

**MINUTES OF THE BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8 SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, September 21, 2022 – hybrid meeting: in person at the office of Bronx CB8 5676 Riverdale Avenue, Suite 100, Bronx NY 10471; and virtually on zoom.

Committee members in attendance: Dr. Robert Fanuzzi (on zoom); Deb Travis, Rhashida Hilliard, Dr. Camelia Tepelus, Robert Spalter, Karen Argenti (in person).

Committee participants on zoom: Laura Spalter (CB8 Chair); Jodie Colon, Noel Manu, Eleptheria Ardizzone (DEP), IC L-Engel, Vittorio Bugatti; in person: Mingxuan Zhu.

1. Welcome to committee members and presentation of the rules of engagement for the proceedings. CB8 E&S committee will make a consistent effort to have proceedings in a hybrid version, to provide for maximum accessibility to the community. Quorum confirmed to conduct business.
2. Approval of Minutes of July 22, 2022 meeting (joint E&S and Parks Committees meeting) – minutes unanimously approved by the committee.
3. Chairperson Camelia Tepelus report of E&S issues reported over the summer to the CB8 office:
 - Letter of concern from Fairfield Ave Association (231st St and Fairfield Ave);
 - DEP made repairs to leaking pipe near 254th St Pump Station (August);
 - DEP information on 311 stats for CB8;
 - Mayoral press release on “Rainfall Ready NYC” program;
 - residents complaints on significant garbage accumulation around JPR along Reservoir Ave, Webb Ave, Claflin Ave, University Ave, W197th St and also along Goulden Ave from Bedford Park to 205th St.
 - City announcing public hearing on November 9, 2022 related to acquiring CSX property to facilitate the Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project and DPR Putnam Greenway Extension, acquisition approved by the Planning Commission in 2011. Proposed purchase price is \$11,200,000.
4. NYC Department of Environmental Protection Eleptheria Ardizzone, Community Relations Specialist, Bureau of Public Affairs & Communications

Provided general feedback about the CB8 issues presented, and made a presentation about 2 new DEP programs: the app “WAIT” – providing real time messaging to users on when to wait due to drainage system capacity limitations [Wait... - DEP \(nyc.gov\)](#); the program “Rainfall Ready NYC” – mayoral initiative to better prevent impacts of significant rain events. [Rainfall Ready NYC - DEP](#). Also mentioned usefulness of DSNY coming back to full capacity operations, that would prevent accumulation of debris onto the catchment basins.

Questions from committee members and participants addressed: incentives for property owners to use permeable surface and expand green spaces, instead of paving open space (Deb Travis); obtaining waivers from Green Thumb via DEP; status of private drains responsibility (Jodie Colon); more information about green infrastructure grants for Kingsbridge, and access to rain barrels (Noel Manu).

DEP explained that every property has 2 service lines a sanitary/sewer line and a fresh drinking water line. Property owners are responsible for the section of the pipe on their property, and until the water main of the City. A DEP voluntary “Service Line Protection Program” exists via the American Water Resources insurance coverage program, requiring a nominal annual fee. More information available here. [Service Line Protection Program - DEP \(nyc.gov\)](#)

5. Old business

Committee Chair informed about introduction of detailed information on the CB8 environmental justice areas in the CB8 Special Committee on Racial Equity June 2022 report.

Deb Travis – suggested updates be requested from DEP on the status of work on the Reservoir – item to be added to a forthcoming meeting agenda. Item to be focus of November agenda.

Jodie Colon – request to put links to the agenda items into minutes, as well as including presentations, and the zoom link recording;

Laura Spalter – acknowledged the efforts of Pablo and staff to repair and upgrade the room, especially following the damage after hurricane Ida;

6. New business

Karen Argenti – informed about \$3 Million allocation from Council Member Eric Dinowitz for the retaining wall at Shorefront Park to be repaired.

Informed about meeting on 9/19/22 of CB8 members Dr. Robert Fanuzzi, Karen Argenti (community member) and Laura Spalter (CB8 Chair) with Tishman Speyer, developers of the Van Cortlandt Park South property block including the forthcoming SCA school project. The conversation highlighted the requirements for green infrastructure and the flood related risks for the project, particularly the “Unified Storm Water” rule that became effective in February 2022 – changing requirements for stormwater management on all new and redevelopment sites that discharge to City sewers. The developers will add 25 new trees as part of the project. This may be the first construction project in CB8 under this rule (area over 20,000 sf/threshold lowered from 1 acre of soil). Questions raised about the location of the entrance, the placement of the 25 new trees that need to be planted, etc. Important as these rules will apply to future developments. This project was branded as “quality housing”. Issue to be followed up with land use and a follow-up presentation at the October meeting.

Camelia Tepelus – budget items of E&S submitted last year, will be put forward for full Board vote in October;

Karen Argenti – flagged the “grove” across from Amalgamated near Mosholu Ave as a green infrastructure project requiring design adjustments. With DEP having conversations regarding the Dickinson edge.

Committee Chair – thanked everyone for participation. Meeting closed at 8:25pm

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Camelia Tepelus

Environment & Sanitation Committee Chair

Recording link: [Environment & Sanitation Committee - Zoom](#)

Every little wait helps

WAITing to use water in your home can make a big difference during heavy storms.

So if you want to help keep NYC's waterways clean, during downpours please:

-  **WAIT to do laundry**
-  **WAIT to do dishes**
-  **WAIT to shower**
(or take a shorter one)
-  **WAIT to shave or brush your teeth**

The WAIT... App makes it easy to know when to WAIT, and when it's okay to start using water again.



Help keep NYC waterways clean



About DEP

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) protects public health and the environment by supplying clean drinking water, collecting and treating wastewater, and reducing air, noise, and hazardous materials pollution.

We provide a billion gallons of water and treat 1.3 billion gallons of wastewater for nine million New Yorkers every day. Over the next 10 years we plan to invest \$14 billion in infrastructure and other projects to improve our city.

For more information, visit nyc.gov.dep, like us on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter.

It's a snap, get the app!

Download the free WAIT... App, and see how you can make a difference.



Make a difference

Whenever there's heavy rain, New York City's sewers can fill to capacity and a mix of stormwater and wastewater can end up in our natural waterways.

During storms the WAIT... App will tell you it's time to WAIT to use water in your home, like doing laundry or washing dishes. When the rain passes the app will tell you when it's okay to restart.

By WAITing, you make it easier for our sewers to do their job, and you help protect NYC's waterways and marine wildlife.



Why Wait...?



When there's heavy rain, rest the drain.

 **Even Heroes need help sometimes. Here are some tips!**

Bathroom Tips

- Take shorter showers to save an average of 5 gallons per minute.
- Fill the tub halfway for baths to save an average of 12 gallons.
- Don't run the water while shaving or brushing your teeth to save an average of 2 gallons per minute.
- And if you're brave...wait to flush the toilet.

Kitchen and Laundry Tips

- Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when full. Use the short cycle when possible.
- Don't run the water while washing dishes to save an average of 2 gallons per minute. Fill your kitchen sink to wash dishes when possible.

Average Water Usage



17 gallons/
shower



2 gallons/
flush

Average Water Usage



15 gallons



25 gallons




IMPORTANT TIPS FOR PROTECTING YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM FLOODS

Know Your Flood Risk

- Visit nyc.gov/stormwater-map to understand the level of risk you may face today during an intense storm and which areas in your neighborhood may experience flooded roadways.
- Learn more about flood insurance and flood retrofits at floodhelpnyc.org.

Stay Informed

Sign up for Notify NYC, the city's official source for information about emergency events and important services, by calling 311 or visiting nyc.gov/notifynyc.

Be Prepared

Listen to local weather forecasts and announcements from officials and prepare a Go Bag that you can grab in case you need to leave your home in a hurry. Always avoid driving or walking through flooded areas.

Call 311 to report roadway flooding or sewer backups not caused by conditions in your home.

For more information, visit rainfallready.nyc or scan this QR code:



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07-22

Rainfall Ready NYC: A Homeowner's Guide

Tips to help you protect your home from flooding and sewer backups during rainfall events



This guide provides an overview of some of the causes of water flooding in your home that are associated with rain events. If you have experienced flooding or want to reduce the likelihood it will happen to you, a licensed professional engineer or architect should be consulted to help determine what measures might be most beneficial for your home's unique conditions. Many of the tips below would require permits and approvals and a licensed professional should be consulted to ensure they are properly secured and that appropriate installation techniques are followed.

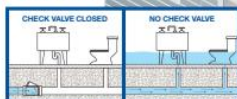
TIP 1 CONSIDER CHECK VALVES AND OTHER BACKWATER PROTECTION

Under heavy rain conditions where the flow in the sewer rises and meets or exceeds the sewer's capacity, basement plumbing fixtures such as toilets, sinks, and drains are vulnerable to sewer backups. A backwater valve, also known as a check valve, can prevent sewer water from rising up from the city sewer into your home through basement plumbing. During heavy rain, if water from the city sewer rises to the level of basement plumbing, the check valve closes and blocks sewer water from entering your home. It is important to note that any wastewater from your toilets, sinks, or showers will not be able to leave your home while the valve is closed. You should not use these fixtures while the valve is closed because you can risk flooding your own property. Drain plugs can be another option to prevent sewer backups into floor drains if they are present on the property.

TIP 2 REDUCE STORMWATER RUNOFF

Water runs off concrete and asphalt almost immediately and can reach and exceed the design limits of sewers quickly during heavy rains. Retaining and creating green and unpaved spaces around your home can help reduce flows into the sewer by reducing the amount of stormwater runoff your property sends to the sewers. There are alternatives to concrete, such as porous paving stones, which could allow for uses like patios while creating less stormwater runoff.

1 CONSIDER CHECK VALVES



2 REDUCE STORMWATER RUNOFF

6 INSTALL PROPER ROOF DRAINAGE

Consider a rain barrel

TIP 3 PROTECT AREAS BELOW STREET LEVEL

Water will flow to and pool in low areas. Below street level spaces such as underground garages, basement doors, and other low lying areas are the most vulnerable to flooding. Direct stormwater from your roof and porch away from low-lying areas. Reduce the risk of flooding by sealing cracks in foundation walls and considering the use of appropriate barriers. Sandbags can be a cost effective option to block water from entering some of the spaces in your home. Other barrier options may include window wells, flood walls around doors, and flood gates at driveway entrances. Be sure that any barriers or modifications do not interfere with appropriate exits from your home.

TIP 4 KEEP GREASE OUT OF THE SEWERS

As a homeowner, you are responsible for the sewer connection from your home to the city sewer. A clogged or cracked sewer connection can prevent wastewater from flowing out of your home properly. Improper disposal of grease and cooking oil can clog your home's internal pipes as well as city sewers. This can cause sewer backups in your neighborhood and home.

TIP 5 HELP KEEP CATCH BASIN GRATES CLEAR

Keeping litter off the street helps stormwater drain and helps protect the city's water bodies. The City is constantly working to maintain our 7,500 miles of sewers and 148,000 catch basins. Street litter is captured in special catch basin collection areas which help keep it from entering into sewers and waterways. DEP cleans and maintains these collection areas on a regular cycle. When debris covers and mats the street level grates, stormwater cannot enter the catch basin and can pool around the area causing street flooding, even before the sewer is full. You and your neighbors can help reduce this type of flooding by disposing of litter properly and by carefully removing leaves or trash from catch basin grates before or during a rain event.

TIP 6 INSTALL PROPER ROOF DRAINAGE

Directing stormwater from your roof away from the foundation walls of your home is critical in keeping your basement dry. Clean your gutters regularly to prevent stormwater from overflowing onto walls, and connect downspouts to appropriate drains. Consider installing a rain barrel as an alternative method to capturing stormwater. You can then use this stored water for activities such as watering the lawn or washing your car. Please note that rain barrels alone are not sufficient to reduce flooding during a heavy rain event but when used as a tool in a comprehensive strategy can improve the overall performance of a property.