



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

1932 Arthur Avenue, Room 403-A, Bronx, NY 10457

Telephone: (718) 579-6990 Fax: (718) 579-6875 Email: bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org

Honorable Ruben Diaz Jr., Bronx Borough President

MS. EVONNE CAPERS
Board Chairperson

MR. JOHN SANCHEZ
District Manager

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6
Meeting minutes of Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Members Present:

Clarita Bailon, Cornell Brown, Evonne Capers, Sadija Cekovic, Nelson Chimilio, Margarita Espinosa, Frank Franz, Lanell Gardenhire, Julisa Hamilton, Maria Latimer, Matthew Martinez, Francine Miller, Floretta O'Brien, Rosa Peraza, Reggie Powell, Paul Ramirez, Carmen Rivera, Krystine Rivera, Wendy Rodriguez, Lisa Sanchez, Divine Sikanku, Gil Simmons, Lillie Steed, Noorjahan Wells, and Jacquetta Whaley.

Members Absent:

Virginia Bird, Milagros Cancel, Nicole Carter, Diana Diaz, Maria Garcia, Audrey Harden, Laura James, Assana Lloyd, Michael Nelson, Rev. Marilyn Oliver, Jorge Ortiz, Rev. Hiriam Ratliff, Helga Robles, and Maria Ruiz Gutierrez.

Elected Officials Present:

New York City Councilmember Vanessa Gibson
New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda

Elected Officials Representatives Present:

Alexis Ruiz, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.
Nick Peters, representing New York State Assemblymember Victor Pichardo
Robert Barnes, representing District Attorney Darcel Clark
Terence Miller, representing the New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams
Francisco Aquino Ramirez, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera
Marc Cruz from Assemblywoman Karines Reyes

I. CALL TO ORDER:

The December 9, 2020 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was held via Zoom Audio and Video Conference meeting ID 936 1547 8640 and via Zoom Video at <https://zoom.us/j/93615478640>

and was called to order at approximately by 6:35 PM by Chairperson Evonne Capers.

II. INVOCATION

The meeting's invocation was delivered by Board Member Jacquetta Whaley.

III. COMMUNITY PERIOD

Individuals who asked to address the community board as part of the meeting's Community Period included:

Sharon Pope Marshall, representing Bike New York

Ms. Marshall informed the community about Street Action Now, where they mentor individuals over a six-week schedule to assess neighborhood street conditions and they are trained through webinars. Individuals would present their findings to the Transportation Committee of the community board and the New York City Department of Transportation to see if they can get street improvements where people live. Currently, the program is seeking more Bronx residents, so the deadline to apply has been pushed back. The program is free and takes place via Zoom.

Diane Hebbert, representing Bronx River Art Center

Ms. Hebbert informed the community about the events at the end of fall semester including the free virtual artist talk and the exhibition justice. The exhibition opened on December 10, 2020 and will be open to the public from Tuesday to Friday from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM and Saturday from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM. The Artist talk is at 6:30 PM on Zoom and the registration begins on the website on December 10, 2020. The Fall Virtual Student Exhibition is on December 19 at 2:00 PM and will also premiere on the YouTube channel and there will also be a window installation of what Students have been creating in the summer and fall. There will be a virtual reception. Ms. Diane also announced that they will be accepting applications for the artist studio program until January 22, 2021 and the starting date will be March 1, 2021. There will also be another application round in the next season. Winter classes for 2021 are open for registration and individuals can register on the website.

IV. BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr's report was presented by his Community Board Liaison, Ms. Alexis Ruiz. The report included, but was not limited to, the following information:

- Ms. Ruiz informed the Board Members that reappointment applications will be sent by postal mail with a return date of February 5, 2021. She also informed us that Community Board Membership applications are available on the Borough President Diaz Jr.'s website and are being accepted until February 5, 2021.
- Ms. Ruiz also informed us that Borough President Diaz Jr.'s website is displaying the COVID-19 positive rates by zip codes. Their website is updated every Monday with new information and updates related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ms. Ruiz also encouraged the community to request self-testing kits by calling 311.

V. ELECTED OFFICIALS' REPORTS

New York City Councilmember Vanessa Gibson

Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson informed the community that her office joined Bronx Community Board #6 for park cleanups and appreciates that Bronx Community Board #6 led the way for park cleanups. She represents District 16 in the West Bronx, including areas of Claremont, Claremont Village, Concourse, Concourse Village, Highbridge, Mountain Heights, Morris Heights and Morrisania. She tries to come to monthly meetings to extend office services and be reminded to address underlying issues of healthcare disparities and food insecurities. Food kitchens and food pantries have had long lines and they are trying to serve as many people as possible. Her office also worked with other elected officials to give out food and groceries and food boxes. Her office will continue to give out food with Food Bank and City Harvest to try to serve as many families. For Thanksgiving, the office was able to help get out 2,200 turkeys and 1,000 food boxes and other food distributions across the Bronx. There have been a lot of requests for toys and toy giveaways and her office will be working with any organization that can help or join other events. She has also been working with healthcare clinics and partners and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She informed the community that there are COVID testing sites everywhere: pharmacies, CityMD, and some parks have self-tests. Her office is promoting "Get Tested Tuesdays". She is excited for the vaccine and it should go to those in great need like nursing homes and the hardest hit places like the Bronx. She encourages community members to get the flu shot because of the overlapping symptoms of the flu and COVID. Her office has been working with clergy and other community groups to launch the Bronx flu fighters campaign to encourage residents to get the flu shot and Councilwoman Gibson wants to thank the Institute for Family Health and the Bronx Health Reach for leading the effort. The Council has been working on maternal mortality and mortality morbidity. Latina and Black women have higher rates of death during childbirth than other people who give birth so the Council has been working with doulas and midwives in making sure the healthcare partners provide the resources necessary for women. In April 2020, Amber Rose lost her life during childbirth and another Brooklyn resident also died. Councilwoman Gibson informed the community that there is such a thing called birth justice. She and her peers are working with Albany to ban the "Walking While Trans Ban", which is an archaic state law that have discriminated against trans men and women and gender nonbinary individuals. The Council has been working to repeal the law and the Walking While Trans Ban Coalition have joined the fight. She is hoping to get the ban overturned in the new session. They are also working to expedite capital projects, construction of new housing and new schools, so they are moving money and working with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to expedite housing projects in the Bronx. Her office will continue food distribution and continue to work with anti-gun violence organizations like SOS, Brag and RTG and Guns Down and Life Up as they work with families who were victims of gun violence. There is a Zoom call on December 10, 2020 with Osborne Association on re-entry services at 6 pm for men and women coming home from prison. The office can be contacted via phone at (718) 588-7500 and via email at district16bronx@council.nyc.gov.

New York State Senator Luis Sepulveda

Senator Luis Sepulveda informed the community that the Democrats secured the super-majority with 43 members, which can lead to vast and drastic changes across many lines. The state has a \$13 to 16

billion budget deficit, which means that the state will either engage in revenue or cuts. He also informed the community that the state would usually try to balance these deficits on the backs of Black and Brown people. The MTA is another major problem because they need about \$12 billion. They would have to either cut services or the services wouldn't be as good. Even though the Senate is fighting for it to restore it, there will be cuts until we can get out of the crisis. Senator Sepulveda's team is tasked to come up with solutions for tenants and small homeowners because they need extra rent for the mortgage. They are thinking of canceling rent but provide subsidies to landlords via tenants or cancel rent and provide vouchers to tenants to make sure they are assisted. They are also looking into laws that protect small businesses. The life blood of economic activities are small businesses. His team is considering assistance with the water bill or other ways to help the landlord, so that the tenant won't be evicted. The Tenant Safe Harbor Act prevented eviction of those who have been financially impacted by COVID. The Governor extended this until the end of this year, so Senator Sepulveda told community members to reach out to the office if they are concerned about getting evicted. They will also try to pass some legislation so that the Housing Court deals with cases during COVID properly. The Senate is trying to set up extra parts, so the Housing Court is not overflowed with cases prior and during COVID. There is about \$3.4 billion of rent owed and about 1.2 families can possibly face eviction at the end of this year. There are about 200,000 cases in New York City alone that started before COVID. The elected officials will fight to get the proper resources and work with federal legislators because a lot of funding will come from the federal government. New York State got \$5.5 billion for COVID relief but a lot of it has already been used up. There is \$100 million for rental relief and only \$35 million have been released. The number of applicants were limited once there were many individuals who started applying to the program. The elected officials are still trying to secure more funds for the program, so that people can stay living in a decent house. Food insecurity is another issue and the programs in NYS like the child adult care program, which provides food and education for anyone who is in need of assistance, have to be funded. SNAP and the Farmer's Market Relief Program comes from the federal government. So, the State elected officials have to work together with federal legislators so that they secure enough funding for the community. Local elected officials worked to provide food during the holiday. Healthcare and essential workers will be the first to get the vaccines including undocumented residents. African Americans and Latinos had the highest rates of mortalities due to COVID. We are still 62 out of 62 in the health metrics and 40% unemployment rate. The disease has ravaged this community. His office is calling the Governor every day to make sure after the healthcare and essential workers, the Bronx gets the next batch of vaccines. If community members follow Senator Sepulveda on social media, there will be more information regarding toy drives to schools and NYCHA developments to help people enjoy the holidays safely. Constituents can call the office if they need face masks. The office was able to work to get 250,000 masks after working with the Taiwanese government and other resources. They are also working with the Hunts Point food market and several other businesses to provide sufficient nutrition for the community. Senator Sepulveda's personal number is (347) 582- 8173. The office is closed now but community members can still call or email. Individuals can contact their district office for more information and assistance by telephone at (718) 991-3161 or by email at team@senatorsepulveda.com. Their district office is open Monday to Friday from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

Nick Peters, representing New York State Assemblymember Victor Pichardo

Nick Peters informed the community that for Thanksgiving, the office partnered with Morris Heights Health Center. The office worked with community groups and leaders throughout the district for

turkey voucher giveaway and a COVID testing events. They gave out 700 turkeys and turkey vouchers to the community for Thanksgiving. They also partnered with the Union Community Health Center to host their health mobile unit in front of the office to give out flu shots. They were also joined by IDNYC in front of the office for the entire week to sign up New Yorkers for free IDs. Mr. Peters also informed the community members that they can also call 311 to get NYC IDs. The office still has events coming up. If community members have student IDs, then Mr. Peters highly recommends to call. If community members need any assistance, then they can contact the office via phone at (718) 933 - 6909. The office is open remotely from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM from Monday to Friday. Mr. Peters encourages community members to leave a message if the office doesn't answer and they will receive a call back. He also told them to follow the assemblyman on social media at vpichardo86. They can also contact Nick Peters to get a newsletter or include any resources in the newsletter via email at petersng@nyassembly.gov. They can call the office number and ask for Nick Peters as well.

Robert Barnes, representing District Attorney Darcel Clark

Mr. Barnes wishes community board members a happy holiday and to stay safe. Individuals can contact Mr. Barnes by telephone at (718) 838-7461 (929) 361-8240 or by email at barnesro@bronxda.nyc.gov.

Terence Miller, representing the New York City Public Advocate Jumaane Williams

Mr. Terence Miller wished Bronx Community Board #6 happy holidays and informed the community that the public advocate has been working on legislation to support small businesses because cases are rising again and small businesses might have to close again. He wants to make sure that there is legislation so that they don't have to close again.

Francisco Aquino Ramirez, representing New York State Senator Gustavo Rivera

Mr. Ramirez encourages everyone to continue to get tested, wash their hands, adhere to social distancing and follow protocol. He also encourages individuals to reach out to centers to get tested. They can also call the office if they can't find a center to get tested and the office will help find a site nearest to them to get tested. NYC test and Tracing Corps are working to identify individuals who have come in contact with those who have tested positive. Mr. Ramirez encourages community members to pick up numbers that begin with 212540 or 212242. They can also reach out to the New York Health and Hospitals website or the office to help with tracing. The office helped distribute turkeys throughout the district for Thanksgiving. Two weeks ago, they also partnered with Walgreens for flu shot clinics and he encourages everybody to get the flu shot. Constituents may call the office for any help. The office will be closed from December 19, 2020 to January 3, 2021. District offices are closed but constituents can still reach out to the office because they are working remotely.

Marc Cruz from Assemblywoman Karines Reyes

Mr. Marc Cruz informed the community that the office is going remote due to rising COVID numbers. The office will be available Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM and can be reached via phone (718) 931-2620. They will continue to assist with cases as they normally have been. Community members can also email Mr. Cruz at cruznm@nyassembly.gov. Small gatherings are driving factors of

the increased spread, so the office will be shifting focus on circulating COVID testing site information. The office also gave out turkeys in housing complexes in West Farms.

VI. DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Sanchez's district manager's report included the following information:

- **Mr. Sanchez reported that Bronx Community Board #6 hosted their Thanksgiving Food Giveaway. He thanked the Belmont Business Improvement District, businesses and board members that were able to contribute with their donations for the community.**
- **Mr. Sanchez announced that toys will be distributed to families in shelters in the community. Bronx Community Board #6 will not be accepting toy donations this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- **Mr. Sanchez also announced that Bronx Community board #6 will be hosting their last financial literacy workshop, *Tools for your Financial Wellness*, with My Money Workshop on Saturday, December 12, 2020 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM via Zoom Audio and Video Conferencing. Individuals can register by emailing bronxcb6@bronxcb6.org.**
- **Mr. Sanchez also thanked Assembly Member Victor Pichardo for his turkey donations that were used to be disgusted throughout the community district. He also thanked Senator Gustavo Rivera for hosting a flu vaccination event for community residents. Individuals wishing to receive the flu vaccination can visit their nearest Walgreens Pharmacy or can contact the district office to obtain information.**

VII. PRESENTATION

Presentation by the New York City Department of City Planning RE: N 210095 ZRY – Proposed Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency (ZCFR) Citywide Text Amendment

The proposed zoning text amendment would make permanent and improve upon the Special Regulations Applying in Flood Hazard Areas (Article VI, Chapter 4) of the New York City Zoning Resolution to remove zoning barriers that hinder the reconstruction and retrofitting of buildings to resiliency standards and to help ensure that new construction will be more resilient. In addition, ZCFR would include citywide provisions to help sites provide back-up energy, and rules that help the City recover from future disasters, including provisions intended to help address the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated economic effects.

Mr. Horseman informed us that the project is eight years in the making. Hurricane Sandy showed how vulnerable the city is to coastal storms and sea level rises. There is a set of recommendations for the citywide text amendment focused on increasing safety and New York City's current and future building stock for areas that can be vulnerable to coastal flood impacts. This proposal was referred out to the 59 community boards in October and Mr. Horseman is looking for feedback from the community boards. The work of the agency is to tackle resiliency at many scales to be effective. The proposal is part of a range of citywide efforts to address resiliency by strengthening our coastal defenses, infrastructure, and proactively engaging in emergency management planning. Since Hurricane Sandy, City Planning introduced temporary emergency zoning rules that were focused on rebuilding and recovering from Hurricane Sandy focused to help homeowners of storm damaged properties to rebuild without facing obstacles due to zoning rules. The agency completed a number place-based and industry-specific studies to identify specific zoning challenges to resilient construction.

They also talked to over 2,500 people in the city's flood plain. All of the research and conversations shaped the recommendations. The zoning rule proposal only impacts the flood plain. The four key goals are encouraging resiliency through current and future flood plains, supporting long term resiliency design of all building types, allowing for the adoption of resilient building standards over time through incremental retrofits and facilitating future recovery by reducing regulatory obstacles. The first goal of encouraging resiliency through current and future flood plains have recommendations including encouraging construction with future resiliency in mind. The proposal would expand the applicability of current text to a broader set of buildings that could be exposed to flooding due to a coastal storm. The optional provisions help people developing buildings in flood plains to meet building code rules. These rules are only available in high risk flood plains. First optional provision is flood protection measures installed when required or when alternate flood protective strategies would be warranted. The next optional proposal is that commercial buildings can do dry flood proofing, so they can create a wall so water can't go in or wet flood proof, so that water can go through the first floor without damaging the entire building above. Ground floor regulations would incentivize flood proofing of ground floors, encourage active uses to be kept at street level and promote internal building access. Streetscape will allow 5-10 feet of height to build above the floodplain to avoid problems of flooding. Allowances will be used to comply with flood resistant construction standards and new streetscape requirements to promote the ground floor. Under the next goal of allowing for the adoption over time through incremental retrofits, the agency proposes that buildings that can't be retrofitted have options to be made safer, like raising platforms or mechanicals and relocating them on a roof. This would include floor area provisions and other exemptions to raise operations out of harm's way. The final goal would apply to all of the community boards, which are set of rules to help any type of disaster to expedite response and recovery. This goal includes three components. The first one are the power systems-- generators, solar energy systems and other energy systems-- to be considered permitted obstructions in open areas to facilitate their installments. The second component is to prohibit development of new nursing homes and restrict expansion of facilities within high risk areas to lessen the health consequences to make sure populations aren't trapped during a disaster. The third component is disaster recovery, so provisions include cutting down on redtape and paperwork and allowing additional time for an effected grandfather business to reopen that was in existing in nonconforming or noncomplying use of the building before the disaster. They would need to go through a public approval process prior to proposals. The agency is currently inviting recommendations on the proposal.

VIII. ROLL CALL ATTENDANCE

A roll call attendance was taken confirming the presence of a quorum with the presence of twenty-five (25) members.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The committee reports were sent by email and are available on Bronx Community Board #6's website. Chairperson Evonne Capers requested that we read the reports at our leisure.

X. ADOPTION OF MOTIONS

1. A motion to adopt the minutes of Bronx Community Board #6's meeting of November 11, 2020 with corrections was made by Ms. Jacquetta Whaley, seconded by Mr. Matthew Martinez, and adopted by a vote of twenty-four in favor, one opposition and zero abstaining.
2. A motion to issue a letter of support for the proposed affordable housing project that will be developed by Westchester LLC, Metro Futures LLC, and Fulcrum Properties at 816 East 176th Street was made by Mr. Gil Simmons, seconded by Mr. Matthew Martinez, and adopted by a vote of twenty-three in favor, zero opposition and one abstention. *(Please note that Board Member, Ms. Maria Latimer, was not present during this motion.)*
3. A motion to issue a letter to the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) regarding the State and Municipal Facilities Grant Program (SAM) funding for the Arthur Avenue Market was made by Mr. Gil Simmons, seconded by Mr. Margarita Espinosa, and adopted by a vote of twenty-three in favor, zero opposition and one abstention. *(Please note that Board Member, Ms. Maria Latimer, was not present during this motion.)*
4. A motion to issue a letter to the Office of the Mayor and the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) about policies to create affordable housing city-wide was made by Mr. Matthew Martinez, seconded by Mr. Gil Simmons, and adopted by a vote of twenty-two in favor, one opposition and one abstention. *(Please note that Board Member, Ms. Maria Latimer, was not present during this motion.)*
5. A motion to recommend the N 210095 ZRY – Proposed Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency (ZCFR) Citywide Text Amendment to the New York City Department of City Planning was made by Mr. Gil Simmons, seconded by Ms. Wendy Rodriguez, and adopted by a vote of twenty-three in favor, one opposition and two abstention.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to discuss, the December 9, 2020 meeting of Bronx Community Board #6 was adjourned at approximately 8:29 PM pursuant to a motion made by Mr. Gil Simmons, second by Ms. Margarita Espinosa and unanimously adopted by acclamation (twenty-five in favor, zero opposed and zero abstention).

Respectfully submitted:

Sanzida Talukder
Community Associate

Carla Leon
Community Associate

Honorable Ritchie Torres,
City Council Member, 15th Council District

Honorable Rafael Salamanca Jr.,
City Council Member, 17th Council District

ATTENDANCE AND VOTING RECORDING FOR BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #6 MEETING OF DECEMBER 9, 2020

NAME	ATTENDANCE	MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 2020	LOS 816 EAST 176TH STREET	LETTER TO NYCEDC	LETTER TO MAYOR AND HPD	RECOMMENDATION TO CITY PLANNING	ADJOURNMENT
Clarita Bailon	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Virginia Bird							
Cornell Brown	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Milagros Cancel							
Evonne Capers	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nicole Carter							
Sadija Cekovic	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nelson Chimilio	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Diana Diaz							
Margarita Espinosa	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Frank Franz	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maria Garcia							
Lanell Gardenhire	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Julisa Hamilton	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Audrey Harden							
Laura James							
Maria Latimer	Present	Yes				Yes	Yes
Assana Lloyd							
Matthew Martinez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Francine Miller	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Michael Nelson							
Floretta O'Brien	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rev. Marilyn Oliver							
Jorge Ortiz							
Rosa Peraza	Present	No	Abstain	Abstain	Abstain	Abstain	Yes
Reggie Powell	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Paul Ramirez	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carmen Rivera	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kristine Rivera	Present	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rev. Hiram Ratliff							
Helga Robles							