

Re: **Borough-Based Jails Neighborhood Advisory Committee
(NAC) Bronx - Fifth Meeting**

Date: February 5, 2019 6:00 pm

Location: BronxConnect – 432 East 149th Street, Bronx, NY

Prepared by: Rose Florian and Stephanie Brooks

Attendees:

Perkins Eastman
Architects DPC

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Name	Affiliation	
Bianca Almedina	Councilwoman Ayala's Office	
Diana Ayala	New York City Council, Councilwoman 8 th District	
Kate Connolly	East Side Settlement House	
Crystal Bisbano	Bronx Defenders	Boston
Ramona Ferreyra	Community Member	Charlotte
Princella Jamerson	Community Member	Chicago
Loretta Lipford	BronxConnect	Dallas
Darren Mack	JustLeadershipUSA	Dubai
John Johnson	Community Board #1	Guayaquil
Jose Marte	BronxConnect	Los Angeles
Carmen Pineiro	Bronx Defenders	Mumbai
Diana Rodriguez	East Side Settlement House	New York
Althea Stevens	East Side Settlement House	Pittsburgh
Alexis Weintraub	Bronx Defenders	San Francisco
Arnie Bloch	FHI	Shanghai
Stephanie Brooks	FHI	Stamford
Joshua Cortes	CAU	Toronto
Rose Florian	PE	Washington DC
Stephen Kaiser	NYC DOC	
Brian Paul	New York City Council Land Use Division	
Nick Smith	CLA	
Jordan Stockdale	MOCJ	

Joseph Thomas	CAU
Nicole Torres	MOCJ

ACTION ITEMS:

- Next NAC meeting scheduled for Tuesday March 5th.
- Walking tour around the proposed Bronx site and nearby neighborhood scheduled for February 13th.
- City requested NAC members provide additional feedback on the Bronx Draft Guidelines and Principles by Friday February 22nd.
- CAU will send updated Draft of Bronx Guidelines and Principles before the next NAC meeting.
- NAC members requested the Mayor's Office provide an update on the public communications strategy for the City's plan to close the jails on Rikers Island and replace them with a borough-based jails system.
- NAC members requested the Bronx Draft Guidelines and Principles include a mission statement that describes the purpose of the NAC.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT:

- NAC members had a positive response to the revised vision. NAC members indicated:
 - Need to be more specific and ensure the vision statement refers to individuals who are currently Mott Haven residents
 - Preference to use the word "implement" rather than "envision" to indicate the Bronx NAC's focus on affecting policy changes.

DISCUSSION OF DRAFT GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES:

- Perkins Eastman team (PE) reviewed the Bronx Draft Guidelines and Principles, based on what we have heard so far from the Bronx NAC. PE facilitated discussion on the points included under each theme. Below is a summary of the Bronx NAC discussion.

Theme 1 - Affordable Housing:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Specifying that affordable housing is needed for existing low-income Mott Haven residents.
- Concerns about potential gentrification in the future. Discussed the need for strategies to protect the interests of existing community residents and their access to any new affordable housing that gets built.
- Identifying city-owned parcels in the surrounding neighborhood, while acknowledging that not all city-owned properties would be ideal for housing development.
- Exploring housing development opportunities in existing buildings are most likely to be taken over by the City due to having a significant outstanding number of violations.
- Wanting to explore whether there is a future opportunity to develop housing on the NYPD 40th Precinct parking lot.

Theme 2 - Youth Investments:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Wanting to create a Youth Hub that provides a variety of free services for young people as well as diverse programming (i.e. arts, recreation, culture, entrepreneurship).
- Importance of identifying funding streams for youth programming and staffing.
- Inclusion of additional Cure Violence interrupters to support the Youth Hub.
- Funding and renovation of existing youth facilities should happen immediately.

Theme 3 - Transportation:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- All subway stations should have improved lighting and be ADA accessible.
- When traveling East to West in the Bronx and conversely via subway, people should not have to travel through Manhattan.
- Advocating for State investments in capital improvements.

Theme 4 - Job Opportunities:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Importance of working with community-based agencies and nonprofits.
- Demanding City contractors meet a percentage of local hiring for all projects in Mott Haven.
- Establishing a Community Benefits Agreement that ensures local hiring, including hiring formerly incarcerated individuals.
- Preventing contractors from potentially circumventing any local hiring requirements.
- Using city-owned parcels to house a cooperative model that provides entrepreneurial opportunities for local residents.
- Increasing job training programs to supplement efforts that are currently underway under NYCHA.
- Allocating funding to NYCHA developments for community integration programming.
- One Bronx NAC member raised the idea of developing a “Land Trust” model that provides grants to local community groups.
- Workforce development programs that focus on equipping local residents and formerly incarcerated individuals with the skill sets needed to compete for future Requests for Proposals (RFPs).
- Local residents should be given preference for receiving potential employment opportunities once they are trained and qualified to fill those positions. Generating a list of community members who are available within the labor pool and that list serving as a resource.

- Being mindful of organizations that already provide employment services and linking future job training and job readiness efforts with those organizations.
- Creating partnerships with the unions to offer training programs for minority-owned businesses that go beyond achieving certification and lead to gainful employment.
- Developing an online platform that tracks the implementation status of community investments, programs, and benefits modeled after existing tracking tools created by the City for rezoning projects.

Theme 5 - Community Development:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Needing to put protections in place for local (“mom and pop”) shops so that they will not get pushed out of the community by big box stores.
Such projections could include:
 - a. Providing these existing local stores with below-market and long-term leases.
 - b. Implementing strict rules ensuring that if any local business leaves the community, it is replaced by another local business.
- Discussed new leases of space having a “social entrepreneurship” component that require businesses to give back to the community in the form of food sharing, discounts, lines of credit, etc.

Theme 6 - Service Providers:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Service providers who are committed to serving the Mott Haven community need a permanent on-site designated office space within the proposed facility.
- When determining which service vendors to provide on-site access within the proposed facility, we need to engage with local organizations that have an established record of success.

Theme 7 - Healthy Food Access:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Partnering with existing successful entities that work on this issue and helping them expand to serve the community.
- Using language like “no food deserts,” and “healthy food options” in the Guidelines and Principles.
- Stores offering the community demonstrations on healthy eating. New healthy food retailers should have cooking demonstrations for the residents as well as a “community kitchen” similar to Williams Sonoma.
- Concern about Mott Haven residents having to pay high prices for seasonal produce. Stores and markets should offer seasonal lowest rates on their fresh produce. Affordable leases can prevent supermarket owners from increasing their prices.
- Encouraging stores like Trader Joe’s and Stew Leonard’s to open a new location in Mott Haven, which could be at the potential affordable housing site adjacent to the proposed facility. Concern about how to attract these businesses to a desolate area like Mott Haven.

Theme 8 - Quality of Life:

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Importance of considering new green spaces outside the proposed facility, such as a “green curtain” on the Bruckner Expressway, and finding ways to add more trees to absorb air pollution in Mott Haven.
- Some Bronx NAC members expressed wanting an increased number of surveillance cameras outside the proposed facility. Other NAC members were not in favor of adding more surveillance cameras and preferred increasing outdoor lighting around the proposed facility and improving public safety through architectural design.
- Community gardens and how gentrification tends to take over existing community gardens and green spaces get co-opted. Focusing on green spaces with multiple uses such as edible gardens.

- Public education about waste handling, including composting, recycling, no plastic bags, no black bags without steel casing, etc. is needed.

Theme 9 - Closure of the Barge

The Bronx NAC discussed:

- Calling for future planning of the Barge to be handed over to the Mott Haven community being affected by the proposed jail. Importance of community leaders serving as policy makers, not advisors.
- Giving to Barge location back to the community as a green space, etc.

NAC'S DISCUSSION OF CULTURE CHANGE EFFORTS UNDERWAY AT DOC:

- The New York City Department of Correction (DOC) provided information requested during the fourth NAC meeting. Specifically, NAC members requested a representative from DOC attend the next meeting to discuss DOC's current culture change efforts (i.e. DOC's 14-Point Plan).
- Generally, the Bronx NAC members indicated they were glad a representative from DOC attended the NAC meeting talk about real culture change. Creating a new jail means nothing if the culture within the jail does not change.
- Bronx NAC members said DOC's 14-Point Plan sounds great, but explained that showing data to support that demonstrates a change in how people in detention are treated would be more compelling.
- NAC members urged DOC to issue a revised and updated 14-Point Reform Agenda. They also encouraged DOC to hire more social workers and provide more mental health support services.
- Bronx NAC members expressed they believe DOC focuses on the violence committed by people in detention. DOC does not acknowledge enough the violence that DOC officers commit against people in detention, which they described as de-humanizing.
- Bronx NAC members indicated they want the City to provide a free shuttle bus that travels from the Bronx to Rikers Island to help individuals seeking to visit people in detention.