

**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8
MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 2, 2010 AT THE BOARD OFFICE**

PRESENT

Maria Khury
Steven Balicer
Sylvia Alexander
Phillip Friedman
Tricia Mullen
Gregoria Feliciano
Michael Nixon
Andrew Sandler
Ari A. Spett
Brendan McHugh
Alina Yaniz

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
Committee Vice Chair
CB8
CB8
CB8
Resident
BOEDC/NYC Business Solutions
Rep. Councilman Koppell
CB8
Riverdale Press
Bronx News12, Bilingual Production

Deleted:

The meeting convened at 7:35 PM

1. **Minutes** of June 27, 2010 meeting unanimously approved.

2. **Chairperson's Report**

Meetings will be held the first Thursday of each month. The Chair engaged the members by asking them to identify the goals and objectives that we as a committee want to accomplish. Attendance is a priority to achieving our committee's goals. The Agenda for each meeting will be circulated amongst members by e-mail two weeks before the scheduled meeting. Everyone is encouraged to invite others. The Chair envisions a committee that will collaborate and participate in driving the agenda as they identify the needs of the community. Our role is not to duplicate the efforts of our counterparts in the district but to support them in the accomplishment of their exciting projects. Rules pertaining to the committee and membership were reviewed. Mr. Steven Balicer was named by the Chair as the committee Vice-Chair. Mr. Michael Nixon was introduced as the representative assigned to BxCB8 from BOEDC. Participants introduced themselves.

3. **Follow-up Business**

Spring Arts Festival

Ellen Feld, President of the South Riverdale Merchant Association, (not present) will communicate to the committee updates on the festival. September 8, 2010 is the meeting of the Association at Sotheby's. The Chair will attend and has encouraged all to do the same.

The Chair indicated that the Festival will be organized by an ad hoc committee. Ari Spett indicated interest in participating. Ari Spett will also reach out to his father, a known local Artist of the holocaust. A curator will be selected. No date has been confirmed but it will be a Sunday afternoon. The Sunday of Memorial Day weekend was suggested as a viable option. The festival will engage the local merchants and community representatives of the district in a collaborative effort in order to achieve effective results. South Riverdale Merchant Association, BXC8

Committee and the inclusion of the Bronx Council on the Arts, Bronx Trolley, and the Bronx Museum of Art are likely. Stores will participate to gain consumer traffic. As well, empty storefronts will display works of art by local artists with property owners participating. Mr. Vega of Citibank has been approached by the Chair and has favorably agreed to be a sponsor in support of the trolley and festival. The Chair is waiting for a response from others.

Youth market

Now in its 2nd year, it started July 30th and will run Thursdays between 2-6:30pm until Oct. 28.

Press coverage can be found on YouTube. At the suggestion of the Chair, Alina Yaniz of Bronx, News 12 interviewed youth workers, Schervier and representatives of the Marble Hill Tenant Assoc.

KRVDC

Tracy Shelton, Director (not present) submitted a report summarized by the Vice Chair. Points covered: Thursday, September 23, 2010 is Graffiti Clean-Up and Awareness Day. Presentations will also be made to schools regarding impact of graffiti on the community. Thursday, September 30, 2010, Restaurant Guide release to be held at Citibank, Broadway branch. Web version of Restaurant Guide will also be introduced. Halloween Event at Riverdale Neighborhood House in early planning stages.

Kingsbridge Business Improvement District

Started in 2002, Katherine Broihier, has been the Executive Director from inception (not present). Chair was a Treasurer and is a member. Covers a specific area in our district and is Merchant driven through an assessment paid by merchants/landlords in the BID district. They sponsor holiday lights, sanitation and graffiti removal.

4. Other Business

The Chair engaged the committee on a discussion of ideas for future meetings.

BXCB8 Business Network Event and BXCB8 Business to Business Card Exchange –

Committeemembers facilitate introducing local businesses to each other. Citibank will host November 4, 2010.

“Meetings on the Road”

The committee hosts meetings at store venues in order to include more stakeholders and increase visibility and participation in the community. The meetings will be held at a different business location each month. This will encourage business involvement and networking. Vice Chair suggested we encourage business tips, best practices, as well as supporting each other's businesses. A description of some business will spur discussion and connections. Businesses must be contacted in a cost effective manner by e-mail because the Board has no budget for postage, printing, etc. Ideally we can get a database which contains contact and e-mail addresses

Phil Friedman mentioned his new venture, an internet based shopping site (riverdaleonline.com) of local businesses from 10463 and 10471, which will include video advertising, consolidated checkout feature and same day delivery. He is willing to collaborate with the Chair in any outreach and use of his database. Michael Nixon indicated that the GIS survey position is open (at NYC Business Solutions). When the position is filled the individual will be a helpful source of business data.

Andrew Sandler mentioned that Councilman Koppell's office assists local businesses with real estate issues, i.e. rent increases with lease renewals that has led to the closing of some important businesses.

Michael Nixon discussed the NYC Council Resolution that will offer commercial landlord and tenants mediation options. The Chair will inquire further, follow-up and report her findings.

BXCB8 “Non-Profits Roundtable”

To explore their agenda and community participation. They are an important employer in our zone. NGOs add much to our local economy. Committee wants to expand on their source of revenue. Agenda items may include updates in new healthcare policy, attracting, maintaining and training of employees.

The IRS and Small Business:

Workshop or an informational meeting, by local tax experts or the IRS to give updates on state, city and taxation changes. Andrew Sandler suggested that these businesses may foster business connections, i.e. tax accountants, tax attorneys and various small businesses. For example, tax incentives for hiring workers who have been unemployed for more than 1 year.

The Chair closed by reminding the committee to be mindful of our goals and objectives. How do we define economic development and our role in our business community. Know our businesses as to their needs in technology, marketing, finances, and capable entrepreneurship?

We need to be creative. How can we foster economic development and increase business to our district? Ideas were shared. How doable is it to have “Bed & Breakfasts” in Riverdale/Kingsbridge or can we use empty buildings and negotiate with a Marriott or Sheraton Hotel Chain? We need to improve the interaction and communication within our business community and have more inter-governmental collaboration. We will prioritize, identify key industries for our district, inventory our available business space, and approach others to come and do business in our district. We will make decisions that will create an impact on the needs of the business community, achieve them, and collectively celebrate our success.

The Chair asked and each participant committed to bringing a guest to the next meeting in order to expand our outreach to stakeholders and to state one word that defined our meeting.

The words are in bold and the Chair prepared the following sentence;

The **network** and **work** we do has the **potential** to bring **local competitive jobs** that will **renew, energize** and identify **prosperous stories** of a **vibrant** business community.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

**Respectfully submitted by,
Tricia Mullen**

**Approved by,
Maria Khury, Chairperson
Economic Development Committee**