



CEEP PROJECT FAR ROCKAWAY

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SBE 400

CEEP project Far Rockaway

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1700: SBE 400

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CEEP Project Far Rockaway community

Introduction:

My research question is, "Has the recent addition of residential buildings and community investing projects benefited the community, and what can we add to make it potentially better?" This question is significant because Far Rockaway remained an unprosperous community for many years. Little to no construction was made to improve buildings, schools or community spaces. For once, we are seeing a big change within the community with the recent funding. Far Rockaway is currently undergoing redevelopment plans, according to the website NY.Gov, "this project will activate a previously underused city-owned municipal parking lot to create 224 units of mixed-income 100% affordable housing and expected to create over 59 permanent jobs." I was interested in gathering information on a young person's perspective on the topic and an older person's perspective on the matter. This will allow me to understand both perspectives on change within the community and what exactly we need built or implement within the community of Far Rockaway.

Far Rockaway is a small Queens area that hasn't seen much building development in over 30 years, and many empty lots were left abandoned from past failed ventures, poor management, and other reasons. Things took a turn within the past two years, with De Blasio administration helping finance 1,300 affordable housing apartments and the addition of commercial spaces. Far Rockaway has been a neglected community for many decades. New changes have been made in my community within the past two years. The increased funding of projects and businesses has flourished with the new construction of commercial and residential buildings. In 2012, an article came out from the daily news speaking of a new possible hope emerging from where the abandoned shopping center lays, in the article the district manager of community board 14 said

the following, “Until this shopping center is mostly filled with stores, the rest of the downtown Far Rockaway area is going to struggle, we see it as the linchpin of the beginning of economic revitalization in Far Rockaway.” (L. Colangelo, 2013)

The primary purpose of this research I conducted is to understand the perspective of an older resident who lived in the community for many years and view where he stands. I also wanted to gather information from a younger resident of the Far Rockaway Community and see if there were any similarities in the answers they chose or if one wanted to see more change than the other and what those changes should be.

Methods

Initially, I intended to gather my data by surveying using survey monkey. Still, due to my low responses, I pivoted and randomly selected two participants of two different age groups who lived within the community of Far Rockaway to help be my interviewees. I used narrative analysis to conduct my research. In my interview, I asked a total of 8 questions. I gathered stories and compared and contrasted both stories. Since I had to select two participants from the street randomly, I had to resort to using my mobile device as a microphone and recorder to ask the questions and for them to respond comfortably. I had to make the interviews short, within 3-5 min for they not to feel dragged into an uncomfortable lecture. After The finished interviews, I asked them if they could also fill out a survey with the same questions, as I was going to use this data for graphing purposes within the survey monkey app. I then proceeded to have the interview transcribed using software called Otter.ai.

Results

After gathering the information from both interviews I conducted, I learned a little more from the perspective of a senior in the community and a young adult growing into the community. My first interview was with a young resident who lives in the Far Rockaway community. His name is Jason, and he is 20 years of age. Below I have the transcribed interview between us both.

Transcribed Interview 1:

Marvin Garcia 0:00

Thank you for doing this little quick interview with me. If you want to introduce yourself, yes, by your first name would be fine.

Jason 0:09

My name is Jason.

Marvin Garcia 0:10

Thank you. And this is a little interview and just a community of Rockaway. And I wanted to ask you the first question here. Have you noticed any improvements within the community in the past year?

Jason 0:25

In the past year, I noticed that they opened up new residential buildings, new buildings for housing, I guess.

Marvin Garcia 0:35

Yeah, no, I, me too. I've been noticing some some changes they've been doing. And do you believe are adequate to be a place of opportunity?

Jason 0:46

I wouldn't say great, too much opportunity. But it's something that can seek improvement. There's not a lot of resources, where you could, you know, per se, like, seek a better future. I'm sure you can add to that. But I think there could be a lot more resources in order to seek better opportunities.

Marvin Garcia 1:13

Okay. Do you believe so as you mentioned earlier, you, you noticed that area that we're building? And you could say, the heart of Rockaway, those buildings, those residential areas, the commercial spaces? Do you believe that to be a? What do you think about that? Like, do you think that's a good thing or a bad thing?

Jason 1:35

I mean, with that, I'm hoping brings a lot more, like new faces, new businesses, and people in order to help the community, I noticed that with the new buildings, there are some they also rebuilt the new Queens Library. But I hope there is more to that where they can help the younger generation, and also the older generation with you know, the community in their lives all together.

Marvin Garcia 2:07

Yeah, I agree. And what new stores would you like included? In our community?

Jason 2:15

I want to say a lot more commercial ones, where there's not just a regular deli, or like a McDonald's, where you can say that's everywhere. But I'm not also saying just to have a Starbucks on every corner, I would like, you know, a new fresh market or, you know, new banks, different resources, where you're not just stuck going to one place where everybody just goes. But, you know, having a lot more commercial use?

Marvin Garcia 2:48

No, definitely. So, the one thing our community community needs the most, what do you think that would be

Jason 2:57

something for the younger generation, or kids going into, you know, after school, so they can, you know, improve their, their own future where it doesn't have to be like a job, but like a learning center of what they want to do in the future.

Marvin Garcia 3:16

Perfect. Now, the next question is kind of similar. It was, what changes you wish to see. And for Rockaway that you don't currently see if you could think of any one as maybe like a school programs, like you mentioned, or shopping centers. You mentioned the trade school, like some sort of learning center, you said, but is there anything else? Maybe that you, perhaps maybe you wish to see one last change? Or change if anything?

Jason 3:48

Well, I think the streets can be renovated. I know in certain areas there. It's not the best area to live around, especially just community. You know, there's one way in one way out, as you could say. So usually the trains are partaking services, the buses, but just to get around the community. I think it needs to have a new renovation.

Marvin Garcia 4:19

Definitely. And your age range.

Jason 4:26

Age is 20

Marvin Garcia 4:27

I thank you for doing this interview with me, Jason.

With the information I've gathered from this interview, I've learned that despite the new construction of residential buildings and commercial settings, it still doesn't meet the needs of young residents who live in the community. My interviewee, Jason, a 20-year-old college resident, noticed the new residential buildings being constructed in Far Rockaway. Mentioned Far Rockaway was a place of little opportunity, with minimal resources to assist someone's future. With the new buildings being constructed, Jason hopes this effect will bring positive change within the community. This included new faces, new businesses, and new people that would help the community. He mentioned that with the addition of the new residential buildings, the new community library currently being constructed alongside the new buildings is a potential staple in helping the younger and older generations gain knowledge in newer fields. With the new addition of commercial spaces now available in Far Rockaway, I asked Jason what stores he

would like included here in Far Rockaway; his response was unique; he said that rather than have another deli be opened, he preferred something with more substance like a new fresh market and a new bank. The reasoning behind his response is that this will add variety to the community and offer new products/services to its residents. Jason believes Far Rockaway's most needed asset is something for the younger generation A learning center that offers school programs to improve their abilities and creativity further. The last desired change Jason wished to see was better road construction around Far Rockaway, as many streets are in rubble due to poor infrastructure.

The second interview I conducted was with an older gentleman who has lived in the Far Rockaway community for many years since the early 90s. His name is Allim, and I wanted to understand an older person's perspective on the new construction around Far Rockaway. Below is a transcribed interview of us both.

Transcribed Interview 2:

Marvin 0:02

I want to thank you for doing this interview with me. It's an interview on Far Rockaway our community, and if you could introduce me with just your name.

Allim 0:12

My name is Allam Moonab.

Unknown Speaker 0:15

Yes. And your age range. Who would be?

Allim

I'm 65.

Marvin Garcia

Have you noticed any improvement within our community in the past year?

Allim 0:26

Yes.

Marvin Garcia 0:27

What would these improvements be? If

Allim 0:30

I saw a lot of newer buildings and different businesses.

Marvin Garcia 0:37

Do you believe for Rockaway to be a place of opportunity?

Allim 0:40

Of course, Far Rockaway is a place of opportunity.

Marvin Garcia 0:45

Do you believe? As you mentioned the construction of these buildings, you think that's a good thing that we're at adding all these new buildings and new commercial buildings in Far Rockaway?

Allim 0:57

I think it is. I think it is.

Marvin Garcia 1:00

Is there a reason why maybe it is a growth of the community? I agree. What new stores would you like include it in our community?

Allim 1:09

Well, we definitely need department stores. We need a home improvement stores.

Definitely a home improvement.

Marvin Garcia 1:20

But what does our community need the most?

Allim 1:26

Our committee needs the most home improvement because we have none like that in the area.

Marvin Garcia 1:33

What changes you wish to see in the improper that you don't currently see? Would it be perhaps more community events? Improved hospital service,

Allim 1:44

I say improve? Has I still improved hospital service? Yeah, yes. I'll have the services not as good as it's supposed to be.

Marvin Garcia 1:55

Could it be because it's low-funded?

Allim 1:58

Perhaps? Yes. Yes.

Marvin Garcia 2:01

And how long have you been living in Far Rockaway?

Allim 2:03

I've been living in Far Rockaway for 35 years. 35 years? Yes, I moved here in the 90s.

Wow,

Marvin Garcia 2:10

that is very, very interesting, because you have more experienced than anyone of course in the forearm, of course, you've seen everything.

Allim 2:20

And I'd have no idea of moving not for now at least.

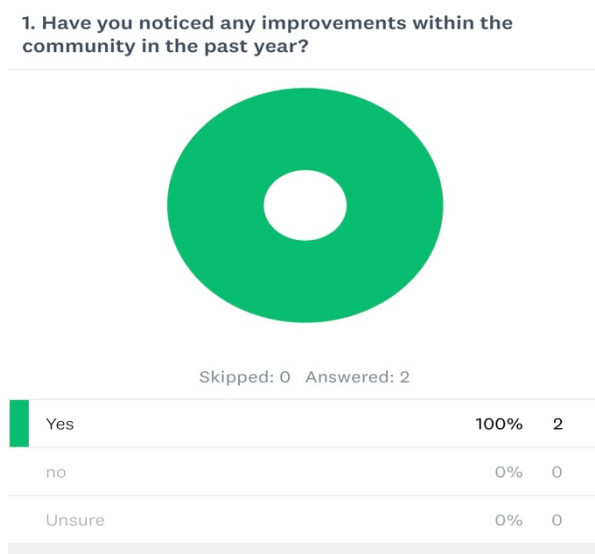
Marvin Garcia 2:23

I really appreciate your time for this for doing this and thank you. Okay.

In my second interview with interview Allim Moonab a 65-year-old resident of Far Rockaway for 35 years, believes he has seen new improvements within the community due to the new funding for buildings being constructed in the main areas of Far Rockaway. He believes Far Rockaway to be a place of opportunity. The recent addition of commercial builds and commercial spaces is a growth or asset of the community. In short words, it's an asset added to our community that we once did not have. With the new commercial spaces now being available, Allim wants more department stores but, most importantly, a home improvement store like

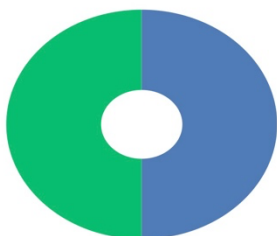
Lowe's and Home Depot because none are available anywhere. The change he wishes to see is improved hospital service due to the low funding the city receives. I agree with him on this statement as well.

As I mentioned earlier, with the use of SurveyMonkey, I was able to graph their responses in graph format to better illustrate the results of my research. Each graph represents both participants' responses, some of the responses were similar, while others shared a different set of opinions.



In this graph, both participants noticed improvements within the community in the past year.

2. Do you believe Far Rockaway to be a place of opportunity? explain

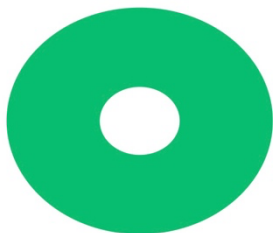


Skipped: 0 Answered: 2

yes	50%	1
no	50%	1

In this graph, we see a different set of opinions, Allim, the older resident of Far Rockaway believes Far Rockaway to be a place of opportunity. On the contrary, Jason, the younger resident of Far Rockaway, believes our community to be a place of no current opportunity. You can see the difference in opinions based on their age range. For the younger resident, he went based on his current knowledge of living as a young adult in a community that offered him few opportunities for growth.

3. Do you believe the construction of residential Buildings, a community library, and commercial space for stores to benefit the community in a positive



Skipped: 0 Answered: 2

yes	100%	2
no	0%	0

In this Graph, Both participants Jason and Allim do believe the new construction to be a right step in the right direction. This can bring in possible change and benefits to the community.

What new stores would you like included in our community?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 0

[RESPONSES \(2\)](#)
[WORD CLOUD](#)
[TAGS \(0\)](#)
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Filter: |

Showing 2 responses

More commercial stores
 3/11/2023 12:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Home improvement store
 3/7/2023 06:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

In this question, Jason answered he would prefer to see more department stores similar to clothing stores or mall-centric shops. Allim really believed a Home Improvement store to be the best type of store to have included in our community.

What does our community need the most?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 0

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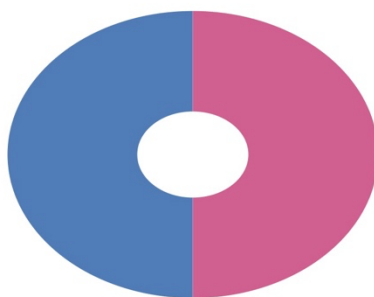
Showing 2 responses

Safety
 3/11/2023 12:46 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Better security
 3/7/2023 06:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#)

Both participants agreed security is the most needed thing in our community, and with good reason. Far Rockaway is known to be a place of dangerous activity. It’s not uncommon to hear about someone robbed by a thief between now and a couple of years back. I agree with both Jason and Allim on this topic. I do believe our community needs better security, and hopefully, we can. According to the wave, “Crime has been a key issue in New Yor since the pandemic started in 2020, having 773 major crimes committed in both the 100th and 101st precincts”. (Schwach, 2022) These are not promising numbers and it is something that needs to be focused on more.

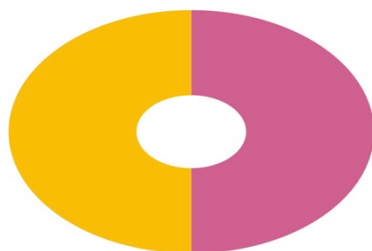
7. Age range



Skipped: 0 Answered: 2

Under 18	0%	0
18-24	50%	1
25-34	0%	0
35-44	0%	0
45-54	0%	0
55-64	0%	0
65+	50%	1

8. Ethnicity



Skipped: 0 Answered: 2

White	0%	0
Black or African American	0%	0
Hispanic or Latino	50%	1
Asian or Asian American	0%	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0%	0
Another race	50%	1

Discussion

After completing my research, I discovered a more significant issue that could arise. After having a conversation with a taxing department well known in the community that's located right in front of the redevelopment zone, they shared their opinions with me and people from the community who were present too. According to them, while increasing population with 1,300 affordable apartment living can bring positive growth for them as a business, It can indeed also cause trouble. They expressed to me how this can bring possible trouble to the community due to the newcomers entering Far Rockaway from other more dangerous areas in New York that could, in turn, cause more crime rate in Far Rockaway. This was not a thought I had present until now, and it made me second guess the state of my community in the future. Showing them the idea of having a department store being constructed in the new available commercial spaces

Allim desired turned out to be an unpopular opinion. Only half the people in the room thought that would be a necessary thing in the community, the rest thought it could be a waste of funding and would not necessarily help the community internally. Overall, they did agree with having better hospital service. According to Rate MDs, St John's Episcopal Hospital was rated 1 out of 5 stars across the board in Management, service, cleanliness, and value. I myself have had bad experiences in this community hospital due to negligence.

My intention of doing this research was to hear the different perspectives on the redevelopment being conducted in Far Rockaway since it was such a new thing in our community. We were used to having rundown shops, abandoned lots, and deteriorating apartment buildings, and seeing a change of scene brought hope to my eyes. I primarily saw the redevelopment plan as a positive change in the community, one that will give kids and adults a better opportunity with affordable living and learning with the community library being renovated right across the street from the main redevelopment zone. According to an online website titled Downtown Far Rockaway, 18 small-business storefronts improved, identifying new opportunities for mixed-income housing, rezoning the downtown area to unlock development potential for commercial and residential usage" (anonymous, 2020)

Communicating with the residents living within the community of Far Rockaway have had a new side of perspectives on what exactly our community needs most. Having better schools was a top priority, the parents of the kids who also attended the public

schools in the community knew well how challenging learning was in a class that was overpopulated with kids having disruptive behavior as I was told. They want their kids to learn with better quality and service. As mentioned earlier, security was the most important thing for our community according to my research.

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