

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2008 AT THE
BOARD OFFICE**

PRESENT

Thomas C. Durham - Chairman - CB8
Phillip Friedman - CB8
Anthony Creaney - CB8
Donald Ranshte - DOB

AGENDA

Guest Speaker: Mr. Donald Ranshte, Department of Buildings (DOB), Director of Intergovernmental & Community Affairs will address the following issues.

1. The assignments of the 63 new hired building inspectors and their services in Bronx County.
 2. Clarification of a "R4A" supportive housing unit. (In regard to 3882 Cannon Place.)
 3. Better policing of abandoned construction sites in our community.
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1. New City Inspectors

Mr. Ranshte said that the new inspectors will be formed into specialize squads such as, scaffolds & sidewalk bridging, excavations & foundations, mechanical infrastructure (plumbing & electrical etc.) high risers & cranes, etc. These squads will work out of the NYC central office and will be deployed to service all five boroughs. The city has 55 more inspectors waiting to be certified and hope to bring the total number two 205. The Bronx county office added one new permanent inspector with the promise of four more bringing the Bronx office to a total of 17 Field Inspectors.
 2. Clarification of a R4A Supportive Housing

Mr. Ranshte was one of the members of the March 16, 2007 walking tour through Kingsbridge Heights (KBH) construction sites arranged by former Housing Chairman, Mr. Jerald Kreppel. Mr. Ranshte also knew the history of the 3882 Cannon Place construction site and had knowledge of

the Developer application to build a R4A supportive housing building on this site. He explained that a R4A home must be built on the same foot print of a standard large 1 or 2 families home that will accommodate the size of the lot in which the neighborhood or block is zoned.

He left literature, clearly informing us on what is supportive housing and mentioned how the mayor is strongly supporting these programs in his effort to eliminate homelessness. (See the attached documents)

3. Policing Construction Sites

On policing troubled construction sites, Mr. Ranshte said is a big dilemma for the DOB. Although they are the primary enforcers of the buildings codes and building safety conditions, they can only take action if they have access to the property. (The unlock gate policy.)

Construction sites are still private property and owners have the same protective rights as any other home or land owner. The DOB can only enter locked and fenced off property with a warrant. Their present budget does not let them hire full time lawyers to obtain them unless it falls under "special circumstances!" Residents will first have to call other city agencies that have warrant power such as police (NYPD), fire (FDNY) or the Board of Health (BOH). Only after one of the agency open the gate, can the DOB enter the property and issue citations and violations.

4. Miscellaneous

- a. Community Board member Mr. Phil Friedman provided Mr. Ranshte trouble sites in Spuyten Duyvil. Mainly on Cambridge & Oxford Avenues and others on W. 235 to 238 streets, with one in particular, the Oxford Tower.
- b. Board member Anthony (Tony) Creaney provided his list of troubled sites in Kingsbridge, targeting the Irwin-Riverdale Avenue project at W.232 Street.

5. Old Business

The Chairman informed the committee on events over the summer such as:

- a. Jerome Park Hearing on Blasting
- b. Evacuation notice issued to 2770 Kingsbridge Terrace. Four apartments were damaged to fire and water in the 30 unit apartment building.
- c. Shady Place Supportive Housing Hearing and follow-up on site fire inspections (see attached report)

6. New Business

- a. Follow up on how the city budget cut will affect the new hiring of DOB inspectors.
- b. Obtaining the blueprints for the new structure being built on 3882 Cannon Place.
- c. Photo logging all of the new buildings and constructions sites in the CB8 community.
- d. Next Meeting was scheduled jointly with Land Use Committee, now moved November 24, 2008.

Submitted respectfully by,

Mr. Thomas C. Durham
tcdurham@earthlink.net
Community Board 8
Housing Committee Chairman

TCD:pm