

Brooklyn Community Board 9
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225
Economic Development Committee Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2023
Meeting ID: 813 9456 1957

Attendance (Board Members): Max Coen, Jean Rene Mbeng Nguema, Vanessa Raotopoulos

Attendance (Community Resident Members): Regina Clarke, Allison Samuels

Absent (Board Members): Shmuel Zfatman

Absent (Community Resident Members): Kristin Thomas

Guests: Frank Hosein, Jay Sorid, Jiovanni Briones, Lisa Etienne, Maxine Barnes, Paula Spann, Rod Hebert(CB9), Suwen “Suki” Cheong(CB9), Theresa Westerdahl(CB9)

CB9 Staff: Khalid J. Jemmott, Community Associate

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- I. Welcome/Introduction**
- a. Chair, Max Coen called the committee meeting to order at 7:10 pm
 - b. Purpose of Economic Development is to enhance the local community , assisting the residents, the community and city to create initiatives to enhance the beauty of the neighborhood
- II. Election of a Vice Chair and appointment of a Secretary**
- a. Quorum was not reached
 - b. Community Board Staff was tasked with taking meeting minutes
- III. Bridge Street Development Corp(Crown Heights Commercial Needs Assessment Interim Findings)**
- a. CDNA
 - i. Highlights the existing business landscape, consumer characteristics, physical environment, and unique character of commercial corridors in Crown Heights
 - b. Neighborhood Context
 - i. Population 143,000
 - ii. Major Corridors (Atlantic Ave, Franklin Ave, Nostrand Ave, Kingston Ave, Utica
 - c. Key Takeaway
 - i. Shifting political districts and the lack of local development corporations or Business Improvement District(s) impedes commercial revitalization

- d. Business Inventory
 - i. 983 Total Business Inventoried
 - ii. 14% Overall Vacancy Rate
 - iii. Atlantic Avenue (Auto Repair/Parts Stores)
 - iv. Kingston Avenue (Clothing and shoe stores)
 - v. Utica Avenue (Beauty/Nail Salons & Barber Shops)
 - vi. Franklin Avenue (Full-Service Restaurants)
 - vii. Nostrand Avenue (Beauty/Nail Salons & Barber Shops)
- e. Strengths
 - i. The diversity of shops offers a wide range of commercial options for consumers
 - ii. significant number of minority-owned businesses that reflect the African American, Caribbean, and Jewish culture of the neighborhood
 - iii. Community-based organizations dedicated to supporting the neighborhood and its merchants
- f. Challenges
 - i. Sanitation issues with corridors in the district. Graffiti and poorly maintained store front create unappealing environment to shop in
 - ii. Safety/The perception of safety (Kingston and Utica Avenue merchants face high rates of petty theft)
 - iii. Utica, Nostrand, Kingston, and Atlantic experience exceptionally heavy vehicle and foot traffic throughout the day. Heavy bike traffic from restaurants to delivery locations (hostile for pedestrians)
 - iv. Need for supermarkets and healthier food
- g. Opportunities
 - i. Clean, Repair, Optimize, Activate open spaces, Help

IV. Committee Goals

- a. Supporting businesses
- b. Beautify the neighborhood
- c. Job opportunities
- d. Bring technological advancements to district (innovation)
- e. Put an end to empty storefronts in district
- f. Help business and community member economically (Mentorship, financial literacy programming)
- g. Workforce development
- h. Healthy mixture of businesses in district
- i. Initiatives to tackle rent for residents and businesses
- j. Food Banks
- k. Leverage partnerships to bring resources to the district (brings benefits sooner than later)

V. Old Business

- a. Crown Heights Farmstand/ GrowNYC (Nostrand Ave & Crown Street) Fridays 9AM – 2PM – Food Scrap Drop-off (Compost) 9AM – 2PM
<https://www.grownyc.org/farmstand/crownheights>
- b. GrowNYC Farmstands are part of a network of food access retail sites operated by GrowNYC, along with Greenmarkets and Fresh Food Box sites. Through Farmstands, GrowNYC sells fresh, affordable food in underserved and under resourced neighborhoods across NYC. The food sold at Farmstands is grown by farmers in the Northeast and transparently sourced through GrowNYC Wholesale

VI. New Business

- a. City of Yes (Zoning laws)
 - i. September 12, 2023 7:00 PM to 8:30PM
<https://www.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/city-of-yes/city-of-yes-economic-opportunity.page>
 - ii. Make a recommendation for community district
 - iii. Small Business Services (SBS)

VII. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned 8:16 PM

Respectfully submitted by,

**Khalid J. Jemmott
September 12, 2023**