

LENOXFIVE 127 BLOCK ASSOCIATION

December 8, 2015

Meeting Minutes

1) Announcements

- a. Annual Harlem Grown Fundraiser Wednesday 12/9 – Tickets available at the door for \$100.
- b. Wednesday 12/9 – 28th Precinct Community Council Meeting @ 6:30 PM
- c. Thursday 12/17 – 32nd Precinct Community Council Meeting @ 34 W 134th Street
- d. Wednesday 1/6 CB 10 Meeting @ 2nd floor Art Gallery of the Adam Clayton Powell State office building (163 West 125th Street). All are encouraged to attend.
- e. **Tuesday 1/12 – LenoxFive127 BA meeting with Clyde Williams, Candidate for Congress as our special guest. All residents are strongly encouraged to attend.**
- f. 12/8 is the last chance to order your LenoxFive127 Sweatshirt
 - i. Sweatshirts will not be passed out until our next BA meeting
- g. New People
 - i. Natalie and Pres at #27 was their first meeting
 - ii.
- h. Officers Peter Diviesti and Pearce Canavan introduced themselves as our Neighborhood Coordination Officers
 - i. We are included in Sector A (127th Street to 132nd Street from Fifth Avenue to St. Nicholas Avenue)
 - ii. NYPD Has Started a new program called “Neighborhood Coordination Officer Program” to strengthen ties between our local communities at the NYPD.
 - iii. Introduced a new program called “Ideascale.” Rolled out for the 32nd Precinct (the north side of 127th Street) as a way of making public safety and quality of life complaints to the police department instead of calling 311.
 - iv. Instead of calling 311, the officers encouraged those in the 32nd Precinct to register as the following link: nypd32.ideascale.com
 - v. To make complaints, you post them on the board. Police officers respond directly to messages.
 - vi. Question: The south side of our block is the 28th Precinct and the north side is the 32nd Precinct, can we make our block either one precinct or the other? The officers said that cannot be changed.
 - vii. Question: Is the Ideascale program going to roll out for the 28th Precinct (South Side of our block) and the officer responded yes, it will launch sometime soon. Every precinct will eventually get the Ideascale program.
 - viii. Officers asked everyone to register. Marilyn pointed out that once you register, the NYPD will send you a notification that your profile is approved.

- ix. Question: Can it be incorporated directly into the Google Group? No, Officers mentioned that the Ideascale program works only on their website and that complaints through their website can be anonymous.
 - x. **The Ideascale Website will be included in the next MailChimp Blast.**
 - xi. **Officer Peter Devesti mentioned there is a \$3,000 grant program that we can participate in and he went to get cards about the program to pass out to the meeting attendees. There is a January 25th Deadline for the \$3,000 grant.**
 - xii. Officer Garcia and Officer Kinsey joined the meeting. They work in the Patrol Car in our neighborhood. Officers Kinsey and Garcia both work in collaboration with our Neighborhood Coordination officers.
- 2) Treasury Report – Marilyn
- a. Total including PayPal is \$1,371.00 as of the time of the meeting
- 3) Membership Committee – Marilyn
- a. 18 Month Recap
 - i. 13 Meetings, 2 Activities (Cleanups)
 - ii. 186 Residents have been identified with Name and/or Email
 - iii. 153 of those residents have attending meetings or activity
 - iv. Each resident attends an average of 3 (three) meetings/activities
 - v. First meeting in June 2014 had a total of 35 people
 - vi. Average number of people who attend our monthly meeting is 32.
 - vii. 36 Dues Paying Members total
 - viii. Numbers are strong, but Marilyn will make a push to include more people for 2016.
- 4) Park Committee Report – Tal
- a. Update on Harlem Grown
 - i. Harlem Grown has obtained a lease w/ option to buy the land with HPD Approval. HPD has preliminarily approved the deal, but not completely yet
 - ii. Tax Liens on property will not be forgiven by NYC. There is about \$200,000 in outstanding taxes.
 - iii. LenoxFive127 and Harlem Grown still trying to reach out to city council members to help
 - iv. Encouraging everyone to attend their fundraiser on Wednesday night
 - v. Playground equipment from the lot has been donated to a school on 135th Street by Harlem Grown and the Block Association
 - vi. Three foreclosure actions on the property and eight tax liens. A court has approved one of the foreclosure actions, and there is some action to try to pay some of the tax liens before the foreclosure date.
 - vii. Question: Is there a chance we may lose the lot? Yes, but it is a slim chance. So far everything that is needed looks like it will come together before the foreclosure action.
 - viii. Question: How much money is needed to come up with? Overall, the approximately \$200,000 to pay off the liens. Tax servicers do allow payment plans, HG still working through their options.
- 5) Sanitation/Beautification Committee – Sandy

- a. LenoxFive127 has been awarded the \$1,000 Love Your Block Grant. The grant money to come sometime in January. We have already attended orientation and signed the grant agreement.
 - i. All city services that take part in the grant met with us and we were given 15 minutes each with a small team with each service provider – Dept of Parks, Dept of Transportation, and Dept of Sanitation. We have contacts for these folks now and we can reach out to them anytime.
 - ii. The BA has decided to use the \$1,000 grant to put a tree guard around the tree in front of Mt. Zion Baptist Church (#26). This helps prevent dog poop/urine from poisoning the tree and prevents people from walking on the soil.
 - iii. The Tree guard costs \$850 plus contractor’s fee.
 - iv. Part of the grant is that we can request other items, for example free Mulch. We can ask for 6 cubic yards which can pretty much cover all trees on both sides of our block.
 - 1. We will do this as part of our event in late May, we can mulch all trees and have a social event.
 - v. Department of sanitation requests can be made (for instance dog curbing “detectives” can help catch people in the act, or to replace missing trash bins)
 - vi. Department of Transportation requests can include Bicycle rack, speed bumps, street light survey, and to fix broken/damaged street signs.
 - vii. Parks Department Requests include mulch, tree survey, tree stewardship workshops, and free daffodils
 - viii. We will apply for the \$3,000 Grant called “Love Your Neighborhood”. We are eligible even though we won the \$1,000 grant already. Deadline is January 25th.
 - ix. Question: Is it a lottery or a selection committee that chooses the winners? There is a committee that expects a full application including a budget, plan how to use the money, people who would be responsible, etc.
 - x. Question: Is the 127th Street Park’s question of opening a factor in whether or not we should make that a part of our \$3,000 grant application? No, since it is planning to open this year we should include it.
 - xi. Sandy makes a call for more people to join the Beautification Committee – Marilyn says if you want to join you can email the block association at lenoxfive127@gmail.com
- 6) CLC Committee – Alicia
- a. Alicia and the CLC committee has been going to the police precinct meetings and there has not been a good turnout but it is important that we go.
 - b. Meetings allow you to get to know the NYPD officers and hear concerns from other people in the meeting.
 - c. Alicia (master pie baker) promises a freshly baked pie to the person who attends the most meetings in 2016 ☺
 - d. The neighborhood watch signs are up and look good, George mentions that 126th Street has the same signs now.
- 7) Board Elections
- a. Slate Nominees

- i. Michael Benevides (President nominee)
 - 1. Live at #78 for 7.5 years
 - 2. Have seen great change especially the last year
 - 3. Wants to help the committees continue their great work
- ii. Tiiffani Chambers (VP nominee)
 - 1. Lives at #21
 - 2. Homeowner on the block for almost 12 years
 - 3. Works downtown on Wall Street in finance and marketing
 - 4. Trustee of the Bank Street School of Education, Member of the Mt. Sinai center for culture and community affairs
 - 5. Has been an active of the LenoxFive BA with the CLC and the Park Committees
 - 6. Main Focus of VP would be: 1) Get engagement from Lenox Ave vendors to help with keeping trash cleared 2) Get more involved with applying for grants that the city provides
- iii. Katharina Wilson (Treasurer Nominee)
 - 1. Lives at #50
 - 2. Would like to support committees
- iv. John McGuinness (Secretary Nominee)
 - 1. Lives at #5
 - 2. Business owner in neighborhood, member of Harlem Park 2 Park, Volunteers with the Harlem Arts Festival, the Harlem Boys and Girls Club
- v. Fallon Carter (Sargent at Arms Nominee)
 - 1. Lives at #1 for five years
 - 2. Wants to help the block to continue to get better
- b. Question: Will we have a chance to question the candidates before we elect them? Can we do this when the candidates are all here? We didn't know we were going to elect the slate tonight, wants to give other members an opportunity to ask questions.
 - i. Minutes clearly stated that tonight was the elections and that it would happen tonight.
- c. Question to Katharina: How long have you lived on the block? Answer: 7 years
- d. Question to all: How many of the candidates are renters? Answer: One
- e. Do the term limits from the prior bylaws apply to this current slate? Yes
- f. Is the association aware that we cannot get non-profit status with the way the bylaws are currently set with the term limits? Yes, we are aware and the bylaws need to be tweaked to start working toward non-profit status. Non Profit status is something that needs to be addressed by the new board.
- g. Question: Does the rule stand that only dues paying members are allowed to vote? Yes.
- h. Question: If you live on this block and cannot afford to pay the membership fee, does that mean you cannot vote? Yes, but that rule will be waived for this evening.
- i. Question: Was the first board elected by only dues paying members? No.
- j. Kathy expresses concern that a lot of people aren't coming to the meetings because they have to pay to participate. And the BA should be able to represent everyone who

can afford to pay and everyone who can't. Marilyn agrees and one of her goals for the membership committee in 2016 is to make sure everyone knows the BA is inclusionary.

- k. Kathy is concerned that the slate represents only homeowners
- l. Michael makes sure that everyone knows that the BA is here to help everyone and there is no delineation between homeowners and renters
- m. Kathy informs everyone that the majority of people who have been living on the block for 10 years do not trust the BA because dues are required to vote.
- n. Marilyn makes a motion to allow all meeting attendees to vote whether they have paid or not, all agree.
- o. Marilyn makes a motion to ask if entire slate is elected in its entirety
- p. Slate is elected in its entirety**
 - i. Unanimous decision except for one oppose

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY JANUARY 12TH WITH CLYDE WILLIAMS

Meeting breaks for holiday social event.