

Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes
Bronx Community Board 8
Monday, May 5, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Board Office – 5676 Riverdale Ave, Suite 100, Bronx, NY 10471

[Meeting Recording](#)

1. Welcome Committee Members and Guests – Roll Call

Land Use Committee Members:

Present (5): Charles Moerdler, Martin Wolpoff (ADA), Lee Chong (ADA), Daniel Rowen, Laura Spalter

Absent (2): Bob Bender (on Zoom), Adiana Rivera, Jessica Sosa

Quorum is present

Board Members & Staff: Chairperson Julie Reyes (Zoom), Farrah Kule Rubin (District Manager)

Guests: John Field (Architect), Frank St. Jacques (Attorney for Akerman LLP), representatives from Best Development Group and GF55 Architects, Hal Dorfman (Architect), Camila Thomas (DCP), Abba Leffler, David Gellman

2. Approval of April 3, 2025 Committee Minutes: Unanimously Approved

In Favor (5): C. Moerdler, M. Wolpoff, L. Chong, D. Rowen, L. Spalter

Opposed (0)

Abstain (0)

3. Combined SNAD & LPC Application: 5051 Iselin Avenue - SNAD Non - ULURP

Proposal for authorizations 105-421, 105-425, and 105-434 to facilitate a new driveway is being sought by private applicant at 5051 Iselin Avenue in the Special Natural Areas District in the Riverdale neighborhood, Community District 8, the Bronx.

- John Field (Building Studio Architects) presented on the plans for his client Mr. Weiner. Northern 1 LLC is the applicant.
- This is an application for both SNAD and Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC)
- Driveway improvement at front of parcel to allow for additional access to the property for public safety and vehicular safety.
- Adding additional entrance for driveway using cobble apron – Chapel Stone Pavers and Belgian Block.
- Including Truegrid Drivable Grass (Permeable) and salvaged fieldstone to create the wall.
- No Steep Slope, not removing fill.
- 3 trees impacted and will be removed, planting 8 additional trees to the property

- Large Edelston property is across the street. New driveway will result in less impact to the entrance with current traffic condition. Difficult to pull out and it will be further away from this congestion with the Road and Driveways.
- Chair requests if they can put up a sign to proceed slowly in this area, architect said he will ask and suggest this to the Fieldston Property Owners Association (FPOA).

Vote to approve the LPC and SNAD Application: Approved unanimously.

Land Use Committee Resolution:

LPC-25-03790 and SNAD Proposal for authorizations 105-421, 105-425, and 105-434 to facilitate a new driveway is being sought by private applicant at 5051 Iselin Avenue in the Special Natural Areas District in the Riverdale neighborhood, Community District 8, the Bronx.

WHEREAS, the representative for 5051 Palisade Avenue, Architect John Field, presented the project to facilitate a new driveway improvement at front of parcel to allow additional access to property for public and vehicular safety and modify topographic features on a Tier I Site regarding the proposed removal of topsoil, and

WHEREAS, it also seeks the Zoning Resolution Sections 105-425, Modification of botanic environment and tree preservation and planting requirements & finally the Zoning Resolution Sections 105-434, Modification of requirements for private roads and driveways, to facilitate the extension of the existing driveway at 5051 Iselin Avenue (Block 5832, Lot 4328) in the Bronx (Borough 2) neighborhood of Community District 8, The Bronx, and

WHEREAS the Architect confirmed permeable drivable grass will be added and a cobble apron with pavers and Belgian Block materials will match existing driveway and stone pavers to create wall.

WHEREAS, there is no steep slope and no removal of fill.

WHEREAS, 3 trees will be impacted and removed and they will plant 8 additional trees to make up for it elsewhere on property, and

WHEREAS, no construction will occur on 80% of the property, and

WHEREAS, the driveway entrance will be further away from the entrance across the road to another large property

WHEREAS, they agreed they will request a Drive Slow sign from Fieldston Property Owners (FPOA) to encourage people to drive slower, and

WHEREAS, the applicant informed all neighbors within 200 feet of the property, and,

WHEREAS, the committee received a letter of support from the neighbor and no opposition was indicated either from the board or from the community.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, for the reasons set forth above, the Land Use Committee APPROVES this application.

Approved (5) C. Moerdler, L. Chong, D. Rowen, L. Spalter, M. Wolpoff

Opposed (0)

Abstained (0)

4. **5602-5604 Broadway Rezoning ULURP**

A zoning map amendment to rezone an area from M1-1 to R7-3/C2-3, and a zoning text amendment to map a Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) district, are being sought by a private applicant, to facilitate the development of a new thirteen-story residential building with a cellar, containing 226 income-restricted dwelling units, for a total of 184,683 square feet of residential floor area, located at 5602-5604 Broadway in the Kingsbridge neighborhood of the Bronx, Community District 8.

Frank St. Jacques (Attorney for Akerman LLP), representatives from Best Development Group and GF55 Architects presented for the third time in the past two years to the committee.

- 13 Story 100% Affordable Housing project consisting of 226 units and a 188 spot parking garage.
Consists of: 44 - Studio, 68 - 1 Bedroom, 101 - 2 Bedroom, 12 - 3 Bedroom and 1 Super Apartments.
- Rental prices on AMI range included for Formerly Homeless, 37% AMI, 47% AMI, 57% AMI and 77% AMI with Household Income Range from \$34,484.00 - \$129,206.00.
- MIH rents will be permanently affordable.
- Publicly Financed with NYC HPD, NYC HDC Bonds and tax credit equity raised in the market.

See presentation here:



5602-4 Broadway BX
06-03-24 CB8 Land L

Chair Moerdler recused himself as chair since he is a member of the HDC Board and ceded the discussion to Vice Chair Marty Wolpoff.

Discussion:

-Laura Spalter asked them to speak on staging plans for construction.

- Performed full Environmental Assessment and received a negative declaration from DCP.
- Did not finish construction documents for building so staging plans not issued yet but will follow up with us and will do as is required by DOT and MTA.
- Asked to please coordinate with board since there will be traffic, construction equipment etc. The board wants communication and coordination on the plan.
- They confirmed they will commit and continue to be in touch on this.

-Chuck Moerdler asked about sound proofing for apartments since they are next to the 1 train and the Deegan Expressway.

- This is addressed in the negative declaration on noise attenuation and noise decibel level that needs to be maintained and will be constructed to meet the requirements.

-Anticipated timeline:

- They have from now until this fall to finish ULURP process.
- They hope to close the project by end of next year if lucky and construction then takes 26-28 months and rent up is generally 6-8 months. They will keep in contact with the board as the timeline progresses.

-What are you doing to mitigate storm water flooding?

- Utilizing Green Roof systems throughout the building to mitigate storm water overflow. 100% storm resistant for the building. Look at the plans to see these features.

Land Use Resolution: Approved

WHEREAS, Frank St. Jacques, attorney for Akerman LLP, representatives from Best Development Group and GF55 Architects presented on behalf of Riverdale Garage Corp. for a third time to the Land Use Committee on the Zoning Modifications for the 5602-5604 Broadway, Bronx, NY 10463 Rezoning Project, and

WHEREAS, the development offers 100% affordable housing for Area Median Income (AMI) less than 80% (Income range \$34,484 – \$129,206) with 15% set aside for formerly homeless on 226 units comprising of Studio, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom apartments (50% 2- and 3-bedroom units) and a 188-space parking garage, and

WHEREAS, the location is in a Transit Oriented site with access to mass transit including West 231st train station serving the 1 line, Marble Hill Metro North Station and BX1, BX7, Bx9, Bx10 & Bx 20 bus lines, and

WHEREAS, this development is going to be funded with a mix of public financing with HDC and HPD and low-income housing tax credits, and

WHEREAS, Affordable housing development is a high priority for Bronx Community Board 8.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED for the reasons set forth above, the Land Use Committee APPROVES this application.

Approved (4): L. Chong, D. Rowen, L. Spalter, M. Wolpoff

Opposed (0)

Abstained (1) C. Moerdler

5. LPC-25-09048 Application: 4695 Independence Ave. Bronx Historic District

Architect Hal Dorfman presented on behalf of the owners, Blanch and Mark McGill, on a Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) Application to Construct a two-Story & Cellar horizontal enlargement of existing individual landmark with exterior finishes to match the existing building

See presentation here:



4695 Independence
Ave LPC 2025-04-25.

200 square foot modification to create 2 sleeping rooms at the back of this 1850's Landmarked property and tall space in the cellar.

Discussion:

- What will be the impact during construction?
West side of the house is an existing driveway they use to park the construction vehicles and equipment. Also, there is a parking area on the East side with space for 4 cars. Not all of the materials will be on site at one time.
- Do neighbors know about this?
They personally hand delivered to every house within 400 feet of property and sent us a map of the properties notified.

Motion to vote in favor of application: Unanimously approved

Land Use Committee Resolution:

Landmark Preservation Commission Application to Construct a two-Story & Cellar horizontal enlargement of existing individual landmark with exterior finishes to match the existing

building in Community District 8, The Bronx.

WHEREAS, the representative for 4695 Independence Avenue Architect Hal Dorfman, presented the project on behalf of Blanch and Mark McGill on their Dodgewood Gate House to Construct a two-Story & Cellar horizontal enlargement of existing individual landmark with exterior finishes to match the existing building, a small increase of 200 square foot to add sleeping room to back of north façade

WHEREAS, will use identical materials to existing house using smooth finished wood, shingle style roofing material, new 4X4 double and 6 X6 width windows with matching grills, trim, corner boards and paint, and

WHEREAS, applicant informed all neighbors within 400 feet of the property

WHEREAS, construction vehicles will park on West side of the house and driveway during construction, and

WHEREAS, no opposition was indicated either from the board or the community.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Bronx Community Board 8 Land Use Committee APPROVES this application.

Approved (5) C. Moerdler, L. Chong, D. Rowen, L. Spalter, M. Wolpoff
Opposed 0
Abstained (0)

6. Discussion on DOB and DCP on SNAD Enforcement: 355 West 246 –

Chair Moerdler recused himself as chair and ceded the discussion to Vice Chair Marty Wolpoff to act as chair on this topic of discussion:

Time after time we have called on DOB and DCP to enforce SNAD rules. Time after time the Department of Building's (DOB) sends an inspector who comes out, sees missing trees and work done in violation of the rules, where we sent multiple photos, videos showing violations and they respond they see no violations after several asks of DOB and DCP to investigate SNAD Violations. Concern that DOB is not enforcing the Rules for SNAD. Noted the City of Yes wanted to eliminate SNAD but it is protected and needs to be enforced.

Need a resolution to push this further for DOB and DCP to Enforce SNAD laws as currently exist.

Land Use Committee Resolution

DOB & DCP SNAD Enforcement: 355 West 246th Street:

WHEREAS, the Department of Buildings (DOB) and the Department of City Planning (CPC) have collectively refused to enforce the law under the Special Natural Areas District (SNAD), Bronx Community Board 8, as stewards of the Bronx SNAD district, do place on the record our gross dissatisfaction with the repeated non-enforcement by the two agencies identified, and

WHEREAS, and as the most recent example, while there have been repeated complaints from neighbors, supported by photographic and video evidence, concerning ongoing violations of the Special Natural Area District provisions of the Zoning Resolution ("SNAD") at 355 West 246th Street ("355") by virtue of multiple tree removals, significant topographical changes (including to the extensive decline from adjacent premises) and removals of protected vegetation, coupled with 311 calls to the City for action, went unheeded, and

WHEREAS, said violations continued and were exacerbated by further and still ongoing non-compliant conduct at 355 that has not resulted in action by the City of New York ("NYC") and particularly its Departments of City Planning ("DCP") and/or Department of Buildings ("DOB"), notwithstanding requests therefor by the District Manager; and

WHEREAS, the only excuse proffered on behalf of the owners of 355 and the numerous workmen at 355 is the claim that Landmarks Preservation Commission ("LPC") supposedly authorized changes at 355, but said authorizations do not relate to SNAD proscribed activities and LPC does not have statutory or other jurisdiction of SNAD, let alone authority to waive SNAD's Building Department's SNAD Permit requirements, matters called to the attention of 355's counsel, but to no avail as the SNAD violations and proscribed activities continued; and

WHEREAS, the Land Use Committee of Community Board 8, under the Chairmanship of Vice-Chair Martin Wolpoff, (the Chair, Charles Moerdler, having previously recused himself), after reviewing some of the photographic and other evidence and due discussion and consideration; unanimously.

RESOLVED that Bronx Community Board 8, prior to seeking other legal remedies, formally calls upon DCP and/or DOB to forthwith exercise their lawfully mandated jurisdiction to enforce SNAD with respect to the 355 premises, including securing immediate compliance and restoration, noting that this is viewed as a matter of urgency and significant public policy.

NOW THEREFORE Bronx Community Board 8 confirms and adopts the foregoing Land Use Committee Resolution.

Approved (4) L. Chong, D. Rowen, L. Spalter, M. Wolpoff

Opposed (0)

Abstained (1) C. Moerdler (recused)

7. Subcommittee Report on Van Cortlandt Village: Marty Wolpoff Chair

As feared the beautiful, mature, trees on the corner of 3862 Sedgewick Avenue have been cut down by the developer. Most Trees on this property were cut down.

Waiting to hear what is happening on the purchase of Van Cortlandt Jewish Center

69 Stevenson Place building became a micro-unit building and knows very little of the ownership. There is garbage out in front of building strewn everywhere. We contacted the owner who said he would take care of it. As of Friday, the front was cleaned up.

Further south is another facility, micro-unit building, with a lot of problems on domestic issues where police are involved. Not sure what the owner is doing here and will pursue more deeply

Council Member Dinowitz wants to get the parties involved and community together concerning Van Cortlandt Village but stonewalled by owner of Innovative Development who has thus far refused to meet with him.

Abba Leffler, resident of Van Cortlandt Village area had these questions:

-What can residents do when faced with these situations?

Best thing to do is go to your public elected officials Council Member, Assembly Member, Senator and Congressman.

-Is the owner of building at 69 Stevenson Place on call tonight?

He was invited but not in the meeting. We can follow up with him on our questions.

8. Old Business/New Business

- Laura Spalter stated we got a demolition notice for 6697 Broadway and owner is Abraham Biller. Can we find out what his plans are there? Near new Homeless shelter being built.
- Resident Laurie Srebnick has issue at 3450 Cannon Place - 3 tenants scream and yell on regular basis. Nuisance every weekend. Was suggested she contact Public Safety committee and wants help with that. We gave her the information to attend the next Public Safety meeting on May 20, 2025.

9. Adjournment: 8:40 PM - Next Meeting Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Respectfully submitted,
Farrah Kule Rubin, District Manager