



Donovan Richards  
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# Community Board No. 2

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Morry Galonoy  
Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert  
District Manager

May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## Environment Committee Meeting Minutes

*this was a teleconference zoom meeting*

### Attendees

Frank Wu  
Benjamin Lucas  
Karla Perez  
Laura Shepard  
Lauren Springer  
Anthony Tudela

### Absentee

Morry Galonoy  
Chhemang Lama  
Steven Raga

### Community Board 2 Staff

Debra Markell Kleinert, CB2 District Manager

### Guests

Isaac Blasenstein, Representating Councilmember Julie Won's Office  
Michelle, Smiling Hogshead Ranch  
Elizabeth, Smiling Hogshead Ranch  
La Shauns

Frank Wu welcomed everyone to the CB2 Environmental Committee Meeting.

Frank Wu mentioned how next month NYC Parks will be coming to a meeting as Parks & Recreation is now officially a part of the Environmental Committee. NYC Parks will be presenting and updating the committee on the Blissville Capital Construction Project. Another topic from NYC Parks will be if community groups can do composting on NYC parks property.

Frank Wu introduced Elizabeth and Michelle of Smiling Hogshead Ranch.

Elizabeth and Michelle, members of Smiling Hogshead Ranch

- Smiling Hogshead Ranch is an urban farm collective in Long Island City

*“Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, and Maspeth”*

- Located at Skillman Avenue between Hunters Pt. Station and 47<sup>th</sup> Avenue, behind the tracks.
- Smiling Hogshead's mission is to create a culture that empowers and connects communities through ecology, education and collaboration.
- They are a non-profit organization run by volunteers.
- The land they are located on used to be South marsh wet-lands
- Elizabeth spoke briefly about the history of Smiling Hogshead Ranch.
- The land they are on is owned by the MTA specifically the LIRR.
- It was in inactive use and became a large dumping ground for some time.
- In March 2011 as a guerilla garden project the grounds were starting to get cleaned with approximately 11 founding members.
- Tons of garbage was cleaned from the grounds.
- In cleaning the grounds, a hogs head was found and hence the name Smiling Hogshead Ranch.
- Cleaning continued for a year and at one point the MTA reached out to one of the founders.
- The MTA was not upset just concerned about liability.
- An organization helped the members obtain insurance.
- [www.Livinglots.org](http://www.Livinglots.org) shows identified public vacant land
- In 2014 they signed a Garden License Agreement with MTA/LIRR
- In 2018 they became a 501(c)3
- A presentation was shown showing the work throughout the years. (*Attachment #1*)
- They do a lot of their food growing in raised beds.
- They host a lot of family events on the premises as well as keeping up with the garden.
- Smiling Hogshead Ranch is Fence-FREE, Plot-FREE and Leader-Full
- They are open all day and welcome everyone to visit.
- They share all the crops that are produced.
- All decisions are made collectively.
- A question was asked about funding.
  - They have received Green Thumb Grants.
  - Love Your Block Grants.
  - They are waiting on a discretionary funding issue to be cleared.
- They host some park events, for example tree giveaways.
- The tracks run throughout the garden.
- Composting is collected on site and used on the site. However, they have collected so much that they partnered with BigReuse to help with this issue.
- Requirements for active membership are to volunteer 6 hours a month and to pay a yearly fee currently \$35. And for families \$60. This is a suggested donation.
- During the pandemic they got a surge in membership from people walking around.
- Short discussion on Dutch Kills Tributary and Newtown Creek. Remediation might be needed in this area.

Frank Wu asked representative from Councilmember Julie Won's office about the recent composting bill and how that will work

- Representative was not sure if the compost would be shipped out of the city.
- It is still being negotiated.
- A committee member suggested the numerous vacant lots in NYC could work as a solution to the composting, instead of them having weeds and collecting trash which attract rodents.

Every meeting the committee records the existing CO2 air quality. Today's reading was 421.56 parts per million. Up from last year. Last year it was 418.91 ppm.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Kim Waber