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THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
211 EAST 43RD STREET, SUITE 1404
NEW YORK, NY 10017

Land Use and Water Front Committee
June 25, 2018 at 6:30PM
NYU School of Nursing, 433 1st Avenue, Room 220

Meeting Minutes

Present: Adam Hartke (Vice Chair), James Collins, Kathleen Kelly, Sandra McKee, Terrence O'Neal, Lawrence Scheyer, Ann Seligman, Lou Sepersky, Letty Simon, and Raymond Knowles

Absent: Sandro Sherrod (Chair), and Kathy Thompson

Guests: Molly Hollister (CB6 Chair), John Keller (CB6), Elaine Tau (CB6), and Claude Winfield (CB6).

Michael Nacmias Esq. (for Crunch fitness), Ben Jacobs (Council Member Keith Powers' Office), Morgan Jones (Government & Community Relations NYCEDC), Catherine Morgan, Amy Seek (Design Director at Stantec for Landscape), Shawn-Paul Macias, (Senior Project Manager, NYC-DOT), Miguel Rosales (Rosales+ Partners), Mike Bradley, Dean Stefanides, Martin Nance, Robert W. Benlinen, Olga Gobunora, Yvi McEville, Kathryn Kprybylski, Mark Hornstin, Barry F. Nedstein, John Spillane, K Bronstein, Elinor T. Fine, Lori Kupfer, Deborah Blumenthal, Ralph Blumenthal, Deborah Blumenthal, Leonard Oppenheimer Mynette Greenberg, Gary Greenberg, Fred Specha, Mary Clare Bergin, Elliot Rais, Tatyana Rais, Samuel Harrison, Malcolm Kravitz, Hame Yang, Cathe Giffuni, Michael Walov, Judith Walov, Claire Lipson, Chao-Ming Wu, Harvey Shapiro, D.M. Creadore, Richard Irwin, Muriel Feruch, Marcy Brownson, T.P. Maginnis, Alan Mauite, Patricia Grew, Marily Weinstock, Leonard Weinstock, Carol Kraus, Brian Kraus, Mary A. Susnjara, Frank Alwill, Vivain Lewis, Paul Lewis, Karl Buchberg, Patrick Cooney, Jeff Becker, Michaela Palmer, Kerry Schlanger, Lawrence Rich, Susan Olden, Rochelle Busch, Sabeto DiRoma, Ellen Imbimbo, Jim Donovan, Marjorie Posner, Bernadette Kriftcher, Helene Blank, Alex Destefano, Steven Protass, Carolyn Protass, Robert Wexler, Ginger Wexler, Jacqueline Halpern, Robert Halpern, Daniel Padnos, Michael E. Feldman, Roslyn sober, Charles A. Poekel Jr., Lynn Giordano, Charles Blum, Barry Keshaver, Ken Sandler, Michael Wellner, Maura Fitzgerald, Peter Simon, Mary Louise Guertler, Martine Kanadaks, Martha Harrington, Trevor Winans, Marie Colwell, Ron

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Spurga, Alexander Galvez, Anastasia Vournas, Peggy Willenbucher, Sara Marks, Charles Coutino, Saesha Saw, Marlwyn Treppea, Andrew Napp, Rachel Honig, Jill Bauer, S. Khan, Marisa Hasned, William Herbst, and Stuart Desser

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

Adam Hartke (Vice-Chair) called the meeting to order at 6:32PM.

Adam Hartke made the motion to adopt the agenda for this meeting and the minutes from the May 10, 2018 meeting. Ann Seligman so moved the motion and Letty Simon seconded the motions.

Committee Business

Agenda Item #1: Application by Crunch Fitness for a Special Permit for the operation of a Physical Culture Establishment located at 511 Lexington Ave. BSA Calendar Number: 2018-60-BZ.

Michael Nacmias Esq. represented and presented to the committee for the special permit to operate a gym in the cellar level of 511 Lexington Ave for 10 years. He stated he is scheduled go to the zoning board for the 10 year approval.

There will be no illuminated signage and the ADA compliant entrance will be on the side street. The business will be open Monday-Friday from 5:30AM-11PM, and from 7AM-9PM on Saturday & Sunday.

In keeping with the community board tradition of recommending physical culture establishments be granted approvals every 5 years, Lou Sepersky made the motion to amend the application request and reduce it from 10 years to 5. Ann Seligman seconded the motion. The motion was then voted on and was approved unanimously, with no objection for 5 years.

Agenda Item#2: Presentation from the NYC Economic Development Corporation on the design of the East Midtown Greenway, which would stretch along the water front from East 53rd street to 61st street. Morgan Jones, Government & Community Relations at NYCEDC stated that the index cards for meeting attendees to write down questions and contact information had not yet been passed out. The presentation that the audience will see tonight will be

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available tomorrow on the NYCEDC website. There are several nodes to the project, but the focus tonight is on the section from 61st street to 53rd street.

Amy Seek, Design Director at Stantec presented on landscape points. They are still working at points to maximize the areas for rainwater catchment. This will enable a natural water supply for the trees and planting along the esplanade. She described that bikes and pedestrians will be kept separate by the plantings and seating along the esplanade. There will also be water fountains and bike racks and an area for teaching and an outlook point The Topside is above the 100 year flood level. There will be 20 feet across for bikes and 20 feet of shared space for pedestrians and plantings. She also described that both the bike lanes and bike direction will be labeled all along the esplanade on the pavement. (The same as on the west side highway bike lane path.)

Miguel Rosales of Rosales; the architect, used various views to develop the view of the proposed bridge. Unfortunately he could not get a volunteer for 60 Sutton Place South to develop a computer generated photo of the view of the proposed entrance ramp and bridge. He is open to working with volunteers to let him work on the views so he can produce more photo illustrations for the project for the public to see. He described the materials of the entrance ramp and bridge will be as minimal as possible yet providing safety for those on the bridge and the FDR traffic below. They have chosen to go with a green structure to match the plantings and trees of the Sutton Place Park.

As they finished the presentation, the LU&WF committee Vice-Chair Adam Hartke explained that this was not a public hearing, but rather a presentation to the community board. He invited the community to come up to the microphone and to keep questions/comments to two minutes so that as many people and ideas could be heard in the 30 minutes allotted for the Question and Answer Period.

The following points and questions were heard:

- Plantings will focus on plants that will need minimal care and upkeep.
- The wide space under the 59th street bridge needs to be there for emergency situations to allow space for an ambulance to be able to turn around.

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- Presently there is no funding for 53rd street to 41st street and that was one of the reasons given that 53rd street or below could not be used for a ramp entrance to the proposed esplanade.
- The safety report for this project was completed in January 2016. David Albert of 60 Sutton Place South wanted to know why a new safety study would not be issued now that electric bikes will no longer be banned/illegal. His concern was that this safety report was only based on cyclists using pedal only bikes.
- City resident Lauren Cockfir asked why the project money couldn't be used on maintaining the up keep of the already existing areas along the esplanade that is in disrepair before they spend money on a plan that is not supported by the community. She held up poster size photos for the audience to see of the 51st street bridge in Peter Detmold Park for the meeting audience and committee to view. She also held up similarly sized photos of benches and waterfront in disrepair along the 64th street to 80th street section along the eastside waterfront. The Parks Department rep; Bradley agreed that the areas and bridge in the photo looked in need of repair. Then he directed the responsibility for maintenance of existing and future bridges to NYC DOT. Shawn-Paul Macias, Senior Project Manager, NYC-DOT introduced himself to the audience.
- Upper Eastside resident Ralph Blumenthaul asked: Has Mayor DeBlasio signed off on the placement of the proposed 54th street entrance ramp and bridge? Catherine Morgan from the NYCEDC described that the EDC commissioner Patchett speaks to the Mayor about the development of the project.
- Ming Wu of 60 Sutton Place South, wanted to know about the construction timeline and actual spaces that will be used for the construction staging. Catherine Morgan listed that construction will start in 2019 and be completed in 2022. She further described that typically construction will be done on the waterside via a barge. She said that space for worker trailers and any storage on land would be done through permits obtained from the NYC DOT. She described that the actual bridge section itself is planned to be done in two picks that would require two evenings of work. They prefer not to close Sutton Place Park during the construction, but she was unable to confirm that it would be able to stay open during construction. Morgan described that the Mayor has committed 100 million dollars in city capital to the project. The EDC is not able to enter in to construction if they do not have the entire budget for completion of the project. To date they are on

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- budget and have downsized the project several times to maintain the budget.
- Harry Shapiro of 45 Sutton Place South asked about the estimate of the volume of people that will use the entrance ramp, bridge and park. According to a NY Times article he referenced: It is estimated that number is 7,000. He stated that the park would be able to handle that number, but that the neighborhood would not. His concern was that the project is based on allowing for the United Nations section to be developed. At present he said at this meeting he has heard: there is no money for the UN section and the UN is not approving the construction. So this one entrance on 54th street will have to absorb all the traffic that will come on and off at this point that was really designed for more entry & exit points. He too wants to know how the now outdated safety report can be used when motorized bikes will be used to enter and exit the park along with pedestrians, carriages, wheelchairs and walkers.
 - Jim Donovan of 45 Sutton Place said that he has list of 900 signatories in the neighborhood that oppose the project. He wanted to know why 53rd street as a placement for the entry ramp is not an option. Architect Miguel Rosales explained that the structure and feasibility was a concern because the height out onto the water would have to be much higher.
 - A woman from 35 Sutton Place describing herself as the spouse of the former UN Bureau Chief of the NY Times explained that her husband had relayed that the UN would never allow the esplanade to go below 49th street. Michael Bradley for the NYC Parks Department described that in talks with the NYC anti-terrorism police that the esplanade extension from 41st street to 49th street would not cause a security problem because the height will be so much lower than the UN. The only issue was that it would need to be closed during the General Assembly. The immediate issue is that to date there is no money allocated for this section of the park.
 - Another point that disallows 53rd street is not that it would affect subway tunnels or blocking views on 53rd street. The other issue is that it would cause the closure of the 53rd street exit ramp on the FDR.
 - The problem with starting on 53rd street is that the elevation of Sutton Place Park is much lower so if a ramp is started there it would need to be much longer to reach the required elevation.
 - Another community resident wanted to know if there had been an open bidding process. Morgan of the EDC stated that it had been a public RFP process and that the list can be requested from the EDC.

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- Bernadette Critter of 60 Sutton Place wanted to know why 48th street was not being used for an entrance ramp when it is past the UN. She requested to see the Environmental Impact Survey. She stated it is not on the EDC website.
- Upper Eastside resident Peggy Willenbucker asked why public safety had been underplayed. She described the proposed 54th street ramp abuts a building with a parking garage. She pointed out that public safety is not listed as a goal for the EDC plan. She suggested bikes; even going slowly, will have no visibility of what will be going on in the street and sidewalk leading up to the bridge. She labeled this project as “zero vision” when the Mayor’s aim is “vision zero.” Shawn-Paul Macias of the NYC DOT agreed that the entrance crosswalks are a work-in-progress and that for the first few weeks there could be DOT ambassadors explaining to cyclists how to properly use the entrance ramp.

The 30 minutes was up, so the community was invited to continue meeting with EDC outside in the lobby or fill out an index card with the EDC with their question and contact information.

Old/Business

Vice-Chair Adam Hartke requested the committee review the 3 main points from the Fiscal Year 2019 Preliminary Register for Land Use and Waterfront.

Regarding priority number 3: The committee highlighted that the Agency Response is outdated. The actual proposal is from 60th street from 53rd street. There is no money for the project below 53rd street and the United Nations has not responded. Hartke suggested that the committee could request for walkway counters to show how many people actually use the existing walkways. Obtaining that actual data might warrant expenditures and the need for funding.

Regarding Priority Number 25: There is a scarcity of public space in CB6. Can they work on preserving public park space and not just use it for hospital or commercial space. According Comptroller Stringer’s office, the area is part of the Blueway Plan and not recognizing it as such could be a lost opportunity. The focus could be on open park space instead of just replacing broken pavers.

Regarding Priority Number 26: Possibly reviewing in the Fall, how to focus using the space on Life Science Research space and community space instead of just adding commercial space.

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Discussion regarding BSA establishment renewals: 10 Years is generally the term granted, even though the CB requests approval for 5 years. This practice started in the 1980's when the physical culture establishments had been used as fronts for massage parlors and sex trafficking.

The next topic was that the BSA committee was also not hearing about block party applications. This issue will be forwarded to the BASA committee of CB6.

Committee member Sandra McKee proposed having architecture students who have studied the RFP for Solar One present to the Land Use & Waterfront Committee. Two outstanding points the students have uncovered: the RFP lists the requirement of using storage containers for the building construction and the use of solar.

Adam Hartke volunteered to write the resolution in support of the Crunch fitness establishment renewal for 511 Lexington Ave.

Adjournment:

Adam Hartke made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Ann Seligman and passed by Adam Hartke at 8:12PM.

Minutes submitted by:

Kathleen Kelly