

Minutes of the Economic Development Committee for Bronx Community Board 8

Tuesday, January 7, 2025

Meeting was held at Tobala Restaurant, 3732 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, NY 10471

Committee Members in attendance (8): Oscar Martinez (Chair), Constance Barnes-Watson (Vice-Chair), Nick Fazio, Angel Ortega, Ashley Medina (Community Committee Member), Jyll Townes, Caesar Tobar Acosta, Karen Walker

Absent Committee Members (1): Dr Julia Gomez

Guests/ Attendees: n/a

Chair called the meeting to order at 7:17 PM

Chair's Report:

Oscar discussed the Skyview walkthrough and acknowledged that inclement weather may make it brief. Members should meet at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, 1/9/25. The Chair presented the Committee with a potential choice for the next walkthrough in the Spring and suggested the Kingsbridge corridor. Nick noted that this corridor was the site of a walkthrough two years ago, with 200 businesses located there.

Oscar also announced that the Armory plans were approved. Caesar provided more information about the actual development of the plans, and Karen inquired about the Northwest Bronx Coalition's proposed plans for the Armory and whether those were included. For more information on the development, refer to the news article explaining the plans for the site.

Regarding the walkthrough format, Nick shared historical information on community participants and the information that is shared, noting that a member from the District Attorney's office and CLAP joined the sessions to assist with commercial leasing information. He also suggested that walkthroughs happen between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. to allow City Officials to participate before they depart at 5 p.m.

The tentative date for the spring walkthrough will be 3/14 or 3/21/25.

Next item on the agenda were the Budget FY27 Priorities:

Oscar will communicate with Small Business Services (SBS) for recommendations for the FY27 budget. Nick mentioned the "Neighborhood 360 Grant" was previously awarded to KRVC and noted that grant administration is sometimes challenging to small businesses.

Next item on the agenda was the Betty Campbell Award:

Nick provided information on announcing the award and proceeded through the selection process. A press release must be created with the nomination form (see the example Farrah shared from last year); Oscar must consult with Farrah, District Manager, regarding the criteria

and period for applications to be submitted.

The process and criteria for the award, including eligibility criteria and the number of awardees, were discussed. The committee will continue to discuss this to reach a consensus. Oscar suggested additional ways to amplify the businesses that won the award, including a photo shoot and press coverage (Channel 12, Bronxnet, KRVC).

Next agenda item was new business:

- Angel discussed the pending construction at Skyview Mall, and Jyll asked for more information about the owner (to be discussed with District Manager).
- Caesar announced that Taste of the Bronx applications are open for the event that will begin on February 8th and suggested that the Committee make an effort to get more businesses involved. The District Office should be made aware of this and share information with the Board to get more businesses involved.
- Jyll noted that Bella Notte recently shut its doors after years of being a staple in the neighborhood.

Approval of December 5, 2024 Meeting minutes – unanimously approved

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

Opposed (0)

Abstain (0)

8:43 pm meeting adjourned

Minutes submitted by Constance Barnes-Watson