

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEES HELD ON NOVEMBER 17TH, 2009 AT THE RIVERDALE MENTAL HEALTH

PRESENT

Anthony Cassino
Robert Fanuzzi
Sylvia Alexander
Steven Froot
Thomas Giallorenzi
Yael Levy
Sergio Marquez
Julie Reyes
Saul Scheinbach
Bradford Trebach
Herbert Young
Katherine Broihier
David Currier
Nestor Danyluk
Paul Elston
Candice M. Giove
David Nimowitz
Robert Press
Cliff Stanton

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
Committee Chair
CB #8
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CB #8
Kingsbridge BID
NYC Dept. of City Planning
Riverdale Review
Bronx News
KRVDC

I. Joint Agenda Items

A. Aggressive Traffic Enforcement in Commercial Districts

Utilizing data obtained from the New York Times, Traffic and Transportation chair Tony Cassino reported on the clustering of traffic violations issued in the commercial districts of Community Board 8. The Kingsbridge shopping area on Broadway from 230th to 235th was hardest hit, with 1846 violations in 2008; Johnson Avenue was the site of 1320 violations. Economic Development Chair Robert Fanuzzi reported complaints from merchants that their business was being harmed by overaggressive ticketing and chasing patrons away from the area. Together, the committee chairs recommended these measures:

1. A common sense policy regarding the issuing of summons
2. Fair deployment of traffic agents across the district so as not to penalize commercial areas
3. Comparison with similar commercial areas in Manhattan Community Board 7 and Bronx Community Board 7 to make sure that Community Board 8 is not getting more than its fair share of traffic agents
4. Coordination between the City Department of Finance and the Small Business Administration to generate a fair policy toward merchant parking.
5. Support for the 5 minute grace period law passed by the City Council and opposed by the Bloomberg administration

Katherine Brohier of the Kingsbridge BID will be issuing a letter from her organization asking CB8 to bring merchants' concerns to appropriate agencies and mayoral offices regarding traffic enforcement policy. The two committee chairs pledged their support for the merchants concerns and will be issuing a letter of their own.

- B. Traffic and Transportation Chair Cassino and Economic Development Chair Fanuzzi reported on a Department of Transportation program for temporary street closures over the summer months. The program is designed to turn streets into public spaces for merchant promotions and arts events sponsored by community organizations. The committee chairs recommended that the two committees research the feasibility of bringing the program to the Johnson Avenue shopping area for Summer 2010. Committee Chair Cassino and Fanuzzi spoke of the opportunity for area merchants, who would benefit from public events over the less busy summer months, and for area residents, who would enjoy public events on summer weekends without leaving their neighborhood.

Ms. Sylvia Alexander voiced concerns of local residents who might find the temporary street closures and public events inconvenient. The committee chairs decided to hold a public meeting in the area to gauge public support for the program and to bring merchants together.

The Department of Traffic and Transportation program had a 11/25 deadline for a street to be considered for the program, so the chairs asked for a vote authorizing them to apply. The committees voted 9-1-1 to authorize the filing of the application on behalf of Community Board 8.

II. Traffic and Transportation Business

- A. Alternate-side parking update -- Committee Chair Cassino reported that DOT is moving forward with changing the signs to reduce the alternate-side parking rules from 4 days a week to 2 in the areas of the Board west of Broadway. Alternate-side parking rules are suspended entirely in that area until the work is completed. Once that work is completed, DOT will begin the same process for the areas of the Board East of Broadway. It is anticipated that the whole job should be completed by early next year.
- B. City Ferry Update -- Committee Chair Cassino highlighted a recent newspaper article that reported that ferry service could be halted once again along the East River due to funding constraints. The ferry company is seeking a subsidy from the City to continue service during the winter. This news relates to the recent initiative by the City to study ferry service throughout the City, including in Riverdale.
- C. Hudson River Greenway -- Paul Elston, a former Board 8 member who leader of the Hudson River Greenway, gave a report on the status of the effort to connect the greenway through the Bronx. He reported that funding was provided many years ago from Senator Charles Schumer to study potential routes. A consultant has been hired to study those routes, and 4 potential routes have been identified. A public meeting is being held on November 18th at Wave Hill to obtain comments on these routes and respond to other issues.

III. Economic Development Committee

- A. Committee Chair Fanuzzi reported on the imminent opening of the Kingsbridge parking lot on Broadway and 230th, noting that EDC would be using an existing contractor at the site as the quickest way to reopen.
- B. Committee Chair Fanuzzi reported on the lack of promotional venues for independent professional service providers in the Community Board 8, leaving many of them to illegally publicize their businesses with flyers on public property. He offered business owners penalized by the city's law against flyers and handbills the NYC Penalty Relief Program, which has a December 21 deadline.
- C. Committee Chair noted with concern the closure of Stella D'Oro factory and the vacancy of the property, and will be looking into the city's effort to recruit a new business. The committee will also be researching the city's industrial policy regarding light manufacturing, and its role in the CB8 economy.
- D. Mr. David Courier, representing the Kingsbridge Community [Committee] asked the Economic Development committee for its support in the effort to obtain a living wage community benefits agreement for the Kingsbridge Armory mall project in Bronx Community Board 7. Noting that Community Board 7 Economic Development and Land Use committees had not required that for their approval of the process, committee chair Fanuzzi stated that any action on behalf of CB* would be considered in light of precedent set by another community board, and that the living wage agreement had to be city-wide, in order to not unfairly burden one community board with an extra bargaining condition for future development agreements.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Perez Cassino
Chairman
Traffic & Transportation

Robert Fanuzzi
Chairman
Economic Development