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**The City of New York**  
**Manhattan Community Board 8**

**Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee Meeting**

New York Blood Center  
310 East 67<sup>th</sup> Street  
Conference Room 1 & 2  
May 31, 2012  
6:30PM

**Community Board members in attendance:** Molly Blayney, Mary Pike, Ellen Polivy, Hattie Quarnstrom

**Public member in attendance:** Jeffrey Ascherman

**Community Board members excused:** Jacqueline Ludorf, Barbara Rudder

The meeting was called to order at 6:42pm.

The HSSS committee heard from two speakers: Jane Swanson, chief of staff to New York City Council Member Jessica Lappin, and Dottie Jeffries, who presented during new business about two outreach programs at Park Avenue Christian Church. As Council Member Lappin chairs the Council's Committee on Aging, Ms. Swanson addressed the HSSS committee on important age-linked issues and matters. Both speakers entertained questions during their presentations.

**Jane Swanson, Chief of Staff to New York City Council Member Jessica Lappin, chair of the Council's Committee on Aging:**

Ms. Swanson's remarks focused on two areas: 1) the budgetary process and its impact on programs and services for seniors, and 2) various ongoing programs and initiatives that benefit seniors. At the outset, she described the annual budgetary process and identified some of the cuts made during prior budgetary cycles. With respect to ongoing programs and initiatives, she made the same important point other speakers have also made to the committee: programs and initiatives that benefit seniors often improve the quality of life for all.

The following were among other points she made during her remarks:

- As chair, Council Member Lappin has sought to pursue a two-pronged approach, focusing 1) on active seniors and 2) on providing and protecting core services for the most vulnerable of our elderly; owing to the economy, protecting core services has, of necessity, emerged as the most immediate and urgent task.

- Both the city and the state have cut funds for seniors, despite the fact that compared to other areas, the amounts allocated for senior services and programs are relatively small to begin with.
- In 2010, a devastating cut resulted in the loss of the adult day care program for seniors with dementia; this money has yet to be restored to the budget. As a result, some adult children have had to forfeit their jobs to care for a parent who cannot be left alone, thus compounding the emotional and financial hardship experienced by both generations.
- In a significant budget victory, the mayor agreed not to cut \$14 million for senior centers and that amount is now baselined in the fiscal year 2013 budget.
- The Council, however, is still faced with trying to restore \$16 million, meaning many important programs and services not already lost in prior budgetary cycles remain at risk; restoring funding for case management programs for at-risk elderly remains a critical budgetary priority.
- Council Member Lappin worked with AARP to identify the most dangerous intersections and to get statistics online about where accidents occur.
- "Silver Alerts" are another of the council member's initiatives. When an elderly person disappears, the New York Police Department will activate a program that quickly notifies hospitals, media, senior service providers, community organizations, and others on a citywide basis, thus enhancing the possibility of the person being safely reunited with his/her family as rapidly as possible.

Ms. Swanson also spoke about the Age-Friendly New York City initiative and the innovative senior centers program. The HSSS Committee had relatively recently heard from speakers who addressed both these topics in detail. Rather than repeat the same information here, we would refer interested parties to the HSSS minutes for April 2012.

### **Dottie Jeffries, Park Avenue Christian Church, on "Lifeline" and the Saturday Lunch Program:**

Both of these programs are church-based programs sited at Park Avenue Christian Church, which is located at 85th Street and Park Avenue.

#### **Lifeline**

- The focus of Lifeline is to offer support and aid in a quiet, meditative atmosphere to those grappling with an addiction.
- It is not a treatment center or a 12-step group although people who participate in Lifeline often are members of Alcoholics Anonymous as well.
- Participants include those seeking recovery from addiction, as well as those who are in recovery.
- The meetings are not religious services and are open to all.
- Detailed information about Lifeline is available on the church's website: [lifelinenyc.org](http://lifelinenyc.org).

## **Saturday Community Lunch Program**

- The program is an interfaith effort participated in by Park Avenue Christian Church, Congregation Da'at Elohim, Manhattan Church of Christ, Park Avenue Methodist Church, and St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church.
- Each Saturday hot lunches are made available at Park Avenue Christian Church to several hundred guests, many of whom are homeless or simply in need of a meal because of personal circumstances.
- A social worker is available to speak on a one-to-one basis with any guests who might wish to do so.
- For further information about the lunch program, go to:  
[parkavenuechristian.com/community/reaching-out-for-justice-and-healing](http://parkavenuechristian.com/community/reaching-out-for-justice-and-healing) /Saturday-lunch/

## **New Business**

Co-chair Ellen Polivy raised the possibility of a letter or resolution urging Cornell-Technton to make research on innovations that would enable the elderly to "age in place" a significant and permanent component of their mission. The committee briefly discussed her suggestion but took no action in light of the pending Roosevelt Island Task Force committee meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.

**Ellen Polivy and Mary Pike  
Co-Chairs  
Health, Seniors, and Social Services Committee**