



COMMUNITY BOARD 11
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BRONX, NY 10462
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Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson
Chair Bernadette M. Ferrara
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- Leadership*
- Community Development & Budget Priorities*
- Economic Development*
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- Ethics & Disciplinary*
- Health & Social Services*
- Housing*
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- Parks & Recreation*
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- Sanitation & Environmental Protection*
- Transportation*

April 1, 2024

Dear Fellow Stakeholders,

On Thursday, March 28, 2024, Bronx CB11 (Community Board 11) voted in favor of the proposed Metro-North rezoning proposal. While the vote was not unanimous (25 to five), it came following the Board’s [public hearing](#) and other events, at which CB11 constituents have expressed various concerns worthy of consideration. CB11 believes it is crucial to implement various stipulations and contingencies with regard to impending infrastructure changes to the neighborhoods of Van Nest, Morris Park and Parkchester.

CB11 kindly requests a response to this letter within 30 days of receipt and looks forward to collaborating with you to address issues raised by CB11 constituents. Your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated.

OVERVIEW OF BRONX CB11’s DISTRICT

Bronx CB11 serves as a vital hub for a diverse community spanning neighborhoods which include Allerton, Indian Village, Little Yemen, Morris Park, Pelham Parkway, Van Nest, and others, covering zip codes 10460, 10461, 10462, 10467 and 10469.

At present, CB11 is guided by a committed team of 43 volunteer members and three full-time paid staff members. The Board’s responsibilities are extensive, encompassing a wide array of areas such as parks, land use, rezoning, transportation, infrastructure, city services, health, youth and education, civic engagement, public safety, liquor license applications, cannabis permits and more. Collaborating closely with agencies and local representatives, the board ensures the provision of essential services to its constituents.

CB11 boasts an abundance of picturesque parks, green spaces, and landscapes that contribute to the borough’s charm and the district’s allure. However, a pressing issue confronting our community revolves around the preservation of these parklands.

There is a resounding call from the community for the establishment of new infrastructure and the enhancement of park maintenance, including measures for pest control, waste management, enforcement of regulations and security. Given



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that 73% of residents (with 22.6% under the age of 18 and 14.2% over the age of 65) reside within walking distance of 19 parks or open spaces, spanning a total of 2,303 acres or 14% of the parkland within Bronx District 11, the imperative to safeguard these environmental assets is paramount.

Over the decade from 2010 to 2020, the population of CB11 witnessed a notable increase from 113,232 to 119,666 residents, marking a 5.7% rise according to the United States Census. This growth has exacerbated issues related to street parking scarcity, leading to extended search times for suitable parking spots, often exceeding 45 minutes. The introduction of the Bronxdale Road Diet in 2022, ostensibly in response to this challenge, has resulted in pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist confusion and congestion, culminating in several unfortunate and even fatal accidents.

Addressing this, our community has advocated for multi-level parking solutions and a reevaluation of rental car services' impact on the already limited parking spaces. Concerns also loom over the anticipated Metro-North stations proposed for the Bronx, particularly in District 11 at Van Nest and Morris Park, with fears that the existing parking predicament will be exacerbated. Moreover, infrastructure maintenance, given the escalating transportation demand, is imperative - evidenced by deteriorating road conditions, potholes, flooding, and mud incursions.

Youth, education, and child welfare remain salient concerns for CB11. With a population nearing 120,000 and only 32 public schools and 3 libraries, the youth and families of our district grapple with diverse health and socioeconomic challenges. Notably, 22.6% of District 11's population comprises youth under the age of 18, with a significant proportion experiencing income levels below the NYC.gov poverty threshold, with these families spending at least 49.4% of their income to rent. Educational disparities persist, exacerbated by overcrowded or shuttered schools, inequitable access to technology and basic learning materials, and a dearth of functional park facilities for essential programming such as sports, camps, and environmental education. Additionally, the absence of a recreational or community center offering free cultural and educational programs, including dance, college readiness, and ESL courses (23.7% of the district self-identify as having limited English proficiency), underscores the urgent need for comprehensive health education, anti-violence initiatives, and substance abuse prevention to foster social cohesion and holistic community development.

2020 CENSUS DATA

The following two pages contain data from the most recent 2020 Decennial Census, which includes basic demographic and housing characteristics for New York City, the borough, and this community district. The data also includes a view of change over time since 2010.

New York City

	2010		2020		Change, 2010-2020		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percentage Point
AGE							
Total population	8,175,133	100.00	8,804,190	100.00	629,057	7.7	0.0
Total persons under 18 years	1,768,111	21.6	1,740,142	19.8	-27,969	-1.6	-1.8
MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RACE / HISPANIC ORIGIN							
Total population	8,175,133	100.0	8,804,190	100.0	629,057	7.7	0.0
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	2,336,076	28.6	2,490,350	28.3	154,274	6.6	-0.3
White non-Hispanic	2,722,904	33.3	2,719,856	30.9	-3,048	-0.1	-2.4
Black non-Hispanic	1,861,295	22.8	1,776,891	20.2	-84,404	-4.5	-2.6
Asian non-Hispanic	1,028,119	12.6	1,373,502	15.6	345,383	33.6	3.0
Some other race, non-Hispanic	78,063	1.0	143,632	1.6	65,569	84.0	0.6
Non-Hispanic of two or more races	148,676	1.8	299,959	3.4	151,283	101.8	1.6
HOUSING OCCUPANCY							
Total housing units	3,371,062	100.0	3,618,635	100.0	247,573	7.3	0.0
Occupied housing units	3,109,784	92.2	3,370,448	93.1	260,664	8.4	0.9
Vacant housing units	261,278	7.8	248,187	6.9	-13,091	-5.0	-0.9

The Bronx

	2010		2020		Change, 2010-2020		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percentage Point
AGE							
Total population	1,385,108	100.00	1,472,654	100.00	87,546	6.3	0.0
Total persons under 18 years	368,196	26.6	349,579	23.7	-18,617	-5.1	-2.9
MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RACE / HISPANIC ORIGIN							
Total population	1,385,108	100.0	1,472,654	100.0	87,546	6.3	0.0
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	741,413	53.5	806,463	54.8	65,050	8.8	1.3
White non-Hispanic	151,209	10.9	130,796	8.9	-20,413	-13.5	-2.0
Black non-Hispanic	416,695	30.1	419,393	28.5	2,698	0.6	-1.6
Asian non-Hispanic	47,335	3.4	67,766	4.6	20,431	43.2	1.2
Some other race, non-Hispanic	12,494	0.9	19,866	1.3	7,372	59.0	0.4
Non-Hispanic of two or more races	15,962	1.2	28,370	1.9	12,408	77.7	0.7
HOUSING OCCUPANCY							
Total housing units	511,896	100.0	547,030	100.0	35,134	6.9	0.0
Occupied housing units	483,449	94.4	522,450	95.5	39,001	8.1	1.1
Vacant housing units	28,447	5.6	24,580	4.5	-3,867	-13.6	-1.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary Files
Population Division, New York City Department of City Planning

Bronx Community District 11

	2010		2020		Change, 2010-2020		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Percentage Point
AGE							
Total population	113,232	100.00	119,666	100.00	6,434	5.7	0.0
Total persons under 18 years	26,014	23	25,881	21.6	-133	-0.5	-1.4
MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE RACE / HISPANIC ORIGIN							
Total population	113,232	100.0	119,666	100.0	6,434	5.7	0.0
Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	47,838	42.2	53,788	44.9	5,950	12.4	2.7
White non-Hispanic	31,037	27.4	26,285	22.0	-4,752	-15.3	-5.4
Black non-Hispanic	22,981	20.3	23,567	19.7	586	2.5	-0.6
Asian non-Hispanic	8,671	7.7	11,154	9.3	2,483	28.6	1.6
Some other race, non-Hispanic	1,114	1.0	1,822	1.5	708	63.6	0.5
Non-Hispanic of two or more races	1,591	1.4	3,050	2.5	1,459	91.7	1.1
HOUSING OCCUPANCY							
Total housing units	43,691	100.0	44,864	100.0	1,173	2.7	0.0
Occupied housing units	41,256	94.4	42,686	95.1	1,430	3.5	0.7
Vacant housing units	2,435	5.6	2,178	4.9	-257	-10.6	-0.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary Files
Population Division, New York City Department of City Planning

Statement on Data Accuracy

Under Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the Census Bureau is legally bound to protect the privacy of individuals participating in the decennial census. To adhere to the law and to avoid the disclosure of information about individual respondents, the Census Bureau has historically applied a host of techniques, such as top- and bottom-coding, imputation, table- and cell-suppression, and data swapping. The Census Bureau is employing a new technique with the 2020 Census, referred to as the Disclosure Avoidance System (DAS), based on differential privacy. With this approach, the Census Bureau “infuses noise” systematically across census data and sets a quantified disclosure risk, referred to as the Privacy Loss Budget (PLB).

While the new DAS approach may diminish the risk of disclosure concerns, it comes at a cost to data accuracy. Consequently, 2020 Census data users should be aware that all sub-state counts, except for housing units (which are unaffected by the DAS), may be adjusted to protect the privacy of Census participants and may be subject to reduced accuracy. Because DAS noise infusion is randomized, it is impossible for data users to know the degree to which any individual statistic is altered. However, it is possible to say that in general the relative size of errors decreases as counts increase. Consequently, data users should have greater confidence in the accuracy of the data as counts get larger. Further, an evaluation of a Privacy-Protected Microdata File (PPMF), treated with a Disclosure Avoidance System like the one applied to 2020 redistricting data, showed that counts of 300 or more rarely have sizable errors (error beyond +/- 10% of the count). Therefore, while data users need to be cognizant of data accuracy limitations, they should have confidence in conclusions based on sizable counts, which are relatively unaffected by the Census Bureau’s latest disclosure avoidance method.

Below is a compilation of essential community needs, meticulously crafted through community input and granted advisory approval by CB11 in anticipation of the forthcoming Metro North stations. Presented in no hierarchical order, each item stands as indispensable to our community's flourishing and enduring vitality.

MINORITY WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (MWBE)

Women-owned minority businesses are a vital and burgeoning segment of the entrepreneurial landscape in the Bronx, making significant contributions to the borough's economic dynamism

and diversity. Recent statistical insights underscore the substantial presence of women entrepreneurs from minority backgrounds, notably Hispanic and African American women. These enterprises not only furnish essential goods and services to Bronx residents but also serve as engines for job creation, innovation, and community advancement. Through tailored initiatives and supportive networks addressing the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, such as access to capital and mentorship programs, we can ensure that these businesses are poised for sustained growth and success.

STEM SCHOOLS

Given the impending influx of new families anticipated with the Metro North project, it becomes even more pressing to allocate space and resources to address the current deficit in education and youth services within district 11. Inclusion of a minimum of three STEM schools in the overall plan is not only imperative but also strategic. Research underscores the significance of STEM education, emphasizing its critical role in preparing our children for the future and bolstering various aspects of our community, including diversity, workforce development, and economic growth. This proactive approach ensures that as our community grows, we will remain equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow, thereby fostering a vibrant and sustainable future for all.

CAPPING ZONES TO R6A

Limiting zoning to R6A for the Van Nest and Morris Park Metro North stations offers a strategic approach to development with numerous benefits. Firstly, it preserves the neighborhood's character by ensuring that new construction aligns with existing buildings, maintaining the area's unique identity. Preventing overcrowding and strain on infrastructure while preserving green space is forefront. This controlled growth encourages the integration of affordable housing units, addressing the pressing need for diverse housing options in the area. Additionally, it helps safeguard existing open spaces and parks, which are vital for residents' recreation and well-being.

Moreover, maintaining zoning at R6A ensures that the current infrastructure and public services can adequately support the population. Overdevelopment beyond this limit could possibly strain resources, diminishing residents' quality of life. By implementing a zoning cap, residents gain greater input and control over the direction of development, enabling them to shape their neighborhood's future according to their vision and priorities.

Furthermore, capping zoning promotes environmentally sustainable development practices,

Overall, limiting zoning to R6A for the Van Nest and Morris Park Metro North stations provides a balanced approach to development, preserving neighborhood character, promoting affordability, protecting open spaces, maintaining infrastructure, empowering the community, and fostering environmental sustainability.

INDEPENDENT INFRASTRUCTURE/FLOODING ASSESSMENT

Conducting an independent infrastructure and flooding assessment is imperative, especially considering concerns raised at CB11's public hearing regarding sinkholes.

Firstly, an independent assessment allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the existing infrastructure, including drainage systems and flood defenses. Such assessments provide valuable insights into the overall state of the community's infrastructure, beyond just flooding concerns. This includes evaluating transportation networks, utilities, and public facilities, all of which can impact the community's resilience to natural disasters and other hazards.

Additionally, independent assessments help inform urban planning and development decisions by ensuring that proposed projects are compatible with the area's infrastructure capacity and vulnerabilities, allowing for proactive measures to be taken to prevent future occurrences. Involving impartial experts in the assessment process promotes transparency and accountability in infrastructure management. By ensuring that the assessment's findings are based on objective analysis, stakeholders can trust that decisions made regarding upgrades and improvements are grounded in evidence and prioritized based on community needs.

GOOD JOBS, LOCAL HIRE, AND WORKER SAFETY

With the surge of new construction and businesses in our area, it's crucial to address concerns about job opportunities and worker safety within CB11. We want a guarantee that new jobs prioritize career pathways for local residents. This means a commitment to hiring contractors enrolled in NYS certified apprenticeship programs, ensuring that community members have access to training and advanced employment opportunities. Moreover, the alarming increase in construction worker fatalities and injuries across New York City highlights the stark reality of the risks faced by our neighbors. Non-union job sites, in particular, pose significant dangers to workers, as evidenced by NYCOSH's recent analysis of OSHA investigations. Twenty construction workers died in 2021, compared to 13 in 2020 — a 54% increase.

An unconscionable 80% of construction workers who died in NYC were employed at non-union sites. Therefore, it's essential to mandate provisions for worker safety and training, protecting our most vulnerable workers and fostering a sense of security for those building our city. Prioritizing safety and training initiatives, we can ensure that the growth and prosperity of our community are built upon a foundation of equity, opportunity, and collective well-being.

“Fair benefits” may include employer-supported family health care coverage and pension benefits, while “fair wages” are determined based on relevant market factors such as project nature and location. With the alarming increase in construction worker fatalities and injuries, it's clear that safety measures cannot be overlooked.

Furthermore, it is wholly evident that unionized workplaces offer the best environments for women in the construction industry. Unions play a vital role in protecting women from gender pay gaps and instances of sexual assault or harassment at work. By supporting unionized workplaces and prioritizing worker safety initiatives, we can create a more equitable and secure environment for all members of our working community.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Promoting increased affordable housing and homeownership in our district is particularly vital, especially for the hardworking blue-collar and lower-wage individuals who form the backbone of these neighborhoods. With a median household income of \$55,788 and 16% of the population

living below the poverty line, many blue-collar and low-wage workers struggle to afford housing. Initiatives advocating for 50% affordable housing, 25% homeownership, and 25% market rate options can provide diverse housing solutions and allow increased housing for both veterans and seniors throughout the area. This approach ensures that those with modest incomes can access safe and stable housing while also offering opportunities for homeownership, building equity, generational wealth and stability for families.

CREATION OF MORE GREEN SPACES

Creating more green spaces in our district is crucial for improving the quality of life for its blue-collar residents. With a median household income of \$55,788 and 16% living below the poverty line, many lack access to recreational areas. Allocating resources to develop parks and community gardens provides free, accessible outdoor leisure opportunities. These spaces offer health benefits like stress reduction and improved air quality, essential for workers facing high job-related stress. Moreover, green spaces foster community cohesion, serving as gathering spots for social activities and events, strengthening neighborhood bonds. Additionally, investing in green spaces aligns with sustainability goals, contributing to biodiversity conservation and climate resilience. Sustainable design practices, such as native plantings enhance environmental education opportunities for residents.

MWBE CERTIFICATION/CONTRACTORS FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS TO COME FROM CB11, BRONX

With over 51% of small business owners being either minority or women-owned, it's imperative to prioritize entrepreneurs from the CB11 for contracting jobs and facilitate their access to MWBE (Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise) certification. By ensuring their participation, we can foster economic empowerment and equitable opportunities within our community.

Minority and women-owned businesses often face barriers in accessing contracting opportunities due to systemic inequalities. By actively involving them in contracting jobs, we can address these disparities and promote diversity and inclusion in our local economy.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY

While the Metro North project promises to bring over 10,000 jobs to our district, there are valid concerns that it may inadvertently displace and undermine the economic sustainability of our existing small businesses. As a community, we advocate for proactive measures to support our established small businesses, ensuring they thrive alongside this development.

We urge for increased economic grants and assistance directed to our current small businesses. Additionally, we request that these businesses be given priority access to newly established economic corridors and hubs, granting them the first right of refusal for available spaces.

Moreover, we seek to negotiate a community benefits agreement that guarantees further reinvestment and economic empowerment for CB11 residents and entrepreneurs. Such an agreement should include commitments from developers to hire directly from our community, contribute to economic trust funds, provide local workforce training programs, and establish a

land trust. These measures will ensure that our community remains a long-term stakeholder in the Metro North project, benefiting from its economic opportunities while preserving the vitality of our local businesses and safeguarding the interests of our residents.

SHUTTLE SERVICE AVAILABLE

Introducing a shuttle bus service connecting nearby parking and public transportation facilities to the Metro North is pivotal for bolstering accessibility and safety within our community. This initiative streamlines access for residents utilizing public transit or parking options, reducing traffic congestion and environmental strain. Moreover, it promotes inclusivity, particularly benefiting individuals with mobility limitations. By investing in such a service, we demonstrate a commitment to enhancing overall transit experiences while prioritizing safety and convenience for all commuters.

PARKING

Expanding both underground and overhead parking facilities is crucial to alleviate the parking strain in our district. By increasing parking options, we can effectively meet the growing demand for convenient and secure parking spaces. Underground facilities offer protection from the elements and optimize land use, while overhead structures efficiently utilize existing space. This dual approach not only enhances accessibility but also reduces congestion and fosters safer pedestrian environments. Investing in additional parking facilities demonstrates our commitment to addressing community needs while enhancing overall convenience for residents and visitors alike. According to the Morris Park and Van Nest Commercial District Needs Assessment, business owners rated parking as their number one concern, resulting in many scaling back their operations. Adequate parking is essential to accommodate and welcome new shoppers into the area, ensuring the continued success of local businesses.

MORE MTA POLICE AND NYPD PRESENCE

Despite the assertion during the public hearing that no new policing would be necessary due to the absence of new communities, it is evident that the influx of over 15,000 riders utilizing the new Metro North station establishes a distinct community in itself. With such a significant population moving through our district, ensuring public safety is a top priority. Therefore, it's essential for CB11 to receive increased funding to address our current public safety needs. Alternatively, collaborating with the MTA to bring MTA police to the station can help enhance safety within the area.

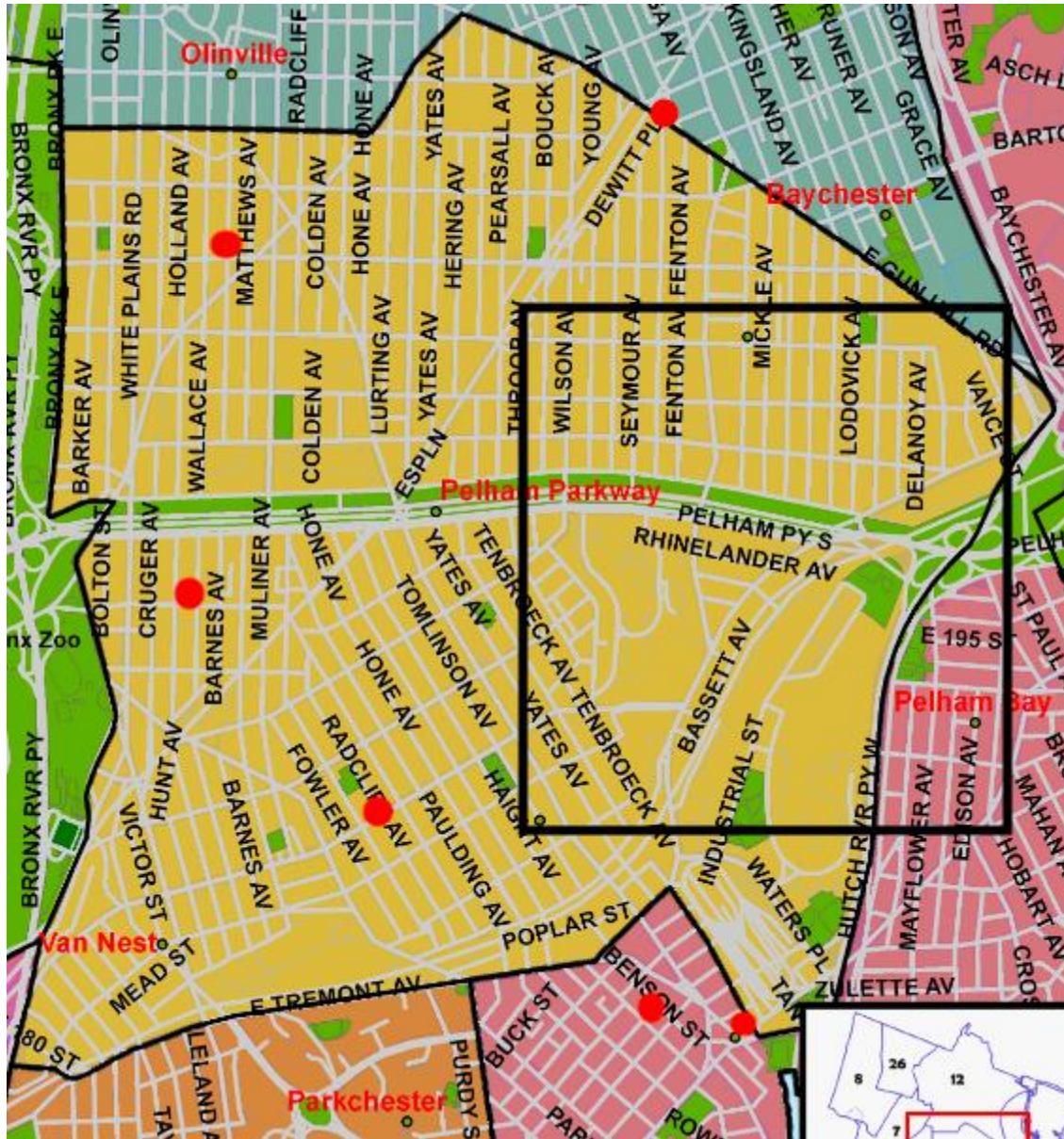
REVIEW OF 1201 MORRIS PARK AVENUE

During CB11's public hearing, numerous community residents expressed concern for building plans regarding 1201 Morris Park Avenue. The community would like to request a zoning review and ULURP process for that specific address and for any concerns to be answered regarding the development forthwith.

SUPPORT FOR NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES

Considering the upzoning proposals predict a surge in area population, addressing the amenity needs of the district becomes imperative. A multifunctional community center could serve as a hub for recreational activities, educational programs, and community gatherings - fostering social cohesion. Additionally, the establishment of an art and culture center and library will enrich the cultural landscape and provide access to learning resources and would effectively manage the anticipated population growth, creating a vibrant and inclusive neighborhood for all.

Attached below is a map of the libraries currently within the district. The square box in the map symbolizes where part of the metro north project will be and the lack of public libraries within that area:



Together, striving to cultivate a resilient community that embodies principles of equity, fairness, and humanism - while remaining responsive to the needs of CB11 residents is the goal. In unity, we aim to progress forward, ensuring that our community thrives and prospers for all its

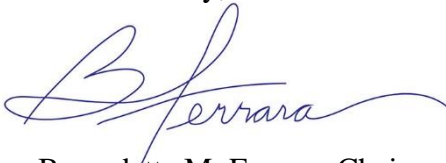
CONCLUSION

Our collaborative approach within CB11 is what we hope to leverage for the common good. Constituents, city agencies and community-based organizations in District 11 hold tremendous potential for driving positive change and fostering inclusive growth. By actively incorporating the input and desires of the community, we are poised to achieve meaningful efficacy and measurable impact. Our commitment to inclusivity, diversity, economic growth, and sustainability is unwavering, guided by a deep respect for the rich history and integrity of our district. Through continuous engagement and partnership, we envision a future where every resident has access to the resources and opportunities necessary to make their own little piece of heaven and share it.

As stated in our opening paragraph, we kindly request a response to this letter within 30 days of receipt, and look forward to collaborating with you to address the issues raised by CB11's constituents. Our goal is a written agreement between CB11, City Planning and the MTA as each development begins to foster discussion on the initial blueprint. Your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated.

Together, we will build a stronger, more resilient District 11 that reflects the aspirations and values of our ever changing and vibrant community, ensuring a brighter and more equitable future for Bronxites to come.

In community,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B. Ferrara". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bernadette M. Ferrara, Chair
With Bronx CB11 Members

CC: The MTA and MTA Police
The 49th Precinct
The Bronx Borough President
The Mayor's Community Affairs Unit
Council Member Kristy Marmorato