



# NORWOOD NEWS

Vol 32, No 8 • PUBLISHED BY MOSHOLU PRESERVATION CORPORATION • APRIL 25-MAY 8, 2019



**INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER:**  
**PRESIDENT BILL DE BLASIO? | PG. 4**



**SEE PICTURES:**  
**SPRING EGG HUNT AT OVAL PARK | PG. 10**

## DEFINING NORWOOD'S CONSUMER DEMANDS

*Residents offer input on community's commercial needs*



Photo by Adi Talwar

**A LOOK AT** a portion of Norwood's commercial strip overlooking East 204th Street at Hull Avenue. The area is part of a long-term study to figure out the corridor's commercial needs.

### By DAVID CRUZ

By many accounts, Norwood's commercial corridors represent a vibrant mix of mom and pop shops that largely comprise the makeup of the northwest Bronx neighborhood. And its commercial ranges are wide. There's Hillside Meat Market, a staple in Norwood for more than 30 years, abutting La Mexicana Grocery, which caters to Norwood's Hispanic population. But it doesn't mean

the corridor cannot do without add-ons or more stores.

The question of what's Norwood's next big idea stood as the key question posed to residents by Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC), the 38-year nonprofit support corporation of Montefiore Health System (and publisher of the *Norwood News*), which has spent the last year working towards answering that question. Their work is not over.

On April 16, the group completed the latest phase of a long-term project designed to determine the enduring needs of Norwood's merchant corridors, specifically East 204th Street, Bainbridge and Webster avenues, known collectively as the Northwest Merchants Association.

It was the third such gathering organized by Daniela Beasley, MPC's program manager, who's been collecting data from

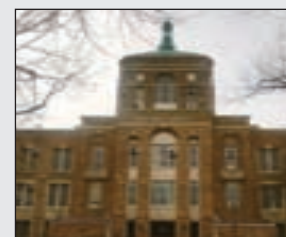
the neighborhood. Residents offered feedback to MPC's preliminary findings on the neighborhood's commercial needs, which will ultimately be incorporated into a printed report known as a Commercial District Needs Assessment (CDNA).

Through a \$200,000 Avenue NYC Grant from the New York City Small Business Service (SBS), MPC seeks to create a full picture of Norwood's com-

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Norwood News is published bi-weekly on Thursdays by Mosholu Preservation Corporation (MPC) 3400 Reservoir Oval East Bronx, New York 10467 Phone: 718 324 4998 Fax: 718 324 2917 E-mail: [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org) Web.: [www.norwoodnews.org](http://www.norwoodnews.org)

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Mosholu Preservation Corporation is a non-profit support corporation of Montefiore Medical Center.



## IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

# Cohen Explores Run for Bronx Borough President Seat

By DAVID CRUZ

Norwood's Councilman is exploring a run for Bronx Borough President, adding to a list of potential suitors for the borough's top executive post.

Councilman Andrew Cohen, the 11th Council District representative covering Norwood, Bedford Park, Woodlawn, Wakefield, Riverdale, Fieldston, Kingsbridge, and Marble Hill, told the *Norwood News* he's weighing considering whether to enter a race that'll open in 2021. He's laying the groundwork in some ways, crisscrossing different parts of the Bronx as a way of understanding its nuances and putting his name out there.

"I'm not shy about it. I'm thinking about it," said Cohen. "We're approaching the halfway point in my second term, and I'm thinking that I would like to contribute to the revival of the Bronx."

Cohen would be vying for a seat that would be up for grabs since 2021 would be the year current Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. is term-limited out of office.

Cohen has kept his eye on several options. Last year, he expressed interest in relinquishing his Council seat to become a judge, a move that was upended when state Sen. Jeff Klein lost to current state Sen. Alessandra Biaggi. Reports indicated Klein had wanted to be a judge following his loss, but Bronx Democratic Party chair Marcos Crespo opted against it as a way of maintaining stability. With that, Cohen's plan was put on the back burner.

With Cohen staying put (he's decided to remain Councilman through the duration of his term), it slowed down plans for contenders of Cohen's seat, namely Dan Padernacht and Eric Dinowitz, the son of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz.

For the last five years, Cohen has operated a largely smooth, scandal-free office that's garnered him praise among constituents within his district. His constituent services unit at his Kingsbridge office has served as his eyes and ears for the district, while his Participatory Budgeting programming has opened the door for constituents to have greater con-



File Photo

**COUNCILMAN ANDREW COHEN** (at podium) at a ribbon cutting of a rooftop playground in Tracey Towers in 2017.

trol over capital monies spent on community-based projects.

With Cohen making the rounds across the Bronx, he's found gentrification to be a key issue, citing the "very mixed bag" results that have happened in Brooklyn.

"I think that while things have not gotten out of control that we are very careful stewards that the people who live in Bronx County and have supported Bronx County continue to have a home in Bronx County," said Cohen. "It's going to require active management that we need people who are going to really be on the job."

Other names bouncing around the Bronx political sphere for possible borough presidential candidates include party chair Crespo, Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson, and Councilman Fernando Cabrera. Crespo has long alluded to interest in the post.

Gibson, a former Assembly Member before representing the 16th Council District in the West Bronx, told the *Norwood News* she's also exploring a run. She cited her experience in the city and state levels, where she's forged relationships as one reason she should be voted

for borough president should she run.

"I'm definitely looking forward to another chapter of public service in some way where I can serve a larger constituency and really continue a lot of the work I've already done really [well] in the West Bronx in serving residents and families," said Gibson, who currently serves on the Sub-Committee on Capital Budget/Finance, which hammers out the complicated New York City Fiscal Budget. "I just look at my entire career and I think putting all that together it makes for definitely well-roundedness in terms of state/city, and obviously taking it to another level."

Gibson has also been making the rounds, picking the brains of her constituents across the borough. "The borough president has a very important role in working with the mayor and the administration, and whoever that mayor is, and will be, will have to work with the incoming borough president," said Gibson.

Cabrera was unavailable for comment.

Just who will enter the race will be decided upon after the more closely watched race for the 15th Congressional District seat set to be vacated by Congressman Jose Serrano is over, according to one Bronx political observer.

"What you very well could see is a very, very crowded race for borough president in 2021 when they settle the race for Congressman Jose Serrano's seat and the losers are still looking to move up," said one Bronx political source.

In either case, Cohen believes the more voices in a race, the better for the Bronx.

"We just had this Public Advocate's special election. There were 17 candidates on the ballot, so I would not be surprised if there would be a robust field for Bronx Borough President, which I think would be good for Bronxites," said Cohen.

Gibson expects a crowded race, given how much 2021 will be the year the seats for mayor, comptroller, and public advocate, will be up for grabs.

"It's going to be huge," said Gibson.

## Public and Community Meetings

**COMMUNITY BOARD 7** will hold its general board meeting on April 30 at 6:30 p.m. at Scott Tower, 3400 Paul Ave. For more information, call (718) 933-5650.

The **52ND PRECINCT COMMUNITY COUNCIL** will hold its monthly meeting on April 25 at 7 p.m. at 3100 Webster Ave. at the corner of East 204th Street. For more information, call (718) 220-5824.





## Letters To The Editor

### A Fourth School at DeWitt Clinton!

At this month's Community Board 7 Education, Youth and Libraries Committee meeting, there was a long discussion about plans to create a fourth school in the DeWitt Clinton Campus; this one to serve students with additional needs.

We absolutely need such a school in our community, but it should not be in DeWitt Clinton. Clinton is an overcrowded campus already overburdened with three principals.

A fourth school will make it much worse. Add to that the concern of potential hostility and bullying that is likely to occur when new students enter. What can be done? Has the Department of Education (DOE) looked into the shuttered St. Ann's School off East Gun Hill Road?

The size of the classrooms is more conducive to teaching a smaller number giving them the extra attention needed. As St. Ann's is significantly smaller than DeWitt Clinton, it could become one solitary school. The stairways can be converted to add ramps and an elevator to address mobility issues. This would be more cost-effective than building a new school, which is what is really needed. The location is also convenient as St. Ann's is across the street from Montefiore, close to North Central Bronx Hospital, near multiple bus lines and fairly close to the 4 train.

I am calling for the DOE to reach out to the Archdiocese and for our local elected officials to see what can be done to make this happen. There will be a meeting about the new proposed school and other schools on April 17 at the Murry Bergtraum High School For Business Careers at 411 Pearl St. in Manhattan if anyone wants to speak out on this issue.

**George Diaz**

**Founder, People for the 81st**

### Congestion Pricing Problems

The devil is in the missing details yet to be worked out concerning passage of Congestion Pricing. The MTA receives \$1.4 billion in annual assistance from various Federal Transit Administration formula funding grant programs. For decades, the MTA has distributed these dollars from Washington via a formula to operating agencies.

They have been split between New York City Transit (75 percent) Long Island Rail Road (12.5 percent) and Metro North Rail Road (MNRR) (12.5 percent). It is interesting that this formula for

federal assistance has been accepted as fair. A similar formula of 80 percent for New York City Transit, 10 percent LIRR and 10 percent MNRR was adopted for distribution of future Congestion Pricing Revenue. (perhaps a great way to obtain support of suburban State Assembly, State Senate and County Executives who use LIRR and MNRR). Remember a legal challenge to the nonresident commuter tax resulted in its demise? Don't be surprised when legal challenges are submitted against Congestion Pricing. Who knows if it will actually be implemented by 2021.

Is MTA Bus included under the 80 percent for NYC Transit? In 2005, New York City transferred management of the seven private franchised bus operators (Command Bus, Green Lines, Jamaica Bus, Triboro Coach, Queens Surface, NY Bus and Liberty Lines Bronx Express) to the MTA. The MTA subsequently created MTA Bus, which is a separate from New York City Transit Bus.

Promised savings by consolidation of Civil Rights, Engineering, Legal, Procurement and other LIRR/Metro North departments have been periodically discussed and promised for decades by different generations of MTA management and elected officials. This will never happen due to work rules, seniority and contracts between different labor unions representing employees at LIRR and Metro North.

The same applies to anticipated savings by contracting out more work to the private sector.

Project cost containment along with fast tracking procurements and contract change orders for the MTA has been periodically discussed and promised for decades by different generations of MTA management and elected officials. It is easier said than done due to significant obstacles.

No one will know the cost of congestion pricing until it is implemented starting in 2021. Coincidence that members of the State Assembly and Senate will first be reelected first in 2020 before the price becomes public? What happened to promised open transparent government?

Is this what MTA customers have to look forward to? Taxpayers and riders deserve better.

**Larry Penner**

**Transportation Expert**

## Have an Opinion On What You've Read in Our Paper?

The Norwood News loves, welcomes and encourages letters to the editor.



**Write To:**

**David Cruz,**

**Editor-in-Chief**

**Norwood News**

**3400 Reservoir Oval East**

**Bronx, NY 10467**

*Letters should be 400 words max, and include writer's name. Anonymous letters will not be published, but names will be withheld upon reasonable request.*

## INQUIRING PHOTOGRAPHER

By DAVID GREENE



# This week we asked readers their thoughts on Mayor Bill de Blasio's consideration to run for President of the United States.



I wouldn't let him walk my dog, and I don't even own a dog. He shouldn't even be running the city of New York because he's a complete imbecile.  
**Edward Burroughs**  
Norwood



Maybe. I think he's trying to do a good job, but it would be better for him to be in the White House, so he could do the right thing for people. But he has to deliver for the city first and then he can go to the White House. If he fixes up the city, he'd have a better chance at getting elected. I don't think he's ready yet; he has few years to go.  
**Darbo Tunkara**  
Bedford Park



I actually like him; he's done a lot for low-income housing as well as other things so I would support him 100 percent, yes. He's done good things with the transit system, housing, and the charter schools. And if he was in Washington he could do even more.  
**Shirley Velazquez**  
Morris Heights



With such a crowded field already, I'm not sure why he thinks this is something he should do, especially since he's not exactly universally loved in his own home town.  
**Gary Axelbank**  
Van Cortlandt Park South



I think he has an interest in the presidency, but without the support of the community, it's too big of a stage for him right now. Maybe in his future, he should concentrate on running the city, but even with that he's had some hiccups and he should just focus on that.  
**Amparo Cruz**  
Mott Haven



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# NEWS BRIEFS

BY EMILY SUZANNE LEVER

## Toll-Free Henry Hudson For Bronxites

Starting in a year, the Henry Hudson Bridge will be free through the form of a rebate for cars registered in the Bronx and equipped with an EZ pass, following an agreement secured by State Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz, the *Riverdale Press* reports. It is currently \$2.80 with an EZ pass and \$7 without. The toll leads to “bridge shopping,” which causes traffic jams and exhaust fumes in Kingsbridge and Marble Hill, Dinowitz said. Dinowitz, who supports congestion pricing for lower Manhattan, said his backing the toll rebate didn’t mean he doesn’t still support public transit. “The best way to get people to stop driving is by making mass transit the clearly superior option,” Dinowitz said.

## Thief Sentenced for GTO

A Bronx Supreme Court Justice sentenced Reynaldo Nazario, 42, to five to 10 years in prison for stealing three vehicles throughout the Bronx including in the 52nd precinct, District Attorney Darcel D. Clark said. The defendant was convicted of stealing 14 older-model Hondas and falsely filled out DMV forms in order to sell the cars to scrap yards for \$250 each, Clark said. Nazario pled guilty to the charges in March.

## AG Unveils All-Electric Truck Fleet

New York State Attorney General Letitia James’s office is providing nine electric, battery-powered, zero-emission delivery trucks to six local nonprofits. The donation was made using the money from a settlement American Electric Power paid the AG’s office in a suit over violations of the Federal Clean Air Act. Most delivery trucks use diesel, which contributes to air pollution. Emissions from trucks and buses contribute to 170 deaths per year in New York City, with lower-income communities being hit the hardest, according to a study from the *Environmental Health Journal*.

## Support for Tenant Organizing Bill

The coalition that backed the city’s Right to Counsel law—which gives the right to free legal representation to low-income New Yorkers facing eviction—rallied on the steps of City Hall on April 18 to support a new bill to require the city to work with

# DOE Postpones Vote on D75 Move to DWCC

By JOSÉ A. GIRALT

Students, parents, school officials, and alumni following the future of co-locating a D75 school into the DeWitt Clinton Campus (DWCC) will have to wait until May 29 to find out the final outcome. The vote is now scheduled to take place at the William H. Taft Educational Campus at 240 E. 172nd St.

After a joint hearing of the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP) and the Community Education Council (CEC) held April 2 at DWCC, the city Department of Education (DOE) determined that more time is needed to fully review some of the concerns of families and students. If passed, a D75 school will join the existing DeWitt Clinton High School, Bronx Collaborative High School, World View High School, and PS X168.

In an email response to the *Norwood News*, DOE spokesman Doug Cohen said, “Community empowerment is central to this process, and we’re taking more time to discuss this proposal with students and families in order to address their concerns and ensure we’re meeting the needs of our students.”

Tensions have been growing between a vocal group of students at Clinton (supported by their parents and teachers) and advocates for D75 students, which is charged with teaching students with special needs including autism, intellectual, or multiple disabilities.

At the April 2 meeting, Kettler Louisaint, D75 superintendent, urged the Clinton academic community to keep an open mind about his students having a space within the campus.

“When you let District 75 come into your community ... you will not want us to leave. You’re going to fall in love with our students,” Louisaint said.

The DOE has identified the Clinton campus as being underutilized and thus appropriate for incorporating yet another school within its walls. According to the DOE, DWCC currently has 670 seats not in use.

Amy Tsai is a parent advocate for the Citywide Council for District 75 (CCD75). She’s also the parent of a D75 student in District 10. “There’s been a back and forth between the parents of children with disabilities and school administrators. I see a lot of misunderstanding and confusion,” said Tsai.

The school has made a comeback in recent years (state education officials have

community groups to spread awareness among tenants about their legal rights in housing court. In attendance were Councilman Mark Levine, the sponsor of the bill; Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson, who represents the West Bronx where a pilot program on Right to Counsel began; Nadia Metayer, tenant leader at Community Action for Safe Apartments (CASA) in the Bronx; and Yarisme Guilamo, tenant leader at the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition.

# Norwood and Bedford Park’s Passions



Top photo by David Greene/Bottom photo by Miriam Quinones

**GOOD FRIDAY SAW** local Catholic churches recreating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ as told in the Catholic Bible. An actor portraying Jesus Christ (top photo) is placed on a wooden cross in a scene organized by St. Brendan’s and St. Ann’s Church in Norwood on Good Friday, April 19. Actors portraying Roman guards flog and beat an actor playing Jesus Christ (bottom photo) during the Stations of the Cross procession organized by St. Philip Neri Church.

improved the school’s ranking to a “low-performing school” from one in danger of permanently closing), but the uncertainty of how a new D75 school on its campus will impact that progress has upset some of the students, parents, and Clinton personnel who have worked to raise scores, combat absenteeism, and increase graduation rates.

The additional time for the vote is welcomed by Tsai who has heard much of the confusion expressed by fellow parents. “I’ve heard what some parents are saying and think they should learn more about D75 students. If they look at schools like Truman and Lehman [high schools], they’ll see that it can succeed,” Tsai said.

## New Interim Catholic Schools Superintendent

Michael J. Deegan, the Deputy Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the New York Archdiocese, will serve as Interim Superintendent for the archdiocese until a new superintendent is appointed, Archbishop Timothy Dolan announced. Deegan attended elementary school at St. Philip Neri School in Bedford Park. His wife of 27 years, Angela, is principal of St. Francis Xavier School in Morris Park.

## Fordham U. Tragedy

Sydney Monfries, 22, died after accidentally slipping and falling from atop of one of Fordham University’s tallest towers, through an opening in the Keating Clock Tower’s stairwell during the early hours of April 14. She was a senior set to graduate from the school’s Rose Hill Campus. Monfries was buried at Mount Hope Cemetery in Greenburgh. The university will honor her with a posthumous bachelor’s degree.



# Lehman College Professor Tied to St. Patrick's Cathedral Incident

By DAVID CRUZ

A Lehman College professor was arrested for what appears to be attempted arson at St. Patrick's Cathedral. News of the arrest came days after the spire and roof of Notre Dame Cathedral in France went up in flames.

Authorities arrested Marc Lamparello, 37, a philosophy professor who taught online courses for Lehman which is located in Bedford Park. He was charged with resisting arrest, trespass and disorderly conduct.

John Miller, the NYPD's Deputy Commissioner for Counter-Terrorism, said cathedral police spotted Lamparello walking inside the landmark church with two gasoline cans and butane lighters.

"The St. Patrick's employee notifies two CRC, Critical Response Command, from the counter-terrorism bureau. Police officers from our striker team, who are outside, [and] the individual went southbound on Fifth Avenue onto 50th Street," said Miller. "They catch up to the individual, who's carrying the gas cans and begin to question him. His answers were inconsistent and evasive, although he remained conversational with them [the officers] and cooperative. His basic

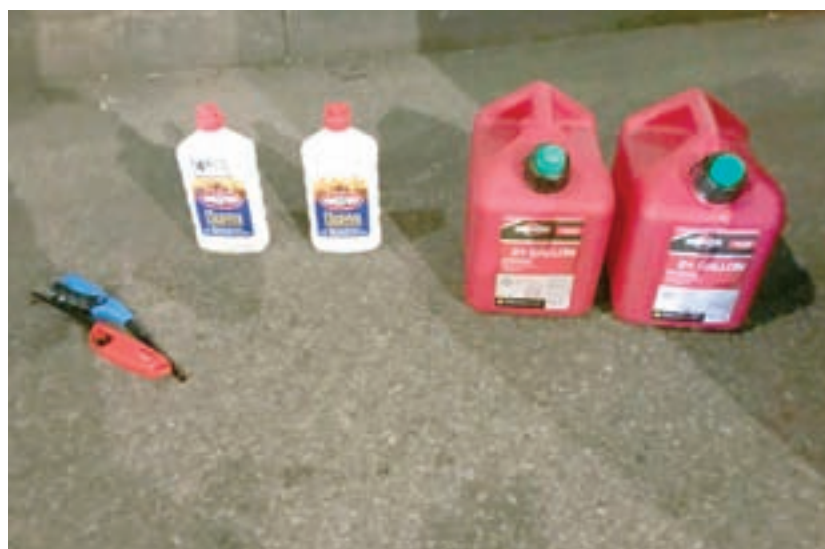


Photo courtesy FDNY

**POLICE OFFICERS RECOVERED** these items the suspect was seen carrying inside St. Patrick's Cathedral.

story was that was cutting through the cathedral to get to Madison Avenue; that his car had run out of gas. They [the officers] took a look at the vehicle; it was not out of gas. At that point he [Lamparello] was brought into custody and brought to the Midtown North stationhouse."

In a statement issued by Lehman College spokeswoman Sarah Ramsey,

she said Lamparello was a recent part-time hire, teaching online classes. "We are taking steps to terminate the individual's employment," said Ramsey in the statement.

Lamparello is reported to be known by police.

Mayor Bill de Blasio weighed in on the incident, telling reporters it's a "pro-

found troubling incident. Coming on the heels of Notre Dame, you know, very, very troubling. And we have a substantial security presence around St. Patrick's. We'll look at every angle. I think this was a very particular, individual act, but it is a reminder that we're going to do everything we have to do to protect St. Patrick's," de Blasio said.

Students enrolled at Lehman College expressed shock.

"It makes me nervous to think that we have someone so close to home that could possibly harm us, because if you could go to a big cathedral with all those gas tanks, you could easily come to Lehman which is easily accessible to walk around freely. It is nerve-wracking" said Sharline Parker, a Lehman College student.

Hardik Yadaw, another student, sought to reserve some judgement. "I don't want to jump to conclusions. I don't know what he was doing there, but understanding that this happened right after the fire in Notre Dame, it does make it look sketchy. He should be made to answer what he was doing there," said Yadaw.

*Additional reporting by Alondra Vasquez.*

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## Body Found Floating In Bronx River

By **DAVID CRUZ** and  
**EMILY SUZANNE LEVER**

The NYPD is trying to figure out how a man in need of medical attention wound up floating face down in the Bronx River.

The man was identified by family members as 43-year-old William Daughtrey of Williamsbridge, according to News 12 The Bronx.

Daughtrey has been missing since February. His mother, Barbara Felder, said he struggled with mental illness, according to News 12.

The cops initially said they received a call at around 2:30 p.m. on April 13 for a man in need of medical attention at Botanical Square, a small street less than a mile from the river. They later discovered the body in the waterway that cuts through the Bronx Zoo and New York Botanical Garden.

“Sometimes things don’t surprise you, living in the Bronx,” said Timothy, 47, an employee of the garden. “This was surprising.”

Investigators found no clear signs of trauma to the body, which was removed by the Police Department’s Emergency Service Unit and declared dead at the scene.

This was not the first dead body found in local parks this year. The remains of an unidentified man were found in French Charley’s Park in early January, and another dead body was found in Van Cortlandt Park days later.

Still, for locals in Bedford Park, next to the garden, news of the dead man came as a shock.

“That is a little scary,” said Sharon, program director at TCK Martial Arts on Webster Avenue. “I’ve always felt like this is a bubble of safety. Even though it’s the Bronx, I’ve never felt unsafe here.”

## Bronx BP Blasts NYCHA for Evicting Disabled Tenant. Agency Relents

By **DAVID CRUZ**

In a continued rebuke against the New York City Housing Authority, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. lashed out at the beleaguered agency for kicking out a senior citizen tenant from his apartment for not paying his rent while he was recuperating from a leg amputation elsewhere.

But hours after Diaz’s news conference, NYCHA is slated to reinstate the tenant.

“He’s a good tenant,” said Diaz at a news conference April 11, calling NYCHA out for evicting Bienvenido Martinez, a 72-year-old resident at NYCHA’s Union Avenue Consolidation, a nine-story residential building, in Longwood for the last 14 years.

Martinez was recovering at Beth Abraham Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing last year after his leg was removed for an undisclosed illness. While staying at the center, and with no one helping him, Martinez fell behind on a total of \$816 in rent. Over the summer of 2018, he was evicted. Though he’s staying at Beth Abraham Center, Martinez, now in a wheelchair, simply wants to go home.

Martinez not only lost his apartment, but his furniture, family photos, birth certificate, Social Security card, which he said were thrown in the trash by NYCHA, an apparent violation of the law which mandates NYCHA to store an evicted tenant’s property should they be unable to recoup it. The issue also opens the door for Martinez to have his identity stolen.

Caseworkers at Beth Abraham are currently assisting. Martinez, a



Photo by David Cruz

**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT** Ruben Diaz Jr. ushers out Bienvenido Martinez, now in a wheelchair following surgery. Martinez was evicted from his NYCHA apartment for not paying his rent while recuperating.

Puerto Rican native who only spoke Spanish, said little at the news conference, though he characterized his situation as “sad.” Had Beth Abraham not intervened on Martinez’s behalf, Martinez may have been homeless.

“Mr. Martinez was not ever served personally with his eviction papers, since he had not been able to return to his apartment while undergoing rehabilitation,” wrote Diaz in his letter sent to Kathryn Garcia on March 18 outlining Martinez’s case.

Diaz is demanding NYCHA reimburse him for his loss and reinstate his

status as a tenant “expeditiously.” NYCHA has not done so.

Troubles at NYCHA once again saw Diaz take shots at Mayor Bill de Blasio for failing the troubled authority. The agency is now under a federal monitor and slated to receive billions of dollars in capital monies for top-down renovations to the authority’s network of 334 buildings.

At the news conference, Diaz—a mayoral contender in 2021—said he deliberately did not forward this letter to de Blasio because he “no longer has confidence” in him. He also pointed to de Blasio’s attention spent on mulling a run for President of the United States, chastising de Blasio for traveling to early primary states such as New Hampshire instead of focusing his attention on New York City.

De Blasio has repeatedly said that he remains plugged into city matters even while on the road.

Diaz became aware of Martinez’s case last year from his office’s Constituent Services Unit.

While Diaz acknowledged his office rarely gets cases like this, he did encourage anyone who had a similar situation to call his office.

“Let’s show if you truly believe this city is the fairest city in the whole United States, let’s right this wrong,” said Diaz, referencing de Blasio’s common refrain of the city. “Get your act together.”

In a statement, NYCHA spokeswoman Barbara Brancaccio said, “We are unable to comment on individual residents’ lease agreements. However, we will work with the resident to restore his tenancy.”

## Deadline Club and Society of Silurian Honors for Norwood News

By **NORWOOD NEWS**

The *Norwood News* will be among those honored next month at two journalism awards contests, adding to the growing number of honors the Bronx paper has received over the last few weeks.

Editor-in-Chief David Cruz is being honored by both the Deadline Club and the Society of the Silurians for his work on a three-part series dubbed “Housing Matters,”

which looked at the complexities of affordable housing in New York City.

Cruz is a finalist for the Deadline Club, the New York City Chapter of the Society for Professional Journalists, under the category of Reporting by a Newspaper with a Circulation Under 100,000 (*Norwood News*’ circulation is currently 15,000 per edition).

For the Society of the Silurians,

Cruz is slated to pick up a Merit Award under the Investigative Reporting category.

“I’m extremely honored for this recognition by two fantastic organizations that promote outstanding journalism,” said Cruz, who’s been with the newspaper since December 2013. “This is the first in the history of the newspaper to earn these honors by the Deadline Club and the Society of the Silurians.”

“Housing Matters” was published in March 2018, touching on issues including segregation in New York City, school segregation, and the community preference policy behind the backdrop of the Jerome Avenue Rezoning.

The recognition comes on the heels of the Bronx newspaper winning eight awards at the New York Press Association for work the paper produced in 2018.



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**NOTWITHSTANDING GRAY SKIES**, the annual Spring Egg Hunt at Williamsbridge Oval Park happened this past weekend to great fanfare and a modest crowd. The event was sponsored by the New York City Parks Department, Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District, Mentoring in Medicine, MetroPlus, and the Office of State Sen. Jamaal Bailey. Check out these photos by David Cruz.

# Spring Egg Hunt



**OUTSIDE WILLIAMSBRIDGE OVAL** Recreation Center, (left), balloon twister Selby Ham works his magic, putting together a balloon animal for these kids.

**THE TATTOO STATION** (right) inside the Williamsbridge Oval Recreation Center gets a lot of attention with this attendant applying a tattoo on this little girl.



**DIONNY AND CLAUDIA** Mejia of Norwood (left) (backs turned) grab a shot of their kids Zoey-Marie and Dionny Jr. alongside the Easter Bunny.

**THESE KIDS TAKE** part (right) in a small-scale Egg Hunt using their bags filled with giveaways, courtesy of the New York City Parks Department.



**(L-R) HANNAH ARCE SHOWS** off her tattooed hand (left) as she stands alongside her grandma, Betty Diana, at the Spring Egg Hunt.

**ALTAGRACIA NIVAR OF** Norwood (right) shows off her hula hoop skills during one portion of the yearly event.



**THE EASTER BUNNY** (left) gets a giant hug from this small child.

**LISBETH MAPONYANE (RIGHT)** took the trip up from Hunts Point to attend the Spring Egg Hunt with her son.





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# To Save Bronx Youth From Gangs, Groups Enlist Public Advocate

By STEPHANIE GARCIA

Activists from numerous youth-based groups gathered at Fordham Plaza, addressing issues impacting Bronx's youth, while also calling on funding to help further their causes.

These activists were joined by Public Advocate Jumaane Williams who showed his support towards these groups and their need to receive funding.

"We have to guide them and show them the right way, and the only way is with funding," said Williams, flanked by groups whose purpose is to draw youth away from gangs and violence.

Shanequa Charles, president of Miss Abbie's Kids in Fordham and the organizer of the rally on April 10 said many of the groups took part in the rally as a show of "power in people" when it comes to grabbing the city's attention. Charles was a major supporter of Williams when he ran for Public Advocate earlier this year.

Many activists explained that funds are needed to raise awareness on issues such as human trafficking, the need for school supplies for low-income students, and teaching Bronx



Photo by David Cruz

**PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE** Williams (at podium) says he supports groups receiving city funding to help their causes at a rally on April 10.

youth trades that will allow them to succeed and not get swallowed up by gang culture. An analysis by the *Norwood News* using data published by the NYPD in June 2018 shows 430 young people under the age of 18 were known to be affiliated with a gang.

Darney K. Born Rivers, president and founder of "I Am My Community," as well as one of the speakers at

the rally, explained that the youth are drawn to gangs as a way of making fast, easy money.

"You've got these gangbangers trying to recruit these children; they've got money. You've got the drug dealers trying to recruit these children; they've got money. What are we doing? We're standing out there trying to recruit them and telling them to drop the

gun, but we have absolutely nothing," explained Rivers, whose group works with young people in and around Fordham and Kingsbridge.

Liz Harrison, from Pen or Pencil agreed with the idea that the youth are inclined to join gangs, and to fail out of school because of the need for money. This results in kids "catching an F," which stands for a "felony" since they believe that this is the best way to move forward with their education.

However, joining gangs is not the only issue kids face. Other kids tend to prioritize sports over their education and entrepreneurship. Activist William Heishower, from "The Peacemakers" addressed this subject, and emphasized the idea of preparing Bronx youth for the future by "putting more entrepreneurship" in them.

Williams added that oftentimes non-profits do a better job at solving a situation, which is why he believes that if the government were to fund local groups, the youth would be in a better place.

With budget season under way, Williams is hoping to catch the ear of councilmembers who can allocate funding to these groups.

## New Gym for PS 246



Photo by Miriam Quinones

**COUNCILMAN FERNANDO CABRERA** (third row, second from right) cheers with students from PS 246 in Kingsbridge Heights, which was earmarked \$9 million for a brand new gymnasium. The funds were the result of the Jerome Avenue Rezoning project that passed last year, where the city pumped millions of dollars into upgrades in exchange for support of the project. The gym is expected to be built by summer of 2020.

## \$40 Mil Proposal for 52nd Precinct Upgrades

By ALONDRA VASQUEZ

Councilman Andrew Cohen is one step closer to achieving his goal in seeing an annex for the 52nd Precinct. The New York City Council's preliminary budget report recently released states that it looks to allocate \$40.9 million for renovations for the Five-Two. Although it has not been signed off yet by Mayor Bill de Blasio, Cohen is hopeful that funding will be able to go through.

On his Twitter account Cohen tweeted, "I'm thrilled that today's preliminary budget report hearing announced considerations for \$40.9 million on this project." He also thanked Council Speaker Corey Johnson for honoring his request.

Cohen has been looking to have the NYPD lease the former Sam's

Carpenter property that would help with the overflow of officers in the precinct that rests across from the Webster Avenue stationhouse. There are more than 200 officers currently assigned to the three-story precinct.

In 1905 the Italian Renaissance-style precinct was built and has been overly utilized. It's unclear what other upgrades the precinct would receive, but a spokesman for Cohen said a percentage of it will be used towards the annex.

The property at 3041 Webster Ave. has been vacant for more than a year. Cohen previously told the *Norwood News* that with Sam's Carpenter no longer occupying the property "It's really a time to make sure we don't miss an opportunity to improve the precinct."

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# 13-Year-Old Arrested for Gun Possession

By **SHA-NIA ALSTON** and  
**DAVID CRUZ**

The gun was unmistakable to plainclothes officers from the 52nd Precinct. They just didn't expect to see it in the waistband of a 13-year-old boy the evening of April 9.

But it happened in the area of East 182nd Street and Jerome Avenue in Fordham Heights at the tip of the Five-Two's jurisdiction abutting the 46th Precinct. Gun arrests are no stranger to this area, but the age of the kid had some residents pausing: why would a little kid be carrying a gun?

The image of the gun can be seen on 52nd Precinct's Twitter page. The case is making its way through Bronx Family Court as standard policy for minors. Had he been an adult, the young suspect could have faced any amount of hard time starting at three and half years or even the maximum sentence of 15 years for criminal possession of a weapon.

"I hope this child one day recognizes how fortunate he was to have been stopped by professional law enforcement officers before he made any potentially life altering decisions," said

Deputy Inspector Thomas Alps, commanding officer of the 52nd Precinct.

Why this young child was carrying a gun is still unknown. One expert and even residents say the suspect could have been used as a decoy.

David Caba, project manager for Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence, a subsidiary of the Good Shepherd Services nonprofit that attempts to convince gang members to renounce their ways, said this a form of protection method used by older offenders called "babyfacing."

"A lot of times, a 13-year-old is just holding the gun for someone else in the gang, someone who's older so when cops come they give everything to the baby face. That's basically what they call, give to the baby-face, because cops won't pay attention to the other ones, they're looking at the older one that they already have a history with," said Caba.

Even with this early arrest of the young suspect, residents still feel a need for more protection in the neighborhood. "They need to bring more police here," Chalina Moore, a local resident, said.



NYPD 52nd Precinct @NYPD5... · 5d

Yesterday, Your 52 Anti crime team removed this firearm from the waistband of a 13 year old child potentially saving his life and the lives of others. I commend those officers and hope this child one day thanks those officers for protecting him from himself. #NYPDprotecting



Image courtesy Twitter

**THE 52ND PRECINCT** tweeted this message on their Twitter account shortly after making the gun arrest.

Marvin, a neighborhood resident who declined to give his last name, worries over gang influence permeating around the neighborhood youth. "The big ones have the little ones with them, and they do some stupid stuff, and they don't have no respect,"

Armando Vernon, a friend of Marvin's and neighboring resident of where the arrest happened, finds his block to be very quiet, but just a few block away it's a different story. "Turn the corner in another direction, 183rd [Street] is a different world," Vernon said.

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#### Mixed Martial Arts Registration Starts:

Tuesday, May 28th for Members  
Thursday, May 30th for Non-Members  
Classes are 1x week or 2x week for 8 weeks  
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#### Salsa Registration Starts:

Monday, June 3rd for Members  
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Members \$300; Non-Members: \$350



#### Group Swim Registration Starts:

Monday, June 24th for Members  
Wednesday, June 26th for Non-Members  
Classes are 2x week for 4 weeks  
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#### Music Program Registration is Open:

Classes start July 13th  
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## NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

### UFT Bronx Fair

United Federation of Teachers and NYC Department of Education Bronx office hosts a fair at the UFT Learning Center, 2500 Halsey St. from 10 a.m. to 3 p. m., for students and families highlighting agencies, colleges, and vendors to assist students with special services and options when going from high school to college or the world of work. Events include meeting with professionals and student workshops. For more information, call (866) 509-5921.

### Become a Home Health Aide

Home Health Aide certification can be earned in one month (no high school diploma or equivalent is required) at the SUNY Bronx Educational Opportunity Center, 1666 Bathgate Ave. Applicants must be able to pass a background check and a drug screening. Register Monday or Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at <http://bronxeoc.org/register> for tuition free training. For more information, call (718) 530-7000.

### Business Courses for Immigrant Entrepreneurs

Department of Small Business Services offers business courses for new and established immigrant entrepreneurs, in multiple languages. For more information and to register, visit [nyc.gov/businesscourses](http://nyc.gov/businesscourses).

### DOS SAFE Disposal Event

Department of Sanitation invites the public to discard potentially harmful household items (SAFE: Solvents, Automotive, Flammables, Electronics), for recycling. Events are rain or shine from 10 a.m. to 4 p. m. Bronx event takes place on May 4 at the Orchard Beach parking lot. For more information, call 311.

### Free Bird Walks

Free bird walks are offered every Saturday beginning at 9 a.m. from April 27 through July 20 at the Van Cortlandt Nature Center. Bird watchers can look for various species of residents and migrants and discuss a wide range of avian topics. For more information, email Joseph McManus at [mcm-naus638@aol.com](mailto:mcm-naus638@aol.com).

naus638@aol.com. No registration necessary. No limit. Free thanks to grant by Councilman Andrew Cohen.

### Summer Youth Police Academy

Young people between the ages of 10 and 15 can sign up to train with police officers at the Summer Youth Police Academy. The program is free, runs five days a week for six weeks, from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Classes include lectures, role playing, and demonstrations in the areas of law, behavioral science, drug prevention and gang resistance. Applications are due May 31. For more information, call (718) 312-5079 or email [communityaffairs@nypd.org](mailto:communityaffairs@nypd.org).

### Right to Counsel

Right to Counsel (RTC)—which assigns a free attorney to those sued for eviction in housing court and in NYCHA termination of tenancy hearings and who are income eligible—is available to tenants who live in Bronx zip codes 10457, 10467, and 10468. If a tenant is not income-eligible, they have the right to a one-off legal consultation or advice session. Tenants facing eviction or harassment from management can call Nova Lucero at the Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition for support at (917) 952-5494.

### Crime Victims Support

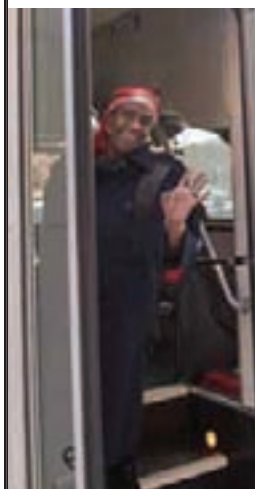
Crime Victims Support Services, a 501(c)3 group at 1138 Neill Ave., offers victims help in navigating the criminal justice system. Free confidential services include claim assistance, case follow-up, crisis counseling, and victim advocacy. The group accepts donations. For more information, call (718) 823-4925.

### Free Legal Services for Immigrants

Low-income immigrants can receive free legal advice from volunteer attorneys through the New York State Liberty Defense Project and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York. For more information, visit [CatholicCharitiesNYProBono.org](http://CatholicCharitiesNYProBono.org) or call (800) 566-7636. If you are interested in volunteering, visit [catholiccharitiesny.org](http://catholiccharitiesny.org).

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# Out & About

Compiled by JUDY NOY

## EDITOR'S PICK

### DOE Rep at Mosholu Library

The Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., hosts a NYC Department of Education representative to inform and answer all your questions about Specialized High Schools admissions, on April 27 at 1 p.m. Learn about requirements for acceptance (info and to RSVP: (212) 637-8080 or email to [shsat@schoolsny.gov](mailto:shsat@schoolsny.gov)). All are welcome. For more library information, call (718) 882-8239.

### Onstage

Lehman College's Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Pk. Blvd., W., presents **Complexions Contemporary Ballet**, April 27 at 8 p.m., performing *Star Dust*, a David Bowie Tribute (tickets: \$25 to \$45; \$75/VIP; \$10/ages to 12). VIP tickets include best seats and preconcert wine and hors d'oeuvres at 6:30 p.m. in the Havana Café. For more information, call (718) 960-8833.

The Riverdale Choral Society presents **Annelies**, concert based on "*Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*," May 5 at 3 p.m. at Christ Church Riverdale, 5040 Henry Hudson Pkwy. at West 252nd Street. \$25. For more information, call (718) 543-2219.

New York Botanical Garden presents

**Live Music Among the Lilacs**, featuring string quartet so&so (symphony orchestra). For more information, call (718) 817-8637.

### Events

New York Botanical Garden presents **Toy Toy Toy!** featuring Singaporean pianist performing a diminutive music-theatre played on toy pianos and other toy instruments from a music box to a jack-in-the-box, April 27 and 28 from 1 to 2 p.m. For more information, call (718) 817-8637.

Van Cortlandt Jewish Center, 3880 Sedgwick Ave., presents free **Holocaust Memorial Program**, May 5 starting with breakfast at 9:30 a.m. Events include a candle lighting ceremony by Holocaust survivors and family and a lecture on the role of Jewish women in the Resistance and



File photo

**WANT TO KNOW** how to get your child into a Specialized High School? You might want to stop by Mosholu Library on April 27 for an information session (see Editor's Pick for more information).

in battle against the Nazis. For more information, call (718) 884-6501.

The Bronx Zoo presents **Run for the Wild**, annual 5K run and family fun run/walk, April 27 from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Registration fee includes complimentary zoo admission and parking. Events include free post run activities, refreshments, and entertainment. Save \$10 courtesy of Montefiore by using code *Montefioreerftw*. For more information or to register, visit [wcsrunforthewild.org](http://wcsrunforthewild.org) and enter code.

Wave Hill, a Bronx oasis at 675 W. 252nd St. in Riverdale, offers **Family Art Projects**: Tree Ring Mandalas, to learn basic tree information from its rings, April 27 and 28; and Silky Caterpillar Sustenance, to make your own cocoon, May 4 and 5; both in the WH House, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Grounds admission is free until noon Tuesdays and Saturdays all year. For more information and a schedule of events including tours and walks, call (718) 549-3200.

### Exhibits

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266 Bainbridge Ave., presents exhibition, **The Bronx Goes to the Movies**, through Oct. 6. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

Bronx River Art Center (BRAC), 1087 E. Tremont Ave., presents **River Rising**, through June 30, featuring an exposition of science, art and technology, located in Starlight Park. For more information, call (718) 589-5819.

The Museum of Bronx History, 3266

Bainbridge Ave. (208th Street), presents **A History of the Bronx Latino**, ongoing. Hours: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, call (718) 881-8900.

### Library Events

Bronx Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd., presents for children: **STEM Explorers**: (ages 5 to 12 years), for hands-on science experiment, April 26 at 4 p.m. Adults can attend: **Crafternoon at 11 a.m.**: Enjoy knitting, crocheting, handiwork, April 26, May 3 and 10, in room C121 on the first floor by the elevators; **film**: "*Rebel Without a Cause*," April 27 at 2:30 p.m.; and **Walk With a Librarian**: to tour the library center and visit Poe Cottage (\$5 admission; call to RSVP), May 3 at 11 a.m. For more information, call (718) 579-4244/46/57 or visit [www.nypl.org](http://www.nypl.org).

Mosholu Library, 285 E. 205th St., offers for children: **Crafty Fridays**: (ages 5 to 12), crafts, April 26 at 3 p.m.; **Toddler Storytime**: (ages 18 months to 3 years), interactive stories, action songs, fingerplays, and crafts, April 29 at 11 a.m.; and **STEM: Kids Science**: (ages 5 to 12), Sound, April 30 at 3 p.m.. Adults can enjoy: **film**: "*Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*," April 26 at 1:30 p.m.; **Jewelry Making at 3 p.m.**: April 30 and May 7 (registration required); and **Knitting Circle**: Thursdays at 3 p.m. For more information, call (718) 882-8239.

**NOTE:** Items for consideration may be mailed to our office or sent to [norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org](mailto:norwoodnews@norwoodnews.org), and should be received by April 29 for the next publication date of May 9.



File photo by Adi Talwar

**RUN FOR THE Wild** promises to be a great time for adults and children of all ages. And it's for a good cause too (see Events section for more details).



# Defining Norwood's Consumer Demands

(continued from page 1)

mercial needs, collecting data through a business inventory (there's currently a 12 percent vacancy rate), interviews of merchants, surveys of its residents, and the current amenities beyond businesses. Over the years, SBS has drafted reports on other commercial areas, including the recently rezoned Jerome Avenue. Comments collected in the three workshops will fall under the "Key Findings and Opportunities" section.

Soliciting feedback from residents falls in line with the economic development philosophy of Jennifer Tausig, executive director of MPC, who sees consumer input as the quintessential selling point to producing community buy-in.

"I don't go into a neighborhood and say, 'Here's what you need.' But prefer to facilitate those conversations with people who have lived there or do live there to hear more on what they're looking to do and to implement it," said Tausig.

A portion of that grant, roughly \$60,000 spread out over two years, will be earmarked for programming intended to spur greater interest in the corridors. Ideas will be hammered out based on insights shared and incorporated into the CDNA.

Local shopkeepers, along with consumers, noted they'd like to see the history and culture of the neighborhoods—which encompasses residential buildings as high as eight stories—preserved. There were also calls for beautifying the neighborhood. Tausig said MPC will also do its part through MPC's matching funds program that would include store signage improvements for eligible merchants.

Tausig doubles as executive director to Norwood's Jerome Gun Hill Business Improvement District, which drafted its own assessment (Community Needs Assessment, CNA) via an Avenue NYC Grant. The report was circulated to the brokerage community and entrepreneurs in hopes of attracting retailers.

Results aren't always immediate, but Tausig sees the BID's CNA as another way of raising the profile of the commercial corridors in a city largely dominated by the retail sector. "It's hard to make the connection super-directly to say that our report has helped bring x-number of retailers, but our vacancy rate did decrease. It went from seven percent to four and a half percent during the year that we did all that work," said Tausig.

## "Bit More Variety"

With poster boards placed on easels around the cafeteria of PS/MS 20 on Webster Avenue near East Mosholu

Parkway, residents and community stakeholders proposed adding more amenities to the strips, which included ideas ranging from cafés and workspace options to lowering the volume of music blasting from stores. Using sticky notes, ideas were jotted down and placed on poster boards.

Joana Oliveras, a lifelong Norwood resident who heard about the meeting through Instagram, wants to see a sneaker store and a YMCA in the neighborhood.

"I just want a little bit more variety. Right now—I've been living in this neighborhood a long time—I feel like there's just delis, and discount stores. Those help, definitely, like for the weird, in-between, like, 'Oh man, I need a tension rod and I don't want to go all the way to Home Depot,'" said Oliveras, shortly after offering her take to MPC.

## More Needs

A week after the workshop, residents not in attendance had different views of the future of the corridors. Near the FoodTown on East 204th Street, a resident who only went by Paul wanted to see another supermarket. He also has a Denny's restaurant on his wish list.

Donnie Cianciotto, another resident, agrees. "Maybe a couple of sit-down restaurants would be alright. But as far as groceries and needs and things, everything is pretty much around. I don't think I would change what's here, no. Maybe just fix up the streets a little bit," said Cianciotto.

Despite the presence of grocery stores and a supermarket, Tessa, a Norwood resident for the last eight years, wants an upgrade to the existing stock of grocery stores.

Caesar Talledo, another resident, wants something different—more security.

Unlike the other four who did not attend the workshop, Oliveras' take will be likely included in the report published by SBS sometime this fall.

The CDNA report outlining those needs is intended for prospective merchants who will have a greater sense of what's in high demand in the neighborhood. The final report—which will be presented to Community Board 7—is expected to be completed later this year.

"Once we have this nice Commercial District Needs Assessment, we'll be able to go use that and to raise additional dollars, hopefully more flexible dollars, to be able to do some of the additional work," said Tausig.

*Additional reporting by Alondra Vasquez and Sha-Nia Alston.*

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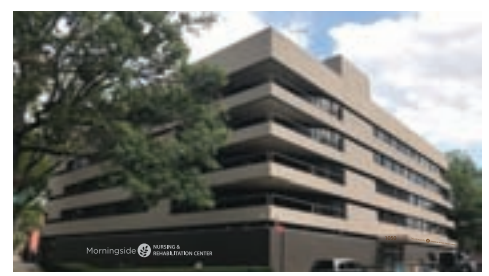
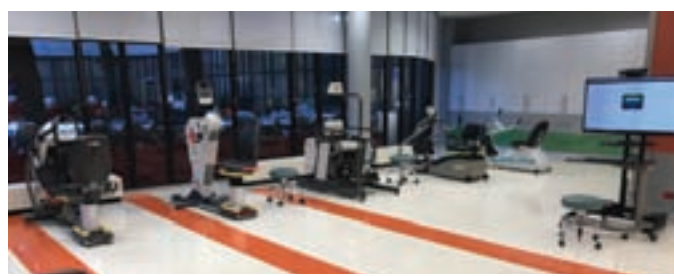


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