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CB4 hears request to honor Brandon Romero

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BY WINNIE McCROY | Residents of Fulton Houses gathered at the January 4 Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) meeting to petition the board to recognize the heroic death of Brandon Edward Romero. The young man was murdered on December 12 while helping his cousin, Jamie Lee Cruz, retrieve her belongings from an abusive boyfriend.

“I am reaching out to board members to support the Romero family on their tragic loss,” said Miguel Acevedo, a CB4 board member and president of the Fulton Houses Tenants Association. “Recently their child was murdered by a former boyfriend of the cousin. As Romero was attempting to save his cousin, he was shot and stabbed to death at the young age of 20. We need to work together as a community to combat gun violence...and the family has asked us to work with them in getting the street name changed on 19th Street and Ninth Avenue.”

Acevedo cited as precedent the 2007 death of a child that led to speed bumps being installed from Sixth to Tenth Avenues, as well as the 2009 DWI death of 11-year-old Leandra Rosado, which led to the implementation of “Leandra’s Law” (making it a felony offense to drive intoxicated with children in the vehicle). Leandra’s father, Lenny Rosado, also addressed the crowd, sharing his support for their petition.

“Brandon not only died heroically here in Fulton Houses, Brandon was an organizer in the community, worked with his grandparents, helped his cousin, always put everyone else ahead of him,” said Acevedo. “There were kids I met at his funeral who told me they would be homeless if it wasn’t for Brandon. There were many things Brandon did for his community, so it’s important we stick together and show the Romero family that we are here to support them.”

Several other people testified — with a friend telling how Romero helped him quit drugs. Romero’s fellow parishioner Karen Lindstrom noted that the young man always walked her to her door after services.

These sentiments were echoed by Brandon’s brother Frank Romero, who said, “My brother is a hero. A hero is defined through actions. Firefighters, cops and soldiers are heroes. They all get credit for their actions. Just because someone is an ordinary citizen doesn’t mean they’re not a hero for their actions.... On December 12, my brother [showed great courage]. He’s done that all his life.... We were all brought up to do the right thing.”

“My brother did more than what he was told. He did what he felt was right, and I feel that should be recognized,” continued Romero. “That’s why I started a petition to get his name put on the corner on the spot where we grew up. So that this way, every time we walk past there, we can look up and know there is some sort of closure.”

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Cousin Brenda Cruz followed, saying, "He chose to put himself in front of a gun for my sister over two times so she could escape unharmed." Cruz burst into tears as she relayed other tales of his civic-minded selflessness — including an incident with a dangerous pothole, donating his lunch to hungry kids, helping with groceries and helping friends stay off drugs and the streets.

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"It's an honor for my family to have known him and helped raise him and love him. It is so sad that he can't be a role model to children because he was killed so young. It rained on their parade, but they danced on his name in there and think "What would Brandon do?" and maybe not do that. We got the ball rolling; How Pr. 40 fight brought us Hudson River Park

Sheltering Homeless Youth 21-24 Gets \$1MM in New City Budget
Connie Kurtz, Lesbian Activist, Artist, Dies at 82

Other friends and family members also spoke, including aunt Patricia Romero. From splintered piers to fancy park of today, we've come a long way

Albany LGBTQI Advocacy Day Draws 250
Band of Brothers

Keeping cool on the West Side, 1940s style

HOP: Nabe Complaints Led to New Parade Route

Fish, forests and fields coming to Tribeca pier

EAST VILLAGER NEWS



items, which included

DOWNTOWN EXPRESS
a ULURP application from the Baillo Deli for a sidewalk café and an application to Trees Management Co. for their new physical culture establishment.

Among powerful friends, Chin enters her second term
Top cop says special unit, outreach can cut thefts

Bob Trentlivan spoke on the study of storm surge barriers and Jane Weissman Police Blotter: Week of May 24

Muscle-headed gym keeps flouting regs with illegal signage
Judge says city broke the law by approving N.Y.U. superblocks plan

Cacophony of colors brings harmony at Governors Island Holi Hai celebration

De Blasio seems on same page with evicted news vendor

Wave vs. glacier: Slow pace of resiliency plans will leave Downtown at risk for many years to come

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tion and Development

All booked up: CB1 worries zoning change will push more hotels into crowded Downtown

Assembly member... support as prime sponsor of a resolution related to federal legislation on firearms.

Speaker Christine Quinn's office takes an important step in her continuing commitment to stopping the flow of illegal guns, and noted that budget modifications have lead to \$400 million in savings this year. Quinn also noted that the Bowers Residents' Committee (BRC) had received their third and final certificate necessary to operate at their location at 127 West 25th Street. She vowed to remain proactive and vigilant, and encouraged community members to attend the BRC's monthly Community Advisory Committee meetings, at 5:30pm on the first Tuesday of each month at the shelter.

Council Passes All Agenda Items

With the thermometer hitting the single digits, District Manager Bob Benfatto elicited laughter from the crowd when he announced in his report that the NYC Parks & Recreation Department was now recruiting lifeguards. He also noted that the BRC was now officially open, and operating at full capacity.

He informed board members that Boxers HK would not have a hearing about maintaining necessary distance from a schoolyard, but would go before the State Liquor Authority (SLA). He also noted that at a recent tour of the Lantern Group's holdings near Hudson Yards revealed that their building on West 51st Street was in poor condition, with vermin and bedbug infestations, crumbling stairwells and sloping floors.

Corey Johnson followed with his Chair Report — noting that by meeting with the Dream Hotel, the NYPD and the Speaker's office ahead of time, New Year's Eve problems were minimized in Chelsea.

Johnson also said he expected Jamestown Properties to file their paperwork for the proposed Chelsea Market expansion in the next few weeks, and it would likely be before the full board in March.

Referencing the Department of Education's abandonment of rezoning school districts, he noted that meetings would soon begin for the Foundling School Elementary — at which point new zones would have to be redrawn.

The board then voted on 18 agenda items — all letters to various city agencies, all of which were approved. The board voted to send a letter to Speaker Quinn supporting the restoration of the Belkin Mural, adding language, based on community input, seeking to temporarily relocate the children's play area during renovation. The board also agreed to wait until after the restoration to approach the Landmarks Commission about the mural.

Other issues included several Department of Transportation (DOT) letters regarding parking, paving, no standing signs and for the DOT to move the location of the Megabus stop on 33rd Street and Ninth Avenue to Eleventh Avenue.

Johnson postponed a discussion about simplifying the Business License and Permit Committee forms until a future meeting, and after a short discussion, the board voted to support a karaoke bar at 572 11th Avenue and a gastropub at 351 West 16th Street.

The next full board meeting of CB4 will be held on February 1 at 6:30pm, at Roosevelt Hospital (59th Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues). For more info, visit nyc.gov/mancb4.

To access the Brandon Romero petition, visit thepetitionsite.com/2/get-brandon-romero-the-recognition-he-deserves.

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