

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting  
September 7, 2022  
Held on Zoom  
(pending approval)

Committee Members Present

Laura Spalter (Chair), Sylvia Alexander, Bob Bender, Kelli Buford, Joy Campbell-Priveterre, Lisa Daub, Nick Fazio, David Gellman, Rosemary Ginty, Julia Gomez, Ed Green, Rob Jacklosky, Charles G. Moerdler, Caemelia Tepelus, Stephen Vazquez, Martin Wolpoff.

Committee Members Absent

Omar Murray, Sergio Villaverde.

Staff

Ciara Gannon, District Manager

Chair Spalter called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of June 1, 2022 and the June 23, 2022 (Special Meeting) were approved unanimously.

**Chairperson's Report**

Chair Spalter expressed her sadness at the death of our friend and long time board member Karen Pesce. She will be missed. We are going to hold our Irving Ladimer Community Service, Betty Campbell Most Valuable Merchant Awards, and Youth award Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

Chair Spalter and several board members attended a press conference with Assemblyman Dinowitz and Councilmember Dinowitz on the completed redesign. A DOT representative is coming to T&T on September 15<sup>th</sup>. She reported that there was an accident on Riverdale Avenue near the Skyview Shopping Center in this afternoon. She encourages members of the CB and community to come to the T&T meeting to offer their feedback.

She updated the board on the new office and the interactions with DCAS. There is a new transaction manager working with us at DCAS. DCAS is engaging with the preferred office site. She wrote to our elected officials regarding the long, frustrating timeline and bureaucracy required in securing new office space for the Community Board.

The School Construction Authority came to the CB Land Use Committee on December 7<sup>th</sup> and the Education Committee on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Education Committee represented the CB. The Board approved the site of the location of the school, as did District 10 Education Committee, and the City Council. We received a Neg Dec on June 24<sup>th</sup>. There is a 4-month comment period. S. Alexander and Chair Spalter plan a public hearing with SCA on September 29<sup>th</sup>, which they declined to attend. They said that they would come later and supply written answers to our questions and comments. Our resolution stated

that they would return later in this process, but not regarding the Negative Declaration. Chuck drafted a letter to SCA and Chair Spalter spoke to the elected officials again today about this issue.

It's clear that the community will be impacted by both the school and the adjacent housing project. C. Moerdler noted that not having information re the school and the affordable housing project together was a problem.

### Treasurer's Report

The budget for Fiscal Year 2023. The budget is \$259, 208. This includes an allocation of \$2500 from CC Carmen De La Rosa. The Board will determine how that will be spent at a later date, and we welcome input on how that will be spent. Personal Services budget is \$219, 117. Other than Personal Services just over \$40,000. Of that amount, \$31,974 has already been allocated, leaving \$225,969 dollars. The allocated includes money spent as well as encumbered.

1.1 itemized other than personal services is \$40,091, out of which \$1265, leaving a total of \$38,826.

1.2 There are no budget mods.

1.3. \$2,523 has already been encumbered.

1.4 Rents and Energy Detail The budget is \$67, 451. The allocated is \$65, 889, with \$1,562 remaining.

And the final page is the operational versus the actual budget. \$23, 574 was spent as opposed to \$39,253 budgeted.

Chair Spalter wished to correct the record by noting that she misspoke at the June meeting when she said that she had discussed spending Council Member Carmen de la Rosa's \$5,000 grant on Marble Hill trees at an Executive Meeting. She had it in her notes, but she didn't end up saying it out loud. Moving forward with the new \$2,500 grant that Councilmember De La Rosa has provided, we will discuss options with board members who reside in Marble Hill and bring them to the Board.

C. Tepelus asked for elaboration on the spending in the June Full Board Minutes, including the amount and the name of the vendor. M. Wolpoff clarified how the June minutes should be amended to reflect that a discussion took place at that time. It should not reflect what was just said at this meeting (which will be in the Executive Minutes). C. Gannon noted that the Member's money sits in Budget Code 499. R. Ginty asked that the detail of what the money is being spent on appear in the minutes going forward.

### District Manager's Report

C. Gannon reported that the Department of City Planning has not yet hired a replacement for Jutan. They should be starting next week. They are still hiring a Bronx Director for Department of City Planning. Joe Coluchio at DoIT left in February and was just replaced recently. We had technical problems that had to be addressed over the summer and just recently were. Tom Lucania has shifted over to Senior Advisor to the Bronx Borough President. A new director of Community Boards needs to be hired. Tom has assured us that he will continue to assist us.

She sent out the schedule for Budget Consultations. She said she will send us the links to those meetings from OMB.

95 % of the CB has completed sexual harassment training. Please reach out if you haven't.

We have been working very closely with Department of Sanitation, NYPD regarding the many 18-wheeler trucks and illegal dumping.

There was a discussion of the light being installed on Johnson and Kappock Avenue at the site where Ruth Mullen was tragically killed last year.

The Council is currently responding to abandoned restaurant sheds. Luckily, we don't have that many. But if you see one, report it to Ciara. A brief discussion of the history of lawsuits surrounding the restaurants' outdoor dining sheds ensued.

S. Alexander asked about the fatal accident at Oxford Avenue and W. 235<sup>th</sup> Street. Chair Spalter said that a representative of DOT will be coming to the next T&T meeting and we will inquire.

### Committee Resolutions

There were no new committee resolutions to discuss.

### Capital Budget Resolutions

We will look at the budget items again at the October Executive Meeting and will vote on the budget at the full board meeting in October, after the public hearing. C. Gannon spent time this summer reaching out to agencies and chairs. She also spoke with agencies, City Council and Borough Offices regarding our new requests. We do have the opportunity to make some of the budget items direct requests, letters.

D. Gellman noted that Ciara followed up on a number of inadequate replies from agencies, seeking clarification about their intentions. He thanked her and said it was an important step forward.

Capital Budget items were presented. The chairs were asked over the summer whether they had any minor or major comments about the budget.

R. Ginty asked whether items 23 and item 28 were the same? D. Gellman indicated that they were the same, coming from different committees, E&S and T&T. It was suggested that they be combined and the chairs of the two committees agreed to this.

There was a question about item 8, which looked like an Expense Budget item. It might have been because it is over \$35,000. It will be looked into.

Items number 9 and 4 (reconstruct a step street and included green infrastructure to capture storm water) both are about reconstructing step streets and including green infrastructure. Item 9 is a whole list of step streets and green infrastructure. Should item 4 go under 9? Bob Bender thought the answer here was "no" ---the infrastructure under 4 is a more ambitious project.

R. Ginty asked whether items 4 (Van Cortlandt Park Bailey Pedestrian Plaza Reconstruction) and 6 (Reconstruct Old Fort Four Park and upgrade equipment) under T&T could be switched? Bob Bender said VC Park is a difficult and complicated intersection. And because of the T&T component it has a big impact on the community and this order is correct.

M. Della inquired about the mapping that SCRE did last year. She noted that some of the items on the budget list were repetitive year after year. She asked the "top 5 category" priorities that have been on the SCRE list for some time be prioritized. The capital requests were mapped to see where they were coming from, what fell off the list, what was addressed, and to see what the biggest priorities were within

the CB. It was clear that a number of the requests come from the Kingsbridge area, so it might speak to the lack of attention to infrastructure, playgrounds, the NYCHA facilities (addressing the HVAC and the boiler). There are a number of requests around Bailey Playground, Washington's Walk, VCP, Ewen Park and the area near Marble Hill and runoff. M. Della said SCRE contemplated what we could be doing about putting these priorities at the top of the list and contacting elected officials about it. These urgent needs in areas that have not been invested in should become a priority in years going forward.

### Expense Budget Resolutions

The Expense Budget was presented and some minor corrections were made.

### Issues for Discussion

C. Moerdler discussed the September 6<sup>th</sup> Land Use Committee Meeting. He noted that the SCA didn't provide much information. He noted that R. Ginty pressed hard for them to come back to discuss school construction, and they didn't.

He reviewed the Neg Dec, and they are just skirting the issue. The SCA answer to the traffic concerns was that they would readjust traffic lights and restrict parking. He said neither makes a lot of sense. C. Moerdler said he called the assistant to Gary Rodney of Tishman Speyer's affordable housing group in order to get two groups of people who have expertise on the board to meet with Tishman Speyer and address the issues. These would include B. Fanuzzi and Karen Argenti on environmental aspect.

The second issue was parking. D. Padernacht and K. Buford will discuss the traffic issues. And he urged K. Buford to read the Neg Dec regarding those traffic issues.

Two renderings were provided by Tishman Speyer. They were insufficient. They didn't show curb cuts, for instance. What was revealed was the sheer bulk of the building. The Archdiocese sold a large portion of the property to Tishman Speyer and a smaller one to the SCA. The school has no playground area; it has no open area; it has no entrance indicated. He guessed that the school is 8% - 10% of the entire lot.

They have now figured out that they are going to have a "roof playground" without mention of safety and security. They also say they will have an easement, without a discussion of how that will work.

SCA promised to come back to report to the CB, but they then said they would not come back to discuss the EAS. A letter was written by L. Spalter, S. Alexander and C. Moerdler to complain of this.

C. Moerdler outlined the various issues with the proposed construction.

He discussed the AMI (Area Median Income) qualifications outlined by Gary Rodney.

S. Alexander said she feels that as Chair of the Education Committee, she must note the resolution she wrote was for the site, and had nothing to do with the school. She noted that we still don't have a plan for the school. The playground easement was given in answer to our complaints about the lack of playground. It was for the kindergarten only. The rest of the play area will be on the roof (which is a thing that SCA does). She thinks that the letter, though strong, will not have the desired result. She said she thinks the board was not fully informed by the SCA. She noted that the SCA will not discuss the EAS. They deal with the agencies directly and then it goes on to the City Council. She outlined the steps she took to get answers.

M. Wolpoff recommended that we contact the Educational Council of District 10 to deal with SCA. But it was indicated that SCA is hard to move.

B. Bender thanked C. Moerdler for emphasizing the need for affordable housing, and noted that we've always listed it as one of our district needs. B. Bender said that playgrounds on roofs are something done many times. But he noted that the area reserved for the school was dwarfed by the housing project. Unfortunately, they bifurcated the presentation (first the school, then the housing) so that it obscured what the project was. In hindsight, he wished we had done things differently, but we are where we are.

D. Gellman said that the current design (with less than 25% for school) is untenable.

R. Ginty said that the block in the proposal is way too dense and packed. She said no one is objecting to the uses (school and affordable housing). There was no zoning information given. She said there should be a public presentation of everything that is going on at this site. She asked if the Neg Dec and the SCA and Tishman Speyer presentations are on our website so that when we advertise to the community, they can view them.

The Neg Dec is currently on the website, and it will be shifted to the home page. We are waiting on the Tishman Speyer presentation to put that on our website. We notified neighbors and posted flyers with a QR code to alert them to the Zoom meeting.

C. Moerdler said we don't have any zoning information and it is no accident. It's very clear that this was a shell game.

C. Tepelus showed an image of the project to emphasize its enormous size and urged that it be shown at the full board meeting.

C. Moerdler mentioned that there are three buildings on Kingsbridge Road that are becoming a big problem. He thanked Ciara for pointing this out and following up on it. They are all owned by the same landlord, who is a licensed real estate broker. He showed up to the meeting after follow-ups by Ciara.

L. Daub noted that there might be a SAPO application at the Aging Committee meeting. Mosaic Mental Health wants to hold an event on Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> at Henry Hudson (232<sup>nd</sup> Street between Henry Hudson Parkway and Fairfield Avenue). But we need a clarification on this location at the Aging Committee.

C. Tepelus brought up an issue on SCRE and general equity. Chairs have the ability to limit the size of their committees. There may be cases where people may be excluded by this mechanism. There is not clarity in our by-laws about how that choice would take place. And that might open us to claims of favoritism or bias. She is suggesting an amendment to by-laws so that the process is transparent, randomized and anonymous. She proposed a revised sentence for Section 2 Article 6:

*"When a committee chair decides to limit the size of a committee in a situation of over-subscription, committee membership shall be determined by using an equitable, objective, transparent and randomized process administered under the supervision of the board chair."*

M. Wolpoff noted that C. Tepelus's recommendation for a change in by-law language would have to go through a committee first.

Regarding the Putnam South Greenway and Daylight of Tibbett's Brook, R. Ginty brought up the vote on CSX. The Public Design Commission (PDC) held a hearing this summer and they criticized the landscape architect. They suggested that there needed to be more innovation and pointed to the Highline as a model for what can be done with a linear park.

D. Gellman pointed out that at next Tuesday's Full Board meeting if we do go into a hybrid mode, everyone will need to turn their cameras on as an attendee.

B. Bender said that the Parks and E&S have been very much involved in the Tibbetts' Brook Park Daylighting and Greenway (in their two joint meetings) and will continue to be involved. Both Parks and DEP have gone back to refine their designs in light of what took place at PDC. We have been notified that they will be hiring a new landscape architect to address the aforementioned concerns.

The meeting Adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Submitted by Rob Jacklosky, Secretary

Reviewed by Ciara Gannon, District Manager