

Minutes for the New West 123rd Street Block Association & Community Garden Meeting:  
**June 20th, 2012**

The agenda of this meeting was primarily geared towards continuing the discussion about the recent events that occurred in the Community Garden. In addition to about 12 members of the community, the president of the NYC Garden Coalition, Ray Figueroa, was in attendance.

Update from the Treasurer: We currently have \$7,930.50 in the account, \$5,000 of it came from the film crew that shot on the block last year and about \$125 was spent to reimburse Greg for his rodent patrol efforts.

Meeting commenced around 7:10pm, at which point Jackie Albano picked up the discussion about the recent events in the garden. Here are a few highlights:

- We were able to get the soil tested once we reached out to Cornell. They offered free testing and a total of 21 samples were taken. Sebastian, Jackie and Roland Chouloute from GreenThumb assisted the Cornell soil analyst.
- A garden diagram was created from the test results and circulated at the meeting. Jackie explained that while the soil is being tested for different types of toxins, the numbers depicted on the diagram indicates the amount of lead present; there were two or three areas that tested at a relatively high level and are a concern for us due to the number of children we have playing in the garden on a regular basis.
- Considering the results of the soil analysis, we agreed to reduce the amount of soil that needs to be replaced in the garden. Per the recommendations of the Cornell soil analysts, it is safe to remove the top 12 inches of soil to promote healthier fruit and vegetable growth.
- We are also requesting a fence be erected between the collapsed building property and garden.
- In terms of air quality, we reached out to the Manhattan Borough President's Office as well as Community Board 10 who are looking into the issue for us.
- NYC Community Garden Coalition (NYCCGC) president Ray Figueroa spoke about his experiences with gardens that had been damaged and destroyed and provided some recommendations on how we should move forward. Suggests that we engage in a buffer zone between properties and that there should be a regular hosing down, when construction starts on the site at #110, as there will be a lot of dust and particulates in the air. We should also be around when insurers make measurements of the sites. Rebuilding also offers other opportunities to add to the garden, such as running water.
- Steve Kidd, also from NYCCGC said that it appeared that we were doing everything that needed to get done and that while it would take some time, we should be aggressive in our follow up.

Important BA dates and information

- August 25th: Youth Day from 9am-6pm
- August 26th: Ephesus Church Annual Health Fair
- Please note there are plans for the street to be blocked both days
- We need to find a nominations date for Vice President and the position will be advertised. We need SERIOUS candidates. February 2013 will be the next general nomination.
- The BA made it to the second round for the MBPO grant, several blocks will be awarded.
- Obtaining speed bumps on the block is an ongoing issue, perhaps adding an afterschool/tutoring program would help quicken the process.
- Additional street lighting near the church has been approved and parking issues on Saturday will be brought up with the church.