

James G. Clynes
Chairman

Latha Thompson
District Manager



505 Park Avenue
Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
info@cb8m.com- E-Mail
www.cb8m.com – Website

The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Public Safety Committee Meeting

The Nightingale-Bamford School
20 East 92nd Street (Madison-Fifth)
Auditorium
Tuesday, May 10, 2016
6:30pm

Community Board Members (Present): Nick Viest, Debbie Teitelbaum, David Rosenstein, Lynn Shinozaki
Attendees: 39

Agenda: Local 14 Crane Operators Union will discuss crane safety measures and precautions

I. Introductions: Thomas Gordon, Director of Journey Person and Apprenticeship Training Program and Kenneth Klemens, Jr., Financial Secretary and Business Representative of Local 14-14 B and Council Member Ben Kallos were the guest speakers.

II. Overview:

- Both Thomas and Ken were crane operators for 20 years. Ken was in charge of all cranes at the World Trade Center site for 8-9 years. Tom was the crane operator on the Freedom Tower. They explained how CD8 has been affected in the past and rules regarding crane safety and licensing.

Tom stated:

- Mayor Bloomberg changed the certification rules, in that an operator from another state could use his experience from that state and get a NYC crane license. NYC used to need years of experience within the city to get a license. The Bloomberg proposal also allows for an operator to be qualified if that person passes a national requirement test.

- Bill 299 (sponsored by Council Member Kallos) focuses on rigging certification.

- NYC is unlike other cities. Operators must be aware of vaults, sewer lines under the city, manholes. Operators look for foundation walls; street-level utility lines, and continuously checking for pedestrians.

- There are levels of licenses. For one license, you could work 5 years and then another 5 years with NYC based experience before able to get a NYC crane license. Under Bloomberg's rules, you could use experience in other states. In NY, however, wind is a major factor that differs from other cities due to the size of the buildings. NYC residents/operators grow up in these weather conditions. Wind is worse in NY than Chicago. Once an operator is 1000 feet up in the air, he is in a different weather zone; there are constant changes in wind gusts due to the many large buildings.

- Under the Bloomberg Administration proposal, if you fail the test, you could take over again numerous times until you pass. It used to be that the written test was given only once or twice a year and if you failed, you had to wait a year to take it again. Tom and Ken were not opposed to a national test per se but did not want it to replace the local requirements.

- The union uses crane simulators and hazmat classes to get people ready to run a crane. Standards must be set high enough. The NYC codes are huge.

-Tom also stated that the legislation focuses on the safety issue. And he feels that only qualified individuals who know the laws and rules of NYC should be able to run a crane.

III: Council Member Kallos stated:

- In 2007 the crane collapse on East 51st Street injured 24, and 7 died.

- On East 91st Street, a crane operator died and a civilian later died.

- Last year, 16 people died on construction-related issues.

- The incident downtown where a civilian died, the crane operator had years of NYC experience and used that to guide the crane down and avoid additional harm.

-Legislation: The speakers explained how the Bloomberg law changes the experience requirements. The law states that a person could take a 40-hour course on paper and national exams and then get a license to operate a crane. Intro 299 resolution requires a local exam with NYC laws as well as local experience in construction. An apprenticeship offers real world experience learning on the job.

- Bill 298 discusses hoisting machines, the cranes that put things into buildings. It is not a priority for the Board to weigh in on this legislation.

- Construction Safety Act is made up of the two bills.

- Bill 299 has no national requirement, with 36 council member sponsors

III. Questions:

- If coming in from out of state, are these rules a deterrent to getting outside people? CM Kallos explained that it is necessary to have NYC experience and that there are new certifications for other professions.

- Equipment Inspection: for a crawler crane with a 200 foot boom, a professional engineer, master rigger, rep from the manufacturer and 3rd party inspectors could be on site.

- Tom and Ken stated that Bill 299 maintains the status quo so that the most experienced people will have the NYC jobs.

- A member of CB 11 thanked the union for this meeting and asked how young people can enter as apprentices. The State Labor Department oversees the state labor law.

- Tom and Ken stated that of the 16 NYC crane-related deaths, 13 or 14 of them were on non-union sites.

- Tom and Ken stated that in other states, these non-union events don't get press because there is very little in the way of record keeping for them.

- Tom and Ken said that the NYC union tries to be proactive and anticipate problems and head them off. A NY State license does not allow the operator to work in NYC if there is no NYC license.

-They also stated that safety is not the area you where contractors and developers should try to cut costs.

- A CB 8 member raised the issue that there are very few inspectors in site and that much of this is self-regulated. She requested that community boards should pressure for more inspectors on site.

- The recent crane accident downtown was also mentioned. Tom said that after the civilian death, a committee was formed that changed the 30mph wind restriction to 20mph. This rule was lifted from outrage as 20mph winds are common and often in the city. Now NYPD and FDNY need to be present when setting up a crane.

IV: Resolution:

-**Whereas** safety is of paramount concern and importance for our community,

-**Whereas** training is a vital component of safety preparation,

-**Whereas** the committee recognizes the important of local knowledge,

-**Whereas** Intro 299 would require a NYC local exam and local experience,

-**Whereas** the committee did not have a copy of Intro 299 to review prior to or at the committee meeting,

-**Therefore Be It Resolved** that the Public Safety Committee recommends that Community Board 8 discuss passing a resolution regarding Intro 299 at the May Full Board meeting.

4-0-0.

V. See Attachments

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm

Debbie Teitelbaum and Nick Viest, Co-Chairs, Public Safety Committee