

Bronx Community Board Four District Manager's Report
General Board Meeting April 2008
Submitted by: José Rodriguez, District Manager

April 2nd the Bronx Borough President held his monthly Borough Service Cabinet meeting and the following was presented and discussed. New York City DOT-Safe Streets for Seniors "Addressing Senior Pedestrian Focus Areas in New York City. Fatality History-Since 1990 pedestrian fatalities in NYC have decreased by 63%. Seniors make up about 12% of the population in New York City and make up 39% of pedestrian fatalities. Main Factors contributing to the fatalities of senior pedestrians were unsafe driving practices 43%, failure to yield (17%) and speeding (9%). Crash Causes-24% of crashes at signalized intersections involved pedestrians crossing with the signal and 13% involved pedestrians crossing against the signal. 8% of crashes at unsignalized intersections involved pedestrians crossing where there was a marked crosswalk and 14% were crossing where there was no marked crosswalk.

DOT-Developed a senior pedestrian safety program based on crash history. The agency designated "Senior Pedestrian Focus Areas" based on statistical analysis and mapping and are currently initiating a pilot program in each borough. Timelines have been created for remaining focus areas including identification of staffing and funding sources.

25 Senior Pedestrian Focus Areas identified City-wide. Four areas in the Bronx have been identified Fordham/University Heights, Mott Haven, Pelham Gardens, and East Concourse. The areas in East Concourse are (Accident Clusters) Grand Concourse-Marcy Place to 165th Street, East 169th Street -Walton Ave to Findlay Ave, Findlay Avenue-169th to 166th Street.

The Council on the Environment of New York City gave an overview of their Office of Recycling Outreach and Education. The OROE was created in 2006 as part of the passage of Mayor Bloomberg's landmark Solid Waste Management Plan. The office's primary focus is to train and

educate building service personnel and occupants on the methods, requirements and importance of recycling, including conducting building specific waste audits.

April 2nd I met with Council Member Arroyo, Bronx Parks Commissioner Hector Aponte, and Lew Zuckman of SCAN New York to discuss coordinating efforts with SCAN and the Parks Department once Mullaly Park is full completed. Issues of concern were who will be the direct liaison from Parks to assist Scan New York with their programming. An agreement was made to have both parties meet regularly to discuss future plans and coordination of events.

April 7th I toured the University Family Residence at 1041 University Avenue. University Family Residence is a transitional family shelter where residents learn essential skills that enable them to meet the challenges of everyday life. By promoting responsibility and independence, families gain practical knowledge and valuable experience in securing permanent housing. UFR offers 24hr security, on-site childcare, classrooms and recreational space for 70 families, each with their own apartment.

The program goals are to 1, create a safe haven for families in transition; 2, guide families toward self-sufficiency through intensive case management services; 3, assure school enrollment and attendance of all school-age children; 4, help families locate permanent housing within six to nine months of entering UFR; 5, connect clients to follow up services to ensure formerly homeless families successfully transition out of the shelter system.

April 8th I attended a meeting with Barbara Robles Gonzalez, Director of DA Johnson's Community Affairs Unit. The Office's Programs are coordinated by the united, but volunteers from both legal and support staff throughout the Office are used to implement them. The following programs offered are. Elder Abuse Initiative, Operation Weed and Seed, Ask the Bronx DA, Project Jump, Read-to-Me Program, STAR, Youth Trial Advocacy Program, People's Court Program, Eagle Academy Mentoring Program, Adult Workshop Series, and the Precinct Council Representatives,

April 8th I attended a meeting with Rev. McKay at the Highbridge Life Center to meet with the United Parents of Highbridge regarding the Highbridge Middle School Campaign. The purpose of the meeting was to strategize and coordinate efforts to focus on clear platform to present to the Olnick Organization and the SCA regarding the possible construction of a middle school proposed by the Olnick organization. Further discussion on structuring the next steps in the Middle School Campaign which will involve the construction/layout and the vision and mission for the school also took place.

Also discussed was the possibility of P.S.73 converting its annex and incorporating it into the school making P. S. 73 K through 8. Other zoning issues were address regarding Olnick's proposed 700 plus unit development. The group also addressed the number of seats needed in the neighborhood to address the Middle School issue.

April, 9th I held a meeting with Randy Quesada, Director of Governmental Relations with the Dept. of Homeless Services to discuss the EAU site as it relates to the issues of concern addressed by residents in the immediate area and from the Community Board. Mr. Quesada and I agreed to development and coordinate efforts to reach out to the community to improve communication with the Dept. and Community Board Four. We further agreed to bring proper notice and involvement to the immediate community. The goal is to organize future meetings and presentation/discussion to the General Board.

April 10th I met with the Bronx Office of City Planning regarding the 161st Street/River Avenue Rezoning proposal. The Department of City Planning has developed a rezoning proposal to strengthen the Bronx Civic Center in Community District 4. The proposed rezoning is a major step toward the realization of long-held visions for this area and is crucial to the continued growth and vitality of the Bronx. The Department has undertaken extensive outreach to the community and elected officials as it developed this proposal, including multiple meetings with the community board, Councilmember Maria del Carmen Arroyo, Helen Foster, the Borough President's staff, and property and business owners in the area. They expect to launch the public examination of the proposal by conducting a public scoping for the environmental review in early 2008. They expect to start ULURP review of this application in the fall of 2008, with final approval in the winter or spring of 2009.

The 161st Street / River Avenue rezoning builds on a number of recent city investments, including a new Yankee Stadium on the western end of the corridor, the new Bronx Hall of Justice at Morris Avenue, and Boricua Village on the eastern end of the corridor. The corridor is largely built-out; therefore we propose to rezone three strategic nodes, which together will strengthen the entire Bronx Civic Center: a mixed-use transit node at River Avenue, a civic node located at the center of the corridor, and a residential node located near the Melrose Metro-North Station between Morris and Park Avenues. In the mixed-use transit node, the rezoning would transform the intersection of 161st Street and River Avenue by allowing high-density residential and commercial development. In the civic node, the rezoning would create capacity for much-needed office and commercial space surrounding the courthouses. Lastly, in the residential node, the rezoning would encourage ground-level commercial uses in order to

better link the corridor's civic uses with the Metro-North station to the east. In addition, the residential node rezoning would allow for higher-density residential development that is in scale with the development occurring in Melrose Commons to the east.

April 11th I met with Analiz Figueroa, community Liaison of Community Partnership Initiative CPI-the Bridge Builders came to the District Office to give a general overview of the their project. The Bridge Builders/CPI a community-based demonstration project that tests the hypothesis that family well-being and child welfare outcomes will improve as at result of community members being trained and working to assist their neighbors who then link the families to targeted social services and legal representation. Parents are involved in the collaborative with neighborhood-based service child welfare agency; Bridge Builders/CPI partners are also developing the capacity for increased youth participation in the initiative.

On April 14th Ms. Ezell and I met with Bourema Niamele and Chauncy Young to discuss the Magassa-Soumare Education Center. The center will have the following programs After School Program, Adult literacy and Citizenship Programs, Foreign Language Programs, Voter Registration and Daycare services. Currently the West African population is continuing to grow throughout the city, the Highbridge section remains as the base of this community and having a learning center and space for an after school program remains the utmost importance. The afterschool program currently serves approximately 250 children weekly. They will soon present their proposal for our support to the Youth Services and Education Committee.

April 16th The Clergy Coalition of the 44th Precinct, made up of Clergy who, minister, work or reside within the confines of the 44thPrecinct met to discuss the Papal visit, workshops presented by the Bronx District Attorney and introduction of New District Manager of Community Board Four. At the meeting I gave a general overview of Community Boards and formally introduced myself to the Coalition, and shared on current developments in the community

April 17th I made a presentation on the roll of Community Boards to SPA 5, Service Planning Area 5-Bronx Community Districts 3 &4. SPA 5 is a Consortium of Child Care Service, Health and other Social Service Providers. Additional presenters included NYPD Community Affairs-Youth Services in the Bronx-Sgt. Margaret O'Gara, Bronx Coordinator, African Services Committee, Sean Brennan, Assistant Director of Health Services and Narco Freedom, Jose Calderon, Dir. of Training and Evelyn Munoz, Assistant Director of Training.

April 17th I with the African United Parade (African community), representatives from Borough Command-NYPD , 44th Pct. the Borough President's office, CB5 and the Mayor's office. The United Parade Committee has been having difficulty trying to coordinate their proposed parade in July and due to the Mayor's moratorium on new events (multi-day-multi-block). In an effort to try and resolve their problem I convened the meeting to discuss how we may be able to negotiate a resolution. Unfortunately the moratorium will stand however, we were able to ensure that the African United Parade will have an event that will work for them and will include support from the City to assist them in properly organizing a festival allowing them to show their pride for culture and community. They have thanked CB4 for our concern on their behalf and appreciate our cooperation, answers to their calls, and services that we provided.