

**PENDING BOARD APPROVAL**

**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Held on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 via Zoom Conference**

PRESENT (34):	S. Alexander	R. Bender	J. Campbell Priveterre
	L. Daub	M. Donato	P. Ellis
	D. Escano Bell	M. Esema	N. Fazio
	S. Froot	D. Gellman	R. Ginty
	J. Gomez	M. Goodman	E. Green
	R. Jacklosky	M. Joyce	R. Kaplan
	T. Morris	O. Murray	D. Padernacht
	T. Pardo	K. Pesce	R. Pochter Lowe
	J. Reyes	G. Santiago	R. Singh
	L. Spalter	C. Tepelus	D. Travis
	J. Townes	S. Villaverde	M. Wolpoff
	L. Lopez		

ABSENT (4):	C. Dastis Galvin	M. Della	R. Fanuzzi
	C. G. Moerdler		

STAFF:	C. Gannon, District Manager
	P. Romano, Community Associate
	T. Ochoteco, Community Coordinator

GUEST:	Ishrael Gonzalez (Bronx Borough President's Office), Captain Emilio Melendez (NYPD 50 <sup>th</sup> Precinct), NYS Assembly Member Jeff Dinowitz, NYC Council Member Eric Dinowitz, Carlos Torres (BXDA), Carlos Munoz (NYS Senator Rivera Office), Eric Sawyer (BX DA office), Marilex Santana-Tavarez (BX DA Office), Sabriena Campbell (CM Dinowitz Office), Tyler Wong (NYS Sen. Biaggi's Office), C. Rizzo, V. Cruz, D. Burke, J. Lerner
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L. Spalter convened the meeting at 7:04 PM and welcomed all to this month's Board Meeting.

**1. GALLERY SESSION:**

Chris Rizzo, Riverdale Main Street Alliance, read a letter of support for the Vision Zero Calming Plan for Mosholu Ave. The alliance appreciates the work of the Community Board. However, he underlined the alliance's concerns regarding Riverdale Avenue.

Victor Cruz, Director of Community Affairs, Grace Church in Marble Hill invited the public to a nutrition workshop on May 20 at 6:30pm.

Deidre Burke expressed her gratitude to the Traffic & Transportation Committee for the careful deliberation regarding the proposed changes to Mosholu Avenue. Ms. Burke expressed that nobody is against traffic safety, but the proposed plan is wrong. She feels that more studies are needed.

Janie Lerner from the Seton Park Dog Run Group introduced her group.

## **2. REPORT FROM THE BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT OFFICE – Ishrael Gonzalez**

Mr. Gonzalez reported that the former Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene passed away. The monthly report was sent to all. The Borough President's office has sent out the re-appointment letters to board members.

## **3. REPORT FROM THE NYPD 50<sup>TH</sup> PRECINCT – Captain Emilio Melendez**

Captain Melendez reported that the 50<sup>th</sup> Precinct is #1 in crime reduction. Overall crime is down in most categories in the 50<sup>th</sup> Precinct except for rape. The captain expressed that the district is very fortunate to have such a reduction in crime in the community when crime is increasing in other parts of the city. The recent hate crime at local Jewish institutions was committed by a troubled individual that lives in the district. He was released without bail and is awaiting a court date. The precinct is working diligently to remove abandoned vehicles from streets.

## **4. REPORT FROM ASSEMBLY MEMBER JEFF DINOWITZ**

Assembly Member Dinowitz informed residents that the legislature extended the rent eviction moratorium until the end of August. This extension protects people from evictions, mortgage foreclosures, and commercial properties. In the state budget several billions from the federal government was allocated to help tenants pay their rents to landlords. New legislation submitted by the Assembly Member would make the counterfeiting or forging of COVID-19 vaccination cards a serious crime. The Assembly Member thanked the NYPD for their response to the recent hate crime that occurred in the district. His office received reports of racing on the Henry Hudson Parkway. He will be reaching out to state police to address the problem.

## **5. REPORT FROM COUNCIL MEMBER ERIC DINOWITZ**

Council Member Dinowitz has joined several committees in the City Council including Aging, Education, Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction, Civil Services and Labor, Consumers Affairs, Small Business, Oversight and Investigations and Parks & Recreation. He also shared that he has co-sponsored a number of bills. He will work to secure funds for schools, parks, and mental health services. His office is conducting office hours throughout the district.

## **6. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Laura Spalter**

L. Spalter shared that she has sent a letter to all elected officials to push for an extension of the open meetings law to continue allowing community boards to meet remotely. The Community Board will partner with NYCHA on the Clean Streets event taking place at the Marble Hill Houses on May 29th. She also extended her condolences on the passing of former Deputy

Borough President Aurelia Greene. She congratulated S. Villaverde on being selected the Bronx recipient of the NYS Bar Associations Pro-Bono Service Award. She also informed the board that Donell Leverett has moved out of the district, thanked him for his years of service and wishes him well.

#### **7. TREASURER’S REPORT – Diomarys Escano-Bell**

D. Escano-Bell provided an overview of the report and noted that we’ve allocated \$172,244 with \$76,424 remaining for FY2021. The board has no budget modifications. The board holds \$2,024 in encumbered funds.

#### **8. DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT – Ciara Gannon**

- City Planning attended the last Executive Committee meeting to discuss the budget process which was very informative to many board members.
- The board is working closely with the Economic Development Committee on graffiti removal along Broadway and Marble Hill. This is possible with funds allocated by Council Member Rodriguez. We should be moving along with summer dates soon.
- A representative from the City Council attended the last Land Use meeting on behalf of Speaker Corey Johnson to discuss Intro 2186.
- The office is busy responding to resident complaints as we return to normal. The DM stressed the importance of calling 311 to log complaints. This helps with tracking local problems and is also required by all city agencies.
- Our new website is nearing completion with the help of T. Ochoteco and P. Romano.
- The office has started to order more office supplies which will be reflected in the next Treasurer’s report.

#### **9. REPORT FROM DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING – Not present**

L. Daub conducted a **Roll Call of Board Members** and determined that a quorum was present.

#### **10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### ***a. YOUTH – J. Gomez***

J. Gomez referred to the committee minutes. There won’t be a May meeting due to a holiday conflict. The committee will have a meeting in June 2021.

##### ***b. AGING – L. Daub***

A speaker from the Department of the Aging presented at the last committee meeting to share new programs. The committee does not plan to meet in June. .

*c. BUDGET – D. Gellman*

Every committee submitted their capital & expense budget priorities last month. A total of 44 capital priorities and 42 expense were submitted. D. Gellman will meet with the Chair & District Manager to review the list of priorities.

*d. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – N. Fazio*

N. Fazio shared that the committee had an informative meeting which included the SBA Director, Silvia Rivera, who spoke about COVID recovery programs. The NYC Economic Development Corporation also presented. There was a walk-through of local businesses on West Kingsbridge Road. N. Fazio recognized the NYPD for their work on fighting graffiti. The next meeting is May 27<sup>th</sup>.

*e. EDUCATION, LIBRARIES & CULTURAL AFFAIRS – S. Alexander*

S. Alexander referred board members to the ELCA minutes for additional information. Mayor de Blasio has allocated funding to provide tutoring to help students catch up. Shelters should provide WiFi to students by August. The next meeting is on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

*f. ENVIRONMENT & SANITATION – NO REPORT*

*g. HOUSING – T. Morris*

T. Morris referred everybody to his minutes from April. He expressed his appreciation to elected officials for the extension of the eviction moratorium. The next meeting will be May 24<sup>th</sup>.

*h. LAND USE – M. Wolpoff*

A presentation was given by the MTA and City Planning regarding a citywide text amendment that would include additional accessible train stations. Annie Levers of the City Council presented on Intro 2186.

M. Wolpoff presented the resolution for 9 Ploughman's Bush for a vote:

**WHEREAS**, the land use committee of Community Board No. 8 heard a presentation by the architect and counsel for the applicant for an expansion of an existing home at 9 Ploughman's Bush within the Riverdale Special Natural Area District (NA-2), and

**WHEREAS**, the committee heard from the impacted neighbor and the Riverdale Sanitation Association,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, Community Board No. 8 approves the application for 9 Ploughman's Bush, Authorization pursuant to 105-421 to facilitate a new enlargement of an existing single-family residence within in the Special Natural Area District (NA-2), sought by a private applicant at 9 Ploughman's Bush, in the Riverdale neighborhood of Community District 8, Bronx.

**VOTE:**

In favor (34): S. Alexander, B. Bender, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, D. Escano Bell, M. Esemá, N. Fazio, S. Froot, D. Gellman, R. Ginty, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, R. Jacklosky, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, D. Padernacht, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, C. Tepelus, D. Travis, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained: (0)

Opposed: (0)

***i. LAW, RULES & ETHICS – M. Wolpoff***

M. Wolpoff shared that it was brought to his attention that there was an oversight in the Ethical Guidance Manual (EGM) from the resolution that the board passed about the functioning of the Nominating Committee. The committee will correct a contradictory statement in the EGM to reflect that board members can seek only one position on the slate.

***j. PARKS & RECREATION – R. Ginty***

R. Ginty presented two (2) resolutions for approval by the Board:

**Whereas**, representatives of the Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) appeared before the Parks & Recreation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 January 2021 meeting to present a plan for the Strong Street Playground Capital Project which will rehabilitate the park and improve active park space for residents; and

**Whereas**, those representatives listened to testimony from residents and responded to questions concerning the proposed project; and

**Whereas**, our City Council Member Fernando Cabrera and our Borough President, Ruben Diaz Jr. supported the project and it is fully funded in New York City's Capital Budget; and

**Whereas**, the Parks & Recreation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 unanimously approved the proposed Strong Street Playground Project as presented to the committee requesting that the DPR return to the committee in the event that substantive changes are made to the design or location of equipment.

**Therefore, Be It Resolved** that Community Board 8 supports the proposed Strong Street Playground Project,

**VOTE:**

In favor (33): S. Alexander, B. Bender, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, D. Escano Bell, M. Esemá, N. Fazio, S. Froot, D. Gellman, R. Ginty, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, R. Jacklosky, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, D. Padernacht, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, C. Tepelus, D. Travis, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained: (0)

Opposed (1): J. Reyes

**Whereas**, representatives of the Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) appeared before the Parks & Recreation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 at its January 2021 meeting to present a plan for Exercise Equipment in Van Cortlandt Park which will better utilize and make active park space for residents; and

**Whereas**, those representatives listened to testimony from residents and responded to questions concerning the proposed project; and

**Whereas**, our former City Council Member Andrew Cohen supported the project and it is fully funded in New York City's Capital Budget; and

**Whereas**, the Parks & Recreation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 unanimously approved the proposed Classic Park, Van Cortlandt Park Exercise Equipment Project as presented to the committee requesting that the DPR return to the committee in the event that substantive changes are made to the design or location of equipment.

**Therefore, Be It Resolved** that Community Board 8 approves the Classic Park, Van Cortlandt Park Exercise Equipment Project.

**VOTE:**

In favor (33): S. Alexander, B. Bender, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, D. Escano Bell, M. Esem, N. Fazio, S. Froot, D. Gellman, R. Ginty, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, R. Jacklosky, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, C. Tepelus, D. Travis, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained (1): D. Padernacht

Opposed: (0)

The newly formed Friends of Van Cortlandt Tail is hosting It's My Park Day with the Parks Dept. on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The P&R committee will participate in the clean-up and welcomes other CB8 volunteers.

***k. PUBLIC SAFETY – E. Green***

E. Green presented four (4) SLA renewal resolutions:

RENEWAL APPLICATION: Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

**WHEREAS**, Alexander Katechis, Owner of Blue Bay Restaurant, located at 3533 Johnson Avenue appeared before the Public Safety Committee on April 20th, 2021 to renew the

establishment's liquor license.

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of NYPD's 50th Precinct stated they were unaware of any prior notable disturbances or complaints about this establishment.

**WHEREAS**, the Public Safety Committee unanimously approved this application.

Therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED**, Bronx Community Board 8 approves this application.

RENEWAL APPLICATION: Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of Bronx Alehouse, located at 216 West 238th St. appeared before the Public Safety Committee on April 20th, 2021 to renew the establishment's liquor license.

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of NYPD's 50th Precinct stated they were unaware of any prior notable disturbances or complaints about this establishment.

**WHEREAS**, the Public Safety Committee unanimously approved this application.

Therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED**, Bronx Community Board 8 approves this application.

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RENEWAL APPLICATION: Wine, Beer & Cider

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of New Tokyo House Inc., located at 5648 Riverdale Ave, appeared before the Public Safety Committee on April 20th, 2021 to renew the establishment's liquor license.

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of NYPD's 50th Precinct stated they were unaware of any prior notable disturbances or complaints about the location of this establishment.

**WHEREAS**, the Public Safety Committee unanimously approved this application.

Therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED**, Bronx Community Board 8 approves this application.

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RENEWAL APPLICATION: Wine, Beer & Cider

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of Siam Square Thai Cuisine, located at 564 Kappock Street, appeared before the Public Safety Committee on April 20th, 2021 to renew the establishment's liquor license.

**WHEREAS**, Representatives of NYPD’s 50th Precinct stated they were unaware of any prior notable disturbances or complaints about the location of this establishment.

**WHEREAS**, the Public Safety Committee unanimously approved this application.

Therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED**, Bronx Community Board 8 approves this application.

**VOTE (4 renewals):**

In favor (34): S. Alexander, B. Bender, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, D. Escano Bell, M. Esemá, N. Fazio, S. Froot, D. Gellman, R. Ginty, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, R. Jacklosky, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, D. Padernacht, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, C. Tepelus, D. Travis, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained: (0)              Opposed: (0)

The Public Safety Committee will not meet in May and the next meeting is scheduled for June 1, 2021.

***1. TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION – D. Padernacht***

D. Padernacht presented two (2) resolutions for approval by the Board:

**WHEREAS**, in June 2019, the Traffic and Transportation Committee expressly stated to the NYC Department of Transportation that the most pressing condition on Mosholu Avenue is the north-south crossing of the street for pedestrians at various locations between Broadway and West 254<sup>th</sup> Street;

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Traffic and Transportation Committee requests that a traffic study be undertaken by DOT for the purpose of installing traffic control measures at the following locations:

Mosholu Avenue at Liebig Avenue  
Mosholu Avenue at Huxley Avenue  
Mosholu Avenue at Spencer Avenue  
Mosholu Avenue at Post Road

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, while the Committee understands that DOT performed previous studies for two of these intersections in 2018, we request that new studies be performed upon the expiration of the three-year period since the last study was completed.



**VOTE:**

In favor (33): S. Alexander, B. Bender, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, D. Escano Bell, M. Esema, N. Fazio, S. Froot, D. Gellman, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, R. Jacklosky, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, D. Padernacht, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, C. Tepelus, D. Travis, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained (1): R. Ginty

Opposed: (0)

**WHEREAS**, the New York City Department of Transportation (“NYC DOT”) presented a plan to the Traffic and Transportation Committee for certain changes to Mosholu Avenue between Broadway and West 254<sup>th</sup> Street and on West 254<sup>th</sup> Street between Mosholu Avenue and Riverdale Avenue which DOT calls the “Mosholu Avenue Traffic Calming Plan;

**WHEREAS**, the NYC DOT proposes to install unprotected, painted bike lanes on the north and south side of Mosholu Avenue between Broadway and West 256th Street;

**WHEREAS**, the NYC DOT proposes to paint bicycle sharrows on Mosholu Avenue between West 254<sup>th</sup> Street and West 256th Street;

**WHEREAS**, the NYC DOT proposes to paint a parking lane on the north side of West 254th Street between Mosholu Avenue and Riverdale Avenue;

**WHEREAS**, the NYC DOT proposes to paint bicycle sharrows on both sides of West 254th Street between Mosholu Avenue and Riverdale Avenue

**WHEREAS**, the NYC DOT proposes to paint a curb extension and install delineators on the northwest corner of Liebig Avenue and Mosholu Avenue.

**WHEREAS**, thirty-seven (37) merchants from Mosholu Avenue signed a petition in opposition to this plan;

**WHEREAS**, NYC DOT presented the same exact plan to this Committee in June 2019;

**WHEREAS**, in June 2019, when NYC DOT presented this plan, this Committee expressly cited that the most pressing condition on Mosholu Avenue dealt with north-south crossing of the street for pedestrians;

**WHEREAS**, NYC DOT has not put forth any changes to the north-south crossings of the street to make such crossing safer for pedestrians;

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the Traffic and Transportation Committee rejects the NYC DOT Mosholu Avenue Traffic Calming plan.

**VOTE:**

In favor (26): S. Alexander, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, M. Esema, N. Fazio, S. Froot, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, D. Padernacht, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained (1): R. Ginty

Opposed (7): B. Bender, D. Escano Bell, D. Gellman, R. Jacklosky, J. Reyes, C. Tepelus, D. Travis

***m. HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES – O. Murray***

During their last meeting, COVID-19 was among topics and recommendations were given to continue following CDC guidelines. The Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene will present on status of vaccinations and testing at the May meeting. O. Murray will invite health professionals to discuss vaccinations for children in June.

***n. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON RACIAL EQUITY – J. Townes***

J. Townes referred to the committee minutes. The next meeting is May 13<sup>th</sup>. Reports and updates are on the website.

***o. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON VETERANS SERVICES – S. Villaverde***

S. Villaverde informed that the Special Committee held its first meeting on April 29. The committee set their goals and will work with other committees by asking Chairs to add veterans' issues to their agendas. The chair referred to the committee minutes.

***p. SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON HUDSON RIVER GREENWAY – B. Bender***

B. Bender informed that the Hudson River Greenway Special committee will be meeting with Congressman Bowman and with Senator Schumer's office.

***q. NOMINATING COMMITTEE – J. Reyes***

J. Reyes informed that all positions are open. The committee will conduct interviews May 12<sup>th</sup> and May 19<sup>th</sup>. The minutes have been posted.

**11. DISCUSSION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 5, 2021 – NO DISCUSSION**

## **12. APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 13, 2021**

### **VOTE:**

In favor (34): S. Alexander, B. Bender, J. Campbell Priveterre, L. Daub, M. Donato, P. Ellis, D. Escano Bell, M. Esemá, N. Fazio, S. Froot, D. Gellman, R. Ginty, J. Gomez, M. Goodman, E. Green, R. Jacklosky, M. Joyce, R. Kaplan, T. Morris, O. Murray, D. Padernacht, T. Pardo, K. Pesce, R. Pochter Lowe, J. Reyes, G. Santiago, R. Singh, L. Spalter, C. Tepelus, D. Travis, J. Townes, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, L. Lopez

Abstained: (0)              Opposed: (0)

## **13. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

M. Goodman reminded everyone to submit nominations for the Irving Ladimer Community Service Award.

S. Villaverde requested a moment of silence in memory of Deputy Borough President Aurelia Greene.

### **Motion to Adjourn at 9:25 pm.**

Approved by unanimous consent.

Prepared By: Pablo Romano, Community Associate

Reviewed By: Lisa Daub, Secretary