

## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

### MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2008 BOARD OFFICE, 5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE

#### **PRESENT**

Robert Fanuzzi  
Thomas C. Durham  
James Plaza  
Hillary Baum  
John Beuhalt  
Katherine Broihier  
Pamela Otto  
Robert Press  
Diane Sargent

#### **AFFILIATION**

Committee Chair  
CB #8  
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Food Systems Network  
Ethical Culture Society  
Kingsbridge BID  
KRVCDC

Meeting started 7:30 PM, with approval of minutes from meeting of October 30, 2008.

#### **Chair's Report**

R. Fanuzzi reported on several matters relating to past meetings:

- Further correspondence with Manhattan College concerning its retail space, which emphasized priorities of committee: a Trader Joe's or specialty food store; book store; increased parking spaces; and public use of unused parking spaces. A branch of the college's Follett bookstore in the space seems unlikely. BOEDC has been in contact with George Kuzma, the business manager, refining its own search for commercial tenant for the space.
- As the Mayor's senior housing plan will consolidate senior centers, the need has never been greater for increased resources for senior transit, providing access for seniors to our local businesses. The chair will work further with the Aging Committee, Traffic and Transportation Committee, and the director of Riverdale Senior Center, Julia-Schwartz-Leeper, to make sure that funding for transit is a budget priority for next fiscal year
- Two branches of Small Business Services—Workforce One, a job training center, and NYC Business Solutions, an entrepreneurial support service—should be expanded into the district. Future meetings will be held with representatives from these organizations.
- The chair congratulated Riverdale Neighborhood House and the Riverdale YM/YWHA, two local sponsors of the New York City Council on the Environment's Youth Market, organized by Phil Yakuc, and Rachel Rosenfeld, and Tom Stumolo.
- The list of preferred sites for bike racks was referred to the Traffic and Transportation committee, at which a subcommittee was formed. A. Cassino, T. Durham, and R. Fanuzzi will provide a comprehensive list of bicycle rack sites to the board.

#### **2. Guest Speaker, Ms. Hillary Baum**

Ms. Hillary Baum, a founder of Food System Network and early organizer of farmers' markets in New York City, spoke on the origins of farmer's markets in the city, her many years of

experience in marketing, organizing, and consulting, and her continuing dedication to improving community access to fresh and nutritious food. Ms. Baum first worked with the New York State Department of Agriculture to bring farmers' markets to the city (most famously at Union Square), and has since worked for or assisted many organizations that sponsor farmer's markets, including Harvest Markets. Having just that day attended a conference on "The Politics of Food" at Borough Hall (sponsored by Senator Scott Stringer, with an address by the United Nations Health Executive, Mr. Miguel Escoto, of Nicaragua) she had helped organize, Ms. Baum told of the need to understand the relation between global food supply and local distribution; improving access to fresh, nutritious food throughout the city in turn will have health, economic, and social benefits for our community. In pursuit of that end, she emphasized that more and more farmer's markets, such as the one that Harvest Markets organizes at Tracy Towers, accept EBT, or food stamps; her current initiatives also include an outreach into youth nutrition programs. Within the Mayor's office, she reported, there is strong interest in creating a position of "food czar" and issuing a "food charter" that will make access to fresh food a policy priority.

From this presentation, the committee generated several priorities in considering the prospect of a farmers' market in Bronx Community Board No.8: that it should have a positive economic impact on local businesses; that it should fill a gap in the food distribution system of the community; that it should benefit citizens of all economic strata; that it should not stand alone but partner with organizations like City Harvest and local food pantries that serve the homeless and poor; and that it should serve as wholesale market for local retailers and restaurant owners looking to improve their product.

R. Fanuzzi, having visited several prospective local sites and consulted with many members of the local food access, proposed that the committee look further into an available site for a farmer's market: short stretch of Kingsbridge Avenue, between West 230<sup>th</sup> Street and Marble Hill Road, bounded by U-Haul and the Marble Hill playground. As the historic crossroads of the Kingsbridge community and the junction of five neighborhoods (Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, Riverdale, and Spuyten Dyvil), this site, Ms. Baum agreed, is perfectly situated to serve a large portion of our community members and more particularly, serve the food access needs of Marble Hill residents. T. Durham noted that the street is often closed for community events sponsored by the NYPD. Many members noted the proximity to local bus, subway, and pedestrian routes, not to mention proximity to the Target Mall while avoiding direct competition with green grocers on West 231<sup>st</sup> Street. R. Fanuzzi welcomed the prospect of a farmer's market as a form of community engagement, and will be contacting Greenmarket in search of a site visit commitment.

### **Old Business**

- Ms. Broihier, Director of the Kingsbridge BID, brought us up to date with the West 230<sup>th</sup> Street Mall development, telling members of the scaling down of the project and the lack of an anchor tenant at this time, though the developer does insist that one is close at hand and that it will be more "upscale" than the anchor tenant on 225<sup>th</sup>; a mix of national and regional chains is foreseen. The developers have committed the retailer to joining BID. The committee then discussed at length the need for the developer to commit to local hiring, both in the construction and retail phase, and to respect the priorities of the West 230<sup>th</sup> Street Revitalization Committee.
- New priorities were added: R. Fanuzzi raised the possibility of the tenant underwriting a local shuttle; H. Baum suggested the greening of the roof of the development, with J. Beuhalt proposing an easement for access to the Putnam Rail Trail behind. K. Broihier spoke of the need to gain agreements on hours of operation, security, and local job fairs

with the retailer once agreements are reached. Committee members also needed to know where the developer had worked before. P. Otto offered assistance in maintaining dialogue with the developer.

- R. Fanuzzi is to bring these questions to the Land Use committee meeting of December 2, at which Ceruzzi developers will be making their ULURP application.

**New Business**

- **John Beuhalt, of the Riverdale Ethical Culture Center**, was looking for assistance on funding his one night (Tuesday) homeless shelter. At the time of our meeting, the NYC Department of Finance announced that all homeless shelters that did not bed the homeless for more than five nights a week will not be funded. This will also impact the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, which house the homeless for three nights.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM, with the date of the next meeting to be announced by the chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Durham,  
Community Board 8

Robert Fanuzzi,  
Economic Development Committee

TD/RF:db