

Public Safety and Environment Committee
June 18, 2018, 7:00 PM
433 1st Avenue (NYU School of Dentistry), Room 220

Present: Ronnie White (Chair), Andrew Gross, Paige Judge, Joseph Parrish, Matthew Roberts, Ann Seligman, Susan Steinberg, David Tsin

Excused: None

Absent: Dan Devine, Bea Disman, Molly Hollister

Guests: Dawn Hettrick, New York State Department of Health; Douglas MacNeal, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; Kenneth J. Kaiser, Con Edison; Stephanie Bello, Con Edison; Bernadette Walsh, Con Edison; Fred Rupp, Stuy Town; Vitaly Filipchenko, CB6 Resident; Trevor Winans, Office of Council Member Keith Powers; Ben Jacobs, Office of Council Member Keith Powers; Joseph Carlucci, NYPD 13th Precinct; Emily Curtis-Murphy, Solar One

Call to Order and Adoption of the Agenda/Previous Meeting's Minutes

Ronnie White called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Ronnie White made a motion to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded.

Committee Business

Agenda Item #1: Presentation and Questions on Contamination in Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village Area

Bernadette Walsh from ConEdison started by talking about the Manufactured Gas Plant Program. There was an agreement regarding the Manufactured Gas Plant Program entered into with the state in 2002 and there's been lots of outreach since then. Last fall, they met with elected officials in the area to brief them on the actual remediation work. The official decision was made December of last year. This spring and summer, there have been meetings with members of the community and elected officials on this topic of remediation in Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village.

The presentation was then turned to Douglas MacNeal from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. He talked about the history of manufactured gas plants, including responsibility for these gas plants that help Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village.

Starting in 2004, there was site characterization to see whether there was any contamination at all in Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village (the answer was yes). In 2006/2007, there were investigations as to where there was contamination and how much contamination there was. The findings were that there was no indoor air

contamination and that there was no shallow contamination. It was found that much of the contamination was 20-40 feet below ground.

Dawn Hettrick from New York State Department of Health talked about exposure to contamination and how people get exposed to contamination. There is also an interim site management plan at this site to manage any exposure to contamination here.

Douglas MacNeal said that several possible options were looked at for cleanup. What was come up with was the insulation of several recovery wells across those sites targeted for areas where there's contamination, maintaining the site covers so that nobody digs into them, and deed restrictions on the properties so that future owners know about the contamination situation. They're looking to deal with wells on 20th Street and Avenue C, 17th Street and Avenue C, and 14th Street and Avenue C. He discussed the process through which materials will be removed from the well.

Susan Steinberg if the presentation will be on the website, and on whether these contaminants were stirred around by Superstorm Sandy. The answer to the first question is yes, and the answer to the second question is that the area was investigated after Sandy and it was found that nothing was significantly changed (because while hurricanes like Sandy do damage on the surface, little happens well beneath the surface).

Susan also asked why there is so much concern about contamination even though it is so far underground. The answer is because the contaminants are moving towards the East River.

Ann Seligman whether the wells will be checked on forever. The answer is that this will happen for the foreseeable future. It was also asked by the same person what the budget will be for this process. The answer is that they don't have the information.

Andrew Gross asked what whether there would be any impact if there were another massive flooding event on this site. The short answer is no. As for erosion along the shores of the East River, that would have an impact on any contaminants on the shores of the East River but nothing further down.

Joe Parrish expressed questions about the sorts of chemicals in the area, as well as what will happen at those wells. The answer is that the wells will be serviced for 30 years, and that the chemical he's most concerned about is not there at the site. A different set of chemicals is at the site.

Vitaly, a CB6 resident, asked how deep the wells are. The answer is that some wells are as shallow as 15 feet and others are as deep as 40-60 feet. He followed up by asking about contamination in the groundwater, and the answer is that there is already contamination in the groundwater

Ronnie White asked about whether the collection of the tar will involve a dedicated team. The answer is that this work is usually subcontracted out to a company and that it likely won't be the same people/group of people for 30 years. There was a follow up question on whether the RFP has been issued and approved. The answer is that Con Edison is working on all of this.

Agenda Item #2: Report from Police Officer Joseph Carlucci on Crime in the 13th and 17th Precincts

He says that there is nothing particularly unusual with the 17th Precinct. With the 13th Precinct, they are a little busier this time this year as compared to this time last year.

As for the spike with cell phone issues, that has died down. The scams with the elderly have also died out.

Susan Steinberg asked whether there have been crimes recently with mailbox contents being stolen. The answer is that there haven't been as many such crimes recently.

Andrew Gross expressed concerns about his discussion with someone in a CVS recently on how they felt that their robbery complaints weren't taken seriously. The reply was that many of these robbery complaints are not reported, for whatever reason. Andrew followed up by asking if more needs to be done to create a culture of reporting these robberies when they happen, and the answer is yes.

Ann Seligman asked about 28-day numbers. Those reports on 28-day numbers were given for both the 17th and the 13th Precincts.

Andrew asked about the two serious incidents in the 17th Precinct area: one was the stabbing at a bar in Turtle Bay and the other was a pizza manager beating up a kid. Matt Roberts, who is on CB6 but also is the President of the 17th Precinct Community Council, said that with the pizza manager issue, an arrest was made. It was taken as a misdemeanor assault, but when it was found that the pizza board was used as a weapon, it was upgraded to a felony but there was no indication that this should be a hate crime.

Susan Steinberg asked how neighborhood policing is going. The answer is that it hasn't come yet. The 17th Precinct is going through transition to neighborhood policing now but that hasn't happened yet for the 13th Precinct.

David Tsin asked whether there is any trend with where the more serious crimes are happening. The answer is that a lot of the concentration of the more serious crimes happens right around the train stations (like around the Union Square station, for example). There are not many complaints about Stuyvesant Town.

Ronnie White asked about National Night Out. Details on the date (August 7) and the locations were mentioned.

Andrew asked what the policy is about people doing things like drinking alcohol while on private benches that are for public use late at night (specifically talking about 46th and 3rd). The answer is that regardless of what time of day this is, it's a violation to drink alcohol in that area.

Joe Parrish asked about problematic activities happening in Stuyvesant Square Park. The reply is that some walkthroughs can be done in that area.

Ronnie White asked about the new hotspot at about 24th and Lexington Avenue. There's no lighting at night and steel construction equipment in the area. Cody also noted that there have been community complaints about the new hotel and that they are coming to the upcoming BASA meeting.

Chair's Report

Ronnie White will be sending out to all the members a new type of a health concern that has to do with audible remediation (anything that emits a vibration or audible noise). There are so many of these types of devices where the devices are cancelling themselves out and are interfering with one another. People are starting to experience illnesses because of this. She thinks it would be good to go around the district and detect hotspots for these audible issues.

Old/New Business

Andrew said that for when they come back, there's new business. He found out from the Transportation Committee that the Coast Guard will be involved with law enforcement for the NYC Ferry. With this in mind, he thinks it would be a good idea for the Coast Guard to come and give a presentation on policing the NYC Ferry.

Ann Seligman has an update on old business about bird-safe building construction and renovations. The NY State Assembly has not been focused on this bill so someone will probably come from AM Deborah Glick's office in the fall to address any questions with this bill.

David Tsin suggested that it might be interesting to hear from MTA police in the fall about policing the subways. Issues were also mentioned with incidents on the buses, and Andrew suggested that it might also be good to invite NYPD Transit to address policing on the city buses.

Ann suggested that it would be also good to invite the counterterrorism unit of the NYPD. She would like to hear what they're doing.

It was suggested that there would be a forum with various safety agencies. The idea received a favorable reception, though Andrew suggested that any forum focuses on one element of policing (examples: transportation, terrorism).

Joe Parrish reported on a meeting he was at with religious leaders regarding training for active single-shooter situations. The reply was that this active shooter training will be brought up to the committee in September for the report.

Adjournment

Ronnie White made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. The meeting was adjourned by Ronnie White at 8:13 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Brendan Birth (CB6 Staff)