authorized by the Zoning for Quality and Affordability Amendments of 2015, which allows significant upzoning without a ULURP process in exchange for 20% of apartments affordable to seniors at 80% of AMI. However as of last July, the program has been suspended by HPD due to fair housing concerns so we may not be seeing more of these. We need to keep an eye on the ones which were approved to make sure they adhere to the regulatory agreements with HPD on affordability and marketing of these units. They are supposed to notify the community board in advance of signing these agreements.
 1. Pat requests that these issues should be referred to the housing committee.
- ii. Warren reports that committee member Esteban Giron has been named on the 100 most powerful people in real estate list - they mentioned the work that Crown Heights Tenants Union did on the Bedford Union Armory
- iii. **Neighborhood Planning**
 1. Esteban reports that he attended a CB8 meeting and the new council member, Crystal Hudson, is not approving some of the new zoning changes requested by developers and they are looking more to a community plan including the MCrown zoning for Atlantic Avenue.
 2. Warren - regarding neighborhood plans, a 197a committee would allow us to discuss a neighborhood plan but there was previously resistance from some quarters
 3. Esteban believes we should watch what is happening at CB8 before we jump in because usually when the city gets involved the plans change in ways that are unwanted by the community; however we should be open minded with respect to the new administration
 4. Nichola - we don't trust these 197a plans they never get implemented by the city as written
 5. Suki -agree with Nichola and Esteban but that shouldn't stop us from talking to each other in our committees. For example, zoning is responsible for ensuring both sufficient commercial and residential space so we would like to hear from the economic development committee about their visions for areas that have commercial zoning. At the environment committee there has been discussion of flooding and sewers which are affected by overall levels of development in the district.
 6. Tom - developers are very afraid of the 197a because it represents a democratic statement of values and a coalition.
 7. Pat - we are always reacting to things and just saying no or yes, and not able to say what we want without a neighborhood planning process.

8. Nichola - we need a regular meeting where we can all talk because some of the committee meetings happen at the same time (i.e. environment and land use
9. Pat- suggests we attend the executive committee meeting. All the committee heads are there and can discuss overlapping concerns. The next exec meeting is Mar 15 at 7pm.

iv. Zoning News

1. Pat requests that we hear from elected officials as to what their priorities are, what they approve and disapprove of otherwise we are in the dark. They have not been attending our committee meetings, they could send a representative. She will reach out to CM Rita Joseph's office and the board staff will also email the community liaisons with meeting dates.
2. Equitable development tool – Suki attended a presentation by the Department of City planning – there are heightened reporting requirements on displacement risk and fair housing goals for any upzoning of more than 50,000 square feet or downzoning that would cover more than 4 contiguous blocks. Not a formal CEQR requirement.
3. Minimum Parking requirements – Suki has read news reports that City council members from Brooklyn propose to remove minimum parking requirements for new affordable development
 - a. Nichola - Elected officials should consult the community first, where are they getting the idea that we would want to eliminate parking.
 - b. Warren - I understand where this is coming from about parking but parking is really difficult in our community and important.
4. Conversion of midtown office space to housing – Suki has read news reports that the Mayor and city planning commission are working on proposals to amend zoning requirements to allow housing in vacant office buildings. It could create up to 14,000 units of new housing, including affordable housing.

v. Committee Fair in May

1. Chair Moses reports that CB9 is hosting a community fair on May 22 which all the committees are supposed to be a part of. Each committee is welcome to table and provide information about their committee.
2. Suki - we can use this as an opportunity to reach out to the community about land use concerns they have, for example construction that concerns them, as well as basic information about how zoning affects them.
3. Esteban - we could give out zoning information from CUP

b. Community Resident Concerns

- i. **136 Winthrop Street** - Abigail Timm says that a developer purchased a property adjacent to her home and built two stories above the house. She has extensive damage to her home as a result of the construction. She wants to know if other people are having this problem and what this committee can do.
- ii. **Parking** - Jannice Grannum says she read the news about proposed elimination of parking in new development. Parking is tight throughout Brooklyn and we need parking. It's a cost saving measure by the developers, they don't want to spend the money excavating an underground garage.
- c. Next Meeting – April 12, 2022

IV. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 8:15

Submitted by:

Suwen Cheong Mar 14, 2022