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June 11, 2013

## BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 1 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS

### FISCAL YEAR 2015

Pursuant to the requirements of the New York City Charter, Brooklyn Community Board No. 1 (Greenpoint/Williamsburg) submits its Statement of Community District Needs for the upcoming year. It is our hope that the items identified in this document will be given priority consideration by the City of New York in order to further enhance the development of a cooperative planning process and insure an improvement in the quality of life for all of our residents.

### OVERVIEW

The wave of 2009 (a Tsunami) continues to impact our community.

Not just a wave of destruction, but multiple waves of construction.

The flood waters have not receded.

Many construction worksites are now stalled or abandoned.

The undertow of these thunderous waves continues to negatively impact the lives of the residents of Greenpoint-Williamsburg and will effect generations to come.

This tide of grief has already created a climate of highly inflated rents, denied lease renewals to both residential and commercial tenants, and a forced exodus of longtime commercial tenants into less desirable areas and even out of state. Now, complicating the equation even more, we are faced with distressed and abandoned work sites and condo prices which are out of touch with today's market.

And the erosion of the existing community has not stopped there!

Like the construction of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway in the 1940's which split communities and demolished the Mt. Carmel Cathedral (for the so called betterment of the transportation network) this wave destroys dreams for the homesteaders, the poor and middle/working class of this community – the people who chose to stay, when it was not trendy or chic.

**Without a guarantee of affordability they have been forgotten.**

And as the flood waters persist to move inland, the distillates of the 2005 Rezoning (notably opposed by CB #1) continue to swoop down upon our small stable communities and create havoc by demolishing our quaint existing structures, building upward (with units not affordable for our community) and straining our limited services and already overburdened antiquated infrastructure. The 2005 rezoning continues to be a "gift that keeps on giving" — we are now facing pending construction of tower type "as of right" developments in Greenpoint (City Landing/Commercial Street) and in Williamsburg (the former Domino site). The following projects are looming this year:

- Greenpoint Landing Project - Park Tower is proposing 4.2 million square feet of mixed-use development on a 22 acre waterfront site in Greenpoint. The City has been working with the developer on the plan, which includes the disposition of city-owned property.
- 77 Commercial/65 Commercial Street Development Rights - Clipper Equities is proposing a residential project on the 77 Commercial Street site and will be seeking a special permit to accommodate the additional square footage it is purchasing from the 65 Commercial Street site.
- The former Domino site - Is to be developed by the new owners, Two Trees Management LLC. The developer has indicated that the current plan envisions a total of about 3.1 million square feet of development that will include approximately 2.3 million square feet of residential; 550,000 square feet of commercial space for small businesses; 228,000 square feet of public open space; 130,000 square feet of community facility space; 72,000 square feet of retail and 220,000 square feet of parking. The residential component will include an estimated 2,284 housing units, 660 of which are planned to be made affordable.

Regarding the Newtown Barge and Box Street Parks, to ensure a seamless waterfront plan, it's important that we start to develop the design on the park sites that are adjacent to 77 Commercial and Greenpoint Landing. NYC EDC released in April 2013 an RFP for design consulting services

As you know, planning for our community and waterfront has been in our sights for the last 20 years, culminating with the NYC Council approval of our two 197A plans. This was a Herculean undertaking by our Board and was the direct result of much sacrifice and voluminous hours of dedication to our community.

The continuous infusion of people (previously approximated as 40,000 persons; and at the least 8,780 dwelling units) in our community will place even greater burdens on the already overtaxed city services addressing the needs of our community. Our community has become a tourist attraction! Plans developed by HPD to protect our constituency have been implemented covertly and piecemeal while residents are being displaced on a daily basis. HPD should work in partnership with Community Board No. 1 to develop a comprehensive plan with community input. **HPD must document this displaced population and allow all these stakeholders a preferential status when low income units are available.** Approximately three years after the approval of the Waterfront Plan, **459 units (at Palmer's Dock, Williamsburg Edge) of affordable housing have been built** in the plan area and the devastation caused by upland development has had an irreversible effect on the entire district. **By the time the trickle down effect of affordable units come on line, the community will have been resettled by new faces from other areas and the displaced residents a mere memory.** Some even relocated out of the district by HPD itself!

We further note the following needs:

- A. That the City creates truly affordable housing units that are both rental and owner occupied. HPD must look outside the box and explore new concepts/options for funding including the use of Section 8 funds for home ownership. We remain highly concerned about the drought of Section 8 funds for home ownership. We remain highly concerned about the drought of Section 8 funding for both NYCHA and HPD agencies, and the loss of the Advantage Program assisting homeless families.
- B. Anti-Harassment and Displacement assistance services need to be restored and continue to be funded in the CB#1 District.
- C. HPD must re-enact services to residents of the district with a Neighborhood Services field office located within the CB#1's confines. The agency never relocated in the District. Forcing constituents to make the trek out of district to Joralemon Street – then closing the downtown office altogether.
- D. Affordable housing is out of reach for local residents because of income guidelines that do not reflect our constituency. The income requirements and rent guidelines need to be reformulated to reflect our area's AMI for affordability.
- E. McCarren Park Pool – construction of this facility is now complete after having the facility laid dormant and derelict since 1981. (The reconstructed facility brings to fruition the agreed upon concept for a multi-purpose facility which includes an Olympic size pool). Construction on this project began Spring 2010 and is now complete. The pool is open and funds must continue to be allocated to operate and maintain the facility year round.
- F. Greenpoint and Williamsburg need more green space and parks staffing, including maintenance of the little precious park land that we have.
- G. Educational needs for District 14 Master Planning Effort (evaluation of services).
- H. MTA Needs Assessment of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Area (evaluation of services).
- I. We need to have no more closures of firehouses! A firehouse is greatly needed to serve the Northside and Waterfront community as a result of a closure of Engine 212 in 2003. There must be no additional closures or reduction in manning.
- J. Need for a hospital or emergency facility within the confines of Community District #1 area – none exists now!
- K. Need for increased space at the 94<sup>th</sup> precinct.
- L. Need for modernized services at the Greenpoint Station and Williamsburg Station (US Postal Service) – services are obsolete at these stations.
- M. Need to alleviate overcrowding of the train service – especially the Bedford Avenue “L” Station, and stop the continued cuts in service at the “G” train.
- N. The newly created bus service along our waterfront (Kent Avenue and Franklin Street) must be evaluated for any needed enhancements. This service is to be fully funded for expansion and ease of transportation to Manhattan. Other modes of transportation, including larger capacity ferry water service, should be continuously explored.

Existing commercial activities have also been put at risk, while landowners are certainly attracted to higher rents and dividing rental units into more profitable ventures, businesses are crying out for safe havens to conduct their business with a degree of stability and the opportunity to expand. Existing jobs must be retained in the community and the Administration must accommodate these industries that chose to stay when many others left! These employment opportunities must be protected. Local employment strategies are the foundation of our success.

We will address additional needs in this document as we read on.

However, we would be remiss if we did not recall the City's own standards regarding open and green space. The citywide average for open and green space is 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Community District 1 ranks near the bottom of the list in terms of open space per capita, with 0.6 acres per 1,000 residents.

With the increase of population expected from the rezoning (25%) the new ratio (0.7) would still fall far below what the New York City Department of City Planning has as its own guideline (2.5 acres).

We therefore urge you to adopt these recommendations of Community Board No. 1.

We now present the specific components of this **Statement of Community Needs:**

## **HOUSING**

Affordable housing in Community Board No. 1 is a top priority that must be addressed as a critical need. If our neighborhoods are to remain viable and attract/retain jobs and a stable work force, an adequate supply of decent and affordable housing must be available at various income levels.

Community Board No. 1 generally supports the policies articulated by the City, that provides an unprecedented portion of City Capital Budget funding for housing in a manner that gives increased priority to the development of low and moderate income housing. As we have stated in previous years, three general principles must be incorporated into any equitable comprehensive housing plan:

**FIRST**, those currently funded housing programs that have proven successful must be held harmless from the reduction in past federal assistance, even if an increased City Tax Levy contribution is required to achieve this end.

**SECOND**, in allocating additional housing funds between the poor and middle class economic segments of our society, it is essential that the first priority be assigned to the poorest segment of our population, those who must bear the brunt of the housing crisis. However, we strongly support the need for affordable housing (both rental and home ownership) for all economic groups.

**THIRD**, any additional housing funds must be allocated in a fair and equitable manner that responds to the most critical housing needs of each Community District, with a clear and largely advertised marketing throughout the district.

We will now apply these principals to the major housing concerns of Greenpoint and Williamsburg:

While we were extremely encouraged by the Administration's "Points of Agreement" with the NYC Council and its consideration of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg zoning and related ULURP actions, several points were noted in this document, including affordable housing, which the Administration agreed to significantly increase through a variety of mechanisms including inclusionary zoning, financial and tax incentives. In addition to increasing the number of affordable units in the district, the Administration agreed to anti-harassment provisions to be provided separately, as part of a follow-up corrective action. The lack of progress on the many

areas outlined in the Agreement shows a violation of the spirit of this document. This anti-harassment initiative should be delivered on a community grassroots level, through a Northside group with a significant track record of achievement. However, we have learned that not all of the groups funded for this endeavor are solely located in the affected geographic area. The ill-fated plans to create a Greenpoint-Williamsburg Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Fund of up to \$10 million, to be managed by HPD, using proceeds received from the sale of air rights from the MTA site on Commercial Street in Greenpoint never happened and there remains a void in a successful formula for ensuring affordability rights and protection for our constituency. A Greenpoint-Williamsburg Tenant Legal Fund (\$2 million) was established and those funds were quickly exhausted. The fund primarily served to protect existing tenants from unfair displacement and harassment. Harassment and displacement continues unmitigated. We are in dire need of funding for these non-profit groups to champion the rights of our residents and to monitor adherence to the City's requirements of affordability.

We remain disappointed with the Deputy Mayor's established Greenpoint-Williamsburg Community Advisory Board. The appointment Advisory Board is charged with monitoring adherence to these points of agreement, including but not limited to, the development of affordable housing units, the development of open space, the implementation of industrial preservation and the periodic review of social infrastructure needs and mitigations in the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Community. We are discouraged by the slow implementation of the points and several members of the CAB have expressed their concerns over a lack of faith on the part of the Mayor. While we recognize that their agenda is lengthy their endeavors lack fruition and fall short on community participation. They have failed to engage the community in a meaningful way.

We demand that the Williamsburg Urban Renewal Area Cross Subsidy Fund (\$2,984,000) be democratically administered and dedicated to the maintenance of the balanced development of this community. HPD must be innovative in the distribution of these severely stagnant funds. **We have made this statement for decades now and the Administration has not responded! This fund has been stagnant since the 1980's.** Perhaps these dollars should be used to purchase the Pfizer Pharmaceutical property and develop badly needed affordable housing on this site. Failure of the Administration to attain the Pfizer properties will go down in history as this Administration's "blunder", a missed opportunity to directly provide much needed affordable housing to a community in dire need of relief!

All efforts must be made to implement those previously proposed projects that have yet to be funded. It is essential that the City realizes the need for low income rental housing/ownership and provide the much needed funds that will help compensate for the past tragic loss of Federal housing subsidies. The inclusion of such programs by the Mayor, an overall comprehensive housing program, is an absolute necessity for our district. Homeownership in low-income communities is seriously weak. In other areas of the country, the Section 8 subsidy is utilized for home purchasing. We urge that a similar pilot program be brought to NYC, and that Greenpoint and Williamsburg is considered for inclusion.

We have seen the erosion of industrial businesses in the community, even from within the designated areas created by the rezoning to attract these enterprises.

It is understood that several developers have already proclaimed their desire to build "affordable housing", however, affordable by AMI is not necessarily affordable to our constituency; **these residents who have vested sweat equity in our district and colonized this community when others chose to stay away must not be forgotten.**

Affordable housing must be constructed "on site" at the waterfront and not scattered into less desirable pockets of the district.

Community Board No. 1 asks that the City revisit Greenpoint Hospital and reconsider the RFP submitted by our local nonprofit, and that in the future, that the City would give priority to the local nonprofits submitting RFPs. We support GREC's plans for the development of the site.

### **PUBLIC HOUSING**

The District contains nine housing developments with 6,656 dwelling units administered by the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA). These represent an extremely valuable low income housing resource. Additional City Tax Levy revenues must again be allocated to compensate for federal budget cutbacks, and provide for the best possible maintenance of these facilities. We continue to support the needed renovations to these various developments (i.e. the majority of the Williamsburg Houses storefronts remain vacant and in severe disrepair. These derelict units should be converted to badly needed affordable housing units to serve our constituents.)

Community Board No. 1 continues to oppose the NYCHA's plan to meet their budgetary requirements by implementing drastic increases to fees for service, maintenance and rent for the low income tenants of public housing developments. We stand with the Cooper Park tenants in opposing NYCHA's proposal to discontinue a building's parking lot as a site for new housing, a deliverable from the Greenpoint Williamsburg Zoning Agreement to develop 130 units of "affordable" housing on a resident parking lot within Cooper Park Houses. This "dartboard" style, siting of affordable housing, is dangerous and provides additional stress on already overburdened sections of the district.

The Resident Council has stated that "It is our desire to request on behalf of our residents a decision to support the proposed development of 130 units of affordable permanent housing. However, as an alternate site to the resident parking lot, we are requesting that a new site be considered. A portion of the Frost Playground, located on Frost Street, between Kingsland and Morgan Avenues is a more suitable site for the proposed housing. We are asking for support of Community Board #1 in developing the much needed housing at this alternate location." \* NYCHA should consult with the Cooper Park Resident Council Inc. in soliciting NYCHA's concept. \* *Communicated in written correspondence sent to Community Board No. 1 from Ms. Diane Jackson, President, Cooper Park Resident Council Inc., dated June 16, 2010.*

### **SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING**

We note that there is a great need for housing of the elderly and an increasing senior citizen population in Community Board No. 1 (over 20,000) remains of paramount concern. In the past, we have been successful in obtaining Section 202 (federal) funding for various senior housing developments in the district: Jennings Hall, Monsignor Vetro Houses, Metropolitan Houses, Monsignor Jarka Hall, Los Sures Senior Citizens Development, Dupont Street Mary D'Angelis Senior Housing) and Huron Street Senior Housing. We urge that similar efforts continue in Greenpoint/Williamsburg, with additional Section 202 sites submitted by private and City sources and evaluated by Community Board No. 1 prior to being recommended to the City. Where there is a shortage of senior citizen, assisted living housing and nursing homes (**a nursing home was targeted for construction at the former Greenpoint Hospital campus**) in the district, we hope that the City will develop this targeted housing as promised by a previous administration.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

With the infestation of new construction throughout the entire district we need a commitment from the City for the monitoring of construction safety and abatement of construction-related nuisances(s). We also need increased enforcement of environmental related issues to ensure that new residential sites (conversions) are safe for habitation.

Demolition often poses additional threats to older and existing adjacent structures. This explosion of new construction in our district has resulted in a rise of adjacent property damage complaints at these sites, as well as building collapses. We applaud the Department of Buildings establishment of a new unit to monitor construction sites; however this unit just deals with excavation/foundations. We are pleased with the establishment of a new "Construction Task Force" under the Department of Buildings that would double check certification for construction plans and also double check individual sites for compliance and adherence. The Department of Buildings must continue to address safety issues and proper attention made to adjacent properties to provide protection and relief.

The Department of Buildings must continue to inventory stalled construction sites and monitor them for any issues that would negatively impact the community (homeless encampments, standing water – mosquito infestation/West Nile Virus prevention, illegal dumping, trespassing, arson).

Community Board No. 1 was pleased to learn that there is movement at the State level to strengthen regulations over construction projects as both Greenpoint and Williamsburg have been greatly impacted by the booming number of construction jobs happening in New York City. Our Board had to be the first one to point out problems with a job, often for nonconformance to either plans, zoning or just plain sound construction practices. Adjacent homeowners frequently reported that their foundations were being undermined by work next to them because the contractor failed to simply do required underpinning.

A package of legislation was introduced (2009) into the NYS Assembly to address shortcomings in the Department of Buildings' (DOB's) regulation of construction and development in NYC. The legislative package included seven cohesive bills. One bill (A04770A, currently in the Codes Committee) called "The Department of Buildings Community Accountability Act" will in particular provide a greater voice and access for community boards to the Department of Buildings. It directs DOB to notify community boards and borough presidents of all construction permits and DOB actions in the district and to issue public reports on all construction accidents, property damage and dangerous conditions. It also prohibits DOB from issuing certificates occupancy until all adjudicated fines are paid; and it gives community boards the right to thirty (30) DOB audits a year and to copies of any plans on file at the DOB. This type of mandated direct access provides additional teeth for our board as we will be able to have a better picture of what a particular job entails and what problems exist. The Board's ability to access information will go beyond just a few lines listed in a computer database. Plans would be more readily obtainable.

The Loft Law Expansion, passed in June 2010, was designed to bring loft buildings up to residential safety and fire codes while giving rights and protections to the tenants who inhabited them. The bill was introduced as an extension of the original 1982 law. Overseen by the Loft Board, the city's agency charged with implementing the law, Loft Law coverage means that landlords must adhere to the rules and guidelines set forth by the Loft Board to bring the space up to code while only raising the rent when landlords reach certain benchmarks. After a certain number of rent increases, the loft's rent will become stabilized. In an attempt to rectify some loft

law stipulations a bill was introduced to clean up certain provisions of the Loft Law and expand coverage.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING**

Adequate police protection is a basic public right, and we urge the Community Board No. 1's two local precincts – the 90<sup>th</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> – receive their fair share of any additional police staffing.

Community Board #1 is experiencing a renaissance. Current population statistics topple over census figures as new faces fill our streets as we become the trendy place to live; even more to visit. New residences are constructed or lofts are converted, new entertainment venues are being developed. While we are enjoying this popularity, it comes with a cost.

Our two police precincts, the 90<sup>th</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup>, continue to be severely overburdened with addressing the many quality of life issues that arise with the many different lifestyles of our new and existing populations. For example, Bedford Avenue (between Metropolitan Avenue and North 12<sup>th</sup> Street; North 6<sup>th</sup> Street between Bedford and Kent Avenue) has become a Mecca for bars, eateries – and on the whole – a new venue for nightlife in Williamsburg. Policing is a necessary ingredient for this venue to be successful, not only for the City as a tax revenue base, but being able to weave this trend into an existing community. Likewise, the introduction of clubs, bars and galleries in Greenpoint has also created a greater enforcement need – constituents are walking the streets at later hours whereas past trends of earlier bedtimes drew less police action. In lieu of this ever-changing scenario Community Board No. 1 seeks immediate action in the assignment of additional police officers to the 90<sup>th</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> Police Precincts.

In addition, the growth in the residential and commercial population has brought a great deal more vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic to the district. We would greatly benefit from more traffic enforcement agents, particularly along our busiest and increasingly dangerous corridors: Graham Avenue, Flushing Avenue, Metropolitan Avenue, Bedford Avenue, and Manhattan Avenue. Since the implementation of a cycling network in our district, we are compelled to respond to increased complaints by residents that cyclists are not adhering to rules of safety. We call upon the Administration to begin a program of identification license plates for bicycles. Revenues attained by the plating of bicycles can be used to implement additional safety measures to protect cyclist, pedestrians and motorists. We believe that the implementation of the BikeShare program will warrant the need for police personnel to be dedicated for bicycles safety enforcement.

We continue to support the installation of surveillance cameras within the City's subway stations. The cameras have aided the police in deterring crime and apprehending criminals. We support requests made by our local precinct(s) commanders to install these cameras, monitored by NYPD personnel, in our district's stations (G, L, M/J lines).

This should result in the assignment of adequate police officers to each facility to maintain the recently reduced crime rate and maintain around the clock coverage of all police sectors in each precinct. In addition, it is essential that the number of police officers assigned to the eight NYC Housing Authority developments located in Community Board No. 1 be significantly increased, whereas Cooper Park was turned over to the 94<sup>th</sup> Precinct. This should be duplicated throughout Community District #1 area. Turning NYCHA sites over to their respective precincts for a more local policing strategy is the right thing to do!



## **ADULT ESTABLISHMENT ZONING, LIQUOR AND CABARET LICENSES**

In 1995 Community Board No. 1 opposed the City's efforts to regulate and restrict the operation and conduct of Adult Establishments by allocating them to exist only in manufacturing districts. This change in zoning allows for an unfair share of these establishments to have the ability to relocate to communities, such as Greenpoint and Williamsburg that possess large manufacturing areas. We seek the City to progress a strategy addressing this issue to prevent such establishments from opening in a newly developed area.

There has been a continued landslide in the number of applications made to the NY State Liquor Authority for locations in CB #1. The Board is highly concerned about the proliferation and concentration of bars in the district. As its role is only one of advisory capacity, CB #1 urges the Police Department, the Department of Consumer Affairs and the State Liquor Authority to aggressively examine these locations prior to granting or renewing any licenses, and urges that both the 500-foot hearing and 200-foot rulings be used to ascertain an establishment's appropriateness. It appears that the SLA uses this permitting process as a fundraising effort for the State and takes little interest in the cumulative effort of these drinking establishments on communities. There has been an increase of applications for liquor licenses. The community board's Executive Committee and Public Safety Committee met jointly to review protocols and procedures for the granting of liquor licenses within the district and developing restrictions. The new protocols and procedures were adopted by the full board. We were pleased that the City Council sought with legislation to step up enforcement by requiring stricter hiring regulations and background criminal checks for employees hired as bouncers at clubs and bars. We remain concerned about outdoor uses and noise complaints (i.e. patios, rooftops, backyard gardens) and urge that the City Council reintroduce legislation that would provide restrictions for such uses. We are also concerned about the proposed shortened review period for sidewalk cafes as well as the extended time for sidewalk cafes to open on Sundays. Shortening of the review period will present problems for community boards to complete their process and provide comments. The extended hours for sidewalk cafes to allow an earlier time to operate on Sundays will conflict with the SLA's regulations restricting establishments to not serve alcohol before 12 o'clock (noon).

Furthermore, Community Board No. 1 pre-warned the Administration that the "Smoking Ban" would project bar-goers into the streets and near yards of communities to smoke and that must be addressed in any legislation. Unfortunately, we were right and we continue to receive voluminous complaints about bar patrons outside bars smoking and sidewalks riddled with cigarette and cigar butts. This quality of life concern must now be addressed by the Administration.

## **ANTI-DRUG TASK FORCE**

We note the valuable contribution of the anti-drug SNEU (Street Narcotic Enforcement Unit, housed at the 90<sup>th</sup> Precinct). We urge continued efforts by the NYPD to deter illegal drug dealing in our community and reduce crime.

## **FOOT PATROL**

The foot patrolman is a valuable public safety resource and more personnel must be put on patrol to increase efficiency and address quality of life type complaints. We strongly support the efforts by NYPD and urge that the resources be increased for foot patrol at the various NYCHA developments in the District under the auspices of the local precinct.

## ANTI-ARSON PROGRAMS

Community Board No. 1 unfortunately, had the distinction of being in the top three of the community districts with the highest suspicious fire rates (88 in 2006). For 2012, the Fire Department's statistics for CB #1 show that there were: 1 civilian fire fatality; 4,537 medical emergencies (fire unit only); 4,977 non-fire and nonmedical emergencies, 456 nonstructural fires and 543 structural fires (total incidents 10,783 – third highest in the borough). For 2012 CB #1 had 42 suspicious fires (ranking it seventh in the borough). The devastating 10+ alarm fire in 2006 the Greenpoint Terminal Market (remarked as rivaling the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center) shows too dramatically the need for fire protection and the full complement needed to investigate and solve suspicious fires. We must not forget that a large percentage of housing stock was lost in our communities during the arson ravages of the 1970's. It was only through prevention, education, investigation and the bringing to justice those persons criminally responsible, that the spread of fire damage was stemmed. We continue to rank within the top five community boards in terms of total incidents. As long as this intolerable situation continues to exist, it is essential that a team of Fire Marshals be specifically assigned to serve Community Board No. 1 on a full time basis.

We are concerned that the consolidation, re-deployment and continuing attrition of Fire Marshal personnel has greatly decreased the efficiency of this unit and its ability to effectively perform its role (today, there are only 80 Fire Marshals and 19 Supervisors for the entire City of NY. In 2002 the FDNY had four Marshal Bases (one in each Borough, except Staten Island). Today there is just one Fire Marshal Base in the entire City!)

We seek the Red Cap Program (called this because its 50 Fire Marshals wore red caps to make their presence known in the neighborhood) to be reinstituted. These "Red Caps" worked in two-person teams around the clock responding to every fire. The advantage of the Red Cap is that investigators are on the scene immediately, not waiting to be notified that a blaze was suspicious. Teams of Marshals and Police Detectives worked to investigate arson-related fires and to prosecute the criminals that started them.

## FDNY/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

We continue to be in "shock and awe" with the Mayor's decision to close Engine Company 212 that we are compelled to once again reiterate our extreme and vehement opposition to any Fire Station closings. The future of our community depends on this essential service. We are pleased that 136 Wythe Avenue was awarded to two local community based organizations, People's Firehouse and Neighbors Allied for Good Growth (NAG). Both are prominent in the Northside and will develop the site. The Board played a vital role in seeing this through to fruition. Our support of the award in no way implies a complacency with no firehouse in its stead. We need a ladder company and hazmat unit here. The growth of the area commands a large more state of the art facility. We oppose any plan by the Administration to close any more units!

With the closing of St. Catherine's Hospital in 1964 and the Greenpoint Hospital shutdown in 1982, **the Greenpoint/Williamsburg community remains void of any hospital facility within its confines.** Although vibrant and expanding, the communities of Greenpoint/Williamsburg continue to have an older population (and a rising young one) and thus rely on the Fire services, EMS, Engine Companies with defibrillators to be the "1<sup>st</sup> Responders" when needed. For the period of January – May 2013, our fire companies responded to 3,825 emergencies as "Certified First Responders-Defibrillators" in Community Board No. 1. The ranking for our district is the third highest in Brooklyn with Emergency Medical responses. The

total number for Nonfire and Nonmedical Emergencies for this year to date is 2,250 noting our district as the one of the highest in Brooklyn with these responses. There were 260 responses to structural fires and 218 nonstructural fire responses (a total of 478 fires).

As a community in renaissance we have seen a rise in population since during the year 2010 census. We believe that this figure is far short of the actual increase (the notable growing population includes many new families with young children, and there is a boom in the restaurant/bar type businesses with many patrons attracted from both inside and outside the community). In fact, Mayor Bloomberg acknowledges the City's increasing population in his PlaNYC which addresses the challenges facing the city. By 2010 it states that NY will have added a population the size of Salt Lake City and in the year 2030 Brooklyn's population is to increase by 11.4%.

An increased risk of fire is connected with restaurant operations, as well as possible food/choking hazard emergencies. Many of these restaurants are located on the first floor of wood frame buildings that have residential units above them. We remain concerned about the lack of fire and emergency medical service coverage in this section of our district.

The exodus of the commercial use to that of residential is extremely problematic mainly as well because most – if not all – of the properties are wood beam construction with an extreme potential for fire.

Additional projects already completed or those that are in the works which create further housing units includes the: HPD – Schaefer Brewery Site: 350 units; Domsey Site: 540 units; Kedem Winery: 450 units. The former Domino Sugar site (11 acres) at our waterfront's edge promised development by the Community Preservation Corporation: 2,200 units remain dormant. The Community Preservation Corporation has sold the property to Two Trees Management. We look forward to a dialogue toward developing the site as a major source of affordable housing (CPC had indicated that they would develop 660 of these units). The refinery building has received landmark status and development for this building is to be carefully considered with preservation. However, this project has not moved quick enough to address our pressing need for affordable housing. We remain concerned that the developer can retool this property for other uses. Pending variance requests currently under review, if approved, will create additional housing units. This is just a preliminary compilation of how the population and land use is changing on a daily basis in our area, especially with the recent rezoning. The rezoning of the Greenpoint/Williamsburg waterfront and specific inland areas will most certainly create a catalyst for what will most likely result in extremely ambitious housing projections for our waterfront and other areas in the district. To address out of scale development, CB #1 has supported the Department of City Planning's proposal for contextual zoning in Greenpoint and Williamsburg.

The NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development submitted an application to the Department of City Planning seeking a rezoning in the Broadway Triangle area. Community Board No. 1 held a public hearing on June 9, 2009 regarding the application and the ULURP Committee reviewed it at a meeting held later in the month to formulate a recommendation. At its regular board meeting held July 14, 2009, the members of Community Board No. 1 voted to support the application with modifications. We continue to support affordable housing and open space for the Broadway Triangle area.

How did we close a firehouse on the heels of a major rezoning plan that reportedly will create several thousand additional housing units to an already overburdened area? **Surely someone in the Administration advising the Mayor did not do the math!**

We applaud the Fire Department's efforts to attempt to bring better service via the concept of housing EMT bases strategically located in the community. A location was identified and secured within Community Board No. 1(332 Metropolitan Avenue). After several delays this facility's construction is nearing completion and we await its opening. The FDNY has made little attempt if any, to site a location to serve the northern portion of Greenpoint. **We hereby call upon the Administration to address the community's need for ready ambulance services.**

The FDNY in recent years collaborated with the DOT (in Staten Island) on addressing speed bump concerns. The increase in these barriers caused many FDNY personnel and residents to worry that there may be considerable increases in response times for ambulances and fire apparatus. The initial study proved that these mounds yield an increase in response time. DOT routinely seeks our Board to support request for speed bumps. We therefore, must oppose any such requests until a proper study is conducted demonstrating the safety of this alleged speeding deterrent. We request that further study be done specifically in our district to evaluate these areas of concern.

## **PARKS & RECREATION**

### **INCREASE STAFFING**

The over 91 acres of parkland situated in Community Board No. 1 represent an extremely valuable resource, the potential of which, however, remains to be realized due to the continued erosion of Park Department staff. Clearly, 21 "real" (1 manager, 4 supervisors, 16 full time workers) maintenance workers cannot begin to supply even minimal coverage of our heavily utilized parks, and underscore the need to provide for the proper maintenance of these facilities. We currently have only 1 slot for workers (playground associates) who provide recreational services for youths and administer programs in the district. This playground associate is located in only one of our many playgrounds – totally insufficient to fully serve Community Board No. 1's district. According to the 2010 census, our District contains over 51,600 residents who are 19 years of age or less, and hosts a heavily used regional park (McCarren Park). We have found that the number of children in the district is steadily increasing as can be seen with the corresponding increases of public and private school enrolled pupils (kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade). A minimum of 5 more supervisory staff positions and 30 employee staff positions are badly needed. Specifically, additional maintenance staff must be assigned to the following facilities: McCarren Park, Cooper Park, Sternberg Park (Lindsay Park), Sgt. Dougherty), P.S. 84 Playground, Martinez Playground, La Guardia Playground, Bushwick Houses Pool. Beyond this, it is essential that adequate recreation staffing is assigned to Metropolitan Pool and such major facilities as McCarren, McGolrick and Sternberg Parks. Finally, firm commitments to secure adequate, year round, recreation, security and medical first aid staffing at McCarren Pool is essential and must be made a very high department priority.

We applaud the efforts of the North Brooklyn Open Space Alliance for embracing our neighborhood parks and look forward towards a continuing partnership in improving and expanding parkland in the Greater Greenpoint-Williamsburg area.

### **MCCARREN PARK AND POOL**

Since its opening in 1938, McCarren Pool has been a valuable Summertime resource to the youth of our community, and North Brooklyn, and was imperative that its reconstruction proceeded as promptly as possible. Community Board No. 1 was pleased that a community consensus was reached in February 2001 regarding the derelict facility. We supported the feasibility plan presented by the consultant firm, Vollmer Associates, to redevelop the site to

include an Olympic size pool, a multi-purpose year round facility and an ice skating/inline skating rink. This concept has gained support from the Community and the Board's McCarren Park Pool Task Force. In June 2007, the Mayor allocated \$50 million for construction of a new pool and recreation area with retention of the bathhouses and archway. The Board supported a feasibility design strategy that was presented by the Parks Department to recommend alternate venues to accommodate the many community events enjoyed at the pool site. The pool and recreation center are now open for all to use. We are encouraged by the Parks Department's issuance of an RFP for the seasonal ice skating rink concession. Sufficient funding must be maintained to sustain our new facility for generations to come.

Most of the acreage (especially the adjacent Abate Playground) has received benefits of renovation or upgrading. These efforts have restored the majority of this park's recreational uses. In fact, these areas are now more heavily used than ever. In fact, parents of children who use the facility ("Park Moms") take an active role in the playground and make recommendations to the Parks Department for improvements.

McCarren Park is basically divided into three large parcels with different park uses. Each parcel is separated by roadways from each other. We seek the Parks Department to address the need for additional comfort station facilities as the only one available is in the existing Park Field House located in the portion with the baseball field and is always in total disrepair. The walk is too far for the children at the playground and isolated from the handball courts, running track and soccer field.

The newly illuminated soccer field, and all other permitted fields, must allow preferences for its use by bona fide Greenpoint/Williamsburg youth groups.

The action to de-map a portion of Union Avenue that lies adjacent to McCarren Park will provide additional open space for the park. Community Board No. 1 has provided support for the action with conditions that the applicants are: (1.) To address concerns about the loss of 34 parking spaces, DPR commits to providing the completed survey (to accommodate all of the parking that will be displaced by this action) prior to the end of CB#1's ULURP clock. (2.) The Parks Department is to commit in writing to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design for the long term use. (3.) OSA is to commit to in writing to involve Community Board No. 1 prior to and during the design for an interim use. (4.) The existing successful uses (including the dog run, Green Market and Green Dome Garden) are to be preserved.

### **METROPOLITAN POOL**

Met Pool now serves Community Board No. 1 in a more effective manner than ever before. The City should further support the valuable voluntary efforts of the Friends of Met Pool by assigning additional recreation staff to this facility and extending hours of operation to further meet the needs of the community. Lifeguards at the facility are needed that are conducive to the community's needs.

### **SAND PARK**

The Williamsburg Bridge reconstruction project has long been completed and we are outraged that the rehabilitation of Sand Park (the mapped park playground beneath it) has not happened. Community Board No. 1 demands the restoration of this mapped parkland to its "pre-destruction" use by the NYC Department of Transportation in reconstruction of the Williamsburg Bridge. Once this park is completed, it will serve the community with additional recreational space and begin a connection between the waterfront and the upland blocks. The

Williamsburg Waterfront 197-a plan seeks the development of a waterfront promenade circumnavigating the DOT property under the Williamsburg Bridge and providing an additional "greenway" for the community. We call upon the Mayor to intervene on our behalf and restore this park in as much as the DOT and Parks have continued to fail to begin a meaningful dialogue to restore this park

### **OTHER PARK PROJECTS AND GENERAL OPEN SPACE COMMENTS**

The Board continues to seek the City's funding of renovations for the various playgrounds. In our view, the upgrading of these deteriorated recreation areas constitutes a major need.

We reinforce our past support for those additional park reconstruction projects: Greenpoint Playground, La Guardia Playground, Classon Playground, any additional projects in the inception stage. The Tennis Courts at McCarren Park are heavily utilized during the warmer season. As dusk approaches, play is made easier by the cool of the evening. Players have requested that lighting be placed in the park to allow practice and matches to continue into later hours. The courts were in need of immediate resurfacing and users of the park formed a volunteer group to pursue the effort. The courts were resurfaced using funds raised. The Parks Department should continue to explore and solicit the community's preference for the doming of the tennis courts to allow for winter time play. The Parks Department has issued an RFP for "doming" in the tennis courts. Community Board No. 1 supports the issuance of the RFP and urged that the RFP that contains year round lighting of the tennis courts be given special consideration. We are pleased to learn that this project is moving forward.

The Parks Department should also explore having a food vending concession in McCarren Park's field house with the caveat that the restroom/comfort facilities remain open and maintained by the concessionaire.

Community Board No. 1 continues to support the valuable work that volunteers do to help our neighborhood parks and we hope that the Parks Department will increase their efforts in this area. Efforts to instill pride about our parks are applauded. We look forward to the Parks Department efforts to display historical markers and educational plaques in the District's inventory.

In order to better address public safety, lighting in each of the Board's parks needs to be evaluated and enhanced. Increased lighting will allow better visibility at their perimeters and interiors.

Convenient location of comfort stations is a constant request made by park users. We urge upgrading of facilities that now exist and the introduction of new ones in those parks that greatly need them. We were pleased that the Department of Environmental Protection funded a station in Greenpoint Playground. It was constructed and is now open for use. We urge the Parks Department to monitor the district's comfort facilities and keep them well maintained. In addition, we seek the completion of Bushwick Inlet Park, including the condemnations, remediation and build out of the promised 28 acre park. In regards to the 65 Commercial Street site, this is another parcel promised as park space in the 2005 Waterfront Rezoning Points of Agreement. The MTA has agreed to relocate from this site. Funds and planning must be applied to turn this site into park space.

## **EAST RIVER PARK**

A State park was designated for a portion of the former BEDT site (Kent Avenue/North 7<sup>th</sup> Street) and funded by New York State. After much delay, the park is has opened and is to be further developed. The park should remain open with regular hours for the area's residents throughout the year. We look forward to the park being further developed. Solar lighting for the park must have the necessary funds to maintain them. We are concerned about the park having any exclusive use by private entities for profit.

## **WILLIAMSBURG PARK**

We ask that with the holding of any special events and use of this new park (at the former Department of Sanitation Garage/50 Kent Avenue) as a performance venue that the sound levels be restricted so not to negatively effect the surrounding community. Police must be involved in crowd control.

## **GREENPOINT MONITOR MUSEUM**

Community Board No. 1 is pleased to learn that the NYS chartered Greenpoint Monitor Museum received donated land at the Bushwick Inlet (where the historical iron clad ship was birthed) for the construction of a museum in honor of the USS Monitor. The ship's construction here was a major event in the community's history – we support the museum's efforts to keep alive the memory of the USS Monitor. The museum seeks to retain its donated property as it will act as a catalyst for additional donations as it moves forward with founding a home at the site. The City is moving forward to develop this area around the Bushwick Inlet, from North 9<sup>th</sup> Street to Quay Street as parkland and must respect the issues raised by the Greenpoint Monitor Museum and partner to make their dream a reality.

## **RETENTION AND EXPANSION OF PARKLAND**

As the pertinent City Planning Department studies indicate, Community District No. 1 is one of the most under-served area with regard to park and recreation services. Thus, we would strongly oppose the elimination of any currently mapped parkland in our district or usage/renting of same for other than parkland/recreation unless as per current City policy, equivalent space is developed as parkland in the immediate vicinity. We also strongly support the establishment of additional parks and playgrounds within our borders.

Community Board No. 1 continues its support for the development of appropriate small parks on triangles. The Southside and South Williamsburg have few local parks, and the triangles, such as where Heyward. Wallabout and Wythe Avenue come together, should be implemented. The concrete triangle at Meeker Avenue, Morgan Avenue and Driggs Avenue should be greened. The community's request to redo this triangle continues to fall on deaf ears.

We are delighted to see that the Administration proposes the expansion of the Waterfront Park to the Bushwick Inlet and its initial phase has moved forward. This expansion proposal provides much needed recreational space for our residents and insures some greening of the waterfront (the former Sanitation Garage at 50 Kent Avenue was demolished and annexed as parkland/open space). The proposal also suggests the inclusion of a Waterfront Access Plan (WAP). While we support this concept, we most certainly want to be directly involved in the design process. The Administration should commence the condemnation procedures to demonstrate a good faith gesture to our community while carefully retaining jobs and relocating existing businesses.

## **THE GREENPOINT-WILLIAMSBURG WATERFRONT ACCESS PLAN**

The Department of City Planning proposed a Waterfront Access Plan (WAP) tailored to the specific conditions of our district's waterfront and to establish a coordinated framework for public access to the Greenpoint-Williamsburg waterfront in advance of development. This plan takes advantage of this opportunity to enlarge existing waterfront park spaces and to mandate connections to the neighborhood at important locations. In addition, the zoning text changes allow the WAP to combine public access requirements on parcels spanning multiple blocks, allowing several smaller spaces to be combined into a single, larger and more useful public access area, which is not possible under existing waterfront zoning regulations. Community Board No. 1 looks forward to the various elements of this open space network which include: existing and proposed waterfront parks (including Newtown Barge, the former NYC transmitter site, the state park/former BEDT site, street end park at end of Manhattan Avenue); mapped parkland at Bushwick Inlet; a continuous shore walkway; public access to piers; supplemental access areas; upland connections and visual corridors. As internal mechanisms continue at the Parks Department, we look toward the further development and implementation of the Parks Department's "Master Plan". Our Board endorses the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Open Space Design Guidelines and Master Plan with the caveat that the City and the Monitor Museum principals continue a meaningful dialogue and that Community Board No. 1 reserves its decision on the museum/boathouse to be sited in the Bushwick Inlet until said dialogue is conducted.

## **WNYC TRANSMITTER SITE**

We continue to look forward to of the completion of Transmitter Park. Conceptual designs that were collaboratively executed denote a passive park, recreational area, gardens, benches and lawns. The renovation of the 1930's World's Fair house was not included in the current construction plans and we urge the City to pursue this project. This site represents a portion of the Parks Department's Master Plan and should be the first stage of development for a waterfront promenade. Community Board No. 1 has learned that this work reconstructing the park is mostly completed and a RFP was issued for a concession at the site.

## **TREES**

In the Fall of 1996 Community Board No. 1 was dealt a devastating blow with the discovery of the Asian Long horned beetle found infesting many of its street and backyard trees. In an effort to contain this foreign pest which has a voracious appetite for sugar maple trees, the US Department of Agriculture and the State Department of Conservation/Forestry Division along with the New York City Park's Department studied methods employed by China for eradication. An area of infestation was identified and "quarantined", a heavy infestation was found in the heart of Greenpoint (a significant number of trees in McCarren Park fell to the beetle) spreading towards adjacent neighborhoods of Northside, Southside, Central, East and South Williamsburg.

The most effective method was to cut down infected trees and remove them. In the period of 1997 and 1998 over 1000 trees in parks, on the street and in backyard/private property had to be destroyed. This represents a large portion of the district's green canopy and efforts to replace it are a high priority for this Board. A new method of eradication, using a pesticide, is being used. We remain alarmed at the recent announcement of a new pest found in NYC, the Ash Beetle. We urge that this pest be comprehensively addressed to halt any damage that it may cause to this species of tree and that the agencies remain diligent.



The Community Board's Ad Hoc Committee on Asian Long Horned Beetle Infestation worked diligently with residents, community leaders, groups, elected officials and agencies to develop a Strategic Plan For The Re-Greening of Greenpoint & Williamsburg which was subsequently adopted by Community Board No. 1 in August 1, 1997. This plan received support of elected officials and the Mayor's Office. The plan's vision is "Greenpoint-Williamsburg will be a greener, healthier and more beautiful community" with a goal to make every street in Community Board No. 1 a "Tree Lined Street". To further preserve our greenery it is important that our parks and street trees receive the utmost attention and maintenance from horticulturist and forestry personnel.

We urge that all efforts to re-green our community be maintained and that the strategic plan be used to implement such efforts. Community Board No. 1 supports an increased allocation for street tree planting as well as funding for maintenance of this vital resource. We urge that additional programs, such as DEP's grant initiative under federal funding to do tree planting in specific areas that they have identified as recipients of heavy truck traffic (i.e. BQE corridor), be utilized to help accomplish this effort.

Community Board No. 1 seeks the Parks Department to immediately remedy hazardous problems with the multiple plantings of Bradford pear trees along Graham Avenue. These trees are notorious for having weak forks with resultant falling limbs, a condition that has been noted by the Director of Forestry, who has related that these trees have weak branch connections, and it is the most common call for limbs down across the city. Forestry no longer plants them, but uses new varieties that are less susceptible to limb breakage. Their removals of these old Bradford pear trees are necessary for the public's safety. Each removal must include immediate replacement with a more suitable and stable tree species.

## **HUMAN SERVICES**

### **YOUTH SERVICES**

More than 51,600 residents of Community Board No. 1 are 19 years of age or less, and a very high percentage of this population resides in the poorest portions of the district. Unless an effective network of youth service programs is established, many of these youths will never have a fair opportunity to succeed in life, and will instead be attracted to the alternate lifestyles of crime and drugs. In light of this, the appallingly small allocation for delinquency prevention and after school programs funded by the Department of Youth and Community Development remains a perpetual source of frustration to the Board's Youth & Education Committee.

We are also concerned with the closing of youth centers at our public housing developments. The youth center at the Cooper Park Housing development is closed in the evenings. The closings should be stopped and these centers reopened and financially supported. Not only do they provide vital recreation but are safe havens for the youths.

The Beacon program located at 850 Grand Street Campus has offered a valuable resource, but is not enough to service the approximately 51,625 youths of our district. Unless the City and State agree to substantially bolster this modest allocation, and a 100% increase is not-out-of order, its impact upon the youth of Community Board No. 1 will remain slight. We were pleased that the City expanded Beacon Programs citywide and, as a result, additional Beacon programs for our area have been made available at MS 126 and MS 50. The Beacon program at MS 126 has served as an anchor for a newly formed "Greenpoint-Williamsburg Youth Soccer League" that has over 500 youths. There is extremely limited open space to

accommodate these youngsters to play concurrent games and we urge that additional space be made available for this use.

We are concerned about the sudden increase in the number of Charter Schools being sited in the district (Community School District 14 serves the CB #1 area). Often they are being collocated in existing school buildings. We raise the question of their having a negative impact upon funding allocations for our existing public schools.

### **YOUTH EMPLOYMENT**

The Department of Youth and Community Development must increase the number of slots and continue to develop and expand local sponsorship within Community District No. 1 for the City's "Summer Youth Employment Program". It must take a more aggressive role in addressing program sponsorship in each Community Board area. We urge the City to increase its outreach within the community to obtain non-profit agency sponsors who will adequately service our youths.

### **TEEN PREGNANCY**

One of the most serious problems involving youth is adolescent pregnancy, which had reached epidemic proportions throughout North Brooklyn. We are pleased to learn that statistics in this area are starting to show a decline. It is essential that a systematic approach to this problem is continued aimed at preventing unwanted pregnancies from occurring in the first place and providing educational and social services to the teen mothers in order to prevent long term welfare dependency.

### **DAY CARE AND SENIOR CENTER SERVICES**

Community Board No. 1 is served by 30 Day Care/2,956 slots 9 Head Start/799 slots, 18 Group Day Care/2,100 slots, 2 Day Care-Voucher Sites/8 slots and 1 LPOS/49 slots and 9 Senior Centers serving an average of 1,338 daily meals. We strongly urge continued support of the City's extensive tax levy commitment to maintain day care and senior center services at least at their current levels despite devastating budget cuts, and urge that it be maintained as long as the need exists. In particular, the need for new day care centers, heads start program and an increase in meals-on-wheels program is rising in the District, especially in the South Williamsburg area.

We are totally dismayed to learn that the City has chosen to close the two agencies at the 211 Ainslie Street facility: The Small World Day Care Center and the Swinging 60's Senior Citizen Center. These two programs have co-existed in the same building for several decades to serve two populations in the neighborhood that are at high risk: the very young and the elderly. We urge the Administration to provide the necessary funds to continue and maintain these programs.

We recommend that the City promptly act to meet the unmet needs that currently exist in the District: the lack of adequate day care services in Greenpoint and the lack of a full senior center to serve the Southside/South Williamsburg. Although we acknowledge the severe funding constraints that the City faces in this area, we must also note that these needs are real and accelerating, and cannot be adequately addressed by existing resources.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

The New York City Department of Human Resources Administration reports that during the prior fiscal year there were over 80,000 persons assisted by the agency in Community Board No. 1. As of the May 2013, the numbers from the agency are 61,327 Medicaid only (with a total of 75,232 persons-enrolled); 5,561 Cash Assistance; 57,852 Food Stamp Recipients). It is reported that over 43% of CB #1's population receives assistance. We rank fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) highest in the Borough and rank seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) Citywide in the number of persons receiving Medicaid, and rank second (3<sup>rd</sup><sup>nd</sup>) in the Borough and rank fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) City wide with the number of persons receiving food stamps. Because of the quantity and complexity of the social service needs that exist in Community District No. 1, we believe that it would be most appropriate to establish a multi-service center in the community (we believe that the 30 Thornton Street "Job Center" facility complies with the requirements specified by the Human Resources Administration for such a Center). The continuing need for a K-1 OFS Office requires immediate attention. We are extremely disappointed in the closure of the Marcy Avenue office as users at this facility will now have to travel further out of the district to obtain services.

Community Board No. 1 supports increased funding for Managed Care education (such as through the Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program) in Greenpoint and Williamsburg. In addition we support an increase in funds for vocational training, job placement and workforce development in low-income areas of the District.

## **HOUSING FOR THE HOMELESS**

We continue to support and urge a continuation of the reduction in the census at the remaining temporary shelter at the former Greenpoint Hospital. The positive positions taken by the Community Board are well known to the City. We applaud the revised policy changes by the City and look forward to the eventual results, a reduction/elimination of the "warehousing" of the homeless in our Community District and throughout the City. Expensive temporary housing must be replaced with permanent low-rent housing, including housing for single individuals, in each Community District. We also urge the expansion of support services to identify and address individual medical/social needs of homeless individuals residing in city and private facilities.

## **HOMELESS SERVICES**

Community Board No. 1 approves the downsizing plan that decreased the census at the former Greenpoint Hospital Site, as the City has agreed to do at all other "armory" type shelters. We agree with the City's decision to limit the overall census at any one site to 200 persons or less, and we hope that this number can be further reduced.

In the past, Community Board No. 1 supported the development of compassionate and effective programs for the homeless. We share the City's basic policy to provide shelter to those who request it and, in 1983 were the only Board in Brooklyn to positively respond to the Mayor's appeal to suggest potential shelter sites.

Our recommended location, the former Most Holy Trinity Convent, was initially identified as a shelter for homeless women, and subsequently opened as a model S.R.O. facility. We have supported this excellent private shelter administered by Most Holy Trinity Parish, and stand ready to assist the efforts of other local community groups to establish similar programs.

The City should review regulatory policies toward private facilities, in which, homeless individuals reside such as, the Greenpoint Hotel. Also, the City must insure that adequate support services are provided to maintain the safety of surrounding residents and to minimize quality of life problems.

Community Board No. 1 had vehemently opposed the Department of Homeless Services' (DHS's) and the Doe Fund's advancement of a shelter at 89-111 Porter Avenue. We were truly saddened that the Appellate division failed to find merit for appeal when the City found a loophole in the ULURP process and sited this "homeless" shelter in the heart of a city designated "in place industrial park". We remain concerned about the recent siting of a homeless facility at 400 McGuinness Blvd., a former factory building that a previous owner eyed for residential development. We remain concerned about these facilities and any associated rise in crime statistics demonstrated for the area.

## **HEALTH**

### **WOODHULL MEDICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER**

The Board believes that all steps must be taken to improve the quality of services delivered at the facility. We also urge that Health and Hospitals Corporation's Brooklyn Regionalization Plan continues in such a way that it will not in any terms undermine the integrity of Woodhull as a full-fledged hospital. We continue to encourage the administrators at this facility to advise Community Board No. 1 of its needs.

### **AMBULATORY CARE**

With the closure of Greenpoint Hospital came a strong commitment to this community from HHC to provide medical services to the district by maintaining two clinics within the confines of Community Board No. 1. As a result of this commitment, two satellite facilities were established by the Woodhull Medical and Mental Health Center. As we stated in previous years, we believe that the clinic at 960 Manhattan Avenue presented "a positive action that was, providing a valuable health resource in the North Greenpoint Community". To the dismay of CB #1, this satellite facility was closed as its lease expired. The Board strongly advocated for its reopening in the immediate community. The Greenpoint satellite was eventually located to a newly renovated facility at the ground floor of 875 Manhattan Avenue.

The 279 Graham Avenue location of the Williamsburg Satellite with bigger quarters and expanded services has worked well. The under-served Southside community could also greatly benefit by having a clinic within its confines and HHC should explore establishing an additional site for this segment of the district.

### **PEST CONTROL**

Community Board No. 1 remains concerned about an increase of the rodent population in the district. The City must promptly address this epidemic on a community-by-community level. Steps should be taken to regularly bait problem areas and coordinate efforts with the MTA/NYC Transit and other city agencies that are responsible for their own pest control. The Health Department must initiate aggressive programs to address the urgency of this dilemma and install checks and measures to monitor and insure that the MTA/NYC Transit are in fact involved in a pest control program.

Demolition, new construction, and street reconstruction have greatly increased in our district. These activities are known for creating problems with rodents and other pests. It is vital that pest control measures are strictly adhered to and that these sites are monitored for compliance.

It has been noted Community Board No. 1 has several transfer stations located within its confines and these facilities are seen as a major draw for rodents and other pests.

We continue to support the Department of Health's efforts to inhibit the growth of mosquito infestation and combat the spread of the deadly West Nile Virus.

### **RECENT HEALTH TRENDS**

Community Board No. 1 had ranked third out of the 59 districts citywide with a high number of asthma cases. Despite a city-wide drop in cases, our district still has a high rate. We remain concerned in any rise in cases of asthma in the district. Funds must be earmarked for additional testing, education and specialized treatment. Several years ago there was a CDC cancer and asthma study conducted in this District and we strongly support a new, updated study be carried out. In addition, the DEP ought to conduct a study of air and traffic pollution (which is particularly bad in our District) and their environmental and health impacts.

We continue to support efforts by the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, DEP and HPD to thwart lead poisoning as it is a very serious condition, especially for children. Children with lead poisoning may develop health, learning and behavior problems. Education about lead poisoning is important so that people can make their homes safe and healthy as well as learn about treatment and access to testing.

Reports about AIDS in New York City have yielded the following figures for Community Board No. 1: the rates of new HIV diagnosis in Greenpoint and Williamsburg-Bushwick health districts range 0.50 & 1.30 per 1,000 persons/population. The combined rates for our district are above the rates for Brooklyn (0.68), New York City (0.84) and the US (1.14). Rates of people living with HIV & AIDS show Greenpoint at 5.5 and Williamsburg-Bushwick at 12.1 per 1,000 persons/population which again, is above the rates of Brooklyn (6.4), NYC (9.2) and US (3.2). We urge that the medical community continue addressing this grave disease and that additional programs be developed toward prevention, education and treatment. As the only New York City hospital within blocks of Community Board No. 1 Woodhull Hospital must be aggressive in addressing the needs of all of our constituents.

We raised concern about contagious diseases which could spread from localized outbreaks such as meningococcal disease (meningitis), shigellosis, tuberculosis, and hepatitis. We urge our health officials to carefully document these cases, provide curative measures and conduct public education to increase awareness about recognizing symptoms, carrying out prevention and accessing treatment.

We urge that additional resources be allocated to prepare for outbreaks of influenza – including both H1N1 (swine flu) & avian (bird flu) – which is being noted by world health officials as a possible pandemic.

Community Board No. 1 is also deeply concerned about the rising instances of diabetes, cardiovascular, heart disease, high cholesterol and osteoporosis in Greenpoint and Williamsburg. We urge the City to provide additional funds and programs for diet therapy, nutritional support and education for our district. Additional women's health services (such as a

clinic with birthing rooms) are needed in our community. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has reported in its recent community study that residents of our community suffer from a high rate of depression. We urge that this serious health issue be addressed with expanded outreach, education and better access to medical care.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **TRANSPORTATION BLUEPRINT STUDY**

We urge the Department of Transportation to realize Community Board No. 1's goals for adequate mass transit, safer streets, more accessible and safer walking and biking environment, and better driving and parking conditions for delivery trucks and motorists. We continue to urge the City and State to budget money to adequately forecast transit and traffic growth projections. Newly constructed buildings have brought – and will continue to bring – thousands of new residents to Greenpoint and Williamsburg. It must be stressed that the time for sitting back is ended. We no longer need a proactive approach, but a reactive one! The L train is so overcrowded that commuters are turning toward alternate sources that are already beyond capacity (i.e. G train line; cross town buses). In addition, many of our bus routes are so convoluted that they fail to provide direct and expedient access to key commuter hub points. The failure of the Administration to respond to our mass transit crisis remains a shameful blot on its legacy. Rethinking is needed for our bus routes and alternate forms of access to Manhattan must be implemented (i.e. water taxis have limited capacities and short service hours. A larger accommodating ferry type service, with affordable fares, is needed).

### **BRIDGE IMPROVEMENT**

Since Community Board No. 1 is nearly surrounded by the East River and the Newtown Creek, it is not surprising that the quality of our local bridges remain continuing concerns. Emphasis must be placed on adequate continued coordination (access/egress) to our community during any upcoming construction work. We must express deep concern about traffic impacts on the community during any bridge reconstruction. We urge that such construction proceed with on-going monthly maximum community input. There have been repeated delays on work to reconstruct the Grand Street (Penny Bridge). We urge that this work progress and that every effort is made to ensure that there are adequate safety measures and detours in place. The Grand Street Bridge is particularly dangerous as the narrow width of the bridge does not allow for two lanes of vehicles, especially trucks, to pass at the same time. Community Board No. 1 supports the alternative which is a Steel "Basket Handle" Tied Arch design. This project must precede the Kosciuszko Bridge reconstruction agenda.

The City-Wide need to upgrade its East River bridges is of great concern to the Board as it relates to the Williamsburg Bridge. Its closing in 1988 caused both traffic and economic hardship to the surrounding community. This century old landmark literally opened North Brooklyn to Manhattan and, through the implementation of the extensive repairs contained in BR-253, will continue to serve the people of the City for at least a century to come. There must be safe traveling by pedestrians and bicyclists.

An issue of particular concern is the upgrading of the pedestrian walkway that serves as a vital link with the Lower East Side. All efforts must be made to ensure the implementation of improvements, which should, as much as possible, aim to enhance security on these paths. This includes installation of emergency call boxes and cameras on these stretches. While so called improvements to this bridge are being made, it is distressing to see this landmark bridge being slowly dissected beam by beam to make way for a "highway type overpass". The integrity

and glamour of Roebling's structure is being lost. Community Board No. 1 request the City to directly involve it with all discussions on repair, design and plans for all bridges in the district as they are being developed, not after the fact. We continue to support the safer methods and construction protocols that have come forward to remove lead paint, including testing and clean-up of any contaminants needed with this type of construction work. We urge continued adherence to these strict and comprehensive protocols in order to provide the best protection for our community's residents as well as those who work here.

### **BROOKLYN-QUEENS EXPRESSWAY (BQE) RENOVATION**

Community Board No. 1 was actively involved in both the review of plans and construction phases of the renovation of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway situated between Metropolitan Avenue and Kingsland Avenue. We have found that the inclusion of an independent engineer for the community in this project was a valuable resource.

Through a carefully structured partnership of Community Board No. 1's Ad Hoc Committee, City and State agencies, elected officials, Embeds office and the independent engineer, this project was delivered on target, without extensive cost overruns while meeting a multitude of community concerns. This partnership is a model that must continue in future projects. We particularly look forward to a similar relationship with New York State DOT in reconstructing the Kosciuszko Bridge (inclusive of a drainage plan). The New York City Department of Transportation must also conduct immediate detour studies so that this project could commerce with little impact on vehicular traffic/pedestrian flow including, but not limited, to the widening of the Grand Street Bridge.

Community Board No. 1 remains opposed to condemnation of any property with the implementation of the Kosciuszko Bridge's reconstruction. In response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) both Community Board No. 1 and the Brooklyn Borough President requested that NYSDOT pay attention to the following issues:

- BR-5 alternative (bridge replacement with a permanent bridge on the eastbound side) is superior to replacement of the existing bridge to other bridge replacement alternatives and appears to provide the best combination of improved physical and performances attributes. Construction is planned for Fall 2014. At the current time, the design work is 40% complete and confirmation on a final design is pending for a Cable-Stayed bridge.
- The allowance for an Independent Engineer in the contract. This bridge spans the Newtown Creek. It is a major connection to the BQE and for those persons traveling to or from Queens. An independent consultant funded with this construction project is a must for this community as it will be greatly impacted by the future work to improve the structure and its approaches. It is the Community Board's experience, gained with the major reconstruction of the BQE (in the early 1990's), that the independent engineer connected with this project was a most invaluable resource that greatly served the community providing engineering and technical knowledge.
- Traffic and noise conditions – abatement of traffic and noise conditions on Meeker Avenue needs to be addressed collaboratively by both NYC and NYS DOT.
- Study suggested detours as part of the construction period impacts.
- Address community's concerns about any contingency arising from the underground oil spill during the construction period.
- The development of a benefit/cost ratio for each alternative as a means to standardize comparisons of the alternatives.

There are continued serious problems with the BQE at Vandervoort Avenue because the radius for turns is insufficient, especially the left turning point. The intersection of Morgan Avenue and Meeker Avenue (westbound) needs serious re-thinking as the fork condition creates a hazard for both pedestrian and motorists. We make the following comments regarding recent proposals for the following referenced sites:

Meeker/Morgan/Driggs Avenues – It is our belief that the elimination of direct entry from Meeker Avenue westbound onto Driggs Avenue will negatively impact our community. Traffic on Meeker Avenue looking to turn right to enter Driggs Avenue/Morgan Avenue will severely log jam on Meeker Avenue while additional traffic looking to make a left turn on Morgan Avenue will virtually shut down the intersection. Any proposal to synchronize the signal at the intersection would then impede the safety of pedestrian bicycle and skate board traffic. We therefore reject this proposal.

Vandervoort Avenue/Meeker Avenue/Apollo Street – With NYS DOT's construction of the state of the art skateboard park (Eastbound BQE), new activities park (Westbound BQE) and the brand new Kosciuszko Bridge Pedestrian Walkway/Bikeway all culminating on/about this intersection. We believe that this proposal severely lacks significant investment to pedestrian, cyclist, and skateboard safety. We therefore reject this proposal until it is adjusted accordingly!

Continued maintenance of the BQE is extremely lacking, decking of the viaduct and rutting of the asphalt on both the roadway and exit/entrance ramps is obviously apparent and severely lacking of regular maintenance.

## **STREET RECONSTRUCTION/PLANNING**

The deplorable physical state of our local streets is an ongoing problem. It is essential that the City prioritize the street reconstruction projects scheduled for Community Board No. 1

Reconstruction of Flushing Avenue is completed and the Kent Avenue/Franklin Street has finished. We still have major concerns about the implemented infrastructure improvements as some sewer lines were not totally replaced on the Kent Avenue/Franklin Street project and their ability to adequately handle the increased flow from new construction connections along the waterfront is questionable.

Additionally, we welcome DOT to join us at occasional transportation committee meetings to update the public on the progress of these projects. We have learned, particularly through the Kent Avenue/Franklin Street project that unforeseen traffic problems can arise, such as the heavy truck volumes which suddenly were routed onto Calyer Street. In the case of Calyer Street, an excellent resolution was put forth by Calyer Street residents: Banker Street was converted from a northbound one way street to a two-way street. The truck traffic was diverted onto this primarily industrial corridor, offering Calyer Street residents immediate relief.

It is clear that the most successful street reconstruction projects are those that are planned with close collaboration with the community, and we urge DOT to work with the Board to continue to reach out well in advance of these projects, as well as throughout construction.

The industrial zone situated beneath the Kosciuszko Bridge is in dire need of repair. Although it is currently M1-3 industrial space, the development potential of this area – either



residential, commercial or industrial – is severely restricted by an inadequate infrastructure. Some streets have either never been paved, or have sewers installed underneath them. The Board has worked closely with all affected City agencies to develop a plan for the comprehensive revitalization of this area, and we urge that the needs of this area be included in the budget as the Meeker Avenue Sewer/Water Main project has severely lagged.

The Nassau Avenue Reconstruction Project began in 2012 and the major work is now nearly 100% completed; tree plantings and punch list work being the final remainders of the project. During the work on the reconstruction, we urged that the DDC take in consideration the needs of businesses (i.e. manufacturers, bakers) that require access to water, including daycare centers and other facilities in the area, as well as the special needs of residents.

In regards to the Pulaski Bridge, we applaud DOT's efforts to improve safety and to work directly with the community regarding any planning.

Last year there were a number of cave-ins and sinkholes that occurred within Community Board No. 1. We have a high rate of potholes. We ask DEP and DOT to collaborate, to determine the cause(s) of these cave-ins, and work with the Board on long-term solutions.

The Department of Transportation needs to stop planning for us and start planning with us. We have requested the agency to address conditions at various locations:

1. Greenpoint Avenue at Provost Street – right turn on red light: to alleviate traffic congestion.
2. Traffic light at Humboldt Street and Withers Street – a long standing request to allow safe crossing for pedestrians and to halt vehicular speeding.
3. Traffic light for Keap & Ainslie Street
4. Morgan Avenue, Driggs Avenue, Meeker Avenue – removal of “eye pollution” billboard sign at this triangle. There are multiple redundant street signs in this area already!
5. Due to the Reconstruction of Kent Avenue and stemming from the traffic diverted to Wythe Avenue – Wythe Avenue Reroute – concerns from the community still need to be addressed; North 11<sup>th</sup> Street still particular attention.
6. McGuinness Blvd. – the creation of turning lanes with no signals has created a dangerous situation. We ask that safety measures be implemented along this corridor and turn signals be immediately installed.
7. Kent Avenue and North 6<sup>th</sup> Street – the newly designed parking lane and vehicular volume with the newly configured Kent Avenue has created a hazardous roadway condition that must be made safe.
8. DOT must re-evaluate North 8<sup>th</sup> Street to North 6<sup>th</sup> Street along Kent Avenue as well.
9. DOT must re-evaluate the corner of Maspeth Avenue & Kingsland, and Maspeth Avenue and Olive Street for traffic light/controls.

Most of our requests have fallen on deaf ears at the DOT!

## **SEWER CONSTRUCTION**

As one of Brooklyn' oldest communities, Community District No. 1 naturally suffers from a terribly outdated and inadequate sewer system. The continued upgrading and replacement of our sewers remains an on-going necessity. The stretch of Graham Avenue, from Meeker Avenue to Metropolitan Avenue, continues to be plagued by foul sewer odors that emanate from the catch basins. To date, DEP has not been able to resolve the condition. An additional

unresolved sewer related matter is DEP's failure to step up to the plate and aggressively correct numerous cave-in conditions from previous sewer pipe work that now requires trench restoration. These are sites where there was inadequate shoring, or wood shoring that was never removed and decayed causing underground subsurface voids which have subsequently collapsed. **The Department of Environmental Protection continues to drag its feet in this matter while every day these conditions worsen and present public safety hazards.**

Community Board No. 1 has forwarded the following locations since 1999 to receive priority attention:

- Clymer Street between Wythe and Bedford Avenues
- Conselyea Street between Graham and Manhattan Avenues
- Division Avenue between Berry Street and Wythe Avenue
- Eckford Street between Norman and Nassau Avenues
- Grand Street between Humboldt Street and Morgan Avenue
- Maujer Street between Lorimer Street and Union Avenue
- Meserole Street between Lorimer Street and Union Avenue
- Montrose Avenue between Union Avenue and Buschwick Place
- Moore Street between Humboldt Street and Manhattan Avenue
- North 6<sup>th</sup> Street between Driggs Avenue and Roebling Street
- Rutledge Street between Bedford/Marcy/Lee Avenues
- Scholes Street between Morgan and Union Avenues
- Skillman Avenue between Humboldt Street and Graham Avenue
- Ten Eyck Street at Lorimer Street

These locations were to be addressed in FY 2009, however, the Department of Design and Construction relates that the work is delayed because DEP says they have no funding!

In another portion of the District, the area directly under and north of the Kosciuszko Bridge continues to be forgotten and floods constantly with the free-fall drainage from the BQE. Sewer construction here has been delayed, too. This item also needs to be promptly addressed by the responsible environmental agencies of both the City and State.

## **THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **WATER QUALITY**

Because of our extensive waterfront, Community Board No. 1 has in the past, vigorously supported all efforts to clean the waters of the East River and Newtown Creek. The success of these efforts is indicated by the substantial water quality improvement that has occurred in the East River, a development that greatly enhances the recreational potential of the waterfront. In recent years, ducks, geese and swans have been observed to be nesting along North 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Looking ahead, our commitment to the goals of high water quality remains as strong as ever, and the Board will vigorously oppose all effort to retreat from this principle.

Our Board hosts the largest sewage treatment plant in the eastern United States and the cost of its upgrading is \$3.5 billion and approximately \$60 million is being spent to retrofit the old DOS MTS facility/construct a loading facility on Whale Creek for pumping and shipping out the

plant's sludge. Quite frankly, DEP is not a good neighbor to Greenpoint and Williamsburg. Greenpoint Avenue surrounding the plant continues to flood.

Community Board No. 1 has not changed its position to oppose any expansion of the Newtown Creek Water Pollution Plant that would allow for an increase in the capacity of secondary treatment. We have recently reviewed items under ULURP regarding DEP's plans to upgrade the facility. This complex undertaking to upgrade the plant was approved by Community Board No. 1 with conditions and an amenities package to be included. A monitoring committee chaired by former Councilman Fisher has spearheaded the Board's commitment to this process. Kingsland Avenue was to be widened from Greenpoint Avenue towards the northern end of the street as part of slated improvements to enhance traffic flow and safety. However, this reconstruction work has not occurred and this lack of progress is of paramount concern for CB #1. Any contract penalties should be directed to the Community and not funneled into the DEP's general fund.

DEP was to demolish the sludge storage tank at Dupont Street. In previous plans, the material was to be pumped away via an underground pipe system. However, the agency changed its plans and instead would continue a barging operation to remove sludge from the Greenpoint WPCP. This project will establish a new sludge loading facility at a site on Whale Creek and the MTS operation will utilize new specially designed barges and tugboats that will reportedly fit under the Pulaski Bridge. CB #1 feels that the application is an important step towards the realization of the parks and open space component of the Williamsburg/Greenpoint rezoning. Our previous support was contingent upon DEP mitigating the landfill component of the project locally and not at a site in Jamaica Bay.

DEP has announced that it will move forward on plans to demolish the tanks and establish the new operations. It will begin dredging the creek in October while constructing the new dock for the barges. Once this work is completed they will begin the tank's demolition.

### **MOBIL OIL UNDERGROUND SPILL**

Community Board No. 1 urges the continued monitoring by NYC DEP and NYS DEC of the 1990 Mobil Oil Consent Order to remediate the free product plume in the Greenpoint area of Brooklyn.

As required by the Consent Order, in 1990 and 1991 Mobil performed a site assessment to determine the magnitude of the free-product plume and subsequently developed a remedial action plan to recover the free-product. The Off-Site Product Recovery System was designed from 1991 through 1993. Permits and approvals for construction of the facility were obtained from the NYS DEC, the NYC Department of Buildings and the NYC Fire Department in 1993 and 1994 at which time construction of the facility began. The Off-Site Free Product Recovery System began operation on September 1, 1995 and over 643,246 gallons of free-products have been recovered by the system as of fall 1997. Between 5 and 10 million of gallons of groundwater are pumped and treated monthly. Additionally, since the 1980's, product recovery booms have been installed in Newtown Creek along the Peerless Importers bulkhead and since 1979 Mobil has been recovering free-product from on-site monitoring wells. By January 1999 6,706,654 million gallons of free product was recovered from on-site operations (with 1,564,326 gallons recovered of the cumulative product for off-site product plume). NYS DEC relates that over 9 million gallons have been recovered to date (according to a report by the US Coast Guard 9,106,000 gallons were recovered as of march 31, 2006). In 2004, Riverkeeper (an

independent, member-supported environmental organization founded 40 years ago) has filed suit in federal court against Exxon/Mobil for the spill.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation reports that there has been a noticeable slow down of seepage into the Newtown Creek at the end of Meeker Avenue and that product recovery is expected to continue for a few more years. Community Board No. 1 demands that recovery activities must continue until all of the spilled product is removed from beneath Community District No. 1 and that the board be updated quarterly by the New York City Department of Environmental protection and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as to the removal progress. Revenues from the recovery of the petroleum products should be directed to the Community.

Earlier this year, it was announced by the NYS Attorney General and the Department of Conservation that the Greenpoint-based North Brooklyn Development Corporation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will jointly administer the Greenpoint Environmental Benefits Projects (EBPs) Program. The Program, with a \$19.5 million fund, was established with money paid by Exxon Mobil in a 2011 settlement with NYS State related to its massive oil spill in Greenpoint.

## **SANITATION**

### **ENFORCEMENT STAFFING/ILLEGAL DUMPING**

Over the past years over 41 transfer stations have been opened within Community District 1. Today 53% of all C&D, fill and putrescible waste transfer stations in Brooklyn and 25% in New York City exist in Community Board No. 1. These numbers translate into a population of 17 permitted transfer stations presently doing business in the district. This makes our district the most heavily impacted area in the entire City.

We urge that strong regulatory policies be developed, enforcement is strict and unpermitted stations closed. Environmental impact area reviews should also be required, not only site reviews. We consider the newer threat to our environment posed by the transfer stations to represent an immediate challenge that must be addressed by government, and urge, that a policy be developed that requires Special Permits and require Environmental Impact Statements. These statements need to look at the cumulative impacts, not just the impact of a proposed facility. As we have far more than our fair share of the garbage industry, we seek to have no new transfer stations sited and built in our District. We applaud the efforts of Waste Management to rail garbage out of the city and reduce truck traffic.

To aid with the enforcement of truck traffic and pertinent regulations, we urge the use of additional weighing stations in the District.

Community Board No. 1 has reached out to elected officials to declare a moratorium on the siting or expansion of any existing or future facilities in the district and on any land on the waterfront as a marine transfer station.

One of the major sanitation problems facing Community Board No. 1 is illegal dumping, which in many portions of the district, has reached epidemic proportions. It is essential that sufficient Sanitation Police be assigned to our community to vigorously combat these problems. No other Sanitation enforcement issue should be given higher priority in Community Board No.

1 than illegal dumping, on both streets, vacant lots and into waterways, including the policing of transfer stations. Additional enforcement police must be assigned to end illegal dumping. We have strongly urged that the Department of Sanitation reopen our neighborhood Self-Help Dump to provide access by residents as this will deter illegal discarding of household materials.

We oppose any reduction in staff and urge upgrading of the present street collection policy. We applaud the policy to initiate/increase refuse collection at public housing sites and large Mitchell Lama Development (Lindsay Park Houses). The establishment of a special unit to handle refuse collection at schools is also strongly supported by the Board. This program should be expanded to parochial schools and other not-for-profit organizations.

### **RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT**

We continue to support the weekly collection schedule for recycling. Any consideration of a new Solid Waste Management Plan, including the Marine Transfer Station in Greenpoint, should be done in close consultation with the Board. DOS must aggressively pursue the abuse of corner wire baskets. Many baskets are overflowing on a daily basis thus detracting from the area's scorecard ratings.

Illegal posterage is out of control and can be seen on the district's streets (light poles, traffic sign rails and vacant wall spaces). The practice proves to be unsightly and promotes litter. Enforcement has been requested to help stem the proliferation; however, there appears to be no response by the Department of Sanitation.

### **WASTE TO ENERGY RFP**

The Department of Sanitation has indicated in recent documents that it would embrace the siting of a facility at the National Grid site (Varick Avenue & Lombardy Street) and/or the Phelps-Dodge site in Queens (57<sup>th</sup> Avenue along the Newtown Creek). We vehemently oppose any siting within the confines of Community Board #1 and view such siting as being disastrous and a step backward for the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Community. The following resolution by Community Board No. 1 was unanimously adopted by the full board and sent to the Department of Sanitation relating our opposition:

WHEREAS the City of New York, with the Department of Sanitation, has released a Request For Proposals to allegedly build state of the art facilities to convert waste to clean energy as part of PlaNYC,

WHEREAS a proposed site is located in Community Board No. 1 at Varick Avenue and Lombardy Street,

WHEREAS the proposed site in Community Board No. 1 is located directly adjacent to residential homes, housing developments, and in a business zone,

WHEREAS another proposed site (located in Community Board No. 2/Queens) is directly across the Newtown Creek (mirrored across the waterway) within close proximity to Brooklyn Community Board No. 1,

WHEREAS Greenpoint and Williamsburg top NY's list for having the most garbage trucks roaming neighborhood streets (19 of the city's 58 waste transfer stations are located in CB #1 handling almost 40% of New York City waste),

WHEREAS such a facility would substantially increase truck traffic to and from said facility,

WHEREAS a recent study shows there is an increase (355%) in pollutant matter floating in the air when transfer stations are open and operating,

WHEREAS Community Board No. 1 has a high rate of asthma cases (according the North Brooklyn Asthma and Environment Consortium study conducted 1995 to 2003 for Williamsburg and Bushwick, the rate is 60 times worse than any part of the USA),

WHEREAS Dr. John C. La Rosa, President of SUNY Downstate Medical Center, in a report titled Brooklyn Community Health – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, states that “For residents of Brooklyn – a borough with a relatively young population – the prevalence of COPD...is still a major cause of sickness and health”. The study also notes that rates of chronic bronchitis for persons over 45 in Greenpoint, Williamsburg/Bushwick have increased,

WHEREAS the district’s air is contaminated due to:

- The Brooklyn Queens Expressway emissions
- Williamsburg Bridge traffic
- Brooklyn’s largest bus terminal
- Waste transfer stations
- Toxic ecological footprints left over from the industrial past,

WHEREAS the Community Board No. 1’s district lacks green space (the citywide average for open space is 3.5 acres per 1,000 residents, our district ranks near bottom of the list in terms of open space per capita with 0.6 acres per 1,000 residents),

WHEREAS the proposed plant would begin operating by processing 450 tons of waste per day,

WHEREAS Community Board No. 1 has more than its fair share of waste transfer stations, sanitation garages and salt piles,

WHEREAS Community Board No. 1 was negatively impacted for decades by the DOS Greenpoint Incinerator,

WHEREAS Community Board No. 1 has suffered from many negative environmental impacts and facilities (for example, an underground oil spill, estimated 17-30 million gallons of oil, benzene, naphtha and other carcinogenic chemicals pollute a 55 acre, 25 foot deep swath of soil, a newly discovered plume of toxic underground material found near the proposed facility’s site; the Newtown Creek Water Pollution Control Plant and the barging of sludge),

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board No. 1 vehemently opposes the siting of a proposed waste handling facility at Varick Avenue and Lombardy Street (Brooklyn union Gas Company – National Grid property) and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue along Newtown Creek (Phelps Dodge Refinery) as such facilities would negatively impact the health and quality of life for all who reside, work or commute in Greenpoint and Williamsburg.

### **SANITATION GARAGES**

The construction of a new garage to serve Community District 1 and 4 was completed. The Department of Sanitation has not acted responsibly to relocate the K-3 Sanitation Garage. It still needs to be placed in Community District #3 and no longer be situated in our district. The

Department of Sanitation must take immediate corrective action to relocate this to its respective district as per co-terminality guidelines and not juggle it within the confines of Community Board No. 1. The DOS relocation of BK3 to the old BK4 site remains completely unacceptable.

### **CHERRY STREET SALT PILE**

We have repeatedly requested the relocation of the Cherry Street Salt Pile, noting that it must be done as expeditiously as possible. This open storage of salt had impeded a local business deal with the City's Office of Economic Development since 2001 and has prevented a business expansion and creation of new jobs for our local community. In addition it is there illegally with no formal approval, salt runoff from this site continues to negatively impact this area. This had remained an outstanding action until DOS reported on June 18, 2012 that they have left the site and moved to a new location near the combined BK1 & BK4 garage. We were encouraged by the news and are extremely disappointed that the conveyance for the development of the site by MarJam at the then agreed upon price has not happened!

### **STREET CLEANING REGULATIONS**

We urge the Department of Sanitation to change the parking regulations to reduce the number of street cleaning days from four to two. We should be treated like any other Community Board and be granted a reduction.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

In the past Community Board No. 1 has greatly benefited from the excellent activities of no fewer than seven commercial revitalization programs, Grand-Metro, Graham Avenue, Bedford Avenue, Havemeyer-Grand, Broadway West, Lee Avenue and Manhattan Avenue which have done much to further stabilize and strengthen these active shopping-strips. We support public funding for the formation of merchants associations to improve the marketability and viability of commercial corridors throughout CB #1.

Without question (jobs) industry constitutes the economic backbone of Community District No. 1, and a substantial percentage of our residents are still employed by local industries. While Greenpoint/Williamsburg has shared in the City-wide decline of manufacturing jobs and suffers from chronic security, sanitation, facility and infrastructure problems, the core itself is strong, and with proper governmental support, should endure and prosper in the coming years. Undoubtedly, along with new residential development should come accommodating and appropriate commercial services to sustain the fundamental growth of all mixed-use neighborhoods (such as grocery stores, affordable eating establishments and clothing shops/boutiques). Such support could include capitalizing on local economic empowerment zones and tax credit programs to provide incentives for businesses to remain in the District. We ask that the Industrial Business Zone be maintained in order to retain blue collar and industrial jobs. Despite the overall city wide decline in manufacturing, North Brooklyn's manufacturing industry is still alive. North Brooklyn has attracted small distilleries, artesian food and wood design manufacturers. As these sectors continue to grow we must support both new and long time manufacturing businesses in order to retain these blue collar and industrial jobs in our community. Supporting the Industrial Business Zones and its funding is an essential part of this growth and job retention.

We support the continuation of public funds for nonprofits to develop affordable industrial real estate. This is similar to the way that affordable housing is developed with public funds (i.e. 20% below market rate). Currently GMDC and EWVIDCO have each developed a number of properties in CB #1. More capital support can expand the availability of industrial real estate made affordable in perpetuity.

### **MOORE STREET MARKET**

We continue to support the merchants and strongly advocate retention of the market at its current location. As part of its support for the market, CB #1 wrote and submitted a proposal to NYC DOT on behalf of the merchants for inclusion in the agency's Plaza Program. We are pleased that the proposal was well received and accepted in April 2009 for funding. The plaza was designed and a contract for its construction was issued. The Plaza will provide open space for the community and additional vending opportunities at the market for the merchants. A Percent for Art project is planned for the location and will provide a unique design for the plaza.

We reminded the Administration that the Moore Street Market plays a vital part in the community by providing both jobs and consumer goods for area residents and shoppers City wide. The role of this market is woven tightly into the ethnic fabric of our neighborhood and thusly represents a unique historic shopping Mecca. These retail markets were traditionally designed to assist the pushcart small businesses to operate off the city streets and into safe clean environments. The markets have evolved and represent physical and entrepreneurial landmarks today. It is highly outrageous that EDC chose to backdoor the elimination of our local market, exclude the community's input, and put at risk the long term livelihood of local businesspersons. Community Board No. 1 continues to support the landmarking of this institution so that it would be around for generations to come.

### **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT – NEWTOWN CREEK AREA**

We continue to urge monitoring the progress of the Superfund scoping and remediation project to minimize negative impacts on creek side businesses. To date, these impacts have included inability to obtain financing and insurance. All of these businesses were adversely affected by Superstorm Sandy; it is vital that proposed public works projects address storm impact on business operations.

### **EDUCATION**

We support an overall master planning effort for the Department of Education's District 14. With the acknowledged change in student population, schools in our district must be retooled to address the ever changing needs.

We continue to support our area schools and their needs that were previously related to our Board: outfitting each school with a science laboratory and to provide wireless computers and stations for the schools within the Community School District. We continue to support (1) After School, Saturday, Summer Instructional and Recreational Programs; and (2) Repair, Refinement of our area's School Buildings. In the past, budget cuts to several capital projects caused them to be eliminated in a number of schools and many educational programs were either ceased or reduced as well as staff connected with those programs.

We are concerned about the need for student protection and support all recognized security programs approved by the Department of Education to protect our children.



A major push by parents, community residents and teachers to reorganize the academically declining Comprehensive Eastern District High School proved to be quite successful as the 850 Grand Street Campus facility was instituted. In 1996 the Board of Education started three smaller schools, also called academies, that focused on particular themes of study (Progress HS for Professional Careers; Enterprise Business HS; and the School for Legal Studies), and eventually phased out Eastern District High School. Since that time, several other smaller schools are established in our district: the Academy for Young Writers; Williamsburg Preparatory School; Williamsburg HS for Architecture and Design; El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice; Harry Van Arsdale HS GED; Green School: An Academy for Environmental Careers; and charter schools: Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School; Williamsburg Charter HS ("Beginning with Children" was a pioneer charter school in our community for elementary school age youngsters. It grew out of a private partnership with Pfizer and opened its doors in September 1992). We look forward to our educational facilities having future success in serving the educational needs of our children.

It has been reported by the Department of City Planning that according to the 2000 Census, out of the total district's population, in the group 5 years and over: 89,085 persons are proficient and 57,775 are not proficient in English. Those persons not proficient in English had another language spoken at home. Roughly 46.5% spoke Spanish/Spanish Creole; 20.8% spoke Polish; 20.5% spoke Yiddish (with the remainder percentage scattered in other categories). We encourage programs that will assist persons with attaining better English proficiency skills.

### **PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

Community Board No. 1 contains four public libraries (Greenpoint, Bushwick, Leonard and Marcy Avenue branches) which provide a variety of services for the community. We support their needs for enhanced equipment, computer linkages, increased book budgets and physical improvements.

The Leonard Branch has its elevator installed and is still seeking to construct a ramp as well as other sorely needed improvements for this aging Carnegie branch. We support their efforts to have the facility wheelchair accessible. Greenpoint Branch is an existing facility that can no longer accommodate the growing needs of the community in terms of function and programming and the construction of a new facility, on its current footprint, is being sought. It is most encouraging to see that these facilities are being highly used by both young and older residents alike. CB #1 strongly opposes cuts to the budgets for our libraries.

### **MASS TRANSIT**

Mass transit is inadequate to meet the needs of our district. Local bus service is frequently delayed because of overall traffic congestion. Overcrowding on the L train is so severe that riders often must allow 2, 3, or more trains before they can board; while on the G train, growing ridership is straining the limits of the current 4-car trains and the service schedule, which is that of a non-rush-hour service schedule.

MTA-NYC Transit's E/F/G/V service change in 2001, which terminated the northbound G line at Court Square on weekdays, interfered with many commutes; service has deteriorated further: the MTA indicated that the G would run its full route on weekends, but on any given weekend, that is not the case. G rides suffer from short, overcrowded trains and a halved line most of the time. For those North Brooklyn commuters who solely depend on the G, improved service must be a priority. The Board has read with interest – not to mention a sense of irony –

that the V line has the lowest ridership in the entire system – lower, even, than the G line, which makes far fewer stops.

In 2001, the G line was shortened from its then-6 subway car trains to its present 4-car trains in order to supply the newly created V line. The V line was so clearly underutilized since its inception and the crowding on the G has increased dramatically with no downward trend in sight. The V line was eliminated and the M train was rerouted to cover the service. The Board recommends that MTA-NYC Transit reallocate subway cars from the M line and return them to the G line to offer relief for G line riders. There needs to be better connection to trains that travel to and from Manhattan. The connection at Court Square for the G line remains inadequate and difficult to navigate. We continue to advocate that there be a free transfer between the G line and the elevated (J/M) line (Broadway/Hewes Street). We were pleased that the temporary extension of the G line that brought it further into Brooklyn was made permanent. The Greenpoint Avenue station on the G line needs to be upgraded to include a public announcement system as one is sorely lacking. Delays in service on the line leave riders at this station in the dark because there is no communication.

Ferry service has resumed at the CB #1's waterfront, with an expanded service. We ask that the ferry service be "hooked into" the NYC Transit's fare system to allow payment by use of a MetroCard. In down times on the G, the ferry could serve as alternate mode of transportation to and from Manhattan, Long Island City or further into Brooklyn where they may stop.

Everyone agrees that the extreme ridership growth on the L train seems to have caught many agencies by surprise although we have been consistently warning them to expect this shift for several years now. We understand that more cars are on their way, but in the meantime, district residents and businesses are frustrated by the increasing unreliability of L service. The Board recommends that the MTA-NYC Transit consider implementing an express-style L train, running in morning peak hours from Myrtle-Wyckoff to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and in evening peak hours from 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Broadway Junction. This would allow the L train fleet to turn around more quickly and service more riders.

We must also express our concern about delays in local bus service. Our bus schedules have been changed/combined with increased traffic and our bus riders are waiting longer than ever for many routes, such as (but not limited to) the B24, B48 and Q59. Given the changes in our community – notably the increases in our nightlife, with many visitors to our galleries, restaurants, night clubs, boutiques, and our slowly-developing waterfront parks – we are seeing more ridership on local bus service, and ask the DOT and MTA-NYC Transit to develop a service plan to meet ridership demand.

We are pleased that MTA-NYC Transit has begun to install smaller, more streamlined bus shelters; we plan to request more bus shelters, now that the odds are better that they can be accommodated at certain bus stops.

We note that the City and State are collaborating on a Bus Rapid Transit pilot project; the proposed Brooklyn route terminates at Williamsburg Bridge Bus Plaza, which is within the Community Board No. 1 district. We believe it would be beneficial to CB #1 residents if the BRT could extend over the Williamsburg Bridge, so that CB #1 residents could also use the service to reach Manhattan.

Given our growth, transportation along the District's waterfront needs to be planned now. The DOT and MTA-NYC Transit must take an aggressive, proactive approach. The

implementation of the new bus route along Kent Avenue will provide a much-needed service to our district, and complement service provided by other routes, such as the B62.

With the siting of the MTA's revenue depot at 46-25 Metropolitan Avenue, Community District #1 has been inundated with armored trucks flying through residential areas. The MTA must take immediate action in advising their drivers to adhere to truck route designations.

The addition of water transportation (such as ferries and water taxis) must be encouraged with any new development on the waterfront. We urge the formulation of an MTA "Needs Assessment" panel to review the service in our district and make much needed service changes to better serve our community and the Authority. A new ferry service has opened and has stops in the CB #1's district and Manhattan. To ensure the viability of the service and continued operations in the future, this mode of transportation must receive a permanent form of subsidy. We continue to press for the ability to utilize the MetroCard for ferry passage.

### **COMMUNITY BOARDS**

Community Board No. 1 still lacks adequate funding. The meager budget provided for our board does not keep pace with inflation and any increased operating costs. The cost for acquiring much needed newer technology, computer software, upgraded hardware as well as internet/web access capabilities is expensive.

Community Boards were to receive another round of budget cuts in FY 2010. We are pleased that the City Council supported the Boards and voted to restore our respective budgets but the boards' budgets were not made whole. The Mayor's proposed cuts were implemented (a loss of \$8,000 with additional cuts to be executed). We are still not out of the woods yet – future budgets are in danger to receive these devastating cuts as the Office of Management and Budget has indicated that the cuts were still reflected on the board's financial plan for 2012 and 2013. In order to continue delivering the Board's budget, and instead, advocate strongly for increased allocations. We are pleased to learn from the Office of Management and Budget that the City Council had restored our budget for the upcoming fiscal year, and we remain guarded about projected cuts for upcoming fiscal year. **However, Community Boards have not seen an increase in our budget in 20 years.**

### **SUSTAINABILITY OF COMMUNITY BOARDS**

Community boards provide a vital function for the districts they are designated to serve and consequently stand as valuable assets to the City as well. There is urgent need for increased funding as moneys were lost in previous budget crunches and were projected to be further reduced in the upcoming fiscal years.

Our internal budget is not sufficient enough to meet the ever escalating costs of necessary office operations and staffing. The rapid changes in communications, media and computers, plus the costly upgrading of various programs and equipment hinder a Board's meager budget, which covers a small staffing of only three persons and miniscule operating (OTPS) budget. Community Board budgets should not be at the sole whim of the Administration. The NYC Charter's language regarding community boards must be strongly re-written to ensure that community boards are fiscally protected and legislatively promulgated – the budgets must be held harmless from political climates.

## **BIGGER AND BETTER LAND USE ROLES**

Community Board No. 1 is no stranger to the land use process. Many impacts for Greenpoint and Williamsburg have been from various ULURP, BSA applications, development scenarios and sting actions – all which our board has taken an active role in. Our diligent work never ceases and our voices must be heard. Community Board No. 1 needs the commission to strengthen our role by giving us more teeth with which to have a better bite. We will continue to collaborate with the Brooklyn Borough President on these important matters that affect the life, health and welfare of our constituency.

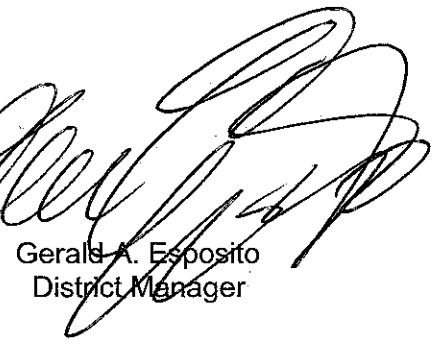
## **CONCLUSION**

Community Board No. 1 is prepared to discuss each of the items addressed in this **Statement of Community District Needs**. Please do not hesitate to contact us. In closing, we trust, that the City of New York will act favorably upon the items contained in this report or advise reasons for not implementing the needs of the Greenpoint-Williamsburg Community.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Christopher H. Olechowski  
Chairman

  
Del Teague  
Third Vice Chairperson

  
Gerald A. Esposito  
District Manager