

**Minutes of the June 17, 2019 Meeting of the Environment and Sanitation Committee of Bronx
Community Board 8**

Vladek Hall, Amalgamated Housing

74 Van Cortlandt Park South

Committee and Community Members:

K. Argenti, B. Bender, M. Della, P. Elis, R. Fanuzzi, S. Froot, M. Gluck, L. Spalter, R. Spalter

Community Board 8 Members:

R. Ginty, D. Padernacht

Attendees:

B. Daly/NYC DEP

E. Ardizzone/NYC DEP

K. Ellis/NYC DEP

A. Brow/NYC DEP

A. West/NYC DEP

J. Colon, NYBG Green Up/NYC DSNY Compost
Project

W. Hall/Croton Committee, CB 12

J. Hill/Croton Committee, CB 7

L. Ryan

M. McCarthy

A. Garti

T. Flynn

C. Greene

L. Priscer

J. Gautreau

L. Minsky

V. Braunstein

F. Leffler

L. Shoenstein

L. Millan

P. Ray

E. Yaker

S. Stern

G. Diaz

S. Matos

Jennifer Tejada

G. Fleishman

B. Fermin

R. Best

D. Travis

D. Hersch

N. Shaw

L. Sussman

E. Blitz

D. Ranells

Ann Rauch

G. Axelbank

S. Leffler

M. Leffler

P. Peterson

D. Spencer

I. Nieto

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

- I. Approval of the minutes of the Environment and Sanitation Committee meeting of April 17, 2019

In Favor: K. Argenti, B. Bender, M. Della, P. Elis, R. Fanuzzi, S. Froot, M. Gluck, L. Spalter, R. Spalter

- II. Chair's Report

- A. Con Edison made notice of planned rate increase in gas and electric rates and public statement hearings on June 25 at Yonkers Public Library and June 26 at 90 Church Street, NYC

III. DEP Jerome Park Projects

A. Gatehouse Repair/CR 521

DEP Representative A. West reported on progress of gatehouse demolition and repair at Jerome Park Reservoir. Gatehouses 2, 3, and 6 are being demolished; Gatehouses 5 and 7 are being rehabilitated. New, lower interior fencing is being placed along the north, west, and southern reservoir borders. Construction is expected to be completed by December 2021.

B. Aqueduct Rehabilitation Project/JRAQ-REH

A. West. reported on the aqueduct repair and east wall reconstruction project. The east wall of the Jerome Park Reservoir has been damaged by age and by the degradation of the Croton Aqueduct within it. Leakage from the aqueduct is causing leakage in the reservoir wall. The aqueduct will be filled with flowable concrete. The east wall will be reconstructed with an inner concrete "liner" and new stone on the exterior. The reservoir will remain empty during this reconstruction process. Construction will begin in July 2020 and conclude in December 2025.

DEP also plans to keep the north basin of the reservoir permanently empty to serve as a failsafe for overflow treated water released from the Croton Filtration Plant. A new ramp will be constructed for maintenance access to the north basin.

Members of the public expressed surprise, outrage, and disbelief that the north basin of the reservoir would remain empty and permanently alter the historic character of the Jerome Park reservoir and surrounding neighborhood. Residents noted poor treatment of the neighborhood by the DEP since the Croton Filtration Plant was first proposed. Members of the public and E and S committee members questioned whether the new plan has been reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office, and received a new Environmental Impact Statement.

DEP responded that their engineers and planners have not found a way to divert overflow water before it enters the Croton Filtration Plant.

The E and S committee passed the following resolution at the completion of the presentation by DEP and comments from the public:

Whereas, Bronx Community Board 8 passed a resolution in January 2017 approving the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Gatehouse Repair and Jerome Park Reservoir and Aqueduct Rehabilitation Projects (JRAQ-REH) based on approvals of the projects by NYS Office of Parks and Historic Preservation (SHPO) and with the condition that DEP update the Environment and Sanitation Committee on the progress of the two projects

Whereas, DEP representatives attended a meeting of the Environment and Sanitation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 on June 17, 2019 at the request of the committee and revealed that the Jerome Park Reservoir and Aqueduct Rehabilitation project will require the northern basin of the Jerome Park Reservoir to remain permanently empty so that it can be used as an emergency storage basin for treated water discharge from the Croton Water Treatment Plant; and,

Whereas, DEP made presentations to Bronx Community Board 8 Environment and Sanitation Committees on May 2014, October 2014, and November 2016, to the Croton Filtration Monitoring Committee, and obtained letters of approval from SHPO and the New York City Public Design Commission (PDC) for the projects without establishing that the northern basin of the JPR would remain permanently empty; and,

Whereas, as part of the Jerome Park Reservoir listing on the State and National Register of Historic Places, SHPO ruled in October 2016 that the projects will have “No Adverse Effect upon historic resources” of the Jerome Park Reservoir provided that “the cast-in place buttress wall proposed to be constructed against the existing east reservoir wall shall, under normal circumstances, be below the water line”; and,

Whereas, the absence of water in the north basin threatens the historic, scenic, and aesthetic value of the Jerome Park Reservoir, and constitutes a potential environmental impact not currently measured or publicly reported;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that, Bronx Community Board 8 categorically opposes DEP’s plan to keep the north basin at Jerome Park Reservoir permanently empty, and calls upon our elected and appointed officials and the Croton Facilities Monitoring Committee to demand that DEP pursue technical and engineering designs that will fill the north and south basins of Jerome Park Reservoir with untreated water; and,

Be It Further Resolved, that Bronx Community Board 8 calls upon DEP to pursue the projects in such a manner that DEP construction work and rehabilitation of structures at the Jerome Park Reservoir not prevent future access by the community to the inner pathway surrounding the Jerome Park Reservoir; and.

Be it Further Resolved, that DEP shall return to the Environment and Sanitation Committee of Bronx Community Board 8 and the Croton Facilities Monitoring Committee to report on the full scope of regional and local water management affecting the Croton Water Filtration Plant and the Jerome Park Reservoir and Aqueduct Project and present all environmental impact statements pursuant to present and future plans for the rehabilitation of the east wall of the Jerome Park Reservoir.

Vote - In favor: B. Bender, M. Della, P. Ellis, R. Fanuzzi, S. Froot, M. Gluck, K. Argenti, L. Spalter, R. Spalter;
Opposed: None; Abstentions: None

IV. Compost Education and Certification

J. Colon, Bronx Director NYC Compost Project reported on progress of compost education, compost sites, and compost delivery in Bronx Community Board 8. Compost education trains master composters to receive and generate compost at a local site. Bronx NYC Compost Project offers 8 week training at NYBG to receive certificate. DSNY will continue organic recycling program in CB 8 residents to encourage diversion of organic waste from the waste

stream and to generate compostable soil, which is delivered to Soundview in the Bronx. Currently, 15 sites and groups in BX 8 receive compost for community gardens, including Friends and Neighbors of Jerome Park, Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, Marble Hill Houses, Riverdale Senior Services, and Schervier Houses. Amalgamated Houses—a 3 pallet minimum delivery. DSNY Compost Project promotes greening of the borough and productive use of open space. J. Colon has created map of community gardens at the NYBG Green UP website' search for "urban agriculture."

- V. BCEQ Application for New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program Grant
R. Fanuzzi disclosed affiliation with Bronx Council for Environmental Quality and M. Della, Vice Chair, chaired the meeting for this discussion.

K. Argenti presented BOA program grant proposal, "Bronx Council for Environmental Quality Harlem River BOA Planning Ecosystem Waterfront Parks." BCEQ gained Brownfield Opportunity Area designation for shoreline of the Harlem River from 230th Street in BX8 to 145th Street in BX 4 as a "contiguous linear park." BCEQ seeks support from CB8 for grant proposal that seeks to develop "living shoreline" design training and best management practices for section of planned greenway from southern border of Bronx Community Board 8 to 230th street.

After discussion, the committee passed the following resolution:

Whereas, the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality (BCEQ) nominated the Bronx side of the Harlem River from 149 Street to the Hudson River as a Brownfield Opportunity Area under Section 970 of the Superfund/Brownfield Law of 2003; and in two reports to the New York Department of State represented the community's vision of a "contiguous waterfront park" along the Harlem River, with a connection to the Putnam Trail from West 225 Street to West 230th Street in Bronx Community Board 8; and,

Whereas, the New York Department of State designated the above stated area of the Harlem River as a Brownfield Opportunity Area in 2016; and,

Whereas, BCEQ is once again applying for a NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program grant for Pre-development Activities (RFA #19-BOA-16), entitled: "Bronx Council for Environmental Quality Harlem River BOA Planning Ecosystem Waterfront Parks"; and,

Whereas, the sites for Pre-Development, identified in the previous studies within this Harlem River BOA include the area from West 225th Street to West 230th Street, designed as "Strategic Connection 3," in the attached map; and,

Whereas, the proposal is to prepare (1) preliminary designs for a waterfront park, a resilient living shoreline, and a marina; (2) guidelines for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation permits needed for resilient green infrastructure, including a "living shoreline" and marina; and (3) green infrastructure workforce training for contractors and construction workers to spur economic development and the quality of life for the surrounding areas and to provide needed expertise to implement preliminary designs; and,

Whereas, this proposed study will continue to employ nature-based best practices that are designed to remove harmful pollutants *insitu* from the designated Brownfield Opportunity Area sites, improve the water quality of the Harlem River, and incorporate green infrastructure into the planning of a “contiguous waterfront park”

Whereas, Bronx Community Board 8 has worked with BCEQ on the BOA and will continue to work on this very important project along the Harlem River; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Bronx Community Board 8 supports the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality application to the New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Program grant for Pre-development Activities (RFA #19-BOA-16), entitled: “Bronx Council for Environmental Quality Harlem River BOA Planning Ecosystem Waterfront Parks.”

In favor: B. Bender; M. Della; P. Ellis; S. Froot; M. Gluck; L. Spalter; R. Spalter;

Abstain: K. Argenti; R. Fanuzzi

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Fanuzzi

Chair, Environment and Sanitation Committee