



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

## SUMMARY REPORT OF THE MANHATTAN BOROUGH BOARD

**August 17, 2017**

**Presiding:** Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs; Lesly Almanzar, Community Liaison to Manhattan Community Boards 6 and 12; Andrew Chang, Community Liaison to Manhattan Community Boards 1 and 2

**Citywide Electeds:**

Jennifer Greer, Manhattan Outreach Coordinator, New York City Public Advocate Letitia James

**Council Members:**

Cory Epstein, Communications Director, Council Member Daniel Garodnick

**Community Boards:** Anthony Notaro (CB 1); Terri Cude (CB 2); Jamie Rogers (CB 3); Rick Eggers (CB 6); Roberta Semer, accompanied by Audrey Isaacs (CB 7); Jim Clynes (CB 8); Barry Weinberg (CB 9); John Lynch (CB 10); Diane Collier, accompanied by Marie Winfield (CB 11)

**Minutes:** Brian Lafferty, Special Projects Liaison

Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Good morning. Happy August. Our General Counsel Jim Caras actually looked in the Charter this week to see if he could cancel Borough Board for August because he just could not believe that we had to meet, but alas, we're here. I just want to thank everyone for coming out today.

I'm excited for our presentation from Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, but first, before we start the presentation, I would like to move to adopt the August 17<sup>th</sup> 2017 Borough Board Agenda and the July 20<sup>th</sup> 2017 Borough Board Minutes.

*Agenda for August 17th 2017 Borough Board - Adopted*

*Minutes for July 20th 2017 Borough Board - Adopted*

**Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office:** Our presentation today will be given by Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director, Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office. We thought it would be a good idea to have some internal discussion about land use and the land use decisions from the Manhattan Borough President's Office, particularly the East Harlem Uniform Land Use Review Procedure application. We wanted to go through the last three big land Use projects and some best practices and resources because we do have a bunch of Uniform Land Use Review Procedure applications coming down the pipeline. The Manhattan Borough President's Office is here to provide technical assistance. We will send the presentation to all of you so that you can send it along to your land use chairs. We are also more

than happy to schedule a meeting with all of the land use chairs to go through any questions that your boards may have.

***Presentation: Manhattan Borough Board Land Use Update***

***Presenter: Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office***

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Thank you and good morning. I will try to keep the presentation brief so that we can get to a more robust Question and Answer session.

We have a six person land use team at the Manhattan Borough President's Office. Jim Caras is our Land Use Director and General Counsel. Basha Gerhards is the Deputy Director of Land Use. I am the Assistant Director of Land Use and there are three Urban Planners; Orlando Rodriguez, who covers Manhattan Community Boards 9, 10 and 12; Erica Baptiste, who covers Manhattan Community Boards 2, 3, and 8, and Jefferson Mao, who covers Manhattan Community Boards 4, 5, and 7. Dawn Billings is the Land Use Liaison and helps us with administrative work. Hector Rivera is our Topographic Bureau Director, and Tony Gulotta is our Borough Engineer. So that makes up our land use team.

The basic purpose of the Land Use Unit is to review Uniform Land Use Review Procedure and non-Uniform Land Use Review Procedure actions in the Borough of Manhattan as mandated by the City Charter. We have highlighted some things we want to point out that are specific to our relationships with community boards. We review and make land use recommendations in close consultation with the chair and land use committees of each Manhattan community board. We provide technical assistance to Manhattan community boards and community groups when requested and we offer Community Board Leadership Trainings on land use and ad-hoc trainings to others upon request. If there is a big Uniform Land Use Review Procedure or community process that you are considering embarking on and it would be helpful to have some refresher land use courses, we can arrange to offer them at a place that is convenient or even find a place to offer them.

As an activist, I had the opportunity to see the work on the Upper West Side that Gale did as a Council Member and I can say that she brought the core principals she developed as a Council Member to the Manhattan Borough President's Office. These core principles are open communication, early planning, smart development, and making sure that the communities at the table to make land use and zoning decisions are both diverse and are representative of the neighborhoods they will impact. The Manhattan Borough President's Office's current pre-planning efforts include the Seaport Working Group, the East Midtown Rezoning Steering Committee, the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee, the Garment Center Steering Committee, and the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Project (formerly referred to as "the Big U"). I am going to talk a little bit about each of these projects, all of which have been covered in the news.

The thing to remember about the East Midtown Rezoning Steering Committee is that it was meant to identify how to preserve and grow an important central business district for New York City. The other piece that came out of the first round of engagement and decision making about what would happen in East Midtown under the Bloomberg Administration was that there was an as-of-right model that was being called for, but we wanted to make sure that any triggers that came with that model would bring benefits for the surrounding community and would improve critical systems for East Midtown and the whole city.

The East Midtown Rezoning Steering Committee was one of our earliest efforts. It began in May 2014 and was chaired by the Borough President and Council Member Garodnick. It initially examined a 92 block area, but its recommendations eventually were based on 73 block subset of this 92 block area. It's important to note that the communities involved in the East Midtown Rezoning Steering Committee were diverse – in addition to the local community boards, businesses, BIDs, real estate concerns, local and city-wide civic organizations and landmark advocacy groups were represented in this 1 year process.

If you are working on a rezoning, you have to plan ahead for how much time you believe it will take. The East Midtown Rezoning was recently approved by the City Council on August 9<sup>th</sup> of this year. A number of major benefits were tied to it, including \$500 million for upgrades to new buildings and \$100 million for street level public space improvements. Moreover, the balance of new buildings and historic preservation on Third Avenue in the rezoning area was a concern for the Borough President and for Council Member Garodnick. Consequently, one of the most important pieces of the rezoning was that the landmarking process for historic buildings in the rezoning area was to be completed before the rezoning would be certified because we knew from the outset that we were going to have to protect and preserve the area's historic buildings.

It is also important to note that 10% of the City's property tax revenue comes from this area. Not only did we need to make sure that this revenue stream for the City remained steady, but we also needed to make sure that the 28,000 permanent jobs and 23,000 construction jobs that are projected to be created by this rezoning would be accommodated by the rezoning itself. A governing group charged with overseeing the disbursement of \$50 million in public funding for public realm investments was also established through a recommendation from the East Midtown Rezoning Steering Committee that made it into the final text amendment. This was another piece of advocacy that came out of Steering Committee.

Anthony Notaro, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: You said that became part of the actual text amendment?

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Yes. We have the full report on our website. I am happy to include the link in what we send out. A number of the critical pieces from the Steering Committee actually helped to craft the final text amendment. By having this plan and document laid out in the beginning of the East Midtown Rezoning, we were in a better negotiating position with the City. The same thing happened with some of the other processes that I will talk about. Consequently, having a defining document in advance, puts communities in a stronger position to negotiate the terms of the City's Response to the Neighborhood Plan (which is formally known as the City's Proposal for Certification).

The other thing that I wanted to mention about the East Midtown Rezoning is privately owned public spaces or POPS. Privately owned public spaces became a major part of the back and forth negotiations with the City regarding the East Midtown Rezoning. Although we want to encourage new development through the East Midtown Rezoning, we also recognized that East Midtown is not an area that has a lot of open space to begin with. Consequently, we knew that if we are going to bring thousands of additional office workers into East Midtown that we would need to ensure that they have an adequate number of new places to go to eat lunch and that visitors in East Midtown also had places where they could relax. To this end, a lot of work went into mandating privately owned public spaces for all development sites in the East Midtown Rezoning area that are larger than 30,000 square feet. Community boards were at the forefront of this effort and the Borough President and Council Member Garodnick advocated strongly for this as well. As a result of these

efforts, the text amendment mandated privately owned public spaces for all development sites in the East Midtown Rezoning area that are larger than 30,000 square feet.

I want to move on to the next project, which is the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan. The East Harlem Neighborhood Plan process itself lasted about one and a half years, but just as there was with East Midtown, there is a period of advocacy and implementation of the plan which occurs after the plan itself. I do not have an end date for the implementation of East Harlem Neighborhood Plan or the East Midtown Steering Committee Plan. However, now that we have set goals in the text amendment for East Midtown and we have set goals in the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan, it will take time to fulfill and realize the goals set in each of these plans for their respective neighborhoods through their respective structures.

For East Harlem currently, we have the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee, which is a 21 member body that is led by four project partners which include the New York City Council Speaker, Honorable Melissa Mark-Viverito, our office, Manhattan Community Board 11, and a local community advocacy group, Community Voices Heard. These four project partners and the 21 Steering Committee members put together a 130 page Steering Committee Document with 260 recommendations which were the product of over 40 meetings, 8 community sessions, countless surveys, and one-on-one engagement. It was an exhaustive effort. Moreover, the complexity of the research required, as well as the need to create a clean communication plan for the public from the research, and the need to take the public feedback from the process and drill it down into ideas that we could incorporate back into the communication plan so that we could move the process forward, necessitated an amount of work that was beyond what the project partners themselves were able to do, either independently or collectively as a whole. In light of this, two facilitation groups were utilized by the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee. East Midtown also required a facilitation team. Facilitation teams are something to consider when strategizing since they can be immensely important in making sure that the community planning process moves forward and runs smoothly and according to your schedule.

The community planning model that we deployed in East Harlem has been recognized by a number of planning bodies as a gold standard and we are very proud of it. The East Harlem Neighborhood Plan, as many neighborhood plans do, goes beyond the zoning framework because zoning does not solve everything on its own. There are a lot of things that we care about, including public policy issues and needs for community investments that are outside the realm of zoning, so we took great care to make sure that these issues and the needs for investments were adequately addressed by these neighborhood plans. The East Harlem Neighborhood Plan is not just a plan for one zoning action to happen in the near future. In fact, it is a 50-year look-ahead-into-the-future kind of document which we are already using to evaluate every Uniform Land Use Review Procedure application that comes by.

In the end, the Department of City Planning proposal was different from the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan that we worked on for over a year and a half. We spent over six months talking with the Department of City Planning on where the differences between the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan and their plan were and where the bottom line was, but we just could not get to a place where the Department of City Planning proposal before us looked like or resembled what the community had fought for such a long time. Moreover, we can only make decisions on an application based on what is in the application itself. Given these circumstances, it became clear that the Department of City Planning's proposal was not something that the Borough President could support so the Borough President issued a "no" recommendation "with no conditions."

The East Harlem Neighborhood Plan laid out what needed to be in place in the Department of City Planning's proposal in order for the Borough President to support it. Although change is continuing to occur in East Harlem, in order for us to move forward with any kind of substantial community growth, certain protections need to be in place. The next step for the Department of City Planning's proposal is the City Planning Commission's public hearing on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. We will be testifying as will all of the other East Harlem Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee community partners.

Now, I would like to discuss the Garment Center Steering Committee, which is currently ongoing. The proposed East Harlem Rezoning is also ongoing, but our roles in both the proposed East Harlem Rezoning and the proposed Garment Center Rezoning are now coming to an end. The Manhattan Borough President will be issuing a report and a recommendation regarding the Garment Center on Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup> which is the product of the work of the Garment Center Steering Committee that was chaired by the Borough President and convened with Council Member Johnson and stakeholders in a way that was very similar to East Midtown Rezoning Steering Committee in that we pulled together all of the parties that make the Garment Center what it is today, manufacturers, business entities, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, and the City.

When we first heard that there was a proposed change to the Garment Center, we realized that there was room for greater community engagement and involvement and we wanted to make sure that the community and its stakeholders were involved in the outline of the plan. The Borough President held a public hearing with many of these stakeholders which was very well attended. At that hearing, in both the moderated panel discussions and the roundtable discussions of the public that were held immediately following the panel discussions, we heard concerns about the parameters of the proposed plan and a lot of ideas about how to address the issues that the City had publically stated that they were seeking to cure as part of their proposal. Consequently, the Borough President, among others, advocated strongly for a Garment Center Steering Committee.

I think you will find in the Borough President's Garment Center recommendations and report that the Borough President has made a number of strong recommendations that would help promote growth in the area, help the businesses and the industries that have strong ties to the area based on their partnerships and the principles of cluster economics, and help to define how the process moves forward in its determination of the proposals appropriateness.

The City Planning Commission's process to evaluate the proposed land use text and the Borough President's recommendations and report will commence on Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, when it is referred out by City Planning Commission. There will be more details in the report and recommendations that will come out this Friday, but if you have specific questions about the report and recommendations, I can try to answer them as best as I can.

Jessica Mates, Chief of Staff: As Ahmed said, the Borough President's report will elaborate on these recommendations in greater detail.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Now, I would like to talk about when the Manhattan Borough President weighs in or becomes involved in the land use and zoning issues. The Borough President typically becomes involved when there are special permits (ZSs), zoning map changes (ZMs), and zoning text changes (ZRs). Zoning text changes (ZRs) do not require a full ULURP process, but they do require hearings at the City Planning Commission and review by the City Council. The Borough President only becomes involved in zoning certifications (ZCs) and zoning authorizations (ZAs) on a case by case basis or when community

boards request her involvement. The Borough President's office does evaluate and research zoning certifications (ZCs) and zoning authorizations (ZAs) upon community boards' request and when issues arise. However, there is no formal role for the Borough President in zoning certifications (ZCs) and zoning authorizations (ZAs). Very often, chairs and community board members will hear from the community or identify issues themselves and will bring these issues to the Borough President's attention. The rules for zoning certifications (ZCs) and zoning authorizations (ZAs) are broken out in other PowerPoint presentations and trainings that we offer.

The Manhattan Borough President's Office's Topographical Bureau is the maintainer of the maps of the Borough of Manhattan so any changes to the City Map (MMs) in Manhattan, even if they are not ULURP changes, go through the Manhattan Borough President's Office's Topographical Bureau. Even address assignment requests go through the Topographical Bureau. The Borough President's Land Use Unit monitors address assignment requests and map changes (MMs) because they are indicators of new or potential development activity that we can share with the communities and the community boards that would be potentially impacted.

Housing and urban renewal plans and projects (HAs) are tools used to bring funding or support or special status to facilitate affordable housing projects. There are many areas within Manhattan that are mapped as urban renewal areas and changes to these areas have to be approved. Then there is the acquisition of real properties (PQs) for various projects.

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: What do these two letter abbreviations mean and where are they used?

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: That is a good question. When you look at a land use application, you will see that these abbreviations are at the end of the application name. They are used to indicate what type of land use application the land use application is.

I am slowly creeping into our question and answer session of the presentation, but before I open it up to questions and answers, I would like to share with you what we have found to be the best practices for community boards for the early part of the land use application process. Usually, the first piece of a land use or zoning application is the draft scope of work. Now, for a long time, the draft scope of work and the public hearing were not something that we would focus on or use as an advocacy piece or to start discussing the position of a board or of a community on a particular project. However, we encourage people to come to these public hearings and engage themselves with these projects. The draft scope of work has all the parameters of a project to help us decide on the merits if a project is a good or bad idea. However, a draft scope of work can be an unwieldy document. For instance, in Manhattan Community Board 12, the draft scope of work for the Inwood Rezoning is 174 pages.

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: Who is the author of the draft scope of work? Is it the applicant?

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Yes. The author of the draft scope of work is the applicant. If an application is made by the City, the applicant will be the lead City agency and then, for the draft environmental impact statement, the author will also be the lead City agency (even if they have hired a consultant). If the application is made by the City, various city agencies will be responsible for different parts of the application's draft scope of work. For example, the New York City Department of Transportation handles the traffic impacts

and The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission handles the impacts on historic resources. You can drill down from the onset and cut through a lot of noise by examining the draft scope of work. You want to make sure that the draft scope of work is thoroughly studied before any future draft environmental impact statement.

The other thing that we urge with Uniform Land Use Review Procedure applications is that community boards take the full amount of time allotted to them to review a project because community boards are not sure what they will learn from the public's exposure to a project. You can communicate to the public that "the board is inclined to support a Uniform Land Use Review Procedure application, but that the board has until x date to put in its recommendation so if you have any thoughts, issues, or concerns, please let us know." If a board makes a Uniform Land Use Review Procedure recommendation early, then there is less time for the public to provide input, so please take the full time allotted. Then, when the board makes its Uniform Land Use Review Procedure recommendation it needs to ensure that it shares it widely with the community and with our office. We always include details from community board Uniform Land Use Review Procedure recommendations in our own Uniform Land Use Review Procedure recommendations.

There is no formal role for the Borough President in the Board of Standards and Appeals process and Board of Standards and Appeals applications are not typically applications with which our office becomes involved unless you, your communities, or your community boards flag an application for us. However, we would like to figure out a better process for cataloging, flagging, reviewing, and evaluating Board of Standards and Appeals applications. Recently, there have been helpful pieces of legislation which have passed in the City Council around this issue that we are currently evaluating. In the fall, we hope to work earnestly with you and your boards on determining a better process for Board of Standards and Appeals applications.

In the current moment, I would just like to review the elements of Board of Standards and Appeals applications. The Board of Standards and Appeals may grant a variance from zoning provisions if all five elements are met. "Uniqueness" is why the entity is seeking relief from zoning provisions and it cannot be for hardships that the entity itself has created. "Reasonable return" requires the entity seeking relief from zoning provisions to show that it expects to receive a reasonable return on its investment from its proposal (unless the entity is a non-profit, in which case it is exempt from this requirement). "Neighborhood character" requires the entity seeking relief from zoning provisions to show how its proposal is in keeping with or is consistent with the current use and size of surrounding buildings. "Hardship not created by the owner" is self-explanatory. Finally, "minimal variance" requires the entity seeking relief from zoning provisions to show that the degree of variance from zoning provisions that they are seeking is no more than is necessary for a reasonable economic return (or, in the case of nonprofits, a reasonable amount of benefit that the proposal would create).

Based on their previous Board of Standards and Appeals testimony, community boards typically choose to opine on the "uniqueness" and "neighborhood character" elements of Board of Standards and Appeals applications. However, community boards can also review the "minimal variance" and "reasonable return" elements of Board of Standards and Appeals applications as well. Today's community board tackles so many different items so we thought reviewing the "uniqueness" and "neighborhood character" elements would be a great way for community boards to hone in their focus when responding to Board of Standards and Appeals applications.

The Borough President also does not have a formal role in the Landmarks Preservation Commission process. However, the Borough President is an avid preservationist and we have worked diligently

to advocate for historic preservation. As I mentioned earlier, the Borough President and the East Midtown Steering Committee worked to preserve historic buildings in the text amendment of the East Midtown Rezoning. For East Harlem, the Borough President, the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan Arts and Culture Subcommittee, Manhattan Community Board 11 and a new community group, Landmark East Harlem, identified 24 or 25 sites to be considered for landmark designation and laid out a road map to engage the community in a landmarks discussion.

In the landmarking process, an evaluation is done by the Research Unit of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Then, if a landmark application moves forward, it is calendared for consideration by the Landmarks Preservation Commission at a public hearing. At its public hearing, the Landmarks Preservation Commission can choose to not designate a site, to table the consideration of designation for a site for a later date, or to designate a site as a landmark. Afterwards, there is a City Planning Commission review and a City Council Vote. However, regardless of what the Landmarks Preservation Commission decides to do, there is no public hearing or process after the initial public hearing so the public hearing is the main opportunity to prepare for.

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: Perhaps other boards have this issue as well, but our calendar and when we have to respond to the Landmarks Preservation Commission is problematic. The Landmarks Preservation Commission may give us a time frame to respond, but their time frame may not allow the full board to approve a resolution. I do not know if your unit has had an issue with the time frame that the Landmarks Preservation Commission sets forth.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Issues with the time frame we are given to respond arise with every piece of the land use process whether it is the draft scope or work, the draft environmental impact statement, and anything that occurs between July and September. There are very few boards that have been as busy this past summer as Manhattan Community Board 1. Time frames are something that we have to discuss more, but we have been dealing with time frame issues as they arise. We have won some battles and lost some battles with timing and scheduling. Speaking more generally and not about the Landmarks Preservation Commission process, the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure clock dictates how things move and there are good reasons for that. There is predictability and fairness. We respect that. With other actions, including those with the Landmarks Preservation Commission, we have become more restricted and we hope that there will be more flexibility. I hope to continue this discussion, but we do not have an answer right now. For the time being, we will continue to handle the Landmark Preservation Commission applications on a case by case basis

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: I have to say that with Uniform Land Use Review Procedure applications, community boards have 60 days to issue recommendations. Consequently, community boards can have at least one full board meeting to discuss the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure applications and, hopefully, two full board meetings which allow community boards to have a dialogue with the applicants and city agencies involved before issuing recommendations. However, the Landmarks Preservation Commission applications are dumped on community boards with no notice. Manhattan Community Board 2 now often holds two Landmarks Committee meetings each month because applications come in late in the month and the time frame to respond is so short. It would be helpful if we could have more time from the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: Sometimes, Manhattan Community Board 1 is almost forced to turn down the Landmarks Preservation Commission applications



because there is not enough time to for us to work with the applicants for us to get to a point where we can come to an agreement with the applicants or thoughtfully approve or disapprove of the applications.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: That is something that we have heard about and which I have seen and it is not the way it should happen. I do not think that the Landmarks Preservation Commission or the board want this scenario to play out.

Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7: Sometimes the Landmarks Preservation Commission has voted on something before Manhattan Community Board 7 has its full board meeting. We have to vote because we are required to, but if the Landmarks Preservation Commission has already agreed to approve an application then Manhattan Community Board 7's vote is a formality and cannot be taken into consideration by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: The Landmarks Preservation Commission has a shorter clock than the Board of Standards and Appeals and all the other agencies.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: There are other bodies that still take community board votes and concerns into account so, even if a community board's vote on a Landmarks Preservation Commission application occurs after the Landmarks Preservation Commission vote – I am not saying it should happen that way – the community board vote is still taken into consideration by the local council member and in City Planning Commission reviews. It is still important to have a vote on a resolution, but the timing concerns need to be addressed.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: Also in an effort to reduce their backlog, the Landmarks Preservation Commission is sending a lot of applications to staff level and things that Manhattan Community Board 2 used to opine on are not able to be reviewed by the community board. I just wrote a letter regarding two applications that would have been voted on by Manhattan Community Board 2, but were reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on a staff level instead. We understand that the Landmarks Preservation Commission is addressing the backlog and we believe that that in and of itself is a good thing. However, to send applications that should be reviewed by the Landmarks Preservation Commission at the commission level, which would include the community board in the review process, to the Landmarks Preservation Commission staff level decision-making process where there is more minimal review and no community board involvement, is not a good thing. Help on this would be appreciated.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: That is certainly something that our office can help with. So, these are some examples of how our office has been involved in the Landmarks Preservation Commission work. The backlog work that the Borough President and the Land Use Unit has done is very much known to the Borough Board and we are happy to send information to your members on the backstory and history of the backlog. However, we have helped to ensure at least 10 Manhattan landmark designations and we are working on more.

Ensuring the creation of Morningside Heights Historic District was important to us because we believe that our historic resources in Northern Manhattan need to be preserved. We have been sure to dedicate extra staff time to look through these projects because so much new development in

Manhattan is taking place in Northern Manhattan. Consequently, the creation of the Morningside Heights Historic District was a major win for us. As I mentioned earlier, preserving landmarks was an important part of the East Midtown Steering Committee's recommendations and we helped ensure that 12 East Midtown buildings received landmark designation. We also made clear that preserving landmarks was a priority in East Harlem when we issued our disapproval of the East Harlem rezoning application. There are particularly important changes that we would like to see made at the Landmarks Preservation Commission regarding culturally significant sites, including Underground Railroad sites and The Stonewall Inn. There are limitations to what the landmark law will allow the Landmarks Preservation Commission to do and we respect these limitations. However, we think that a push toward more recognition of culturally significant sites in conjunction with architectural significance will be important, especially for Northern Manhattan sites that we would like to see designated. Finally, we were happy to see the Mount Morris Park Historic District expanded.

There was no slide for our work with the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Project since it is a very different type of project. However, the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Project was an example of how our office can work with community boards to put together a working group around an issue. We were asked early on to develop a process and develop a task force that would look at this from all different sides and then work with the city as they move through the process. We focused extensively on the process guide. When you look at each of the processes, the process guide might seem to be the least important part, but the process guide decide how voting happens, how membership is acquired, and what individual roles and individual responsibilities are. The stronger the process guide is the better the process will be. The Lower Manhattan Resiliency Project is currently undergoing changes of leadership and thankfully we can just refer to what is laid out in the process guide.

For the Lower Manhattan Coastal Resiliency Project, a lot of the planning and research development is taking place on the City agency side and not on our side. However, it is still an example of how we developed a communication apparatus that enables the plan to relate well to the community and outside public. It also ensures that we are all coordinating our work together effectively and that the information that the City has can now be released to the community at several critical points. This has been a good thing for us to partner with you on and I think that we still have a lot of work to do, but the process is working.

Are there any questions about community planning or how we can be working together on projects that you may have? Is there anything that comes to mind?

Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7: We are going to have a project certified in October, the 108<sup>th</sup> Street garages, and we have been meeting for the last eight months with Council Member Levine and his staff and other stakeholders to discuss the whole process and educate the different groups involved. For the scoping document, Manhattan Community Board 7 created an outline of all the items that we felt were missing from the document and needed to be in the document so that when can use that as our base and when we get the environmental impact statement we can easily compare the two documents and put them together.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: That is an excellent example. Not only is a clearly laid out outline helpful in organizing the community board's thoughts moving forward, but it is also probably the most ideal way to present the community board's position to the public. I am a person who writes far more densely than I should and the

denser the document is, the harder it is to bring people into the process and conversation about the project.

Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7: There are three main groups of concerned stakeholders. First, there are the parents and families of the school children who attend the school across the street from the garages on West 108<sup>th</sup> Street and were told things that were not true. Our meeting with them was helpful. Then, there are the people that park in the three garages who are upset at the prospect of losing their affordable parking spaces and, third, there are the residents who are otherwise opposed to the upzoning required and the proposed siting of the supportive housing for seniors in this location.

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: Well, then there are also the people who support the supportive housing project and the upzoning needed for it to be built.

Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7: Yes. Then there is a large group of people who support it. So, you have basically four groups.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Currently, is it the community board that is taking on the role and responsibility as the facilitator or convener of all these discussions with the Council Member?

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: We have all facilitated them.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Are there parts of the process that you would have done differently? You are in a reactive state in the community planning process at this point.

Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7: My concern now is how we communicate effectively with each of the groups moving forward.

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: That is a controversial issue. One suggestion is something that I think that we all need to do more of is using visualizations, making projects as visual as possible for meetings and sharing information online. I wish we had more staff to help you with this, but it helps to be able to see the advantages and disadvantages of whatever you are trying to consider or present. This probably would have helped Diana Howard, my office's Community Liaison to Manhattan Community Boards 7 and 9 a lot in some of the meetings she attended regarding this project. Being able to have the facts laid out and what people have previously said laid out as well as what the project will look like, all in a visual medium, would be helpful and the West 108<sup>th</sup> Street supportive senior housing project is an example of a project that could benefit from visual aids and guides because there is a lot of information and misinformation.

Barry Weinberg, Member, Manhattan Community Board 9: We are experiencing a difficulty in getting agency resources from the Department of City Planning involved in neighborhood rezonings, particularly when they do not feel there is enough room for upzoning that will allow significant new development to happen under Mandatory Inclusionary Housing. It has been the position of Manhattan Community Board 9 for the past thirty years that Morningside Heights needs to be rezoned. We passed another resolution addressed to the new Commissioner of the Department of City Planning and we have spent a lot of time with local groups who are interested in seeing this rezoning happen. The message of the Department of City Planning – it has been said it is like the Wizard of Oz “bring me the broom of the witch” and we come back with the broom and they

say “come back tomorrow and bring something else.” At one point the Department of City Planning asked “well what type of designation do you think should be there?” and for years we had been told not to tell the Department of City Planning what we think the designation should be there and that we should leave that to the planners. Do you have advice for community boards attempting to get the Department of City Planning to pay attention at a time when they are coming off of Midtown East Rezoning and are still grappling with Inwood and East Harlem?

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President’s Office: I think what you are running up against is the fact that the Administration has set policies and the Administration expects City agencies to execute the policies that it has set. The Mayor and his Administration are focused on creating affordable housing and housing in general to account for population growth in the City and so these priorities dictate where City agencies put their resources. If you look at all of the proposed rezoning that have moved forward, you will see that they involve major increases in density. There are certainly limitations to what an agency can and cannot do and agencies are moving forward to meet their prioritized goals. The Mayor and his Administration are trying to create and preserve a total of 200,000 units on a set timeline and so resources are going to be steered toward fulfilling this goal. Other than what you are already doing to bring groups together and increase the volume of those calling to make a rezoning a priority for the Department of City Planning and growing the list of people who support what you are trying to do, you can point out areas that can be designated for upzoning to allow for growth to offset areas that you think should be downzoned. We have been working with a community group on the East Side, the East River Fifties Alliance on their application to make changes to the zoning of the Sutton Place neighborhood. We put together a comprehensive plan that increases growth while respecting the character of the area and it has been a back and forth battle with the Department of City Planning. I think a lot of community boards have laid out public policy positions that have existed for decades and have not moved for decades. Community boards will inevitably be up against the Administration’s policy goals and the Department of City Planning because the Administration has control of the agency. Public pressure and leveraging the other things that the Department of City Planning and the Administration would like to do in each community is how we can get them to the table so we will just continue doing that. That being said, and tell me if I am not understanding you, you are answering what Department of City Planning is asking you to do. You are putting forward proposals. It might take the Department of City Planning a while to get to these proposals you are putting forward, because, as you said the rezoning processes in East Harlem and Inwood are still ongoing.

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: I have two items that I was going to discuss in my report that are somewhat related to what you are discussing. The best practices on how to develop a community planning process are great and we want to implement them. However, we often deal with one-offs in which we do not have the full amount of time or can engage in the full process. I am thinking about these one-offs in the context of East Midtown regarding impact funds. In Lower Manhattan, we have these huge as-of-right developments that create immense impacts on the community in terms of the neighborhood character, the number of school seats needed, the existing sanitation and transportation services and traffic, etc. However, we do not have a way or process of handling these developments and their impacts are only assessed independently of each other even though these impacts should be assessed in the context of and in concert with each other. We also have a text amendment that was very controversial regarding privately owned public spaces on Water Street. Now there are unintended consequences where the first application since this text amendment passed adheres to the text, but because of the way in which the applicant is doing things, the applicant will actually be able to construct new market rate apartments on the second floor of their proposed build out in return for no new community benefit. So maybe we can

figure out how we handle these situations and determine best practices around impact funds and impact fees and community negotiations. What has been your experience?

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: When a text amendment is approved, the way of dealing with the impact of new development allowed for under the text amendment, according to the way things happen now, is that City agencies respond through their capital budgets. If there is increased pedestrian traffic or vehicular traffic, for example, than the Department of Transportation will conduct a traffic study and implement a solution through their capital budget. When the text amendment was initially approved, the Department of City Planning allowed for a certain amount of development so you have to go back and examine the text amendment. City agencies respond to as-of-right developments' impacts on infrastructure through the capital budget which means that they do not deal with as-of-right development impacts at the time the as-of-right developments are constructed, but instead do so after construction. There has not been a lot of discussion about imposing impact fees on as-of-right developments because we are a city that allows for primarily as-of-right development with exceptions for community boards to opine on, not the reverse. The best way that we have been able to advocate for improvements is through the capital budget. In Lower Manhattan, we are pushing the Department of Transportation to conduct a traffic study through its capital funds because the new development, residential conversions, and resurgence of business downtown have created transportation and pedestrian issues that need to be addressed. However, these issues will be examined and solved through agencies' capital budgets, not through zoning mechanisms. If there is a movement to try to do something different and push the definition of impact by as-of-right development, I think we would be interested in having that conversation.

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: We have little control over it and that is understandable, but the impact is much more significant than the original planning had accounted for.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: That is a good point. One thing that we can start with, and maybe we can talk about this as a group, is we can go back and look at the neighborhood rezoning area since the environmental impact statement covers the geographic context that we need to look at. We can see what they estimated growth to be in their ten year forward look and see if what is on the ground matches or if there is a difference between the projection and reality. If there is a difference, the easiest way to is to address the difference is through the relevant agency capital budgets. I say that is the easiest way to address differences between what growth was estimated to be and what it was in reality, but it is not to say that it is easy to do this.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: The State Environmental Quality Review process is flawed and what that State Environmental Quality Review process allows is to take the impact of a one-off or one massive building or a building that is one unit below the limit at which it would trigger needs that must be met and say, okay it does not trigger all the needs, even when there are several developments going up next to each other, each one potentially being one unit below the limit at which it would trigger needs that would need to be met, and this can, in effect, overwhelm our schools and our built infrastructure. Any way that we can gather together and really work on making the State Environmental Quality Review Process more reflective of an urban environment rather than the distillation of what the State Environmental Quality Review Act is, would be welcomed. The State Environmental Quality Review Act should be more reflective of urban environment so that we can look at new developments in context, which we do not have, unless as you said, we are looking at a neighborhood level.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: We could not agree with you more. I have a couple things to say about that:

First, the Manhattan Borough President has been advocating for State Environmental Quality Review process reform since she was elected Manhattan Borough President. In many of our recommendations, we point out factual errors that were brought to our attention by community board members on major topics like school seats. In fact, in the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan, there is a miscalculation that undercounts the number of children that are born in Northern Manhattan and results in a wildly inaccurate assessment of the number of school seats that will be needed in Northern Manhattan for new development projects.

In many cases, environmental impact statements are huge documents which reveal issues and inaccuracies when they are closely examined. The Borough President believes that, for some of the topics, there needs to be a closer alignment with the social and economic impact of that area, a prime example of which is public health and environmental impacts. For example, not only should we determine if a sewage system is durable enough or not to handle an increased amount of sewage, but we should determine if the increased amount of sewage will negatively impact families and worsen their health and quality of life. It gets far more intense and more costly so these are things that we are dealing with. The model that we have used in East Harlem – which has been used in Brownsville and is beginning to be adopted across the country, but is mostly prevalent in Europe – is called the impact assessment model. The East Harlem Neighborhood Health Assessment done by the New York Academy of Medicine exemplifies the type of analysis that we believe should become an integral part of the State Environmental Quality Review process.

Second, the Manhattan Borough President's Office has been working with Council Member Reynoso's Office, the Regional Planning Association, and organizations across the city regarding Uniform Land Use Review Procedure reform and amendments to the State Environmental Quality Review process. There will be a point in time in which we will solicit your input and feedback on this as well and we hope to be able to do this in the Fall or early winter. That is not to say that the Borough Board could not, if it chose to, draft its own letter to address these issues. We are approaching a good time to do that because the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination, which examines the State Environmental Quality Review process every three or four years, is reaching a point where they are going to be proposing changes.

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: Are they going to have a public hearing? Community Boards should develop resolutions and these resolutions should be included in a public hearing. We should ask for a public hearing if there is not one.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: There will be some type of public conversation. As the Borough President just said, this is a really important opportunity for the Borough Board to develop a document that lists out these issues. Individually, as community boards, you may also have something that you want to talk about, but a statement from the Borough Board would be really powerful. The Land Use Unit is getting those details about what their roll out will be like. The Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination seems pretty far away from any public engagement on this, but that does not mean that we could not send a letter to them now since we know that they are thinking about it.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: Could we work with the Land Use Unit to draft this document?

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: Of course. We can do that, but I want to make sure that that is the general consensus of the Borough Board.

*The consensus of the Borough Board was that it did want to develop a document or letter to send to the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination.*

Marie Winfield, Member, Manhattan Community Board 11: I was just wondering what kind of analysis is done by the Land Use Unit on fair housing. It is difficult for community boards to work on fair housing on the community board level, but all of these projects in all of the community boards have an impact on fair housing so I would like to know how you are addressing fair housing on a borough-wide level.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: Currently, we rely on others' research and work and we try to evaluate what has been put out about fair housing rules and the consequences of allowing certain types of projects and particular policies to create housing models and neighborhoods. We refer to that research and work and try to build off of it. At this point, the Manhattan Borough President's Office does not have a Manhattan study that it has done on fair housing impacts of the current Administration's housing plan. However, this is something that we could do moving forward. I know that you and others are involved in fair housing research, so if there are things that we are not looking at, please let me know. Also, I would be happy to pull together the research that we have looked at and analyzed for you.

Diane Collier, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 11: My understanding is that the new version of 421-A does not include community preference. That is pretty much what Ms. Winfield is talking about there – that is trying to meet the federal government's requirements on fair housing. The other thing that I am hearing is that low income tax credits may not allow for community preference so we should also be aware of that. That bill which would disallow community preference would be tied to the tax reform that comes out of the federal budget.

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: I am not sure that tax reform in Washington, D.C. is happening. I think they skipped that and went to infrastructure and I am not sure that they are even going to get that.

Diane Collier, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 11: Yes, but it is being looked at by Senator Orin Hatch. There is a bill that out that they are currently having public hearings on.

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: It is not clear that it is going to go anywhere, but yes, you never know.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: And then there is the court case that is moving through the courts now.

Diane Collier, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 11: They seem to be putting in the necessary points to address that if the fair housing laws are passed.

Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, Manhattan Borough President's Office: I appreciate that. I think that is my time today, folks. As you guys know, our information is on the website. We love hearing from you.

Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office: And again, we will send this around. Next up, we have the report by the Borough President.

### ***Borough President's Report***

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: Thank you for being here in August. I know it is a big sacrifice and it is much appreciated. There are a couple of things that we are working on in terms of events and then there are more substantive announcements that I would like to share with you.

Women's Equality always takes place on August 26<sup>th</sup>. This year August 26<sup>th</sup> will be on a Saturday. We are holding a press conference on the steps of City Hall on Friday, August 25<sup>th</sup> to talk about voter registration. There will also be locations at which people can register to vote on Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>. We do this every year. It is hard to get press coverage, but we are doing what we can because we want people to know that Women's Equality Day exists and that people can register to vote on Women's Equality Day even though it will be a Saturday this year. August 26<sup>th</sup> is the celebration/commemoration of the 1920 adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment. November 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 is the centennial anniversary of when women in New York State won the right to vote (on November 6<sup>th</sup> 1917). Municipal Archives is organizing celebrations for both anniversaries.

When the Mayor and his Administration said he planned to move the overwhelming majority of the Garment District to Sunset Park, I said no. My office and I started a task force of designers, real estate professionals, community boards, and factory representatives. It is working with a facilitator, the Department of City Planning and the New York City Economic Development Corporation. It is a really complicated issue. However, most of the task force wants a certain number of square feet to be continued to be set aside in the Garment District to preserve some manufacturing there. We are trying to get the Mayor and his Administration to agree to this. As of now, they have not agreed to this so we may have a press conference tomorrow at noon at City Hall to say that there has to be a phase in for moving some garment manufacturers to Sunset Park and there has to be preservation of some space in the Garment Center for manufacturing. There are between 400 and 900 manufacturers in the Garment Center. The Garment Center should be the hub, but there can be spokes in other boroughs.

On September 8<sup>th</sup> my office will hold an African American Day Parade Dinner honoring healthcare professionals. If there are people you believe should be honored because of their healthcare work in Harlem, please let my office now.

The Mayor will be working in Manhattan communities between September 25<sup>th</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup>. We gave the Mayor a list of events and we would also like to forward any of your suggestions for events, people, places and organizations he should visit. This is not an easy week to put together so your suggestions are most welcome.

In October, my office will be hosting an exhibit for Open House New York. Open House New York is one of my favorite events because it enables people to visit places that they would otherwise not be able to visit. In this building, I have to thank the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, you can go up to the cupola. They allowed us to do this last year for the first time and they will allow us to do it again this year. Please sign up on Open House New York's website for our exhibit, which is free, and reserve a spot for the cupola, which has a great view. Please also consider sharing the information about Open House New York with others you know.



My office also issued a report evaluating mental health services in schools. The report found that social workers in every school would not only be beneficial, but that they are necessary in every school. Our schools have typically have counselors, but they need social workers. One teacher commented that schools need social workers in schools now more than ever to help them overcome challenges and have discussions about issues which impact their lives. These discussions are difficult even for adults. If you have any opportunity to discuss mental health services in schools in any of your respective community boards' relevant committee meetings, I would encourage you to do so. Please join me in advocating that the Department of Education assign social workers to every school because it is very difficult to get the Department of Education to agree that this is a legitimate need. Having had challenges with raising children in my own life, I do not understand how the Department of Education does not believe that social workers are needed to help young adults in all schools to overcome the issues and challenges that they face.

My office is also working with Council Member Chin on legislation to more effectively regulate pop-up stores and pop-up events and my office wholeheartedly supports Council Member Garodnick's bill to exempt some small businesses from the Commercial Rent Tax. Finally, my office is working on legislation with Council Member Johnson that would exempt all grocery stores from the Commercial Rent Tax. Grocery stores are an endangered species in Manhattan and the commercial rent tax that exists only applies to businesses in Manhattan that are located south of 96th Street and north of Canal Street.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: Would you like community boards to consider resolutions supporting both Council Member Garodnick's and Council Member Johnson's and your office's bills?

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: Yes. Absolutely.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: What if we, as the Borough Board considered a resolution in support of both of these bills?

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: I think that would be great and if we could have community boards from outside of Manhattan and other Borough Boards consider resolutions, as well, that would also be terrific.

Finally, there is a proposal to close Rikers' Island. We need to organize a task force to make Rikers' Island's closure successful because, as of now, it is not clear how or when Rikers Island will be closed. In the Borough of Manhattan, we are going to involve you and your boards. We would like to develop a list of people who would like to be on this task force. If you would like to be involved in the task force to ascertain how best to close Rikers' Island, please let my office know. Judge Lippman's suggestion is to take the Tombs facility, which is known officially as the Manhattan Detention Complex, temporarily move inmates residing there to Rikers' Island, build a new facility in the Manhattan Detention Complex's place, and when the new Manhattan detention facility has been completed, move those still residing on Rikers to the new Manhattan detention facility.

The Manhattan Detention Complex, which is next to the court house in Lower Manhattan, has 900 cells. There are 1600 Manhattanites on Rikers Island currently. If we can reduce the population residing at Rikers through alternatives to incarceration, then this plan can work. This is a topic of discussion. It is not a type of thing that can happen overnight. So we are working on developing a list of people to participate in a task force on this issue.

My office has had wonderful interns working this summer on how to evaluate the issues involved. We are trying to figure this all out and I wanted to let you know that we have put a lot of time in on it and we have interviewed many of the people and organizations that work with those who were formerly incarcerated. We had over 100 interns this summer and I feel very strongly about involving interns in the work of my office.

High school interns went to every part of the Manhattan waterfront. I cannot say that they took on the issues of resiliency as you might, but they will complete a report called "Teens Take the Waterfront." They were so excited about this, I cannot tell you. You will get a copy of the report.

In July, my office hosted a Caregiving 101 event that 800 people attended at Fordham Law School this summer. Last year, we held a Senior Brain Health Expo which was similarly well-attended. If you have a senior task force and you would like to discuss the lack of centralized information available for seniors, it would be a good topic to cover. There are not a lot of centralized lists of resources available for seniors as they age.

My office has also been working with NYCHA this summer. We just met with them about their recycling and composting initiatives. There are also challenges concerning infill and jobs for NYCHA residents that are ongoing.

In addition, my office and I have met with land trusts. We have worked closely with East Harlem land trusts and now there are discussions about buildings in Chinatown possibly becoming part of a land trust agreement with the families that own and live in them. Land trusts are a way in which we can preserve affordable housing in the long term so I wanted to mention them.

Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs: Our interns did a community board study on the latest community board recruitment and selection process. What they were looking to see was who, in terms of demographic groups, is represented on Manhattan community boards and how well these demographic groups are represented on Manhattan community boards. They looked at the representation of different age groups, ethnic diversity, the ratio of those who own and those who rent, educational attainment and the geographic dispersion of applicants and members. We really wanted to see how these groups are represented and it helps me because in October I will be speaking with you all about who you need on your boards and what you are looking for on your boards. I am going to look at what the interns found and see if there are systemic gaps in representation. We really want to encourage having people who live in public housing, for example, on community boards.

In addition, I know that some of you have looked at re-instituting public membership on your boards if you do not have it currently, and seeing how we can ease people into public membership and then, perhaps, full board membership. I know that some applicants may not yet have the time or skills necessary to be full board members, but that we can work with them.

Honorable Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President: We will share all of this information, but what we tried to evaluate was the demographics of your community board districts and how well your boards match these demographics.

## ***Chair Reports***

Anthony Notaro, Jr., Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: Community Board 1 has received its first application for a privately owned public space infill at 200 Water Street. We are still wrestling with the issue of Peck Slip Park, which was planned for, but still does not exist. The Parks Department stated publically that it would like to back out of building the park so we are going to work with Basha Gerhards, Deputy Director of Land Use on this issue. Resiliency is an ongoing issue. Jamie Rogers, Manhattan Community Board 3 Chair, and I are going to work together on our respective resiliency plans and with the agencies that are involved. We are trying to figure out how to restart and reenergize the whole process. We are coming up on the fifth year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy and it is really amazing that we are still vulnerable and there may not be an end in sight yet. This is a critical issue for our board. Some of you may know that there is a posting for a new district manager so if anyone wants to speak with me about that that would be great and we also have some turnover in board membership. Our high school student is going off to college so we now have three vacancies on Manhattan Community Board 1 that we are working with the Borough President and her office to fill.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: Manhattan Community Board 2 is getting to the end of the first round of permits for oversized retail in NoHo and SoHo. We thank the Borough President's Office for supporting our board with a very thoughtful response and my favorite two letter word when it comes to developer overreach, "no." We will see where that goes in the City Council. Manhattan Community Board 2 is still working to get controls on the crowds that are popping up outside of these crazy stores as the Borough President mentioned. There were two *New York Times* articles two weeks ago on how the crowds and the lines are the point and people crowd together for the social interaction and opportunity to meet new people. I know it is localized to Manhattan Community Board 2 right now, but it is coming to an empty storefront near you. This has become so popular and so financially lucrative that it will spread. We just got to "enjoy" it first.

Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office: It happens to be that you all have the strip of cult stores that everybody wants to go to. I also recognize that that is an issue.

Terri Cude, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2: We are victims of that success. We also appreciate all the collaboration with our neighboring community boards and the Borough President's Office on the issues that cross our borders. We spoke with David Dodge and are working on creating an L-train task force for the five boards that are affected by it. We are all in discussion. I am especially excited about today's discussion which brought up two things that we can all collaborate on which are State Environmental Quality Review reform and small business preservation through exempting more small businesses from commercial real estate taxes.

Jamie Rogers, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 3: We did not meet in August. We therefore do not have a report at this time.

No one from Manhattan Community Board 4 was present to provide an update.

No one from Manhattan Community Board 5 was present to provide an update.

Rick Eggers, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 6: Manhattan Community Board 6 will be dealing with the opening of United Nations in September, which causes traffic congestion issues each year in its own right. However, Midtown Tunnel construction and the multitude of simultaneous

construction projects is expected to significantly exacerbate traffic congestion, disrupting the area and leading to additional noise. For example, five or six projects may be taking place within a ten block area, all of which are properly permitted and would individually not be a problem, but which taken together impact one another and the community as a whole in unanticipated ways.

One of the things that Manhattan Community Board 6 is working with Ahmed Tigani, Assistant Director of Land Use, and outside consultants on is a construction site mapping tool which will help us identify where things are currently going on. Now this has taken us a year and a half and we still have to do a good deal of informational data input. We need a simple tool in the meantime so the District Manager has put together a mapping tool that district office staff and members of the board can use. They have taken pictures of streets and placed dots and lines on a google map, that when clicked on, show a description of the construction taking place and a picture that documents the construction taking place. We just had our first demonstration last night at our executive meeting. It is something that I will share because we are finding it to be very useful. The only problem with these construction sites is that they will never provide an anticipated completion date and we want to have this information so that we can develop a planning tool so when someone comes to us to notify us of a construction project we can work with them to time the construction project so that individual areas are not overburdened with simultaneous construction projects. Manhattan Community Board 6 has a senior survey posted on our website.

So far, Manhattan Community Board 6 has collected 50 replies from our older adult community, which I am told is the preferred term, about things like what they participate in, what they would like to participate in, how they travel to their activities, etc. It has both multiple choice and open-ended comment sections. We will post the findings online when we have more replies. Of course seniors are not always technology users so we are getting hard copies out to senior centers, libraries, and larger buildings with large aging populations as well. We hope to get a representative sample, but if we do not, at least we will have a sample and we will have some input from our seniors. Manhattan Community Board 6 also has a landmarks resource guide on its website which identifies all of the landmarks and landmark districts in our community board district. It has hyperlinks to the City's various information portals so if someone wants to research a site, they can click on it and learn more about it. Manhattan Community Board 6 also has a privately owned public space report that is a couple of years old now. Manhattan Community Board 6 went out to every single privately owned public space in the community district and we are actually now looking for violations so that we can report them and follow up on them. The report does need to be updated. Manhattan Community Board 6 contains one of the largest numbers of privately owned public spaces in the city.

Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7: We had two committee meetings in August. First, Manhattan Community Board 7's Parks Committee met regarding the Big Apple Circus, which filed bankruptcy two years ago, and was purchased by a profit making organization that signed a lease with Lincoln Center and the Parks Department that will allow them to set up the circus in Central Park in the fall. The applicants first went in to the BCI meeting in July to get a wine and beer license, which BCI gave them. They were supposed to come the following Monday to the Parks Committee meeting, but they refused to come because Lincoln Center could not come with them and they have a clause in their contract that they do not have to go to anything without having Lincoln Center present with them. There was a meeting in August that the applicants attended at which the Borough President asked if they would give free tickets to the children living in Amsterdam Houses so I made sure that the Borough President's representative and I spoke with them afterwards. The applicants said that they would provide free tickets to children living in Amsterdam Houses and they asked if there were other groups that would like free tickets so I

connected them with the right people. Manhattan Community Board 7 did get a copy of the circus contract, but it had to FOIL it. Manhattan Community Board 7 has also offered to have a construction oversight committee when there are large construction projects. We tried to meet with Lincoln Center regarding the construction of the circus tent, but they said that they could meet in the middle of October. However, since the circus will start putting up the tent in early October, meeting with them in the middle of October really would not be helpful. Manhattan Community Board 7's Preservation Committee also met because there was a matter that they had to vote on.

Manhattan Community Board 7 is also having meetings now regarding the West 108<sup>th</sup> Street supportive housing project. The City will sell three parking garages to the West Side Federation for Supportive Senior Housing for a dollar each so that they can develop supportive senior housing so we are taking time over the next few weeks to organize for these meetings.

Jim Clynes, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 8: Good morning everybody. We did not meet in August either so I do not have any reports on specific votes. However, when I think of August, I think of water and how, until recently, Manhattan was an island without many ferries. Now we have ferry service coming to Community Board 8 as you all know. Within Community Board 8, ferry service will begin on Roosevelt Island connecting it to Long Island City and that will be coming soon. We did have a proposed ferry dock at East 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, which had been in the works for at least the last 9 months. However, we were informed very recently that the East 62<sup>nd</sup> Street ferry dock was being yanked away and one of the reasons given for this was that the fact that the channel of water is too narrow in that area for the Watertaxis. We are very concerned about this change and would like to have an alternative site if East 62<sup>nd</sup> Street will no longer be feasible. Ferry service is needed for commuting. I brought up the fact that the Circleline ferry tour boat goes through this same channel and it is a much larger boat than a Watertaxi. I do not understand how the channel can be too narrow for a smaller Watertaxi vessel. Community Board 8 will have a meeting on September 14<sup>th</sup> concerning this issue and hopefully we will be able to change their mind about the East 62<sup>nd</sup> Street ferry dock or help them to find an alternative site. Community Board 8 had three major street fairs where it had a table manned with two or three board members from 10am in the morning until 5pm in the evening. That is where we do a lot of our outreach and that is it for this month.

Barry Weinberg, Member, Manhattan Community Board 9: Manhattan Community Board 9 did not meet in August, although a lot of work continued apace. We are very excited that we will have the Morningside Heights Historic District unveiling on September 8<sup>th</sup>. It was a long struggle to achieve that historic district so I want to thank the historic district committee, the Manhattan Borough President's Office and Council Member Mark Levine and Assembly Member Danny O'Donnell since they all fought for it.

In late July, Manhattan Community Board 9 reached an agreement to support a venture being undertaken by Silicon Harlem and Columbia University, which also effects portions of Manhattan Community Board 10, to research next generation WiFi. There will be benefits provided for the community, which Manhattan Community Board 9's support was conditional on.

Manhattan Community Board 9 is continuing to organize a NYCHA resident forum with Manhattan Community Board 7. Manhattan Community Board 9's Transportation Committee is also planning to meet in September to take a comprehensive look at transportation plans. There are a number of New York City Department of Transportation modifications to traffic flow that have seemed to be a bit piecemeal to us. We would like to understand the broader impact of transportation modifications from Morningside Avenue to Riverside Drive. Related to that, we will be taking a look

at the congestion pricing plan that is being discussed up in Albany. We are, right now, opposed to that because we are concerned about the proposed \$5.50 toll for crossing 59<sup>th</sup> Street. We would love to collaborate with other community boards to examine the impact that congestion pricing would have on our transportation system.

Manhattan Community Board 9 is also continuing to seek a Morningside Heights Rezoning. We have been participating in community visioning meetings and the irony is that the Department of City Planning is effectively saying to us that it does not see development potential. Meanwhile, we have forty story luxury condo buildings currently under construction in two different sites and likely more on the way in this area. Even if the Department of City Planning does not see the development potential, developers clearly do, so we are attempting to compile enough evidence on what is going on to try to bring them to the table on a contextual rezoning and possible upzoning that would include Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and affordable housing. Manhattan Community Board 9 is finalizing committee appointments for new members of the board.

John Lynch, Vice Chair, Manhattan Community Board 10: We are working on a forum for late fall that will address faith-based institutions who have valuable real estate, but may not be able to develop or preserve it. We will provide legal and preservation advice for them. I was speaking with Manhattan Community Board 9 Chair John the other day and he said that Manhattan Community Board 9 was in discussions with Union Theological Seminary so we will loop Manhattan Community Board 9 in on our event.

Manhattan Community Board 10 started an Older Adult Task Force and we had a summit meeting the other day which Deputy Borough President Aldrin Bonilla and Athena Moore from the Borough President's Office attended. We talked about getting out information regarding senior resources, senior crime, and senior centers. There are younger, older adults and older, older adults and they have different needs.

Manhattan Community Board 10 had a press conference last week introducing the four big belly trash receptacles that were installed on 125<sup>th</sup> Street and Lenox Avenue. As Harlem has grown and as businesses have grown along 125<sup>th</sup> Street, there has been more refuse, rats, and health issues. Dr. Hazel Dukes, the Chair of Manhattan Community Board 10's Health and Human Services Committee and Barbara Askins, Executive Director of the 125<sup>th</sup> Street BID, formed a "Clean and Healthy Harlem Committee" and raised \$31,000 required to acquire, install, and maintain the receptacles. These receptacles can be opened with your feet and they are fully enclosed. They also have WiFi capability, so when they are full, a notice is sent to those maintaining the receptacles that they have to be emptied. We hope to get more receptacles along 125<sup>th</sup> Street and other areas.

Manhattan Community Board 10 worked with Manhattan Community Board 9 Chair John to develop the community benefits agreement for the Columbia Next Generation WiFi project. We talked about developing a task force that will oversee the development of the project and the distribution of community benefits.

As I mentioned last month, Wholefoods opened on 125<sup>th</sup> Street. They have been really good so far. They have been following through on their commitment to interact with and work with the community. They put about 25 local Harlem vendors on the shelves in their store and they have been listening to our priorities and concerns, including the possibility of creating an older adults discount day. They appear open to this idea.

Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office: They say it's also the cheapest Wholefoods.

John Lynch, Vice Chair, Manhattan Community Board 10: Yes. They have their own store brand as well and the more space they fill with their own products the less expensive shopping there can be.

Diane Collier, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 11: Last month, I was not here but I was thinking of you all. The East Harlem Neighborhood Plan is on available on Manhattan Community Board 11's website. Manhattan Community Board 11 voted "no, with conditions." I do want to take this opportunity to commend my board members, who, in the midst of intense adversity, stood fast, persevered, and voted. They wanted to make sure that people knew how the board was voting on this very important action for East Harlem. I also want to commend the task force. You will see on the website that there is a very lengthy and comprehensive discussion as to how we came to our decision and why we came to our decision. In our vote "no with conditions," we identified the important issues with the plan, which were density, a lack of discussion of preservation, and all of the core values that are key to East Harlem and the priorities that we set forth in the East Harlem Neighborhood Plan. I also want to thank the Manhattan Borough President's Office because during this difficulty where there were calls for Manhattan Community Board 11 to revote. The Manhattan Borough President's Office stood with us and helped us navigate the legal issues so that, the following week, when we met again and continued where we left off, we ratified the vote and the vote stood.

Manhattan Community Board 11 met in July and in August. We had a very busy summer. We had the National Black Theatre Uniform Land Use Review Procedure application, which is located at 125<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. They are one of the oldest cultural institutions on 125<sup>th</sup> Street. They are looking at developing a mixed use 25-story building that will give them a new theatre and marquis. It is compliant with MIH and, at the end of the day, this project will cross-subsidize the theatre and ensure that the cultural arts will survive. They are the first applicant on 125<sup>th</sup> Street to utilize the 125<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Rezoning that was approved in 2007 and allows for increased density.

Manhattan Community Board 11's District Manager Angel Mescaïn-Archer has returned today. Reflecting on what has been going on in the country, particularly with the issues with the statues in Charlottesville and other places, I met with Yiselly Ortiz, the Manhattan Borough President's Office's Community Liaison to Manhattan Community Board 8 and Manhattan Community Board 11, and Council Member Inez Barron and the City Council Women's Caucus regarding the lack of women statues in New York City and the Marion Sims statue, which is located on 103<sup>rd</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. Marion Sims was considered to be the father of gynecology, but he utilized African American slaves without their consent and without anesthesia to develop gynecological surgery. We feel that there is no place for him on Fifth Avenue where Mount Sinai and the New York Academy of Medicine are located and in East Harlem where women of color live and work. If there was ever a time to discuss moving the statue, this is the time. I hope you will stand with Manhattan Community Board 11 when you hear that there will be press conferences. The Mayor just announced that he will do a 90 day review of all statues of hate on city property and we are hoping he will include the Marion Sims statue.

Jessica Mates, Chief of Staff, Manhattan Borough President's Office: He is including it in the 90 day review. We said that the Mayor's Office had to include the Marion Sims statue in its review and they said they would.

Diane Collier, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 11: Thank you.

Barry Weinberg, Member, Manhattan Community Board 9: We had discussed the Sims statue at a Manhattan Community Board 9 LGBT task force meeting. We discussed the lack of representation of LGBT people in history in Upper Manhattan and that statue came up and it was proposed that a statue be dedicated to his victims.

Diane Collier, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 11: I will give you a brief history. They came to us last year in June of 2016 with a plaque that they wanted to affix to the statue that had the names of the women he operated on against their will without anesthesia. The issue I had with it was that the plaque would go at the bottom of his feet, which I thought would be demeaning to them. Manhattan Community Board 11 took a position against this proposal and it voted to remove the statue.

Anthony Notaro, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1: Will the list of statues of hate be made available?

Lucille Songhai, Director of Community Affairs, Manhattan Borough President's Office: We can ask the Mayor's Office for that.

Jessica Mates, Chief of Staff, Manhattan Borough President's Office: There was a press conference about it planned for today and the Mayor's Office discussed releasing the list. I can find out if they did.

No one from Manhattan Community Board 12 was present to provide an update.

### ***Council Member Reports***

Cory Epstein, Communications Director, CM Garodnick: Hi everyone, I'm Corey from Council Member Garodnick's Office. I just want to speak about three very quick things. We want to thank the Manhattan Borough President's Office and Manhattan Community Boards 5, 6, and 8 for all of the work that they did regarding the East Midtown Rezoning. We are very pleased with how it turned out. We are looking forward to the transit improvements, the creation of more public spaces, and the jolt that it will provide for the business district.

Manhattan Community Board 8 Chair Clynes brought up the Soundview Ferry issues. Two weeks ago, Council Member Garodnick's Office requested that a 34<sup>th</sup> Street stop be added to the ferry. Rather than having the ferry go straight from the Upper East Side to Wall Street, we thought that it made sense for there to be a stop in Midtown. EDC did add the 34<sup>th</sup> Street stop, but they took away the 62<sup>nd</sup> Street stop.

Regarding the Commercial Rent Tax, I love the idea of the Borough Board considering a resolution of support so I will connect with Lucille. Council Member Garodnick's Commercial Rent Tax exemption bill has 41 City Council Co-Sponsors from all five boroughs. This is a no-brainer that would help 3,400 small businesses in Manhattan. We are continuing to increase the pressure on this because this is something that the City can do with the stroke of a pen. It doesn't rely on Albany and it would give a break to the businesses that we love in our neighborhoods. Thank you.

*The August 17, 2017 Borough Board meeting was adjourned at 10:37am.*