

The City of New York
Bronx Community Board Four
General Board Meeting
Held on Tuesday, FEBRUARY 26, 2013
BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS
1040 Grand Concourse & East 165th Street

Ms. Kathleen Saunders, 1st Vice Chair, Presiding

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Ramatu Ahmed, Mr. John Howard Algarin, Ms. Naimah Bilal, Ms. Beverly Bond, Mr. Felix Camero, Mr. Maynard Charles, Ms. Ernestine Davis, Ms. Brenda Dawson, Mr. Robert Garmendiz, Mr. Winston George, Mr. Walter Harris, Mr. Ray Henry, Ms. Frances Hudson-Marrows, Ms. Mildred James, Ms. Nurys Laureano, Mr. Mohammed Mardah, Bishop Earl McKay, Ms. Marie McCullough, Dr. Karie Nabinet, Mr. Ebrahim Dawda Ndure, Mr. Bourema Niamebele, Mr. Barry Nissen, Ms. Rockyatu Otoo, Mr. Michael Rendino, Mr. George T. Robinson, Sr., Ms. Lilliam Rosa, Ms. Kathleen Saunders, Ms. Mary Sears, Mr. Jackson Strong, Ms. Shelly Wilson, Mr. Oshrie Zak, Ms. Grace Zarate.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Ms. Evelyn Arauz, Mr. Emmanuel Cabrera, Mr. Omar O. Ortiz, Ms. Martha Reyes.

STAFF:

Mr. José Rodriguez, District Manager
Ms. Lynne Thompson, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Elizabeth Gonzalez-Rodriguez, Senior Secretary

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Mr. Nivardo Lopez, representing Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Ms. Aurea Mangual, representing Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Mr. Angel Santana, representing NYS Senator Jose M. Serrano
Mr. Victor Pichardo, representing NYS Senator Gustavo Rivera
Mr. Yves Filius, representing NYS Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson
Mr. Martin Munoz, representing NYC Councilwoman Helen D. Foster

GUEST PRESENT:

Ms. Miriam D. Tabb-Bronx Museum of the Arts, Ms. Evelyn Rivera-President 11 West 172nd Street Tenants Association, Ms. Zonia D. Ortiz-resident, Ms. Marilyn Ramos-resident, Mr. Oscar Alvarado-resident, Ms. Ellen Harvey-Concourse Village Inc., Ms. Flo Canada-Concourse Village Inc., Mr. Enrique Colon-CASA New Settlement Apartments, Mr. Doug Apple-Samaritan Village, Inc., Ms. Deirdre Rich-Rees-Samaritan Village, Inc., Mr. J. Hollywood-Samaritan Village, Inc., Mr. Ravi Ramporsard-Aguila, Inc., Ms. Arlene Hall-Grand Concourse Academy Charter School, Ms. Rubina Torres-Vargas-HB Bronx NRP, Ms. Elizabeth Bennett-Sheldon Lobel, P.C., Mr. Fedrico Colon-NAICA, Mr. Uche Onyeukwu-Volunteers of America University Family Residence, Ms. Sabrina R. Ford-Charter School for Science Literacy, Ms. Esther Mosley-Gospel Mission Pentecostal Church, Ms. Aiyanna Spellman-Gospel Mission Pentecostal Church, Ms. Beverly Curtis-Gospel Mission Pentecostal Church, Mr. Julio Pabon-South Bronx Community Association, Mr. Jarbai Ajamu-resident, Ms. K. Jordan-resident, Ms. Sonja D. Gracy-resident, Ms. Betty Crawford-President 44th Precinct Council, Mr. Matthew Perlman-NY City News Service, Ms. Chrelle Silvera-resident, Ms. Gabriela Silverno-Community Member; Mr. Dwayne Evans-Volunteers of America, Mr. Rick Miller, Ms. Lillian Gwyn-Concourse Village, Inc., Mr. Henry Wilkenson-Concourse Village, Inc., Ms. Elise Sabatel-Concourse Village, Inc.

Public Session

Killian Jordan – Request for the Board to work with our elected officials to stop considering the proposals of the placement of so many shelter facilities in our community. “Though they are very much needed, they do not all have to be right here”. Madame Chair commented that the Board has approached that issue on several occasions but have not been totally successful; but need everyone’s support so that we can put a halt on all of the shelters that are coming within our area.

Enrique Colon, Outreach Coordinator for CASA – Campaign for reforming Housing Court on March 15, 2013 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Julio Pabon of South Bronx Community Association – community’s concern over parking availability when the Yankees are playing; noise and parties have stopped at billiards place after 16 summonses issued; beautify the community by painting murals where once there was graffiti – need artists and paint to beautify areas in need; Mayoral Election Forum – Resurrection United Methodist Church, 158 Street and Elton Avenue, March 9, 2013 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Welcoming remarks and announcements by Ms. Kathleen Saunders, 1st Vice Chairperson.

The Chair welcomed everyone and asked for a moment of reflection for the passing of Pastor Wendell P. Jackson. As a Board, we will continue the work that he has started and we are going to work very hard to continue those things.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance led by Bishop Earl McKay.

Motion to Review/Correct/Adopt of General Board Meeting: Motion was made by Mr. Robert Garmendiz and by Mr. Barry Nissen to approve the General Board Meeting minutes for January 22, 2013 with corrections. All were in favor with one abstention. The Motion was duly carried.

Review of the Community Board’s Register of Capital and Expense Budget Priorities:

Several of the members questioned the order of the priorities and the District Manager reminded all that these were discussed last October 2012.

The community board, through committee should look at the district as a whole and select areas that it wants to do development projects. Projects such as implementing a rezoning initiative. When we have projects presented to us, we need at that time, mention what is it that we want to have in the community. We also have to be careful about what restrictions we ask for because we can lose projects.

The Department of Youth & Community Development does not do development projects. The board can commission a study on youth services in the community and see what their needs are. Question was asked, what is the impact of a yes or no vote in moving these priorities forward? Do they need to be discussed further? DM's response is that it is a charter mandate to discuss these priorities in order to respond to the agencies' response.

Parks committee put a list of requests for six capital issues that have not been finished. Some have been ongoing for 20 years. The Parks committee Chair would like to approach the Parks Department to partner with the Parks committee in order to formulate the projects further and then approach the elected officials to sign on and ask them for a five-year plan to finish these projects. How can the committee proceed? The Board will have to wait until June and revisit in October when it can be added to their "wish list". The community boards opted to meet as a whole and not do individual consultation. DM will advocate to go to the old system and meet individually with the Bronx's parks commissioner. Everything we have requested from the Parks Department has the same answer. "They do not have sufficient funds" and their recommendation is that we speak to our elected officials. The elected officials also receive this same response and are present in these meetings and therefore aware of the issues and requests.

Can the Borough President meet with the Board and give us better understanding of this issue of budgeting? Mr. Rodriguez advised, that the district managers as a group have requested to the Borough President for additional training for board members regarding their responsibilities since some members are not clear with the process and need training in budgeting. BP's office understands the issue and is working on the best approach to figure out what would be the best

time and mechanism to provide training for a better understanding what the members do or is required of them. As the final step, the documents will be reviewed by Mr. Rodriguez and he will provide a statement to the preliminary budget and it will be sent to the office of Management & Budget, the elected officials and to the Bronx Borough President.

Nomination Committee:

The Chair of the Nominating Committee, Ms. Beverly Bonds explained that as a result of the Community Board's current vacancy, it has to be filled pursuant to Article 5, Section 3 of the By-Laws. Ms. Bond placed a motion that Ms. Kathleen Saunders be the Interim Chair until June's election. It was seconded by Mr. Oshire Zak. The vote was unanimous and the motion duly carried. An additional vote was placed in motion by Ms. Bonds for the Second Vice-Chair. The two nominees for this seat are Ms. Mildred James and Ms. Martha Reyes. After a vote of 24 to 5 with two abstentions, Ms. James is the new Second Vice-Chair.

Presentation: Mr. James Hollywood, Samaritan Village at 170th Street and University Avenue. A 152 person facility that houses individuals for drug treatment. They are proposing to renovate the existing building and add outpatient services for the community as well as health and wellness programs. They want to continue serving the same amount of persons but new regulation requires changing from bunk beds to individual beds. The upgrade will be funded by a state grant. The request for a Letter of Support is to upgrade from 152 bunk beds to 152 individual beds for their treatment facility project. Motion was moved by Mr. John Howard Algarin and seconded by Ms. Shelly Wilson. All were in favor except for four in the negative and three abstentions. The motion was carried.

Report by the Offices of the Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz, Jr.

- Statement from the Bronx Borough President on the passing of Chairperson Pastor Jackson
- Ongoing process of interviews of new applicants as community members. The re-appointment requests have been received.
- Statistics on the decrease of murders in the Bronx. It is the lowest since 1963.

- The BBP is against the proposed closing of the Post Office at 149th Street and Grand Concourse. Bronxites do not want this landmark building demolished.
- New York City Employees' Retirement System (NYCERS) Board of Trustees pass a resolution requiring an analysis of any system investments in gun manufacturing companies.
- Comptroller Liu rejects \$91 million contract for homeless shelters.
- Celebrated Black History and Dominican Heritage. Next month there will be a celebration of the Irish heritage.

Reminder by board member of the issue of the debris collecting at the Court house on Morris Avenue. Ms. Mangual stated she will refer to Mr. Wilhelm Rhonda of the Borough President's office.

Report by Local Elected Officials or their representatives.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg's Office represented by Nivardo Lopez

- Condolences on behalf of the Mayor's Office.
- Mayor's final State of the City Address can be found online at www.nyc.gov.
- Planned completion of several infrastructure projects.
 - Second phase of the water tunnels
 - First subway expansion in Manhattan—7th train extension.
- Report in May and June by the Mayor's Special Initiative Building and Resiliency. This report will focus on how the City can better address and prepare for future storms; how to protect the core infrastructure of the City; and how to protect and rebuild the waterfront. There are various meetings taking place within inflicted areas and will meet in the Bronx in March.
- Graffiti Free NYC – A program to combat graffiti wherever it is found. All anyone needs to do is call 311 and report graffiti. A notice is then sent to the property owner who then has 30 days to consent through a signed waiver that he is allowing the city to clean up or to let the city know that he is okay with it. This waiver is only signed once. The program is available all year round, but for best results the weather should be around 50 degrees or after late March.

NYS Senator Jose M. Serrano represented by Angel Santana

- Sadden to learn of Pastor Jackson's passing.
- Sponsoring a resolution to the Senate along with Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson honoring Pastor Wendell Jackson on Thursday, February 28, 2013.
- Stop the phasing of PS 35 at 750 Concourse Village West; support for new principal, Hernandez to implement his initiatives.
- Honoring of Hon. Helen Diane Foster, Richard R. Buery, Jr. and Hon. Donald A. Miles during the Senator's celebration of Black History Month.
- Sedgwick Library, March 21, 2013, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson's Office represented by Mr. Yves Filius

- Deep regards for the passing of Pastor Jackson.
- Introduction of the Dream Act Bill.
 - Benefits more than 925,000 New Yorkers which allows immigrant students to be eligible to receive scholarships, financial aid, TAP and other private scholarships.
- Amendment to raise the minimum wage to \$9.00.
- Public Hearing on March 8, 2013 – Statute of Limitations applicable to sexual abuse against minors. 250 Broadway, NY, NY at 10:00 am.
- Black History celebration on February 28, 2013 at the Bronx Museum of the Arts at 5:30 pm.

Councilwoman Helen Diane Foster represented by Martin Muñoz

- Black History celebration on Thursday, February 28, 2013 with Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson at the Bronx Museum of the Arts at 5:30 pm.
- Currently a decision hasn't been made whether to support the Samaritan Village project.

NYS Senator Gustavo Rivera represented by Victor Pichardo

- Condolences for the passing of Pastor Jackson
- Supporting of the minimum wage to \$9.00 per hour.
- Free tax preparation on February 28, 2013 from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm and March 26, 2013 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Senator's office. Call ahead to RSVP.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT- HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES- HOUSING & LAND USE-

MUNICIPAL SERVICES & EDUCATION - PARKS- YOUTH SERVICES

Economic Development Committee- No Report. Investigating the parking garage where the hotel was going to be built. The committee wants to know from the Borough President and all the elected officials why it is not open. They were advised it was a BOEDC decision, however, Marlene Cintron of BOEDC that the hotel will not be happening.

Municipal Services & Education Committee- Mr. Julio Pabon of the South Bronx Community Association presented to the committee the difficulties that the residents of this area are affected by the lack of parking or inability to park in their communities as a result of games and/or events that occur at Yankee Stadium. The committee is asking for a vote to explore and start the process of a residential parking permit. The motion was made by Ms. Mildred James and seconded by Mr. Jackson Strong. All in favor with one no and one abstention. It was clarified by the Chair that there is a lot of involvement with this process with DOT and anyone having an objection to this that they should attend the committee meetings in order to have a clear understanding. It was suggested by the District Manager, Jose Rodriguez to have the committee meet and draft a resolution on residential parking and have the Board office request that DOT and other city agencies be present at a later date to discuss a residential parking program.

Housing & Land Use Committee- Sheldon Lobel, P.C. requests a Letter of Support for an application at 81 E. 161st Street for variance of existing third floor which is currently vacant to be changed from residential to commercial use. It is a narrow and irregular 2000 square foot area. Motion carried by Bishop McKay and seconded by Mr. Walter Harris. The voting was unanimous. The motion was carried.

Parks and Recreation Committee- Meeting next month with Councilwoman Foster's office. Thank you to Ms. Mildred James for joining the Parks and Recreation committee.

Youth Services- Mr. Johnson from Community Board 3 and provided a status update on the C Ball League. A Community Board Athletic League that competes in various sports. The target is males and females ages 7 to 18. Also includes spelling bees and leadership type games. First meeting is March 15, 2013 with all the Chairs of all the boards. Anyone that has any great ideas or wants to attend a meeting can stop by the third Thursday of every month. Youth Day this year will be in honor of Pastor Jackson.

Health & Human Services Committee – Veterans of America located at 1075 Webster Avenue is requesting a renewal of their Letter of Support to continue services. Mr. Barry Nissen made a motion and Ms. Frances Hudson-Marrow seconded it. Motion was carried with three abstentions.

Announcements Mr. John Algarin announced that he met informally with Municipal Services Committee and Pastor Jackson to discuss a sky walk across 161st Street. He is currently speaking to BBP office and the idea is moving forward.

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.