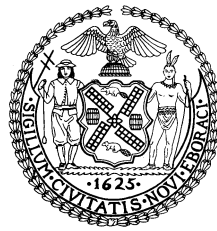


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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**  
**Environment and Sanitation Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, November 19, 2020 - 6:30PM**  
*This meeting was conducted remotely via Zoom*

*Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.*

**Minutes**

**CB8 Members Present:** Alida Camp, Saundra Coleman, Ed Hartzog, Craig Lader, Cos Spagnoletti, Russell Squire, Marco Tamayo

**1. Discussion of rodents and sanitation conditions in Community District 8**

The committee was joined by Marissa Yanni from DSNY and Caroline Bragdon from DHMH.

Ms. Yanni addressed the proliferation of trash on the streets. She explained that there have been significant cuts to services across DSNY. The sharpest cuts were to organics collection and recycling, but there have been cuts to trash pickup as well (as has been evident). The cuts were determined by the Mayor and DSNY leadership.

Ms. Bragdon addressed the increase in rat sightings by CB8 residents, both on the streets and at the Holmes and Isaacs Houses. She noted that the number of rat complaints has not increased over last year, although the committee noted that most rat sightings are not reported to 311. Ms. Bragdon explained that there is a seasonal increase in rat sightings every Fall, and that the presence of trash on the street would be expected to lead to an uptick in rat sightings. However, DHMH has not made any rat-related changes in response to the increased trash on the street; if anything, they have fewer resources available to address pest complaints due to Covid, as inspectors have been diverted from rat control duties to business inspections related to Covid compliance.

When DHMH receives rat complaints, they send inspectors to look for “rat activity.” If such activities are found, DHMH contacts the premises owner, who is required to abate the rat problem. DHMH also provides guidance to business owners related to rat mitigation, and the committee discussed holding a CB8 “Rat Academy” in which DHMH could provide such information in the near future.

There were a number of other comments and questions from the community and the committee.

**2. Discussion of MTS air quality monitoring**

The DSNY engineer who was supposed to attend the meeting to address this agenda item was unable to do so due to a death in the family (the committee expressed its condolences). Ms. Yanni was present for this portion of the discussion and agreed to take the concerns expressed back to DSNY. The committee was also fortunate to have been joined by a number of members of the MTS Community Advisory Group (CAG).

DSNY is required to test air quality at the MTS twice a year, in January and July. The committee had concerns that the July testing may not have been representative of the air quality impact of the MTS due to the fact that the MTS is not yet operating at full capacity and the presumed reduction in truck traffic/trash due to Covid. The committee also had concerns that air quality testing twice a year might not be sufficient.

Although CAG members shared these concerns, they made clear that their top priority with respect to air quality monitoring was changing the location of air quality monitoring equipment. Their secondary priority is to have DSNY report all the pollutant data that they collect, rather than data for just a subset of pollutants. The CAG has raised these issues to DSNY in the past, but has not received a satisfactory or specific response; DSNY has essentially said that it cannot comply with any CAG requests because that would require them to accommodate communities around other MTSes throughout the city as well.

In addition, the CAG has asked for more frequent reporting from DSNY and for reports to include a dashboard or otherwise be simplified. During the meeting, it was also noted that pollution from the MTS was likely to be compounded by the nearby ferry drop-off point, and that the data in the most recent air quality report from DSNY seemed odd because the amount of particulate matter in the air did not appear to correlate with the number of trucks operating in the vicinity.

The committee determined that a letter should be written to DSNY expressing the concerns reflected above. Further, the committee determined that the letter should emphasize the fact that the CAG's priority requests would require little if any expenditure of resources by DSNY, even if they were to be applied throughout the city. The committee also requested that a DSNY engineer come to the next committee meeting to address the concerns that were expressed.

### **3. Old and New Business**

There was no other old or new business.

Whereupon the meeting was adjourned.

**Russell Squire and Cos Spagnoletti, Co-Chairs**