

Community Board No. 8 Bronx

**MINUTES OF HEALTH, HOSPITALS & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD JANUARY 14, 2008
AT THE COMMUNITY BOARD 8 OFFICE
5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE**

PRESENT

Martin Katzenstein
Philip Friedman
Thomas Durham
Beverly Fettman
Julie Reyes
Martin Wolpoff
Nadine Baker
Captain Mitchell Berkowitz
Manny Grossman
Roger Montesano
Louis Vorhaus, M.D.

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair CB #8
Committee Vice Chair CB #8
CB #8
CB #8
CB #8
CB #8
Schervier Nursing Care Center
FDNY/EMS
Riverdale Press
FDNY
Committee member

Introductions:

Committee members and attendees make introductions.

Chairperson's Report:

No Report.

Agenda Items:

EMS Station
(Guests: Capt. Mitchell Berkowitz, EMS1 & Roger Montesano of FDNY EMS2)

Historical review of EMS station request within CB8:

It has been many years since CB8 began requests for an EMS station within the boundaries of CB8. CB8 is one of the very few Community Board areas that does not have a hospital or a full EMS station within its borders. CB8 has one of the densest populations of elder care beds within New York City. The EMS Station that CB8 had been requesting was recently selected to be located in

¹ Captain Mitchell Berkowitz is the highest ranking EMS Captain on-duty in The Bronx at time of Committee Meeting.

² Roger Montesano handles FDNY/EMS community affairs for all five Boroughs

adjacent Bronx Community Board 12 (Bx CB12) on the other side of the Bronx at the former site of a FDNY ladder company.

Chairperson expresses concern about EMS response times for CB8 from the new station.

Chairperson further expresses disappointment with respect to lack of a full EMS station in CB8 and with the number of city ambulances within CB8.

Chairperson recalls two (2) automobile accidents where the ambulances that responded were from Saint Barnabas and Montefiore and were not the locally assigned FDNY/EMS units.

A committee member recounts a story occurring within North Riverdale regarding a call to 911 for a cardiac distress of an elderly patient. The first responder was Engine 52, then an NYPD patrol, then a St Joseph's ambulance (Yonkers) and lastly a NYC EMS ambulance.

Another committee member expresses frustration for the years that CB has apparently been overlooked by FDNY/EMS.

Another committee member recounts efforts made to coordinate with EMS leadership in 2002 where EMS presented a depiction of a joint EMS/FDNY stationhouse. Also mentions efforts by the Bronx Borough President's task force with FDNY for an EMS station within CB8.

Captain Berkowitz states that EMS attempted to establish an EMS station within CB8 in 1998 when the Tibbett Avenue construction began. Further states that efforts were disrupted by local influences.

Captain Berkowitz distributed FDNY/EMS call statistics for 2006 and 2007 with citywide, Bronx and CB8 breakdowns (see attached).

Mr. Montesano of FDNY/EMS, states that there are 4-6 ambulances allocated to the CB8 area. Based on the CB8 call statistic through 2007, it appears the number of ambulances allocated to the CB8 area is sufficient (approximate statistics for the Lincoln Hospital area are mentioned where EMS averages 800 calls per week as compared to the approximately 228 average calls per week within CB8.)

Per the FDNY/EMS representatives, the selected site for the new EMS station was the best selection at the time since the property was already owned by FDNY (former location of an FDNY ladder company) and the site is a "cross-street" location (best for access by ambulances to the site.)

It is further noted by the FDNY/EMS representatives that the Montefiore Hospital location is a very congested location which can lengthen EMS response time. The new location to be built, though not within CB8, is still closer and would likely improve response times within CB8.

A committee member expressed disappointment with respect to the final EMS station site selection since CB8 had been attempting to coordinate a station at the proposed West 230th Street development site though 2007.

An allocation of 5,000 square feet, the minimum required space for a restocking station as suggested by EMS, had been programmed into the development's Requests for Proposal.

The committee members further expressed disappointment with the FDNY/EMS decision to turn down the West 230th Street site in mid 2007 due to the property not being city owned and due to the proposed space being too small after having suggested the size requirements.

A committee member recounts a story of a CB8 resident with a heart stent. FDNY/EMS representatives stated that there is a relatively new 'stent protocol' where a Bronx patient with a heart stent would be transported to one of 3-4 specially designated Bronx hospitals specializing in heart stent patients (not necessarily being the closest hospital.)

FDNY/EMS representatives gave the example that even if the nearest hospital was Lincoln Hospital, a stent patient would still be transported to one of these specially designated hospitals for treatment.

A committee member asks FDNY/EMS to provide call statistics for all of the Bronx Community Board in addition to CB8 (available at the CB8 Board office).

Chairperson considered whether local hospitals (i.e. Allen Pavilion and/or Montefiore) should be approached to provide additional ambulance coverage within CB8 if an EMS station or additional ambulances within CB8 are not provided by FDNY/EMS.

A local volunteer ambulance company is mentioned in discussion; it is noted that they are not connected with the EMS response system.

A physician in attendance stated that though there may not be many deaths due to EMS response/transport time, delays and/or prolonged response/transport times can significantly affect brain function of the patient which is likely the larger concern.

The FDNY/EMS representatives mentioned that survival rates of medical calls improved when FDNY Engine companies were trained in CPR and included in response to medical calls.

FDNY/EMS representative expressed the opinion that keeping the old ladder company property in CB12 and re-utilizing the site for an EMS station was a good idea and was better than if it had been sold for use as a strip mall, etc.

The committee posed a question to the FDNY/EMS representatives: If CB8 were to have an EMS station, would the originally proposed location at West 230th Street and Tibbett Avenue or an alternate location on West 246th Street be appropriate?

It is mentioned that several years earlier, the FDNY with a Bronx Borough President Task Force had looked for city owned properties/lots and had identified the West 230th Street and Tibbett Avenue site.

FDNY/EMS representatives responded that FDNY/EMS did not want to get involved with a controversial site due to where ground contamination had been suggested.

Suggestions for EMS station locations were discussed: West 231st Street and Riverdale Avenue (former Veterinarian Office), and West 240th Street and Broadway (former gas station).

Chairperson requested that the FDNY/EMS representatives express to the FDNY/EMS leadership that CB8 Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committee continues to request for an EMS station within the CB8 borders. Chairperson also wished to have expressed that a location within CB8 would be more appropriate for the new site than in CB12.

FDNY/EMS representatives noted that Community Boards are always asked for possible sites for stations prior to establishment. It is further noted that in 2001 there were (3) EMS stations, in 2007 there were (9) and that there may still be a possibility of additional stations with one perhaps, to be located in CB8.

It was noted by the FDNY/EMS representatives that there are times when ambulances do not usually return to restocking stations after each call; to ease concerns regarding response times from the proposed new location within CB12.

FDNY/EMS representatives summarized the current locations of dispatched ambulances within CB8 - at time of Committee meeting:

- West 246th Street & Henry Hudson Parkway (BLS3)
- West 240th Street & Broadway (ALS4)

³ (BLS) = **B**asic **L**ife **S**upport

- West 254th Street & Broadway
- Fordham Road & Sedgwick Avenue
- Kingsbridge Avenue & Sedgwick Avenue
- West 231st Street & Bailey Avenue
- West 220th Street & Broadway (location noted but is outside of CB8).

A Committee member expressed frustration with the FDNY/EMS representatives due to several comments during the course of the meeting suggesting they have no control with respect to FDNY/EMS decisions and suggestions for station sites.

One of the FDNY/EMS representatives responded that though they had been dispatched to attend the meeting, they are not at the decision making level to establish a station within CB8. He further stated that FDNY/EMS respects CB8's desire for a station and which is why they were sent to attend the Committee meeting.

The FDNY/EMS representative suggested that CB8 place a request in the Board budget priorities for an EMS station within CB8.

Chairperson expressed appreciation for the FDNY/EMS representative's attendance at the Committee meeting.

A committee member asks the FDNY/EMS representatives how much it would cost to establish a new EMS station and what the minimum requirements (i.e. square footage, location access, etc.) would be.

At the joint meeting of the Aging, Public Safety and Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committees held September 19, 2007, EMS Chief Peruggia presented information regarding the new proposed station within CB12. It was further mentioned that \$50 million dollars had been allocated for construction/establishment of several new EMS stations. The FDNY/EMS representatives indicated they were not sure how much one station would cost to establish.

In Summary of the EMS Discussion:

Chairperson with Committee's support will approach Allen Pavilion and Montefiore Hospitals to attempt to get additional ambulance coverage within CB8.

Chairperson believes that establishment of an EMS station within CB8 would be a benefit to the community especially since FDNY/EMS had previously indicated that a station would be a benefit within CB8.

⁴ (ALS) = Advance Life Support

The Committee requested month-to-month breakdown of Bronx EMS call statistics for the other Bronx Community Boards to be compared against CB8 and Bronx-wide statistics provided at the Committee meeting. It is additionally requested that the statistical breakdown be more detailed to include "type-of-call" (i.e. heart attack, broken arm, etc.)

Chairperson concluded by requesting that there be a consistent FDNY/EMS representative at future Committee meetings.

FDNY/EMS representatives state that FDNY/EMS does make changes (i.e. types of ambulances deployed – ALS vs. BLS) and the FDNY/EMS welcomed community input with respect to community needs and decisions on placement of stations and resources.

It is clarified that different EMS ambulance types/locations have different deployment durations (i.e. 16 hour vs. 24 hour location deployment) based on anticipated call volume (i.e. more ambulances deployed during anticipated high call volume times).

It was noted again that there is no hospital within CB8.

A resolution was called with respect to continuing efforts to establish an EMS station within CB8:

Resolution: Establishment of an EMS Station/Facility within Community Board 8

As the need remains for an EMS station/facility within Bronx Community Board 8 (CB8), the Health, Hospitals and Social Services (H & H) Committee and CB8 will continue to search for an appropriate site to establish an EMS station/facility within CB8.

For establishment of an EMS station within the borders of CB8, the committee requests that EMS/FDNY maintain a dialog with the H & H Committee and CB8 with respect to station requirements (i.e. minimum square footage, site access, etc.) and possible site recommendations derived from CB8.

Health, Hospitals and Social Services Committee Vote:

In Favor: 5 Oppose: 0 Abstentions: 0

Community Board No. 8 Members

M. Wolpoff
M. Katzenstein
T. Durham
P. Friedman

Community Committee Members

Louis Vorhaus

Miscellaneous:

No Miscellaneous Business

Old Business:

No Old Business

New Business:

No New Business

Meeting Adjourned 8:26PM

Submitted by,

Philip Friedman

PF:db (Feb. 11)