

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING
HELD ON DECEMBER 8, 2009 AT
RIVERDALE JEWISH CENTER, 3700 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE**

- PRESENT:** R. Abbott, S. Alexander, S. Balicer, B. Bender, A. P. Cassino, A. Cohen, A. P. Creaney, W. S. Dolny, T. C. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, B. Feinberg, A. G. Feldmeier, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, S. Froot, T. Giallorenzi, R. Ginty, A. Goldman, J. Goris, I. Ladimer, Y. Levy, S. Marquez, B. Maybury, D. McShane, C. G. Moerdler, K. O'Brien, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, S. Scheinbach, L. Spalter, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, H. Young
- ABSENT:** D. Bowden, A. Fana, T. Feerick, V. Gray, M. Khury, G. O. Koppell, J. O'Reilly, J. M. Pilsner, J. Reyes
- STAFF:** N. Stent – District Manager, CB 8
D. Bay – Community Associate, CB 8
P. Manning – Community Associate, CB 8
- GUESTS:** J. Dinowitz – Assemblyman
J. DeSio – rep. Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.
R. Fedderman – rep. Congressman Eliot Engel
R. Martos – Office of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz
Y. Salih – rep. State Senator Jeffrey Klein
A. Sandler – rep. Councilman G. Oliver. Koppell
I. Asseo
A. Appelbaum – Riverdale Press
S. Barker – Kingsbridge Library
H. Barret – Memorial Grove
A. Caba
Capt DelPozo – 50th Precinct
K. Finch
C. M. Giove – Riverdale Review
P. Moerdler
L. Moiatto – Memorial Grove
A. O'Reilly
M. Perron – Van Cortlandt Park
P. O. M. Ramos – 50th Precinct
T. Tureski – Spuyten Duyvil Library
R. Press – Bronx News
D. Sheehan
S. Spielberg
W. M. Suero
D. Tannen – Memorial Grove

Chairman McShane convened the meeting at 7:35 PM.

Gallery Session

- A. Tim Turesky, Spuyten Duyvil Branch Library, provided information on the new accommodation at the branch for 24 hour book returns. The Branch placed No. 3 in Bronx circulation and new jazz CD's have just arrived.

- B. Herb Barret reported that full restoration of Memorial Grove would go forward. He asked the Board for a moment of silence in memory of Pearl Harbor Day, December 7th, of which the Board complied.
- C. Alison O'Reilly discussed the critical problem of unruly youths congregating on West 235th Street and Johnson Avenue in front of Subways and Starbucks shops. Police presence is needed mainly between 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM. This issue was also raised at the meeting of the 50th Police Precinct Council.
- D. Margot Perron, administrator of Van Cortlandt Park, announced the Solstice Boats event on the lake on December 21st. Christmas trees can also be left on the street at the park for collection and for mulching.

1. Approval of Regular Board Minutes of November 10, 2009

K. O'Brien corrected the Budget report to reflect reference to FY 2011 Budget Priorities; and S. Alexander advised that the District Manager's Report should be corrected to reflect the fiscal year of 2010.

The corrected minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of the Executive Board Committee Minutes of December 2, 2009

The minutes were adopted as written.

3. Chairman invited Captain Del Poso to address the Board.

- Captain responded to the Gallery speaker regarding disruptive youths. He advised of an arrest and assured other measures are being taken to counteract the problem. Year to date crime statistics show crime down with the exception of auto theft with a 9% increase representing 16 additional thefts. There are six new foot post officers, with a pair assigned to Johnson Avenue, West 231st Street and Broadway, and on Broadway. This number will be reduced after the holidays. The precinct responded to a complaint of improper use of a police plaque in a car parked illegally that belonged to a police officer. A parking summons was issued and a report was made to the Office of Internal Affairs. An Auto Crime Specialty Unit will be deployed in the 50th precinct, and graffiti is considered a crime and should be reported. Certain properties do not need owner permission for graffiti clean-up. NYPD's Annual Coat Drive is on through January 1st.
- To guard against the appearance of any impropriety, Police Officers are prohibited from accepting free gifts of any value, not even a cup of coffee. Saying thank you is appreciated.

4. Chairman invited Assemblyman Dinowitz to address the Board.

State budget cuts will have a negative impact on the City; parking lot on West 231st Street and Broadway has been restored; City Council will vote on the Kingsbridge Armory development plan on December 16th; requests for graffiti clean-up can be submitted to the office.

5. Report from the Borough President's Office – J. DeSio

- The Office of the Borough President will be accepting board member applications from all 12 Bronx Community Boards from city residents who reside or have professional or other significant interests in the Bronx. Applications will be available beginning December 14th by calling the 718-590-3914 or online at www.bronxboropres.nyc.gov. Deadline for submission is February 5, 2010. Reappointment applications will be sent in December to members whose term expires in 2010.
- More than 300 business owners participated in *The Bronx Economic Summit: a Blueprint for Success*, organized by Borough President Diaz, Jr. Discussion topics included the potential areas of growth and large scale developments; a Bronx Marketing plan; how to attract and retain businesses; the role of cultural organizations with regard to economy; green economy opportunities and job training needs.
- Borough President Diaz, Jr. called for an end to gun violence at the National Day of Outrage held November 23rd. He noted the memory of three recent Bronx innocent bystanders who were victims of homicide.
- Donations for the Coat Drive are welcomed.
- The Borough President has been informed about the development proposal for 3469 Cannon Place and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss the matter. C. Moerder commented on a meeting held at the site and noted that the retaining wall on the property appears unstable and suggested that it be investigated by an engineer.
- Upcoming Events: December 15th, Annual Menorah Lighting Ceremony, Veterans Memorial Hall, Bronx County Building, 1:30 PM, RSVP 718-590-3959; December 13th, Handel's Messiah and the Taste of the Bronx Food Show, Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 3:00 PM, for tickets call 718-960-8833; December 20th, Bronx Official Tree Lighting, 4:00 PM, Bronx County Building. On December 15th, Community Conversation with Governor David A. Paterson, Lehman College, Lovinger Theatre, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM.

6. Chairman's Report

Chairman McShane informed the Board that budget cuts were once again occurring. Last year the Board passed a resolution opposing the cuts and each board member and community members signed a letter opposing the cuts. The Board office distributed the letter to city elected officials. He asked that Board Members and members of the public once again sign a letter opposing the Mayoral budget cuts and the Board Office will forward them to Mayor Bloomberg, City Council members, and Borough President Diaz, Jr.

7. Treasurer's Report - P. Friedman

Reviewed the balances that will remain after the Mayor's budget cuts, leaving a balance of \$160,437 for FY 2011 which will not suffice payroll.

The Treasurer presented the following resolution for a vote:

WHEREAS, the NYC Office of Management and Budget has advised Bronx Community Board No. 8 of a Mayoral budget modification of 4% (\$9,865) in fiscal year (FY) 2010 and additional budget funding cuts of 8% (\$17,272) for FY2011; and

WHEREAS, under the auspices of the New York City Charter, Bronx Community Board No. 8 has an important advisory role in dealing with land use and zoning matters; the City budget; municipal service delivery; and many other matters relating to its community's welfare. It serves as community advocate, mediator and also provides information, research, and community data; processes street activity permits for block parties and street fairs; reviews liquor licenses; initiates and monitors special projects; and solves community complaints; and

WHEREAS, Bronx Community Board No. 8 has been at the forefront of preserving the community and improving its quality of life, from its 197a Plan that down zoned residential areas to protect them from over development, ensured business growth, strengthened and expanded protection of Special Natural Area District to new Alternate Side of the Street Parking Regulations that enhanced the environment, saved fuel costs and reduced community stress to initiating a Farmers Market, and employing youth that brought fresh food into an underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, the meager FY2010 budget of \$206,895 is slated to be reduced this year by \$9,865 (4%) and in FY2011, the already scheduled, drastically reduced base budget of \$177,709, will be cut by an additional \$17,272 (8%), leaving a final, further reduced budget of \$160,437. These cuts will negatively impact the Board's ability to meet the challenges and mandates in the City Charter, devastate the Board office budget, force the elimination of staff, and severely hinder the ability of the Board to meet the needs of the over 110,000 citizens we serve;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Bronx Community Board No. 8 joins many members of the community in opposing the FY2010 and FY2011 budget modifications and cuts and is requesting the Mayor and City Council to hold our board's budget immune from any proposals to modify the current FY2010 budget and eliminate the budget reductions for the FY2011 budget.

Vote: 33 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention

In Favor –

R. Abbott, S. Alexander, S. Balicer, B. Bender, A. P. Cassino, A. Cohen, A. P. Creaney, W. S. Dolny, T. C. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, B. Feinberg, A. G. Feldmeier, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, S. Froot, T. Giallorenzi, R. Ginty, A. Goldman, J. Goris, I. Ladimer, Y. Levy, S. Marquez, B. Maybury, D. McShane, K. O'Brien, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, S. Scheinbach, L. Spalter, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff

Abstained –

C. Moerdler

S. Villaverde proposed that an Executive Session be called to deal with decisions deriving from budget cuts impacting on staff. Chairman McShane advised that in accordance with the Board's Bylaws all such responsibilities are strictly within his purview. Following further discussion, Chairman requested that the Law, Rules and Ethics Committee take the issue under advisement.

8. Committee Reports

A. Economic Development - R. Fanuzzi

1. Meeting for December 24 is cancelled.
2. Thanked City Council for approval of five minute grace period for parking meters.
3. Attended Bronx Economic Development Summit on November 18th.
4. There is strong support for living wages with respect to Kingsbridge Armory jobs.
5. Attended City Council's hearing on December 7th on the FRESH (Food Retail Expansion to Support Health) initiative, which goal is to put supermarkets in low access areas. The Committee will survey the status of grocery stores in the Board's district.

6. December 21st is deadline for penalty release on Environmental Control Bureau's violations.

B. Education

S. Alexander reported in the absence of D. Bowden.

1. Lt. Clarke, NYPD School Safety Division made a presentation on Gang Awareness at its November meeting.
2. There will be no December meeting.

C. Environment and Sanitation – S. Scheinbach

1. Illegal postings have declined.
2. Opposition of gas drilling in New York watershed continues. The process uses over 300 chemicals of which 65 are considered hazardous. The comment period on the drilling is extended through December 31st.
3. Department of Environmental Protection will advise on decision for access around Jerome Park Reservoir at the next Croton Filtration Monitoring Committee meeting.

D. Health, Hospitals and Social Services

Refer to Committee minutes.

E. Housing – T. Durham

1. Refer to minutes for full report.
2. Operation Hope for Homeless needs volunteers for counting the homeless. Pre-preparation is needed, cautioned participants to dress warmly.
3. The Committee had a speaker from the 2010 Census. The undercounting of the last census caused a loss of millions of dollars for NYC. T. Durham recommended other committee chairs to invite the Census representatives to speak at their meetings for further dissemination of information.
4. Discussed the problem of illegal dwelling conversions, linked to fires where faulty heating was set up in spaces such as garages and basements. The Committee will hold a meeting to address this issue.
5. December 28th will be next meeting.
6. I. Ladimer asked for review of "Exit" plan with respect to senior facilities/residences.

F. Land Use – C. Moerdler

The Committee will meet December 9th and continue with 3469 Cannon Place proposal for development. A meeting with the principals and some of the immediate neighbors was held at the site on December 4th. Blasting was mentioned and there are no building plans at this time but a building scale was received.

G. Law, Rules and Ethics – I. Ladimer

1. No December meeting.
2. The Committee is reviewing the jurisdiction of Board committees. Directed all to the Board's website to view a report produced by Vice Chairman Trebach on the same issue.
3. Conflict of Interest Board materials will be reviewed.

H. Libraries and Cultural Affairs – R. Abbott

Regretfully informed the Board of the sudden passing of Horace Harrison, longtime Librarian at Van Cortlandt Branch Library.

I. Parks and Recreation – B. Bender

1. Designs for Sid Augarten Field will go forward for construction slated to begin July 2010 with completion in April 2011. Funding was made possible through both Borough President Diaz, Jr. and Councilman Koppell.
2. Memorial Grove will be fully restored along with plaques and additional tree plantings, thanks to funding by Councilman G. Oliver Koppell.

J. Public Safety – A. G. Feldmeier

1. Det. Rodriguez, Community Affairs, 50th Pct. is recovering from shoulder surgery.
2. Report of gun shots at the Lounge bar were unfounded following police investigation.
3. The Committee will hold its next meeting on December 17th, at the 50th Pct., at 7:30 PM.

K. Traffic and Transportation – A. P. Cassino

1. Presented the following resolution approved by the Committee on the Department of City Planning's Residential Streetscape Text Amendment:

WHEREAS, the New York City Department of City Planning has proposed a city-wide zoning text amendment (N 100139 ZRY) to preserve and enhance the streetscape character of residential neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, on November 16, 2009, the City Planning Commission referred the proposed text amendment to all Community Boards, Borough Boards and Borough Presidents for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the proposed text amendment would strengthen front-yard planting requirements in R1 to R5 districts; and

WHEREAS, the proposed text amendment would refine rules for curb cuts and front-yard parking in R1 to R5 contextual districts; and

WHEREAS, the proposed text amendment would restore the original intent of zoning regulations affecting residential parking and planting rules to be consistent with a court decision that defines "development" as a new building, not an existing building; and

WHEREAS, the proposed text amendment would encourage group-parking facilities and preserve on-street parking spaces for Quality Housing buildings; and

WHEREAS, the proposed text amendment would ensure that adequate parking is provided for new dwelling units added to existing buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Traffic & Transportation Committee of Community Board No. 8, Bronx, has considered the implications and other policy issues relating to the proposed text amendment;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board No. 8, Bronx, supports the Department of City Planning's proposed Residential Streetscape Preservation Text Amendment (N 100139 ZRY) and urges that it be approved by the City Council.

Vote: 33 in favor, 1 opposed, and 0 abstentions

In Favor –

R. Abbott, S. Alexander, S. Balicer, B. Bender, A. P. Cassino, A. Cohen, A. P. Creaney, W. S. Dolny, T. C. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, B. Feinberg, A. G. Feldmeier, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, S. Froot, T. Giallorenzi, R. Ginty, A. Goldman, J. Goris, I. Ladimer, Y. Levy, S. Marquez, B. Maybury, D. McShane, C. G. Moerdler, K. O'Brien, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, S. Scheinbach, L. Spalter, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, M. Wolpoff

Opposed -

S. Villerverde

2. The Committee will hold a committee public hearing in January to determine support for a "Temporary Pedestrian Street" on Johnson Avenue. Businesses are being polled for interest. Due to the January 31st deadline, a non-binding application has already been submitted to preserve the opportunity pending the Committee and Board review.

Discussion ensued over the Board's rules and procedures regarding Committee public hearings without approval of the Board.

3. Refer to minutes for full report.
4. The next meeting will be held on December 14th, Board Office, 7:30 PM.

L. Aging – K. Pesce

1. Refer to minutes for full report.
2. No December meeting, next meeting January 26th.
3. The Committee has undertaken visiting senior residences for meetings.

M. Youth

NY Yankees Youth Leadership awards will be presented to five individuals at the January Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned 10:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Manning
Community Associate