

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Libraries & Cultural Affairs Committee**
Held at the NYPL Riverdale Branch library on December 9, 2010

Present

Robert G. Abbott
Bill Stone
Martin Wolpoff
Jane Fisher
Rebecca Barbier

Affiliation

CB#8, Committee Chair
CB#8
CB#8
NYPL, Network Manager
NYPL, Library Manager

The meeting began at 7:00 pm.

RIVEDALE BRANCH

The Library Manager, Rebecca Barbier, gave a tour of the branch facilities. It was noted, during the tour, that:

- In the staff lounge/kitchen area, the gas line should probably be removed from the building since the gas stove is unhooked. A hot plate and microwave are adequate.
- The high ceiling is architecturally a building feature but lighting pendants only cast shadows on the ceiling. Up-lighting would be attractive.
- The community room is used for training and class visits ... it's loaded with donated books (need a sale) as well as variety of chairs. The Manager sees an opportunity to develop a grant application to create a more interesting space in the community room featuring historic Riverdale photos and publications – while continuing to use the community room for program activities (i.e. not turn it into a museum).

The Library Manager also noted:

- The branch has a very successful baby lap-sit program. There is nice dedicated space for program.
- There have been several welcomed outreach initiatives to local elementary schools and a local Montessori school.
- She is considering outreach to nearby senior centers/residences but this will be dependent on staff capacity
- Statistics show increase in circulation from 2009 to 2010. However, the number of people visiting the branch has decreased in the same time period probably due to reduced hours.

The committee members thanked Ms. Barbier for her excellent summary of branch activities.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kingsbridge

The new Kingsbridge branch is likely to open in April or May 2011.

Mr. Wolpoff asked for an update on the design of the new branch since it has been many years since the Library committee was given a presentation of the Kingsbridge design.

Ms. Fisher looks forward to visiting the site interior in near future. There are no known obstacles (financial) to acquisition of all new furniture, equipment, and the new collection.

Spuyten Duyvil

The proposed Forum at Spuyten Duyvil branch was discussed. Committee members expressed caution that a big public meeting could raise expectations in the community of “significant” improvements coming to the branch. There could be disappointment if the forum is limited to tools and technology (the Library for the Future). An alternative focus of the Forum could be for teachers who may gain continuing education credits with database searching skills presented by an NYPL specialist. Ms. Fisher and Mr. Abbott will report back with recommendations

A renovation of the Spuyten Duyvil branch has long been one of the capital budget priorities for the Community Board. Ms. Fisher suggested that renovations of other branches have significantly improved the usable space and created a sense of openness. It was observed that the adult space at Spuyten Duyvil is cramped and not “inviting” to browsing the shelves.

Van Cortlandt Park

The committee chair thanked Mr. Tom Durham (the chair of the Housing committee of the CB) for suggesting a possible site for a new location for the Van Cortlandt Park branch if the current space cannot be expanded. No immediate action is anticipated on this subject.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Robert G. Abbott, Chairman
Libraries & Cultural Affairs Committee

Attached: Overview of the Branch

OVERVIEW OF THE BRANCH

The Riverdale Branch of The New York Public Library was built in 1967.

7,500 square feet

The branch is a red brick L-shaped building with vaulted ceilings of wood; its exterior is enhanced by a garden and wrought iron fence. There is a 60-seat meeting room available for branch programs. The one-floor, air-conditioned branch is fully accessible to persons who use wheelchairs. The Branch is located in a residential neighborhood of single family houses with several apartment buildings scattered throughout the area.

The Library Manager, since January 2009, is Rebecca Brown Barbier. She has an MLS from Pratt and is a Children's Librarian specialist.

Statistics:



Current Schedule:

| | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| 10-6 | 11-7 | 10-6 | 11-7 | 10-5 | 10-5 |

Neighborhood Schools: PS 81, Riverdale Country School (early grades), Montessori School on Mosholu Ave.

Neighborhood Institutions: Riverdale YM/YWHA, Classic Hyatt, Residence of the families of the Russian Mission to the United Nations (the branch maintains a Russian-language collection.)