



East Harlem Center Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

Thursday, March 28, 2019

6:00 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

East Harlem Neighborhood Health Action Center

Advisory Committee Attendees:

- Chantanae Singletary, Office of Council Member Diana Ayala
- John Greene, Community Board 11 member and East Harlem resident
- Jose Rodriguez, East Harlem Center parent
- Matthew Washington, Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
- Michelle Booker, Office of Congressman Adriano Espaillat
- Nilsa Orama, Community Board 11 Chair and East Harlem resident
- Pilar DeJesus, East Harlem community member
- Raja Flores, Children's Aid alumnus
- Shana Harmongoff, Office of Senator Brian Benjamin
- Tammy Rodriguez, East Harlem Center parent

Advisory Committee Members Not Able to Attend:

- Denise (Mille) Jerez, East Harlem resident
- Gabrielle Hernandez, Office of Assembly Member Robert Rodriguez
- Ja'Nai Harris, East Harlem Center alumnus
- Neven Cepeda, East Harlem Center youth
- Pennylane Ortiz, East Harlem Center parent and alum, resident, Children's Aid Trustee

Children's Aid Staff:

- Ali Tan, Chief of Staff
- Amy Scharf, Chair of the Board of Trustees
- Anthony Ramos, VP of Marketing and Communications
- David Giordano, Director of the East Harlem Center
- David Sweeny, Assistant VP of Real Estate and Facilities
- Don Shacknai, Chief Operating Officer
- Courtenaye Jackson, General Counsel
- Keyla Espinal Antigua, Assistant Director of Public Policy
- Phoebe Boyer, President & CEO
- Sandra Escamilla, VP of Adolescence
- Yolanda McBride, Director of Public Policy

Meeting Notes

- The meeting opened with Phoebe Boyer, President & CEO of Children's Aid, welcoming advisory committee members to the meeting.
- Yolanda McBride, Director of Public Policy provided a recap of the community meeting held earlier in the week on Tuesday, March 26.
 - There was a low turnout of parents and community members despite the push to get East Harlem Center families and community members to attend.
 - Emails were sent, announcements were made at the Community Board 11 meeting earlier in the month, flyers were distributed to parents, parents received texts, and flyers were also distributed in the larger community.
- Yolanda stated Children's Aid will take a couple of different approaches to get the information to the families and community members who were not present.
 - For the East Harlem Center families not present we will send them a letter providing an update on the center and who they can contact if they have questions.
 - Yolanda will attend meetings where our families will be present including the Saturday Deaf and Hard of Hearing program, the summer camp orientation meeting, and other small parent meetings.
 - Children's Aid will attend the next Community Board 11 meeting in April to provide an update on the center rebuilding process.
- The advisory committee agreed with the suggestions provided and also provided additional ideas.
- During the community meeting earlier in the week, families and community members present raised the following concerns:
 - Will the mix of Mount Sinai services and programs operating out of the new facility be accessible and services actually needed by the East Harlem community?
 - Will Children's Aid have a separate entrance from the Mt. Sinai entrance?
 - Can Children's Aid guarantee the Play Street will remain?
 - How much space will Children's Aid have in the new building?
- Phoebe discussed the next steps for Children's Aid.
 - Children's Aid will finalize their analysis on programs and space needs for the new building.

- Once the analysis is complete, Children's Aid will have more targeted conversations with the developer (Oren Evenhar) and have them develop schematics that accurately reflect what Children's Aid needs them to build.
- Phoebe then reviewed the list of non-negotiables raised by the Advisory Committee. This list is based on what was discussed in the four special meetings held between November 2018 and March 2019:
 - Children's Aid must own the space
 - No substance abuse programs or programs that involve radiation in the Mount Sinai portion of the building
 - From Children's Aid's perspective, we want to make sure there are no competing programs (e.g., adolescent health and mental health)
 - Outdoor space for the older youth and the little ones
- Phoebe clarified that the negotiations process could go fast or slow. Children's Aid will provide an update at the next meeting on May 16, 2019.
- As a follow up to this meeting, Yolanda said she would reach out to the developer (Oren Evenhar) to request a massing schematic and to Mt. Sinai to learn more about the current usage of Mt. Sinai health services in the East Harlem community.