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•
Eutha Prince
District Manager

CB9M

16-18 Old Broadway
New York, New York 10027
(212) 864-6200/Fax # 662-7396

COMMUNITY BOARD #9, MANHATTAN

August, 2013

INTRODUCTION

Community Board 9 is made up of several distinct neighborhoods, Hamilton Heights, Manhattanville, Morningside Heights and a portion of Central Harlem. Our district runs from 110th Street to 155th Street. Our Eastern border runs along Manhattan/Morningside Aves, St. Nicholas/Edgecombe and Bradhurst Aves and the Hudson River is our Western border.

Each neighborhood is a district community; Morningside Heights in the southern portion of the Board contains many of the area's numerous institutions: Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, Bank Street College of Education, Columbia University, Barnard College, Teacher's College, Manhattan School of Music, Union Theological Seminary, Jewish Theological Seminary, The National Council of Churches, Riverside Church, Grotto of Notre Dame, and the St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center. Morningside Heights reflects great diversity at the southern end where two large housing complexes: the General Grant Public Housing Development and the limited equity cooperative Morningside Gardens are nestled between major retail areas.

Manhattanville begins at roughly 123rd Street and extends northward to 135th Street. This area includes the City College south campus of City University of New York, the Manhattanville Housing Development, Riverview Towers/Riverside Community Housing at 3333 Broadway, (a former Mitchell-Lama cooperative), and a number of small commercial establishments. Manhattanville is the site of Columbia University's planned new Campus.

The northern most section of Community Board No. 9 is comprised of Hamilton Heights (part of this area is designated the "Hamilton Heights/Sugar Hill Historic District"). Hamilton Heights is home to a substantial number of owner-occupied brownstones and also includes the

City-owned Audubon Houses and a large number of Housing Development Fund Cooperatives. There are very few vacant structures. The majority of the small businesses in this area are operated by a diverse group, including Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern, Caribbean and Asian. Hamilton Heights is also home to the North River Pollution Control Plant with the Riverbank State Park on its Roof.

These three neighborhoods which encompass St. Nicholas Park, the new home of the Alexander Hamilton House create an eclectic and historical area.

We are proud of neighborhoods and are committed to maintain them ensuring that our neighbors will be afforded true quality of life.

HOUSING

Existing Housing Stock Not Adequate

We assume that existing housing stock in Community Board 9 continues to be inadequate to meet the needs of its current recorded population. Until the results from the ongoing Census will be available we continue to look at the available data from the US Census 2000 report that states that there were just over 43,000 units of housing in CD9, a drop from 1990 in contrast to Manhattan's and New York City's overall gains. Over the last decade (1991-2001) CB9 was one of the community districts with the smallest number of new housing units built during this period at 195 out of a total of 94,000 new unit (measured by final certificates of occupancy) in New York City.

There are less than 40 city controlled buildings in the District in addition to vacant lots. Many are in various stages of disrepair but are either being rehabilitated or in preparation for major rehabilitation. We are deeply concerned about the need for timely rehabilitation of deteriorating and often over occupied housing stock. As such, the Board supports the continuation of initiatives to coordinate the necessary repairs, rehabilitation and contract monitoring. The Neighborhood Entrepreneur Program (NEP), Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), and Anti-Abandonment Program have potential to remedy these matters; however CB9M has reservations about the effectiveness of these programs.

The track record of the entity chosen to oversee a site is of greatest importance, as many current residents fear displacement in the name of renovation. The current programs do not have affordable housing stock they displace residents. They are not allowed to keep the housing they have known for decades because with the renovation comes the money to make it

viable for profit. In addition the entities that come in renovate and rents do not maintain the property, apartments included. In order for them to make a profit they do not repair or replace they patch or do nothing. Some of the buildings renovated by NEP, NRP, or Anti-Abandonment need further renovation moving forward because they do not maintain. The proof is obvious when you go through the community.

Need for the Creation of New, and Preservation of Existing, Affordable Housing

The need for affordable housing has become a major problem for low, medium and middle income families. A significant portion of CB9 renter households are under financial burden to pay rent. Technically, this includes households who have to use 30% or more of their income towards rent. There are concentrations of such households where almost half the households are "rent-burdened." CB9 also has 23% of its residents paying more than 50% of their income in rent. This comes in greater existence with the rent regulation increase in effect as of 6/15/11. With this being the case renters face even greater challenges of increases nearing 55% (or more) of their incomes.

As a result of the expiration of public subsidy contracts for affordable housing, and of rapid private development, long-term residents of public and rent-regulated and subsidized housing face the threat of displacement. River View Towers and Riverside Park Community is a recent example of a lost Mitchell Lama property with over 2,000 apartments we encourage the City to take all steps necessary to protect NYCHA, HPD and Mitchell-Lama properties from privatization. The privatization of the properties would render many residents homeless

The majority of vacant buildings and lots in NYC are privately owned, and the trend toward privatization continues. While we envision different strategies for the transformation of publicly owned vacant buildings and lots vis a vis privately-owned vacant property, both types beg the same question: who benefits from vacancy, and does that benefit outweigh the social and economic costs of the housing emergency.

Rent Stabilized Units Ending vacancy decontrol for rent stabilized apartments, renovating them and renting them at the previous rents will create thousands of low rent apartments without rental subsidies. The City can launch a program to cover the cost of renovation in order to avoid Major

Capital Improvement (MCI) increases passed onto tenants. The City would be better served funding housing development and job training for homeless folks than spending thousands per month on shelter costs, per family.

The same neighborhoods that send high numbers of families into the homeless shelter system have the highest density of vacant property—in most of them, there is enough vacant space to house ten times as many people as are currently housed in shelters in that district. Citywide, vacant property could house the entire shelter population five times over.

New York City government actively supports the warehousing of vacant buildings and land. In 2005, in the early days of our Housing Not Warehousing campaign, asked (then) NYC Housing Preservation & Development Commissioner Sean Donovan to address the problem of vacancy. He responded that “development in our city requires that some property be temporarily held off the market to assemble development opportunities”... even though “temporarily” can be thirty years or more. Although New York City has been in a “housing emergency” since 1947, the City places no restrictions on how long residential buildings or land can be kept vacant! One example: in Harlem, the buildings on the west side New York City government actively support the warehousing of vacant buildings and land. In 2005, in the early days of our Housing Not Warehousing campaign, asked (then) NYC Housing Preservation & Development Commissioner Sean Donovan to address the problem of vacancy. He responded that “development in our city requires that some property be temporarily held off the market to assemble development opportunities”... even though “temporarily” can be thirty years or more. Although New York City has been in a “housing emergency” since 1947, the City places no restrictions on how long residential buildings or land can be kept vacant! One example: in Harlem, the buildings on the west side

Tenant Interim Lease

We support the completion of the Tenant Interim Lease (TIL) Program, as well as expansion of programs to create more HDFC's with more stringent guidelines to guarantee major repairs for tenants associations before the sale of such designated buildings, along with built-in requirements for more thorough tenant education around purchasing and maintaining these tenant controlled cooperatives. All residents involved in the importance of raising maintenance to cover costs. In addition, realistic budgets.

While buildings are in TIL the bills are paid for them Con Edison(some building being sold with gas boilers)the cost is double what they see in TIL

The new renovated buildings have Standpipe systems which you must be certified to operate.(training should be included).

We continue to encourage the early identification of HDFC's in jeopardy due to lack of performance and the establishment of specific remedies to cure problems that these HDFC's are suffering. Continued training is the key (these buildings need a support group) either made up of buildings that unite and hire training or get educated professionally. By outside firms.

The HDFC's which came out of other programs of HPD the closing turnaround time after renovation, the HDFC's are not having a choice of who buys and where the funds from the sale go. The Section 8 promised is not being confirmed. If there is no Section 8 they will fail

As CB9 is undergoing a rezoning of the northern section of the District we appreciate City Planning's efforts of including areas of Inclusionary Zoning, however it is imperative that further creation of new affordable housing units are explored through additional opportunities for more Inclusionary Zoning and any other City initiatives.

These units must be affordable within the context of the incomes of the residents of our District. We plan to continue discussions with all pertinent city agencies and developers seeking support for our efforts to facilitate the creation of new affordable housing units. Affordable is not Condominiums where the prices are out of range for residents in CB9. The only new constructions are Condominium's. Not affordable Co-ops or rentals

In all efforts CB9 encourage and support the fight to uphold, preserve and re-build the existence of each community. We have such rich cultural history which has been the foundation and continuance of neighborhoods in CB9. As a community voice we maintain our position in efforts for greater establishment of affordable housing. Therefore we continue to support and oversee the future of our children and community at large.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Overview

West Harlem has been hard hit like many other communities during these tough economic times. Unemployment is high and new jobs are scarce. Recent employment data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and City Planning indicate an unemployment rate of 8.7 % for New York City in general and lower than the national average; however, among peoples of color the percentage is reportedly much higher. In 2008, only 59.1 % of our eligible working population (104,719) was employed while the

remaining 40% of residents were without jobs. Incomes seem to average between \$15,000 and \$24,000 per year. Most of our residents still commute outside of the area for jobs and we still have a high illiteracy rate in English and Spanish that limits employment opportunities for residents.

There continues to be a number of store closings in the area. The southern portion of our district has been more fortunate with only a few closings and a number of those vacant spots have new tenants building out those spaces. Our northern district has seen an increase of fast food establishments and communication stores like Metro PCS that can pay higher commercial rents limiting space for small “mom and pop” stores. We still believe that it is in everyone’s best interest to support more retail business and professional office spaces where appropriate in our community.

Our community has certain advantages that could be attractive to new business owners. We have large sidewalks and boulevards. This distinct feature can lend itself for future street fairs, promotional events and art installations that could attract residents, tourists and fellow New Yorkers to our community. In the last fiscal year, the Community Board has worked closely with City Planning towards re-zoning our manufacturing district. Our M1 District also known as our proposed New Amsterdam Special Mixed Use District is one of the last remaining areas we have to realize new economic growth. This district is between Amsterdam and Convent Avenue from 126th Street to 130th Street. There’s an assemblage of old manufacturing buildings, including the former Taystee Bakery Complex, which could be transformed into a hub for entrepreneurs and small businesses, studio space for visual artists and dance professionals, light manufacturing and small-to-medium box retail businesses. This would be very similar to other neighborhoods like the Meatpacking district in Manhattan and other communities around the country where diversification is the new “future” for urban cities. A special Task Force was appointed to review proposals of interest with Economic Development Corporation. As a result of this joint effort, the Economic Development Corporation had community input into the selection of proposals that would enliven both 125th and 126th Streets because of the proposed building’s entrances on both streets, and the promise of local jobs at the \$100 million development that will include 100,000 square feet of manufacturing space, 90,000 square feet of office space, 40,000 square feet of retail space, and 10,000 square feet of community facility space and will create about 440 permanent jobs and 510 construction jobs. In the long-anticipated announcement, Mayor

Bloomberg stated that NYCEDC selected Janus Partners LLC and Monadnock Construction, Inc. to redevelop the former Taystee Bakery complex into CREATE @ Harlem Green, providing an additional 328,000 square feet of commercial and industrial space to house a number of tenants from creative industries. NYCEDC also selected 125th Street Equities LLC to redevelop the Corn Exchange Building, rehabilitate its landmarked base and add six additional floors for office and retail use. The second project will create 90 permanent jobs and 60 construction jobs.

Streetscaping for West 125th Street from Old Broadway to Marginal Street has been approved by the local Community Board and the Public Design Commission. The scheduled work will result in larger pedestrian sidewalks, new lighting, bicycle racks, an intermodal area for bus and ferry riders, trees and historical interpretations. Again, this will make West Harlem more attractive and viable. With Dinosaur BBQ moving on the western side of 12th Avenue, all of our restaurants in Manhattanville will be on the same side of the street which we hope will generate more foot traffic from our new waterfront park. A plan to further stretch streetscaping to Morningside Avenue on West 125th Street would complete the transformation beginning with the refurbished triangle that is home to a Richard Hunt sculpture.

Our most challenging area economically is Upper Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, St. Nicholas Avenue and West 145th Street. Though Upper Broadway has many small businesses, open spaces and good transportation, the range of retail and business services should be broadened. Many of these businesses are locked into agreements with suppliers that make it difficult to expand offerings and improve facades. It would be better if the City and property owners would support existing businesses and not just new businesses to offer a balance in service and offerings to our residents. Some streetscaping improvements are very visible on all of Amsterdam Avenue – new and/or improved awnings and signage, storefront windows, tree plantings and tree guards – the northernmost blocks of the avenue still needs more work. Amsterdam Avenue could benefit from more foot traffic, and a number of suggestions include attracting more professionals – especially creative professionals and lawyers needing office space or meeting spaces as well as diverse eateries. Some new restaurants have helped to create new energy along the commercial corridor, mixed with City College, some park spaces, elementary schools and residential apartments, bakeries and showrooms on the street level could help enliven the strip even more and

into the late evening. The proposed re-zoning on 145th Street could also help with needed foot traffic by bulking up the corners on Broadway with mixed use towers with up to three to four floors of commercial and income targeted housing.

Small Business Retention

New business models are needed for our district north of 120th Street. Many of these businesses are small, family-owned operations. There is very little hiring of local residents. The only exception is the mega Duane Reade located on 125th Street and Broadway. The management of the store reached out to the local housing projects nearby and tenant associations to hire local residents. In addition to encouraging our local businesses to consider new models in order to qualify for training support and loans, we are currently engaged in an effort to edify small and “mom and pop” businesses about incentives that are available to them but rarely used. The incentives, along with more information on and greater access to micro loans should fortify many of those who take advantage. These programs are available to all businesses and could possibly expand their audience and generate more income.

Adult Education & Literacy

Much has not changed in the year regarding adult education. Though much deserved attention is paid to elementary and secondary education, the Community Board understands that adult education and literacy needs to be a part of the conversation for our district. Community Board 9 has a large population of residents who were born in a foreign country. Many travelled to the United States so that their children would be able to get a good education. Nonetheless, the family suffers if the parents are not able to navigate life in the United States and offer the support that is necessary to help their children. It is important that we push for more literacy programs in West Harlem. ESL programs are great for those persons who just need to learn English, but it's not helpful for someone that cannot read. This is directly tied to economic survival, development and sustainability. Earlier in the fiscal year, Community Board 9 participated in the Harlem Community Development Corporation workshop which stressed this issue in small business growth. Job preparedness demands a basic skill level. Our

Community Board has many people who are willing to work but lack the necessary skills. Therefore we need this situation addressed.

Access to Capital

Businesses and cultural institutions in Community Board 9 need access to more capital. For decades we have sought investments for equipment, inventory and employee training. Our community desires an integrative, economic mix. Therefore, we need subsidies from the City to off-set the cost for a local incubator that can help develop more jobs or offer opportunities to expand.

Waterfront Development

The Community Board has been in negotiations for three years with the City of New York over the re-development of the old Marine Transfer Station at 135th Street. Delays have pushed community engagement back but in late 2009 and spring 2010, there have been two meetings drawing community residents to re-vision the site as a potential “green” site for jobs in aqua farming, hydroponics, and other sustainable jobs for local residents. The Community Board is working in partnership with We-Act which has conducted a feasibility study that would help realize that goal. Additionally, Columbia University through its community benefits agreement will assist in further development of the Harlem Piers and waterfront. Also, the Board would like the City to move the Public Design Commission to approve a pedestrian bridge improving access to the waterfront at 150th Street and Riverside Park along with Phase One of a new re-landscaping plan for the inland portion of Riverside Park North.

Arts and Culture

Arts and cultural programming and organizations are hit hardest and hit first during times of economic uncertainty. The growing crisis in the decline of the stability of many of our institutions that sponsor creative endeavor and preserve cultural heritage is of particular and primary concern for the arts and culture community of West Harlem.

Preserving and expanding cultural opportunity in our community ranked highest on our needs list, as we discussed the issues most important to the arts and cultural community of Manhattan Community Board Nine (MCB9). Developing a strategy of systemic sustainability to fuel the economic engine that cultural and creative enterprise provides is our top priority.

Local arts and cultural organizations need tools to collectively respond to economic challenges as they arise; technical support to integrate and improve fund raising and marketing initiatives; leadership and advocacy training are needed to educate the next generation of arts support and service delivery entrepreneurs. We need to identify ways to increase capacity, improve outreach and implement structural change in such a way that we are prepared to meet the fiscal challenges that force closings & curtailments rather than react to each situation on a one-trouble spot-at-a-time.

With targeted and through strategic and collaborative efforts*, the Arts & Culture Committee of MCB9 will continue its advocacy to exact meaningful results. To assist in these efforts, the Arts & Culture Committee has identified the following needs.

- Continue percentage funding for the Arts;
- Development of government supported work and performing space for artists & a Community Center to support the development of future and existing artists and their work;
- Increase funding to culturally specific (ethnic) arts organizations;
- Tax abatement legislation for businesses that donate spaces to artists;
- Technical support for emerging arts & cultural organizations and those that have a history of service to the community. Such support includes workshops on marketing, grant writing, budgeting, board development, etc.;
- Tax abatement legislation that allows small theaters to stay in business;
- The systemic integration of arts in education programming in school curriculums (Youth and Education);
- An Arts and Culture Charter School, especially since Music and Art High is no longer in our district;
- Signage- designate spaces and allow free advertisement that highlights arts and culture activity in the community (Transportation, Park & Recreation, Department of Sanitation, and DOE);
- Development of job opportunities via cultural programming and the creation of "Teaching Artist Program" to ensure economic and advancement for artists.
- Prepare future arts and culture entrepreneurs by assuring summer jobs for youth in arts, festivals and special event planning industries, i.e., providing opportunities and fostering the understanding of arts as a business;
- The formation of an advocacy group that works to ensure that a fair share of arts funding is allocated to smaller, minority-owned arts organizations whose primary mission is to support and to serve communities of color.

Expense:

DFTA	Programs that support Aging Artist Support and Establish Artists-in Residence program at Senior Centers
DOT/MTA	Subsidized and /or free advertising on MYC Buses, Subways and bus kiosk that highlights arts and culture activities and A&C organizations in CB9
HRA	Fund a workforce development initiative targeted at professional artists
DYCD	Special Funding for Summer Youth Employment Program placement at A&C organizations
DCA	Separate funding source for General Operating Expense (not program based funding)
HPD	Housing for Artist & Arts Workers
DOE	Funds for arts education in public schools Support and Establish Artists-in- Residence in After- School Programs
Capital:	
DCA	Funds to conduct a study that evaluates needs of artists and cultural organizations as well as an organized ongoing effort to collect data that document accurately, artists and arts organizations/businesses in West Harlem; Support a study on the feasibility of a cultural district in CB9; Fund Streetscape enhancements
DOE	Construct new A&C High School
EDC	Revitalization & Beautification of Arts & Cultural facilities (HSA, DTH, Harlem Stage, Children's Arts Carnival, Harlem Textile Works, others)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CB9M requests that the Manhattanville Health Station be reopened at full capacity. For almost a decade, Manhattanville Health Station remains closed

and there has been no clear plan presented as to when we can expect to see the center rehabilitated. Programs originally on site have been relocated to other facilities and areas leaving a major gap in services for this area.

CB9M requests that staffing for upper Manhattan be re-evaluated and additional staff (i.e. inspectors) be assigned. In addition agencies with their own Pest Control units such as HPD and Parks staffing should be increased so they can be more responsive to complaints. CB9M believes that the high incidence of rats in this community is directly related to many illnesses, as well as massive private construction of late without monitoring by the Dept. of Buildings as to mandated baiting account for the very visible rodent population explosion. It is essential that there be an increase in baiting in areas where there is demolition due to the disturbance of nests and habitats of rodents, who are forced to seek dwelling in nearby buildings.

CB9M requests that funds be restored to HPD for subsidies. The continued soaring of rents in CB9 as well as the elimination of the Advantage program has resulted in an increase in homeless families. HPD has continued to decrease subsidies, which causes an influx of evictions and no additional services to prevent eviction when families fall victim to the lack of available employment which is a critical issue for Community Board 9. In order to help these families break the vicious cycle of poverty, it is imperative that funds be restored to HPD for subsidies.

SENIORS

The elderly population in CB9M is increasing. During this time of budget constraints we must not lose sight of the special needs of our seniors, it is imperative that long range comprehensive planning includes housing, health and mental care, home care and senior centers. Only in this way can we ensure continued quality of life and prevent the isolation, which places many of our elderly at risk of poor health, unacceptable living conditions, poor nutrition and inaccessible services.

The astronomical cost of health care today takes an especially heavy toll on seniors, many of whom, while above the Medicaid eligibility level, cannot afford large out-of-pocket medical expenses. The Seniors Issues Committee of CB9M strongly urges support of a National Health Bill, that unlike the current prescription bill actually works, which would guarantee access to community based, affordable, quality, and health care.

A priority need of the seniors of CB9M was an additional van for the Hamilton Grange Senior Center, which was delivered. So that it can be effectively utilized, funding to cover the salary of a driver must be included

in the package, which DFTA is unable to fund. Board 9 needs the assistance of City and State Legislators to secure the funding for vital personnel. In order to encourage the independence of our seniors and facilitate their ability to maintain their social networks, it is imperative that accessible safe reliable means of transportation is made available. The escalators at the 125th Street and Broadway IRT line and the 145th Street 8th Avenue line subway station are all too often not operational, making it impossible for the frail, elderly, mother with young children, and physically handicapped adults to use these stations. While both escalators were allegedly reconstructed they continue to break down on almost daily basis. It is completely unacceptable that CB9M residents around 125th Street should have to walk twelve blocks down to Broadway and 116th Street to access the subway. Reliable access to the subway is an essential needed Senior service. The job must be done right this time and then the experience must be replicated at 145th Street.

In response to the increasing number of seniors and disabled persons in our community it is imperative that immediate attention be given to facilitating access to public places, affordable housing and other needed senior services.

POLICE

We had until recently been pleased to a point with efforts of the Department with the Upper Manhattan Initiative which includes the 30th Precinct. However recently that coverage had dropped and while crime numbers are down, by comparison to ten years ago Drugs remains a major problem. Many of the dealers have moved inside and taken over multiple apartments making under cover arrests more difficult. Increasingly Gang activity has flourished. In a briefing by the Harlem Drug Task Force in 2001 Board 9 learned that 60% of the identified Gang members lived in the Manhattanville and Grant Houses. The problem is still present although more localized in various focal points in the community, that Police Service Area 6 needs more police officers to patrol the housing developments within CD9.

The drug dealers are not the ONLY local employers, CB9M urges full utilization of the Trespass Affidavit Program on every block to combat this situation.

The Board urges an increase in both Precinct Uniformed personnel with concerns that the Initiative in the adjoining Precincts will drive Drug Dealing into the 26th Precinct especially at our borders.

More manpower is needed for the Housing Police to facilitate sweeps so that Officers from the 26th and 30th Precinct can remain on the street as a visible presence. Civilian Personnel have returned due to CB 9's efforts to bring staffing to pre-1994 levels we urge the Department to maintain these levels, and the need for more police officers.

SANITATION

While most of the drastic Sanitation cutbacks were restored, this is not enough for the quality of life in our community. This is especially true north of West 125th Street.

This is in part due to the population being 20% higher (including undocumented) than reflected in the 2000 Census. The 2010 results have remedied the undercount problem somewhat. The staffing does not reflect the actual tonnage of garbage handled by Community Board 9 Sanitation Crews. Pick-ups along the Commercial Strips of Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue (W 135th – W 155th

Streets), and 125th Street cannot keep up with utilization. We urge the City to increase staffing to facilitate three pick-ups in these locations a day.

For lots and trouble locations we need the Clean Team Restored. Recycling figures have greatly improved since 1997 however the Public Schools and City owned buildings or agencies are the greatest violators. The Office of the Mayor must reach out to local agencies to follow the rules.

We need, if not increased then, consistent Sanitation Enforcement in our Area. Board 9 has recommended Flex Shifts to reflect the findings that the majority of violations occur in the afternoon when Enforcement Officers are finished their Tour. Super block structures require special attention for health reasons. The health and integrity of our community MUST be a top priority.

FIRE

CB9M strongly requests that Fire Marshals be located in Manhattan to respond effectively and quickly to arson inspections. Community Board 9 requests that all the ambulances covering our area be upgraded or replaced.

CB9M requests the restoration of the five-man team to the engine companies. The deficiencies in our area are not limited to manpower alone. Also, that Ladder 23 and 30 must receive a hurst tool, air bags and chain saw; and Ladder 28 must receive air bags. There is also a need for the Red

Cap Program in upper Manhattan. A long-term goal is to have resident sprinklers for all multiple dwellings.

Although our request for a Juvenile Fire Setters Intervention Unit has not been funded, we strongly recommend the creation of such a Unit in Manhattan. Because of the constantly growing population in the area there will be many children that need and would benefit from the resource that this unit can provide.

PARKS

Community District 9 is fortunate to encompass over 175 acres of city parkland. This includes two NYC scenic landmarks (Morningside Park and a portion of Riverside Park) historic St. Nicholas Park and many smaller parks, triangles, a significant stretch of the Broadway Malls, half a dozen playgrounds outside of those within parks, and community gardens. CD9 is proud of the new West Harlem Piers Park which the community worked long and hard to see realized. Unfortunately our north-south greenway is still marred by a section bounded to the west by North River Sewage Treatment Plant and to the east by the Amtrak rail lines with southern and northern boundaries at approximately 138th Street and 146th Street respectively. This area is largely given over to uses such as salt storage and industrial sheds that are an eyesore and potential health hazard to our residents. Community Board 9 has overwhelmingly supported a resolution calling for this zone to be designated as parkland.

The need for safe, well maintained parks and open spaces has consistently been and remains a high priority for this community. It is imperative that our residents be provided with recreational havens for our youngsters (29% of our population) and our seniors (12% and ever increasing).

Expense Needs:

1. **Park maintenance** is the overriding priority in our district. Park usage in our district is exceptionally high especially in the warm weather and such heavy usage takes a tremendous toll on our parks and open space. In addition, much of the district's parkland is located on the rugged and steeply sloping terrain which lies on the east and west flanks of our district making routine maintenance a challenge. Park staffing and equipment are often seen as inadequate to meet these needs. Our parks are sorely in need of additional

maintenance workers in all our parks. We need trash pickup to be doubled over the peak summer season from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Similarly the level of horticultural staffing is inadequate during periods of peak plant growth and heavy usage, leaving large portions of our beautiful parks often looking overgrown and neglected during this time of year;

2. **PEP officers.** Our district's need for safe and usable parks requires that park regulations are enforced. We have an acute need for additional Parks Enforcement Patrol (PEP) Officers to carry out this task. Dedicated PEP officers have been provided for the West Harlem Piers Park but our other parks including Upper Riverside, Morningside, St. Nicholas and Montefiore Parks are woefully understaffed in this regard;
3. **Recreation programs, supervisors and more park rangers** are needed to engage children in team sports and teach those environmental values, urban gardening and training in horticulture. Since there are so few day care centers and many of our schools are poorly equipped, our parks must be programmed to provide alternatives, which can stimulate career opportunities for our older youth;
4. **Street Trees.** While many street trees have been planted in our district the board has identified a number of areas that still have an inadequate number of trees.

Capital Needs:

1. **Pedestrian access through our parks and to our waterfront is a critical need in our district.** There is no access to St. Nicholas Park from along its western boundary between 135th Street and 141st Street. With the relocation of the Hamilton Grange into the north end of the park there is a pressing need for park and Grange visitors to be able to gain access to the park from the west. This could be accomplished via a new stair from St. Nicholas Terrace at approximately 140th Street that would tie into the existing path system in the park. While a number of park stairways elsewhere in CD9 have been rebuilt or repaired over the last five years such as the stairs leading to St. Clair Place in Riverside Park, many other park stairs remain in treacherous or unusable condition. These include stairs at 114th and 121st Streets in the upper level of Morningside Park and Stairs at 133rd and 139th Streets in St. Nicholas Park. Access too much of Upper Riverside Park from points east is also severely limited. New pedestrian access routes are needed

over the railroad tracks as well as the completion of the renovation of the existing crossing at 148th Street. A section of asphalt sidewalk in Riverside Park along the eastern edge of northbound Riverside Drive between the north end of Sakura Park and the southern end of the Riverside Drive viaduct also needs to be upgraded with a surface in keeping with the historic design of the park;

2. **Recreational facilities** are in great demand in our district and a number of DPR facilities need to be renovated or rebuilt. A recreational priority in Morningside Park is the rebuilding of the basketball courts at 118th Street. There are also a number of underutilized DPR properties in CD9 that could become real community assets through capital improvement. These include the park house in Annunciation Playground at 135th Street and Amsterdam Ave. and the Croton Aqueduct Gatehouse at 119th Street and Amsterdam Avenue;
3. **Adequate lighting** is critical to park safety. Lighting for bicyclists along Cherry Walk in Riverside Park between 110th Street and St. Clair place is critically important to the safety of riders who have to contend with the glare of oncoming headlights from the West Side Highway and a complete lack of park lighting for the bike path. The perimeter of St. Nicholas Park would be considerably enhanced by providing historic lamp posts with pedestrian side arms as has been done at Morningside Park. Inadequate lighting on the 135th Street Stairs in Riverside Park leading down to 12th Avenue is detrimental to the new business which are struggling and need safe and well lit pedestrian access in order to survive;
4. **Upper Riverside Park Dog Run.** There is no dog run within easy walking distance for a growing community of dog owners living on or near Riverside Drive between 135th and 155th Street. We urge DPR to find and develop a site to fill this need.

EDUCATION/LIBRARIES

As civic institutions anchoring our community, neighborhood schools ought to be encouraged to aggressively pursue after-school, weekend, and summer enrichment programs designed to encourage healthy activities that sharpen their charges physical, social, and cognitive skills. Neighborhoods with high poverty rates have higher rates of obesity, with corresponding increases in the rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, cancer, heart disease, and, ultimately, morality

rates. Though it's difficult to track, gang activity among our youth is rising with corresponding increases in truancy, vandalism, violence, and criminal activity.

Of course many of the problems our children face can be traced back to challenges in the home, consequences of unemployment, low-income, incarceration, drug addiction, and debilitating illness. Other more benign causes include parents or guardians who are non-English speaking immigrants, participating in foster care, and single and working. Overcoming these difficulties often requires access to educational resources and support services like classes for English Language Learners, budget management, employment counseling, anger/stress management, homework coaching, healthy cooking options. While most of our schools are receiving Federal Title I grants, financial assistance for the education of children in low-income families, is not enough. To the extent that these programs exist, our community lacks sufficient outreach mechanisms to inform parents. Even our most stable and engaged parents have difficulties ensuring that their children's schools are providing them with a safe and effective learning environment.

The Youth, Education and Library Committee had identified the needs outlined below based on information gathered from community members and neighborhood institutions as well as committee projects undertaken during the 2010-11 term. With so much at risk, to protect our youth and the institutions that service them, Community Board 9's Youth, Education and Library Committee has identified the following categories of district needs for the coming year:

- Funding and technical assistance to assist in monitoring, and working with community members and organizations to improve, the quality of instruction and programming in the District 3, District 5 and District 6 schools within our catchment;
- Task force commissioned to study population growth and development in our community in order to produce a full accounting of school seat needs and other needs related to youth, education and libraries;
- Funding and technical support for existing adult learning programs and to develop new programs as needed;
- Vocational training and career training (including retraining) for adults of all ages to prepare our community to access and develop the full range of 21st century employment opportunities;
- Fully funded summer youth employment programs;

- Database software and database management training for CB9 District Office staff as needed to better organize and leverage community contacts, thereby expanding community outreach around education-related issues;
- Ensure that schools have and fully implement adequate and appropriate technology and professional development to provide parents with timely and relevant information regarding child-, school- and district-level information;
- Funding and technical assistance to conduct an accounting and inventory of existing afterschool, weekend and summer programs, including summer youth employment programs;
- Funding and technical assistance to preserve and protect afterschool, weekend and summer programs that enrich our youth's academic and employment opportunities, including summer youth employment programs;
- Develop and expand genuine parent support programs by providing funding and professional development for CB9 District Office personnel dedicated to orienting both new and current families to school- and community-based educational opportunities and other social services;
- Funding and technical assistance to develop opportunities for productive community collaboration between residents and public offices, community-based organizations, philanthropic and advocacy organizations; and
- Funding to preserve and expand public library access and programming.

Faced with such economic, social and moral peril, to protect our families we must work together proactively and strategically to restore our community's safety net and help our children and all community members reach their full potential. With adequate resources to address the needs outlined above, CB9 will help ensure a brighter, healthier, more prosperous future for all community residents.

ENVIRONMENT

CB9M requests additional inspectors assigned to our district. We have been concerned for many years about the quality of our drinking water and request that DEP view this as a priority. The current number of inspectors in our area does not have the capacity to handle the level of complaints that have been recorded as coming into our community by 311.

CB9M requests an expedited delivery of new equipment as well as coordinated training of the staff during emergencies at the Sewage Treatment Plant. As we have observed, as a result of the recent explosion and fire, it is time to replace and upgrade existing equipment and evaluate and implement needed precautions to prevent a possible catastrophe. The air quality needs to be monitor consistently and evaluated for risks to the health of our residents.

CB9M requests that the flooding of catch basins be addressed immediately. CB9M continues to be subjected to the flooding of catch basins along St. Nicholas and Morningside Drive; it is commonplace to see "mini lakes". This is an intolerable situation that must be addressed immediately given the risk of West Nile Virus. In addition it makes it especially difficult for our senior citizens to "navigate" the cross walk.

CB9M requests in light of the Mayor's "Clean Heat" initiative that there will see an increase in funds that will enable building owners in our district to be proactive and begin the process of conversion to number two oil or natural gas.

TRANSPORTATION

The Manhattan Community Board 9 residents need availability of convenient and reliable mass transportation. They need subways and buses that deliver them to their place of employment on time. The failure of the MTA to increase services that correspond with the 15% growth in mass transit utilization causes delays that make our residents travel more difficult.

The M4, M5 & M104 should be extended as well as extend the (M60) service, however the lack of additional buses on a regular basis is causing buses to bypass bus stops southbound to expedite schedule adjustments for lower Manhattan leaving our community stranded. CB9M is also in the need for bus pads along the route of Amsterdam Avenue. Reconstruction efforts both within and without our Board area has placed undue strain on other of our arteries. Broadway and 125th Street has become heavily congested; given the many differing objects of the drivers entering the intersection, it has become increasingly hazardous. During peak period, traffic enforcement is required for this area.

There is a desperate need for adequate parking facilities in the Community Board 9 district. Currently Columbia construction has taken away parking from residents which is greatly needed. Board 9 recommends that a method of coordination be "created so that all changes are routed through the

Manhattan Borough Commissioners Office, with subsequent input from the Board before implementation.

The conditions of our road surfaces north of West 135th Street require reconstruction, NOT RESURFACING, on Amsterdam Avenue, St. Nicholas Avenue, as well as Broadway.

197A PLAN

As early as the 1980's, this Board recognized the need to identify comprehensive and integrative approaches to improve the quality of life in CB9M.

After modifications to the original Plan, City Council adopted CB9's 197A Plan in December 2007. In 2009, the Department of City Planning undertook the West Harlem Rezoning Project. This Project is key to the implementation of goals and objectives articulated in the 197-A Plan, specifically the creation and maintenance of affordable housing, support of Economic Development, and the preservation of neighborhood character. Notwithstanding, there are many other goals and objectives to be met.

We are aware of the budgetary restrictions affecting all phases of government funding. We want to do our part in conserving these resources and utilizing them in a way that will be beneficial to all in the community.

Working together does make a difference!



Reverend Georgiette Morgan-Thomas
Chair