

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON APRIL 22ND, 2009
AT THE BOARD OFFICE, 5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE**

PRESENT

Thomas Durham
Anthony Creaney
Tracy Feerick
Philip Friedman
Thomas Giallorenzi
Dominick Crescenzo
Brian Fink
Roger Montesano
Shawrdrika Obazee
Lynn Schwarz
Melvin Turner

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair, CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
F.D.N.Y.
F.D.N.Y.
F.D.N.Y.
RY Management Company Inc.
Ft. Independence Neighborhood Association
RY Management Company Inc.

1. Introductions

Board Members

2. Approval of the March 29th Housing Minutes;

A. Minutes were approved.

3. Chairman's Report

A. Update on 3882 Cannon Place, (the supportive home under construction):

After weeks of reviewing the rights and law, Bronx Building Commissioner, Thomas A. Fariello sent the ruling found by the Department of Building's (DOB) legal department. The DOB Legal department ruled that the developer (Mr. Fernandez) "As of Right" status trumped the community's opposition, positions and arguments against the construction of the supportive home. The developer does have the right to build the structure under the guidelines of the now existing Zoning Laws. However, the commissioner stated that although the developer has the right to construct the building, the commissioner will not issue a Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) until he sees a Not-For-Profit signed to a ten year lease.

B. Mr. Ruben Diaz was elected to the vacated Borough President office yesterday by 80% of the residents who made it to the special elections.

4. Agenda

A. The Promenade Houses (150 West 225 Street) Review of complaints and compliances:

- a. In following up with the many issues and items brought to the attention of CB8, I'm happy to report that much progress has been accomplished. As of April 1st, 2009 the Promenade Houses has changed the building management team at RY Management. Ms. Shawdricka Obazee, the new executive officer and Mr. Melvin Hunter the regional manager, both on short notices, joined us that evening. At the original Councilman Martinez Town Meeting, one of the agenda items was Public Safety and a large part of the residents issues involved fire safety. For reasons unknown to all, a representative from the Fire Department (FDNY) was not in attendance that evening. To address those issues we invited the FDNY to the committee meeting. In attendance was, Battalion Chief Brian Fink, Fire Inspector Dominick Crescenzo, and our FDNY liaison, Roger Montesano.
- b. One of the big safety issues was having an unqualified superintendent. Building superintendents are agents of the fire department. Certificates of Fitness are issued to superintendents to show that they have passed written exams to operate the many systems found in multi dwelling buildings. Most are familiar with the heating systems but tall buildings like the Promenade requires the superintendent hold the minimum of three certificates, the heating, roof water tank and the fire stand pipes system. I'm glad to announce that the new superintendents have them plus an additional one for high pressure water tanks system. Inspector Crescenzo confirmed that they are all in good standing.

Battalion Chief Fink, is very familiar with the Promenade House and fought a fire in the garage just before the meeting. During this fire a section of the stand-pipe failed and a violation was issued. I noted all in attendance that R Y Management's plumber had drawn a work permit at the DOB to correct the standpipe.

R Y Management also agreed to hire a consultant to draw out a fire plan to be posted in the lobby to aid the residents and FDNY. Inspector Crescenzo pointed out two other fire violations that needed to be addressed immediately. The R Y Management took down all of the information regarding fire issues and will address them when they return to the office. The Inspector noted that one pressure test was way past due and gave his number to help the Promenade House address this violation at the minimum level. As always, the FDNY was firm but very helpful and very professional.

- c. The other big safety issue was the Local Law 11 violation. This is the DOB violation where work on the building terraces had a Stop Work Order (SWO) issued (mainly for safety issues and lack of proper documents at work site.) Once again, good news, R Y Management had hired a new contractor and work is to restart the first of May, weather permitting. The SWO was rescinded.
- d. I thanked all for attending the meeting and for the fine progress they made in such a short time. The new management team agreed to stay in touch with CB8 and I let them know that we are here to help them and the residents of the Promenade House resolve issues where it is possible. I also noted that, I believe that these changes, in management, superintendents and violations removal came about through the efforts of this Housing Committee and the involvement of Community Board Eight.

B. Capitol and Expense Budget Expense Budget for FY 2011

- a. The hiring of DOB & HPD inspectors
- b. New vehicles for inspector
- c. Updated computers for better record keeping.

C. Mission Statement

- a. “The Housing Committee is a forum for the community to discuss housing issues and neighborhood concerns. The Committee guides area residents through many complex housing issues governed by various city, state and federal agencies. We are available to help residents that are private homeowners, those that live in large or small multi-unit dwellings, renters and/or even those residents that may find themselves temporarily without housing.”

Helping all who live in this community, this is our community mission!”

4. The next Housing Committee meeting is scheduled for June 1st, 2009.

5. Meeting Adjourned.

Submitted by,

Thomas C. Durham
Chairperson
Housing Committee

TCD:db

.