

Pending Committee Approval
Minutes of the Economic Development Committee for Bronx Community Board 8
[Meeting Recording](#)

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Hybrid meeting held at CB8's office 5676 Riverdale Avenue, Suite 100, Bronx, NY 10471-2194

Committee Members in attendance (6): Oscar Martinez (Chair), Constance Barnes-Watson (Vice-Chair), Nick Fazio, Angel Ortega, Ashley Medina (Community Committee Member), Jyll Townes

Absent Committee Members (3): Julia Gomez, Caesar Tobar Acosta, Karen Walker Miguel Matos (Community Committee Member)

Community Board 8 in attendance: Farrah Kule Rubin (District Manager)

Guests/ Attendees (Zoom): Dana Williams (RMSA), Autumn Velasco, Erioluwa Akin-Salami

Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM

Chair's Report:

Oscar attended the South Bronx Community Enterprise's "Bronx Brilliance" Accelerator event this evening and would like to see similar opportunities in CB8 to bring entrepreneurs together. The event is sponsored by M&T Bank, Nick F. noted that Tim Gomary leads the organization and has worked with CB8. He noted the accelerator has a rolling application process where entrepreneurs can join cohorts for support and a chance to earn funding. Several businesses from CB8 have been awarded funding.

Next agenda item was the Skyview Walkthrough on 1/9 at 5:30pm. Oscar noted the reason for the walkthrough is for CB8 Econ Dev and other concerned CB8 members to see first-hand the issues and conditions raised by Dana Williams at the last Econ Dev. meeting. Jyll and Nick stated these issues have been longstanding and that the landlord is difficult to contact and work with. Dana shared that after recent flooding the roof is leaking and the issue has been raised to Facebook, also there are concerns for pedestrian safety due to the lack of the crosswalk. Angel also mentioned that the pedestrian walkway is an issue that can be pursued for legal assistance.

The Community Leasing Action Program (CLAP) provides legal advice and should be notified, also advised to contact Henry Gonzalez at CLAP. Farrah will send invites to members of CLAP and members of the Committee to see who will attend. Farrah remarked that as a community board, we normally don't take these types of direct actions and that we try to contact the owner first to try and resolve issues.

The discussion continued with Nick noting that we should consider past actions that have been tried to resolve the issue; Oscar suggested documenting through photos and notes what we observe to then escalate to Councilman Dinowitz as well as request a 2nd walkthrough with officials, etc.

Nick and Angel discussed various types of commercial leases and how those different leases predicate who is responsible for repairs. Nick stated that with older buildings repairs are costly with multiple factors affecting how landlords can proceed.

Oscar and Dana discussed contacting Key Food's owner prior to the walkthrough so he wouldn't be "blind-sided", and as we discussed the next overall Econ Dev Commercial Corridor Walkthrough, Oscar decided that we would use this opportunity to do a full walk-through of the 10 businesses in the Skyview Shopping center. Dana will notify the owners of the establishments.

Next item on the agenda were the Budget 27 Priorities:

Oscar requested that Nick provide some background on prior budget requests. Nick clarified the differences between Expense Budgets (<\$50k) and Capital Budgets (>\$50K), conditions that apply to each category, giving the example of the SBS Emergency Team.

We discussed the proposed Small Business Development App, which would be a capital expense, however it has not moved forward over the years. Nick discussed how the app would work, pros and cons, and the benefits for small business owners and resources from the city that would be needed to deploy. Oscar's background is in tech and he is very interested in pursuing this as a budget item.

Nick mentioned we should ask Angel Pagan from SBS to join the Skyview walkthrough. Farrah also shared that invites to their team come from the CB Office.

Oscar stated that at the January meeting we would discuss budget items and he will be inviting various agencies to join our meetings.

Final item on the agenda was the Betty Campbell Adams Award: Nick provided history on the previous process, previous awardees and remarked that there has been fluctuation between 1 and 3 awardees depending on how the Committee voted. Oscar asked about the process for submission; Farrah and Nick discussed procedures, the nomination process, timelines, whether self-nominations and non-profits would be allowed. We discussed the timeline and turnaround time for the applications, possibly opening the applications from January through March, having a discussion about the nominations and then presenting in May, Small Business Month. Last year nominations were due on 3/15/24.

Approval of October 10, 2024 meeting minutes – unanimously approved

In Favor (6) O. Martinez, C. Barnes-Watson, N. Fazio, A. Ortega, J. Townes, A. Medina

Opposed (0)

Abstain (0)

8:25 meeting adjourned