

# Bronx Community Board 8 Committee

## Activities to Advance Racial Equity

### District office:

- Tabling in every community that the board represents with board volunteers – We Table throughout the district
  - Pride Event and North Riverdale Block Event in North Riverdale
  - National Night Out on Bailey Avenue near Van Cortlandt Village
  - Theory 9 Food give Away in Ft. Independence Park
  - KRVC Halloween Event on Mosholu Ave. across from Van Cortlandt Park
  - NYCHA Family Fun Day at Marble Hill Houses
  - Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway we donate and bring turkeys to all areas of our district focusing on food programs at Non Profits , Churches and our 2 NYCHA Houses for those in need
- Emphasis on conducting Board and committee meetings throughout the entire district to provide for the opportunity for the underrepresented communities to engage with local issues affecting the CB8 area and ensuring bilingual office capabilities (Spanish/English) -
- Board meetings held in every neighborhood of our district that can accommodate us: Ft. Independence Houses Community Space on Bailey Ave., St. Stephens Church in Marble Hill, In Tech Academy in Kingsbridge, Riverdale Y in North Riverdale, Amalgamated Houses in Van Cortlandt, Manhattan University in Kingsbridge
- The office purchased a translating device this past fall that translates into multiple languages that we have been using to great affect to talk with constituents and community stakeholders and address their issues.
- We printed the 2024 Housing resource guide in English and Spanish (had this translated) and will do the same with the updated Senior Resource Guide when it is completed.
- Our CB8 Brochures are printed in both English and Spanish
- Three-year effort to gain approval to move the CB8 office to a central location for the entire District.
- We are constantly scouting for sites to move to in the central portion of our district to be accessible to all.
- Information for the community on the Office of Cannabis Management  
<https://cbbronx.cityofnewyork.us/cb8/resources/>

### Aging:

- Advocated for pay parity among home-based caregivers
- Need to close the digital divide between the old and the young
- Elder justice: an older adult liaison has been designated for each precinct
- Supported aging in place in a local community (AmPark NORC senior services); looking for ways to advocate for more of these communities (Knolls Crescent/Kappock Street)
- Updates to resource guide to make it more accessible
- Coordinating with other agencies in regard to accessibility to goods and services at Knolls

#### Crescent/Kappock Street

- The NYC Department of Finance presented on the various housing benefits available to NYC older persons, including resources for homeowner, housing cooperatives and for tenants
- Attended the NYC Mayor's Roundtable for Older Adults and was able to speak on what the community of older adults need here
- Provided information around wills, trust and elder law, providing opportunities for the community to have this information
- Promotion of information on fraudulent behaviors in wake of crises, advocated at City Council for increased Covid -19 testing and vaccination sites throughout the district
- Growth of bilingual support such as translating Aging resources guides into Spanish
  - Support of the start of meals at Ft. Independence seniors program

#### **Budget**

- Utilizing racial equity lens in prioritization of budget requests, ensuring requests representative of entire District

#### **Economic Development:**

- Aim to create a business directory that includes Marble Hill area
- Engaging with concerned agencies to ensure another supermarket is opened in place of Key Food
- Betty Campbell Adams Award: make this award more accessible to businesses across the district; ensure fliers are translated into Spanish as well as any other languages spoken in the district; discussed additional ways to access the flyer and application
- DWCP: free tax services for residents below a certain income threshold; concerns for undocumented residents; help for those who need to set up an account as there are no more paper checks
- Working with Aging Committee to create a NORC
- Working with Save Knolls Coalition
- Continuing to make connections with businesses in other areas in district to increase awareness of resources available through BXCB8
- Presentation by Khadija Jabbi vacancy rates and quality of life issues - noted that district is 48.9% Hispanic but there was an evident communication gap - need for increased communication across the entire district
- Planned two corridor walkthroughs to discuss the challenges that the small business in Kingsbridge Heights and North Riverdale are facing while connecting them to resources through NYC Small Business Services
- Conducted meetings focusing on access to capital for minority and low-income businesses - (Sharon Higgin from the Minority Business Development Agency and Oresemi Adekoye from National Development Council).
- Developed relationships with BOEDC, SBDC, and SOBRO to help numerous minority businesses with customized services and resources.
- Collaboration with SOBRO on M/WBE certification process and access to procurement contracts for minority-owned businesses. (meeting and webinar).

#### **Education, Libraries and Culture:**

- At least two library managers present at each meeting to update the committee on activities available at their respective libraries that are accessible to residents of all ages

- Discussed progress in construction of additional schools in the district
- Support for internship programs for teens at Wave Hill for the next year
- Budget Priorities - good response from local principals
- Support for Pre K seats but concerned about budget constraints
- Discussed concerns regarding teen violence in the district and how Mosaic Mental Health(now located on 239th St) is supporting youth and their families in the community.Discussed how the board can support these initiatives
- Raised concern about Wi-Fi for computers for shelter at Broadway Plaza to reduce the Digital Divide
- Discussed concern regarding federal funds being deleted from schools and shifted to State funding leaving Special Education students and Pell Grant for college tuition, and other programs needy
- Supported two new Elementary schools proposed for Kingsbridge and Broadway/West 256 Street
- Art in Public Schools being investigated by committee with the Independent Budget Office for future discussion
- The Managers of the three branch libraries, the Riverdale Library, Spuyten Duyvil Library and Jerome Park Library reported on programs available for adults, teens and elementary students, as well as toddlers with story time to enjoy. Please use their sites to read what they have to offer. You will be impressed by how much is available to the community.
- The Managers of the three branch libraries, the Riverdale Library, Spuyten Duyvil Library and Jerome Park Library reported on programs available for adults, teens and elementary students, as well as toddlers with story time to enjoy.
- Held discussions about the elimination of the Federal Education Department giving the State jurisdiction over our children's education. parents. The educators who attended the meeting were concerned as to how this would affect Special Education students, which is now federally funded. It is too early to get the whole dynamics, and we will monitor the situation.
- As part of the Expense budget, advocate for continuing 6-day service in branch libraries and serve as safe havens for after school activities for students.
- Resolution in support of the Freedom Trail
- Requested funding to continue 6-day service in branch libraries and serve as safe havens for after school activities for students.

#### **Environment and Sanitation:**

- Army Corps of Engineers flooding study on Harlem River put on hold - need for community input
- Concerns raised regarding location of trash bins and who to contact if more trash cans are needed/overflow of trash near buildings
- Discussed fairness of rules regarding snow shovelling in front of private homes of 1-3 families/DSNY summonses
- Committee signed onto letter urging support for strengthening NYCDEP's Unified Storm Water Rule
- NYC Department of Sanitation presented on new regulations around curbside organic/compost collection from across the city along with containerization
- DEP/NYC Parks finalized purchase of CSX land for Tibbetts Brook Daylighting project
- NYC Department of Environmental Protection presented on flood preparedness and lead service line replacements
- Contribute to Mayor's Office Environmental Justice for All by contributing comment on delineation of EJ areas in our district and environmental justice outcomes

- Adopt Environmental Justice areas, as designated by US Census, for determining community Environment and Sanitation needs
- Prioritize Environmental Justice areas in budget requests
- Advocate for Environmental Justice areas through resolutions directed toward City agencies and elected officials
- Collect and analyze 311 calls into Board office according to neighborhood and Environmental Justice area in district

### **Health, Hospitals and Social Service:**

- Discussed bill introduced by CM Eric Botcher - need for outreach and public education in regards to harm reduction and fentanyl test strips - info in our neighborhoods is limited; need for multilingual resources and access; increases in overdoses in the older population
- Discussed collaboration with Aging Committee
- Discussion of high incidence of Alzheimer's related illness and a lack of access to resources
- Support agreed For Mosaic mental health services , relocated to a premises on 239th Street which offers services to all members of the community (Padavan letter)
- Focused on equal access to culturally competent mental health and trauma-based care
- Provided testimony to NYC on seniors and COVID-19 vaccinations, timely informational updates on Covid-19 by leading medical experts
- Challenged vaccine equity for communities of color and rewarding only those who are computer savvy with swift vaccination appointments
- Requested NYS to provide additional COVID-19 testing sites in the District
- Promote access to financial resources for vulnerable (elderly, disabled, homeless, and those with low income and limited English proficiency) individuals during COVID as a measure to assist the Social Security Administration in their national campaign and outreach to vulnerable communities
- Letter to City Council to allow senior centers as pop-up vaccination sites

### **Housing:** (promotion of budget, legal and advocacy)

- Discussed goals of WhereWeLiveNYC2025 which include fighting discrimination and expanding accessibility
- Resolution to support TOPA
- Discussion of Good Cause Eviction
- Information on where residents affected by PACT can get help to benefit from this program
- The committee want to keep abreast of developments with Civic Reset which focuses on housing issues for young residents of the borough.
- Establishment of the Deed Theft Prevention Office by the mayor. Important as this disproportionately impacts Black homeowners and neighborhoods
- Requested visit from HPD to speak about Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities
- Promote tenants' right to purchase buildings from negligent landlords ( Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition: [NWBCCC Homepage](#))
- Conducted workshop on tenant's rights and responsibilities with NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development at MMCC
- Met with the representatives of Tishman Speyer ( 160 Van Cortlandt Park South) for clarity regarding homeless and supportive housing in this development
- Growth of bilingual support such as translating the Housing resources guides into Spanish ● NYCHA quality of life improvements and safety related repairs (Capital Budget Request); ●

Shared resources on legal assistance in the wake of the end of the eviction moratorium (Right to Counsel) ;

- Advocacy in the wake of the end of the eviction moratorium (Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development: [ANHD | Homepage](#))
- Promotion of “Where We Live” goals, strategies and actions to advance fair housing

#### **Land Use:**

- Discussed impact of proposal adopted by the electorate in the last election and how that will impact the district
- Concerns regarding impact of micro units being built in Van Cortlandt Village and over development of surrounding areas
- Sent a letter supporting housing bills that would address the issue of affordability
- 160 Van Cortlandt Park South – Asked representative from Tishman Speyer to clarify and discuss the details and resolve the issue and go on record if there will be homeless or supportive housing here.
- Tishman Speyer responded it is not transient but permanent affordable housing including formerly homeless. With affordable housing, HPD requires 15% is set aside for formerly homeless Shelter persons.
- They qualify to be placed here and are given 1-2 two year leases like everyone else and can renew leases as long as they are in good standing. Breaking Ground is there to provide social services to the formerly homeless to assist in order to be able to maintain their permanent living (assist in filling out renewal forms, applying to schools in the area). The city added funding to support these residents and the community. Assisting building code violations and enforcement in Kingsbridge with the Department of Buildings
- Advocacy for tenant association at 22 Marble Hill Avenue
- Ongoing testimony at the Board of Standards and Appeals in opposition to inappropriate development at 7-15 Terrace View Avenue in Marble Hill
- Work closely with neighborhood groups to preserve neighborhood character in Kingsbridge Heights
- Revisiting the 197A Plan and assess entire District to determine matters addressed and unaddressed

**Law Rules and Ethics:** Revision of nominating committee rules regarding committee composition

#### **Parks & Recreation:**

- Details of Fort Independence playground design.
- Voted to support installation of lighting for Sid Augarten Field to extend playing times for Little League baseball games
- Plan to update parks resource Guide
- Approved resolution for Van Cortlandt public restroom design
- Discussion of tree planting around Kingsbridge Heights - Van Cortlandt Village
- Resolved to send a letter to Parks Department requesting full replacement of at Van Cortlandt Park
- Sent letter advocating for reconstruction of Bailey playground

- ADA accessibility of parks in the district (recent improvements)
- Reviewed exciting capital projects
- Reimagining Enslaved African Burial Ground in Van Cortlandt Park
- Discussion of Van Cortlandt park Stadium study
- Voted for Bronx-wide Initiative to Support the Expansion and Maintenance of the Borough Tree Canopy as the Bronx has less than 8% tree canopy
- Chief of Staff to the Bronx Borough Commissioner presented on capital investing in New York City's parks through "Vital Parks for All"
- Working with Van Cortlandt Museum House Enslaved People's Project
- Funding for Van Cortlandt Park Enslaved People Project curriculum

#### **Public Safety:**

- Broadway Corridor collaboration to improve safety, transportation and quality of life issues- walk throughs
- Drafted letter to elected officials concerning opposition to changes that would reduce distances specified in the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act
- Discussed concerns with Cannabis Showcase Event regulations
- After several complaints about fenwicks the establishment was eventually closed down
- Developed a clearer way of using 311 (reporting and engagement) to make it more accessible to residents in the community - flyer/web information
- Developed a Cannabis Dispensary application/questions to be completed and submitted by applicants for the Board's consideration
- FDNY Fire Safety workshop held
- DA's office discussed their recommendations to change the Raise The Age Law in response to the recent killing of a young person in district
- Letter of support sent to the state supporting Darcell Clarke's proposals regarding youth violence/amending Raise The Age Law
- The committee has worked closely with the 50th Precinct and community to close multiple illegal cannabis shops in the Kingsbridge and Marble Hill communities.
- Determined criteria for siting of legal cannabis establishments.
- Promulgated and passed our Unmask Hate Resolution in support of legislative bills A03133 and S03070 to combat rising hate crimes.
- Comprised budget requests prioritizing the needs of our entire district: Argus surveillance cameras in all BXC8 neighborhoods. Utility Task Vehicle (UTV) for police patrols in Van Cortlandt Park.
- Reported community complaints of drug sales on Bailey Avenue & West 238th Street that resulted in arrests.
- Presentation by FDNY on the deadly fire in Marble Hill and other buildings caused by lithium-ion batteries. Legislation to address this issue was discussed and will continue to be monitored by our committee for potential support. Inclusion of hate crimes in monthly precinct crime statistic reports
- Working with the DA's office
- March 16 promotion of NYPD Reform report for public comment and engagement survey
- Worked with 50th to remove totaled vehicles from Broadway where walkable communities shop and adjacent to transitional housing improving quality of life
- Graffiti Removal in Marble Hill

#### **Traffic and Transportation:**

- Resolution : safe routes to school near PS/IS307
- Discussion of DDC safety plan for W254th St
- Reviewed SCRE Broadway Corridor feedback
- Discussion with Access-A-Ride - how to apply/ pick up drop off locations
- Ongoing discussions with MTA regarding service
- School Slow Zones discussed

Pressure DOT to move forward its step-street repairs in the Kingsbridge area that have been dilapidated for years

**Youth:**

- Commitment to increase youth engagement in civic affairs
- Development of the Youth Resource Guide
- Presentation with youth from Riverdale Neighborhood House - teens expressed what they prioritize as needs for their community
- Feedback on community town hall "Break The Cycle" - how can CB\* support/elevate some of the ideas discussed
- Support resolution for S134/A117 "Solutions Not Suspension" bill related to school climate and codes of conduct on school property regarding disciplinary actions
- Digital divide project
- Resource fair planning for workforce development and career readiness
- Promote SYEP application to ensure youth connected with paid summer engagements
- presentation of the effects on office and drug laws on youth with citation of statistics from the 50th precinct followed by short question and answer session.