

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON APRIL 25, 2016
AT KINGSBRIDGE ARMS
2865 KINGSBRIDGE TERRACE, BRONX NY 10463**

Board Members Present:

Paul Ellis
Sergio Marquez
Anthony Creaney
Omar Murray
Julie Reyes
Amy Joy Robateau
Georgia Santiago
Dan Padernacht

Affiliation:

CB8 Housing Committee, Chairman
CB8 Housing Committee, Vice Chair
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Chairperson

Guests:

Lee Chong
John Sims
Enrique Mehl
Ian Christner

Community Resident
Community Resident
Riverdale Mental Health Association (RMHA)
Bon Secours New York Health System

Absent, CB8 Housing Committee Members:

Lenora Croft, Margaret Donato, Noah Friedman, David Gellman, David Kornbluh, James Rather, Lucy Mercado and Ruby Palma

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

Paul Ellis, Chair of the Committee, welcomed the attendees and introduced himself. Mr. Ellis then went on to review the agenda for the evening.

1. Budget Priorities for FY 2018

Mr. Ellis advised that as per an email communication received from Matthew Cruz, the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) has no budget items for the committee to request. Discussion followed on the reason that DOB was not in need of any budget items when they reported to the committee recently that there remained an inspection backlog. Mr. Ellis also observed that in the spring of 2015, DOB was reporting that the backlog was such that some less serious complaints were not getting addressed, because they timed out before inspectors were able to actually make an inspection.

Past committee requests were for inspectors and vehicles. Mr. Ellis will speak with Matthew Cruz to address these issues and inquire if past requested funds have been received, and if so how were funds utilized.

Mr. Ellis reported that Ted Weinstein of NYC Housing Preservative & Development (HPD) is unable to attend tonight's meeting and will be invited to speak at the next Housing Committee meeting. The committee will discuss budget priorities for HPD at the next committee meeting.

Discussion followed regarding the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) budgetary issues. Mr. Ellis stated that a representative of NYCHA would be in attendance at the May meeting. Committee members discussed the chronic issues in CB8 NYCHA properties that were largely due to budgetary constraints, including an inadequate number of caretakers at Marble Hill Houses and the leaking roof and boiler problems at Fort Independence Houses.

With respect to Fort Independence, Ms. Robateau will be setting up a site visit of the boiler room at that facility and will notify the Committee as to the schedule for same.

Dan Padernacht raised the subject of the millions of dollars that have been allocated to NYCHA and would like to know if funds already allocated have been used, and, if not, what the plans are for those funds. Mr. Ellis stated that he would follow-up with Brian Honan of NYCHA on the status of those funds. He noted that Mr. Honan had previously advised him that Ft. Independence was not in the cue for roof replacement.

2. Presentation by representatives of Bon Secours New York Health System

Ian Christner, Licensed Social Worker at Bon Secours New York Health System, and Enrique Mehl of Riverdale Mental Health Association (RMHA) discussed the initiative at Marble Hill Houses and surrounding area to increase access to mental health services. The services include having private sessions in the community utilizing venues such as neighborhood houses of worships and housing facilities. To date, they have a relationship with St. Stephens Church and Marble Hill Tenants Association. They welcome additional referrals from community groups, businesses and residents.

The initiative targets the elderly, youth and substance abuse segments of the community. There will be three community events within the coming year. They anticipate hosting an event in the Marble Hill Houses complex, at St. Stevens Church and at a third location to be announced.

Discussion on this topic continued. One suggestion raised was to contact the Veterans Hospital in our neighboring district and the Jericho House within CB8 which houses Veterans. A draft pamphlet of the initiative program will be forwarded to the Board office for review.

3. Approval of Minutes

The committee unanimously approved the minutes for the February 22, 2016 meeting.

4. Working Session for Housing Resource Guide

Mr. Ellis gave a report on the status of the Housing Resource Guide, explaining that the working group has been meeting regularly on the project, and hopes to have a workable first draft soon. He noted that there had been a working session prior to the meeting and that, rather than continuing the working session during the meeting, the Committee would complete the rest of the agenda and would adjourn, with the working group to continue its work thereafter.

5. Old Business

Mr. Ellis reported that he has been working with CB8 District Manager Pat Manning and Senator Rivera staffer Terrence Miller regarding resident complaints of garbage and rodents at Marble Hill Houses and that information on that topic has been forwarded to NYCHA manager Nate Parris.

Ms. Santiago brought up an issue regarding residents at Marble Hill Houses wanting access to the locked storage closets utilized by the porters. The residents would like to leave mops in the closet which the tenants use to mop the floors. Mr. Ellis suggested that the Committee should follow-up on this issue at the May meeting when NYCHA representatives would be in attendance.

6. New Business

None.

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Minutes recorded by,

Julie Reyes
Housing Committee
Community Board 8 - Bronx

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ellis, Chairperson
Housing Committee
Community Board 8 - Bronx