

**Minutes of the March 2020 Meeting of the Environment and Sanitation Committee  
of Bronx Community Board 8**

**March 19, 2020**

**Conference Call**

In attendance:  
Karen Argenti  
Bob Bender  
Stephen Caruso (DSNY)  
Margaret Della  
Robert Fanuzzi  
Steve Froot  
Eider Garcia

Martin Gluck  
Ira Levenberg  
Rob Spalter  
Laura Spalter  
Note: Debra Travis could not join meeting  
because of busy signal but texted her attempts  
to join

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm

- I. Approval of Minutes  
The minutes of the Environment and Sanitation Committee meeting of February 19 were approved by a unanimous vote.
- II. Chair's Report
  - A. The next meeting of the committee will be April 29, 2020, with a date change due to Passover.
  - B. At the request of the chair of the committee, DDC and District Manager Ciara Gannon hold conference calls to review progress of DEP HEDA-003 water main replacement in Fort Independence neighborhood. DDC sends advisories of upcoming work to CB8 and to community members. CB8 asks community members to email problems with construction and street closures to Tara Figueroa at heda3ccl@gmail.com and board office. CB8 asked DDC to produce "common questions" advisory to community. Property damage due to construction should be pursued with DDC.
- III. DSNY Reusable Bags  
Stephen Caruso, Community Affairs Officer for DSNY, presented the agency's DSNY reusable bag program. NYS Department of Environmental Conservation policy is that no business in New York State distributes single-use thin plastic bags after March 1. Exceptions are made for pharmacy prescriptions, meat and fish, vegetables, and take out "food to order." Businesses may charge \$ .05 for paper bags tax free, of which \$.03 is given to NYS DEC and \$.02 is given to NYC DEP. Businesses may absorb the cost or charge more than \$.05 but anything over that amount is taxable. WIC/SNAP recipients are exempt from all charges. NYS DEC enforces this ban.

NYC DSNY has distributed reusable bags through Community Board and elected official offices. Because of COVID-19 production problems, NYC DSNY cannot replenish supply at this time.

Businesses should give feedback directly to NYS DEC.

Committee members suggested the following:

- Charitable donations that give donors reusable bags
- NYC DSNY metric for measuring success of reusable bag program in NYC.

IV. DSNY Broadway Service Issues

Members of the committee discussed service and sanitation issues along the Broadway business corridor and upland connections. The following locations were discussed:

- 225<sup>th</sup> and Broadway
- 225<sup>th</sup> Street and Marble Hill Avenue (vicinity of subway entrance and Metro North stop)
- 231<sup>st</sup> Street and Broadway
- Bailey Avenue between 234<sup>th</sup> and 236<sup>th</sup> Street, especially handball courts
- 242<sup>nd</sup> and Broadway, east and west sides
- 238<sup>th</sup> Step Street
- Summit Avenue Step Street, between Bailey and Heath Avenues

Mr. Caruso advised that elected officials may devote discretionary funding requests to DSNY for added clean up patrols in the area. Committee members reported success of FedCap program funded by Councilmember Andrew Cohen.

Mr. Caruso described enforcement protocol followed by DSNY Enforcement officers and Police Officers but NYC has only 60 officers city wide. DSNY has started an eyewitness program that allows residents to send pictures of illegal dumping activities from a vehicle. Any illegal dumping violation should be reported to 311 and the Bronx Community Board 8 office.

V. FY 2022 Capital and Expense Budget Committee Priorities

The committee discussed the following budget requests, with final approval to be determined before April 24 deadline.

**Expense:**

- 1 DSNY--Manual Litter Patrol Personnel: Support funding for adequate personnel to staff Manual Litter Patrol (MLP) operations to expedite cleaning in hard to access areas of CD8 and clear storm sewers in high-flow/flood-prone areas.

2. DSNY--Community Relations: Support addition of personnel, both borough and citywide, to properly engage Community Boards and community organizations with DSNY programs and policies
3. DSNY--Compost Project: Full support for personnel and equipment required for program training, outreach, and service delivery to members of CD8.
4. DSNY--Organic Recycling Pick-Up: Full support for personnel and equipment required to maintain regular pick-up of organic waste in CD8.
5. DSNY-- Extra Litter Baskets in High impact Areas: Support additional litter baskets in areas with a record of frequent 311 calls and in heavily trafficked commercial districts, and to alleviate illegal dumping.
6. DEP--Air, Noise, and Asbestos Inspectors: Support and expanding staffing to enforce new NYC laws
7. DEP--Jerome Park Reservoir Personnel: Support full deployment of DEP staff to protect and properly maintain DEP property in and around JPR reservoir and to supervise public access to CD8 residents.

**Capital:**

1. DEP--Green Infrastructure: Support expenditure of DEP funds for construction of right of way and public retrofit green infrastructure projects in high flow/flood-prone areas of CD8, in consultation with Environment and Sanitation committee.
2. DEP--Daylight Tibbetts Brook: Support expenditure of funds necessary to daylight the freshwater wetland known as Tibbetts Brook, which currently discharges into the Van Cortlandt Lake Weir and the Broadway sewer, and reconnect it to the Harlem River to reduce combined sewer overflow.
3. DSNY -- Snow Removal Haulster: Support the purchase of an additional haulster to maintain inventory necessary to remove snow from the narrow streets of CD8.
4. DSNY---215th Street Garage Rehabilitation: Support funding for rehabilitation of DSNY Garage Facility supporting service delivery in CD8.

VI. Old Business

A. DEP Jerome Park Reservoir North Basin

Committee reviewed questions asked by community and committee members at the February 19 meeting, as distributed and recounted here:

**Public Notice and SEQRA/CEQR status of Jerome Park Rehabilitation and the Croton Filtration Plant**

1. When did DEP know that the Croton Filtration Plant would require a near-empty portion of the reservoir to accommodate an emergency?
2. Why isn't the new Croton Filtration Plant emergency operational policy subject to SEQRA review and an environmental impact statement?
3. Why hasn't the DEP prepared, tested, and publicized alternative analyses of other, less impactful actions for accommodating overflow water from the Croton aqueducts into the Jerome Park Reservoir in the event of an emergency?
4. Why didn't DEP change its plans for the east wall reconstruction of the Jerome Park Reservoir to reflect the operational need of the Croton Filtration Plant, which would leave all modifications above the waterline?
5. What changes or extra measures does DEP have to undertake with respect to its Public Design Commission (PDC) applications for the Jerome Park Rehabilitation to reflect the emergency shutdown plan and the new waterline? PDC approval expires on February 13.

#### **Plant Failsafe Measures and Electrical Power**

1. What guidelines, oversight, and regulations oversee the energy generation and back-up generators for the plant?
2. Did DEP consult with any agency or regulatory body besides the NYS Department of Health to approve the construction of an electrical facility without a back-up power source?
3. What guidelines, oversight, and regulations oversee the energy generation for the plant and who did DEP have to consult in order construct an electrical facility without a back-up power source?

#### **JPR and Aqueduct System**

1. Where did DEP send 90 million gallons when it started up the plant? Why can't this method be repeated?
2. What are the results of DEP's consider lowering the level of water in the south basin, raising it in the north, or equalizing them?
3. How fast can the reservoir drain water and can it keep pace with the input? Are you measuring input over a single day or can that input be spread over several days?
4. Will DEP consider further changes in the minimum water level in JPR?

#### **KA Questions:**

1. How many hours does it take to travel from Croton Lake to CWTP from JPR?
2. How long does it take to discharge JPR or the NCA to Shaft 24-25?
3. Where in the NCA are there discharge shafts? Like Dunwoodie?
4. Where in the JPR-CWTP can you discharge water to the High Level, Low Level and 3 Tunnel?

Committee agreed to send DEP a letter asking for narrative accounts addressing three broad questions: how and when they arrived at Croton Filtration Plant failsafe policy; why DEP did not list failsafe action as a SEQRA action; what alternative analyses did DEP produce and record?

Committee also agreed to send letter to the Public Design Commission alerting it to expired approval for JREH-AQ on February and Bronx Community Board 8 resolutions passed subsequent to public disclosure of DEP Jerome Park Reservoir policy at its June 2019 meeting.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Fanuzzi

Chair, Environment and Sanitation Committee

DRAFT