

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

# KEITH POWERS



*September 2019*

Dear Neighbor:

I hope you had an enjoyable summer. As the season winds down, there is plenty of activity ramping up for the fall.

I am pleased to invite you to a Town Hall with Speaker Corey Johnson on Tuesday, September 17, at 6:30 P.M. at the CUNY Graduate Center. This is an opportunity to join me and the Speaker of the City Council in a group forum to discuss community issues and updates. The Speaker and I will address questions from constituents, and look forward to a robust conversation.



Another Participatory Budgeting cycle is starting, as well. With \$1 million to allocate toward community projects, residents in my district can submit ideas on what they want to see in the neighborhood, and ultimately vote on the ones that will most improve the community. Participatory Budgeting can fund projects through the city's capital budget ranging from park upgrades and school improvements to transportation innovations, and more. My office will be hosting several Neighborhood Assemblies in the coming weeks to explain the process and [collect project ideas](#), which you can start submitting now. I hope to see you there.

Please remember that my office is a resource for you, and I encourage you to call or email me at any time, at (212) 818-0580 or [kpowers@council.nyc.gov](mailto:kpowers@council.nyc.gov).

Regards,

*Keith*

Keith

## NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

### Submit an Idea for Participatory Budgeting

I am excited to announce the beginning of another cycle of Participatory Budgeting in District 4. In April 2019, thousands of residents voted to decide how to spend \$1 million of the New York City budget. Winning projects included new tree plantings, tech upgrades for our local schools and libraries, and countdown clocks at bus stops. This fall, I will be hosting Neighborhood Assemblies throughout our district to hear more ideas for next year's ballot. Dates and locations for the assemblies will be shared in the coming weeks, and will be available [here](#), as well. I hope you will join me at one of these events but you may also [submit your ideas online here](#) if you are unable to attend. If you would like to get involved with volunteering or helping develop the Participatory Budgeting ballot as a Budget Delegate, please email Ben Jacobs from my office at [bjacobs@council.nyc.gov](mailto:bjacobs@council.nyc.gov).



*Council Member Powers visits a Publicolor summer arts program.*

### New Pre-K Center Open at 355 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street

This month, a new pre-kindergarten center opened for 180 four-year-olds on the Upper East Side, at 355 East 76<sup>th</sup> Street, serving both my and Council Member Ben Kallos' constituents. This marks the third pre-K center opening in the area over the past two years as a part of Mayor de Blasio's Pre-K for All initiative. The new centers help to close the gap in need and I look forward to continuing to work to identify more areas in our communities that fit the mold for pre-K. In total, more than 400 seats have been added during my tenure in the City Council. I thank the Department of Education for continued efforts with this successful program and am glad to partner with Council Member Kallos to benefit our youngest learners.

### Greenway Bike Lane on the East River Waterfront

Last month, a new bike lane was installed along the East River waterfront between 25<sup>th</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Streets. My office has received feedback from cyclists, drivers, and pedestrians concerned about elements of the bike lane's design and implementation. While I am supportive of new infrastructure that keeps everyone

safe, the newly installed bike lane is inconsistent with that of the original design that was a better fit for the area. As a result of this feedback, I am hosting a walkthrough of the area with the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to examine these issues up close. I look forward to coordinating with DOT to address the concerns raised and to make the new bike lane safer for everyone who travels in the area.



*Council Member Powers distributes school supplies to P.S. 281 The River School students earlier this month.*

### **The Frick Collection Expansion**

As you may know, last year The Frick Collection, located at 1 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street, submitted an application to the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) to renovate and expand their facilities. Due to the historical significance of the museum, many of you have shared your thoughts and concerns with me regarding the plan and how the character of the building would be altered. While I believe that institutions such as The Frick should be able to grow to fulfill programmatic needs, community voices must also be heard during this process. The BSA will hold its next hearing on September 17.

### **EVENT ALERT: Senior Health Fair**

Join me on October 10 with Council Member Kallos at St. Peter's Church for a Senior Health Fair to receive a flu shot and benefit from resources from various health-focused organizations. Vaccines will be sponsored by Walgreens.

Thursday, October 10, 2019

4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Saint Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue



*Council Member Powers joins Council Member Ben Kallos and DOT Manhattan Commissioner Ed Pincar to cut the ribbon on the newly completed 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue bike lane gap on the Upper East Side.*

## CITY HALL

### **New Legislation: Allowing New Yorkers to Cancel Memberships Online**

Last month, I announced that I am drafting a bill to require companies to allow customers to cancel subscriptions and memberships online. I have heard from constituents who have described the unnecessarily complicated process of trying to cancel memberships from clubs and gyms, as well as other services. Even after cancelling memberships, some gyms continue to charge consumers for services they no longer want. Especially in light of the boycott of Equinox, I want to ensure that consumers have the freedom to put their money toward the causes they believe in. With this bill, consumers will no longer have to go in person, mail a certified letter, or make multiple calls just to cancel a membership.



*Council Member Powers celebrates Korean Independence Day at City Hall.*

## Improving Our Campaign Finance System

This summer, the City Council heard two pieces of legislation that I introduced that seek to strengthen New York City's campaign finance system. Intro. 773 would close a loophole in our campaign finance system that allows developers to make contributions to candidates despite having land use applications before City agencies. My legislation would implement earlier thresholds for placing limits on contributions to avoid any potential conflicts. Intro. 774 would lower the minimum contribution requirement to qualify for the public matching funds system from \$10 to \$5, so that first-time candidates have an easier time getting the support they need to run. I hope these bills will improve New York City's already strong campaign finance system.



*Council Member Powers tours the Irish Hunger Memorial with Council Member Bob Holden.*

## Upcoming Criminal Justice Reforms

Across New York, we are at a pivotal moment for an overhaul of the criminal justice system. In addition to myriad reforms being enacted for bail and parole, the vote on closing Rikers Island and establishing a smaller, borough-based criminal justice system is coming to the City Council this fall. This is a part of the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) in which Rikers Island will shut down and jails will be established in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens. As Chair of the Criminal Justice Committee, I am looking forward to this important step in order to create a more humane jail system. With this plan and process, we can do more than site locations, but can make transformative reforms that change people's lives. A reformed criminal justice system in New York City should be representative of our progressive values and the 21st century. Following approval from the City Planning Commission (CPC) and a Council subcommittee hearing, the City Council will vote on the land use actions in October.

## IN THE NEWS

### September 6, [The Difficulties of Canceling Your Gym Membership](#), Fox5

It can be surprisingly difficult to cancel your membership to a gym. Now, New York City Councilman Keith

Powers has announced that he is drafting a bill that will require fitness companies which use auto-renewal subscriptions to allow members to cancel...

**August 28, [The City's Pouring Money Into Trash Basket Pickup, and Complaints of Overflowing Bins are Dropping](#), *Gotham Gazette***

In the public conversation surrounding quality of life in New York City, litter baskets -- the mostly green, metal-wire trash cans standing guard on street corners throughout the five boroughs -- have taken on a unique focus.

**August 20, [Second Avenue Bike Lane Gap Won't Be Filled Until Next Year](#), *StreetsBlog***

A little good news, a little bad news. City transportation officials have finally set a date for closing the last gap on the popular Second Avenue bike lane — only to reveal that the nine-block unprotected stretch between 43rd and 34th streets, where there are hundreds of crashes per year, won't be fixed until 2020 at the earliest.

**August 9, [New Yorkers are trying to cancel their Equinox memberships over Trump. A city councilman wants to make that easier.](#), *CNN***

In light of Equinox gym members looking to cancel their memberships over the chain's owner fundraising for President Donald Trump, a New York City council member wants to make it easier to cancel gym memberships.

## SAVE THE DATES

### Events with Council Member Powers

**Town Hall with City Council Speaker Corey Johnson**

**I am pleased to invite you to a Town Hall with Speaker Corey Johnson on Tuesday, September 17, to discuss community issues and updates. This will be an opportunity to talk about the topics that matter to you.**

CUNY Graduate Center  
365 5th Avenue, 8th Floor  
Tuesday, September 17, 2019  
6:30 P.M. | Doors open at 6:00 P.M.  
**Please RSVP to [d4townhall@council.nyc.gov](mailto:d4townhall@council.nyc.gov) or (212) 482-4123**

**Mobile District Office Hours**

Sit down with representatives from my office to talk about the issues in the district you care about, and work toward solutions. This is a great opportunity to meet in-person with our constituent services team and get to know my office a bit better.

Yorkville Library, 222 East 79<sup>th</sup> Street  
Third Thursday of Every Month  
Thursday, September 19, 2019  
12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Stuyvesant Town Community Center, 449 East 14th Street  
Last Thursday of Every Month  
Thursday, September 26, 2019  
12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

### **Comptroller Scott Stringer's Upper East Side and Roosevelt Island Town Hall**

Wednesday, October 2, 2019  
Doors Open at 6:30 P.M.  
Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, 331 East 70th Street

### **Senior Health Fair with Council Member Kallos**

Thursday, October 10, 2019  
4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.  
Saint Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Avenue

### **Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) Clinics at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, sponsored by Council Member Powers**

Thursday, October 17, 2019  
10:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.  
331 East 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
For an appointment or information, contact us at [DRIE@lenoxhill.org](mailto:DRIE@lenoxhill.org) or 212-218-0503, option 0

## Community Events

CB6 Full Board Meeting  
Wednesday, September 11, 2019, 7:00 P.M.  
NYU School of Dentistry, 433 1st Avenue, Room 220

CB5 Full Board Meeting  
Thursday, September 12, 2019, 6:00 P.M.  
Xavier High School, 30 West 16th Street | 2nd Floor Library

CB8 Full Board Meeting  
Wednesday, September 18, 2019, 6:30 P.M.  
New York Blood Center 310 East 67th Street (First-Second) Auditorium

Sundays at JASA Open House  
Sundays at JASA is a one-of-a-kind, college-level continuing education program for adults 50+. Learn more about this upcoming semester, meet faculty as they discuss their courses, network and make new friends, and enjoy refreshments.

Sunday, September 15, 2019 10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.  
John Jay College, 524 West 59 Street, 2nd Floor, New York City  
Please RSVP to: [Sundays@jasa.org](mailto:Sundays@jasa.org)

Asphalt Green Senior Field Day  
Join Asphalt Green for a fun, fitness-filled day  
Friday, September 20, 2019  
9:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
Litwin Field at Asphalt Green, 555 East 90th Street

DSNY NYC SAFE Disposal Event  
The NYC Department of Sanitation is holding a series of SAFE Disposal Events (Solvents, Automotive, Flammable, Electronics) to provide NYC residents with a one-stop method to get rid of harmful household products. Materials accepted include common household products such as auto fluids, batteries, electronics, strong cleaners, medications, paint and more.

Sunday, September 22, 2019  
10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.  
North Plaza, Union Square, 17th Street between Union Square East and Union Square West

National Voter Registration Day  
Tuesday, September 24, 2019

DOROT: Senior Portrait Day  
Sunday, October 6, 2019  
10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.  
171 West 85th Street

Flatiron Partnership Expansion Public Meeting  
Thursday, October 10, 2019  
6:30 P.M.  
New York Seminar Center, 71 West 23rd Street  
<http://www.flatirondistrict.nyc/expansion>

New York Public Library Money and Finance Programs: [nypl.org/moneymatters](http://nypl.org/moneymatters)  
Various dates and times, Midtown Manhattan and across New York City  
Next Financial Planning Day: Friday, September 20, 2019  
10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.  
Science, Industry and Business Library, 188 Madison Avenue at 34th Street

Manhattan VA Hospital Military Mondays Free Legal Clinic  
First Monday of Each Month (except holidays) 1:00 P.M. - 3:30 P.M.  
423 East 23rd Street | 1st Floor Atrium