

**COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX MINUTES
OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 11, 2007 AT SCHERVIER APARTMENTS
2995 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE**

PRESENT: R. Abbott, R. Bender, D. Bowden, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney, Rev N. Dixon, W. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, T. Feerick, B. Feinberg, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, T. Giallorenzi, J. Goris, M. Katzenstein, M. Khury, I. Ladimer, D. McShane, K. O'Brien, K. Pesce, J. M. Pilsner, C. Prentice, J. Reyes, T. Rubinstein, S. Scheinbach, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, L. Vazquez, M. Wolpoff, H. Young

ABSENT: A. Fana, A. G. Feldmeier, J. Giegerich, J. Higgins, G. O. Koppell, J. Kreppel, V. Gray-Lewis, C. G. Moerdler, R. Moll, J. O'Reilly, J. Plaza, L. Spalter, E. Tossas Tucker

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

E. Schneiderman – State Senator
J. Dinowitz – State Assemblyman

STAFF: M. Carrion – rep. NYS Governor Eliot Spitzer
D. Contreras – rep. Public Advocate's Office Betsy Gotbaum
L. Copland – rep. Congressman Eliot Engel
N. Danyluk – Bronx Department of City Planning
J. Gordon – rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell
J. Martin – rep. State Senator Jeffrey Klein
R. Martos – rep. Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz
C. Ramos – rep. NYC Comptroller William Thompson
J. Sewell – rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell
J. Sonett – rep. State Senator Eric Schneiderman
A. Toledo – rep. Borough President Adolfo Carrión, Jr.
N. Stent – District Manager, CB 8
S. Alexander – Clerical Assistant, CB 8
D. Bay – Community Associate, CB 8

GUESTS: K. Argenti – F.I.P.N.A.
G. Axelbank
F. Barret
M. Chuchmach – Columbia University
J. DeSio – Riverdale Review
S. R. Dodson – Director, NYC Dept. Design & Construction
A. Eldin – NYC Dept. of Design & Construction
L. Gold – Columbia University
M. Grossman – Riverdale Press

H. Harris
M. Kirby
J. Lefkowitz
R. McAllan – NYC EMS Paramedic (ret.)
P. McFeeley
Sister E. McGrory – Sisters of Charity
M. Perron – Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park
R. Murray – New York Public Library, Riverdale Branch
R. Press
P.O. M. Ramos – NYPD, 50th Precinct.
A. Rivecchio
Detective L. Rodriguez – NYPD, 50th Precinct
M. Santana – CWA 1180
P. Schaeffer
Captain D. Shea – NYPD, 50th Precinct
L. Schwarz
M. Townsend

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 P.M. by the Chairperson Anthony Perez Cassino. The meeting convened with a moment of silence in memory of the September 11th Terrorist Attacks and in memory of a long standing member of Community Board 8, Denny Dennison. Mr. Dennison was an invaluable member of the Board and an active member in the community.

GALLERY SESSION

A) B. Trebach informed the meeting participants that the Department of Design and Construction (DDC) would present to the Board on the Distribution of Water Main Extensions Project in lieu of presenting to the Traffic and Transportation Committee. In order for the water main project to work in conjunction with the Reconstruction of the Kappock Street Concrete Retaining Wall project, DDC requires notification to the Community Board of the project plans and the bus route detours. A letter from the Board is also needed stating that it acknowledges DDC's plans. Mr. Ala Mohi Eldin from the DDC presented the water main project plans. The plan includes a modification of the existing bus detour. The buses will run from Independence Avenue and detour at West 227th Street and proceed under the underpass. The water main project will commence in 2 to 3 weeks and will continue for 17 months.

Mr. Trebach confirmed that the details of the plan and bus route detours will be addressed at the Traffic and Transportation Committee.

Chairman Cassino stated that the community board will continue to monitor the two projects and a letter acknowledging the presentation will be sent to DDC.

- B) Rosemary Murray, head of the Riverdale Library introduced herself as the new Branch Manager of the Riverdale Library. The branch is currently closed due to a flood that occurred in the summer. The tentative date for reopening is October 15th. There will be new furniture, carpeting, flooring, personal computers and an area for toddlers. In addition, as a result of budget requests, the branch libraries in the area will be open 6 days a week.
- C) Lynn Schwarz from the Fort Independence Park Neighborhood Association to discuss matter soft the public health, specifically the Croton Filtration Plant project. She thanked the Community Board for requesting a review of the cost overruns on the project and thanked the participation of Chairman Cassino and Saul Scheinbach at the Facilities Monitoring Committee (FMC) meetings. She expressed concern about the chlorine gas spill at the Jerome Park Reservoir which was brought to the attention of the FMC. However, at the FMC meetings, the public is permitted to speak at the beginning of the meetings and she urged the community to support requesting the FMC to develop a better mechanism to allow for greater stakeholder participation.
- D) Robert Press discussed the West 239th Street overpass. Work continues on the overpass with a number of unsafe conditions that need to be addressed such as exposed cables, uneven metal plates, crumbling cement barriers and dangling wires. In addition, he expressed concern over the Mayor's congestion pricing plan and its affect on the Bronx.

Mr. Trebach stated that the Mayor's congestion pricing plan was addressed at the July Traffic & Transportation Committee meeting and would be addressed again in future meetings. He added that the Committee had discussed the West 239th overpass and raised several concerns that have been sent to the Department of Transportation.

- E) Carlos Ramos representing NYC Comptroller William Thompson announced a Consumer Banking Conference on September 26, 2007. The free event will feature three workshops about savings and credit, financial maintenance protection for homeowners, and predatory lending. This citywide initiative includes a hotline for questions on home ownership. If there are any questions, Mr. Ramos' number is 212-669-2530 and email is cramos@comptroller.nyc.gov.
- F) Anthony Rivicchio from the Bronx News announced that the Bronx News newspaper would be available in the Community Board 8 area by the end of the year. In the current issue there is an article interviewing the Community Board 8 Chairperson, Anthony Cassino.

- G) Gary Axelbank, resident of Van Cortlandt Village expressed concern about the Croton Water Filtration project, the cost overruns and multiple discrepancies of DEP in reporting costs and providing information to the community. He urged the community to support an investigation of this project and to attend the September 20th FMC meeting to express their concerns.

Chairman Casino stated that the community board will continue to monitor this issue.

- H) Herb Barrett reported on the Van Cortlandt Park Memorial Grove. The Grove commemorates Bronx citizens killed in World War I and II. Plaques bearing the names of a slain soldier have fallen into disrepair and the area needs overall tending. The Riverdale Press has written about the Grove and its need for restoration. The Parks Department has reviewed the site and taken some preliminary steps with fencing off the area and providing a general cleaning. However, the Parks Department does not have adequate funding to replace the plaques or maintain the site. Mr. Barrett requested support in bringing attention and funding to the restoration project.

Chairman Cassino stated that the Parks committee will work with Mr. Barrett and continue to address this issue in the upcoming months.

- I) Richard Allen, retired NYC paramedic commented on the new EMS site. He expressed concerns about the location of the EMS station in Woodlawn as opposed to Community Board 8, the EMS response times and general public safety for residents in the Community Board 8 area. He suggested that the FDNY look for alternative sites to house an EMS station in the Community Board 8 area.

Chairman Cassino announced a joint meeting of Aging, Public Safety and Health, Hospitals & Social Services Committees will be held on September 19th at the Manhattanville Health Center at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the EMS issue and FDNY Chief John J. Perruggia would be attending.

1. Approval of the regular Board Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2007 and the special Board Meeting Minutes of July 10, 2007 were adopted.

Both minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of Executive Board Minutes of September 5, 2007

D. Bowden corrected the Education Committee minutes to reflect the speaker for the September 25th meeting would be Karen Worchel, Director of the Marble Hill Nursery School.

3. Chairman welcomed State Senator Eric Schneiderman; Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz; Andy Toledo, representing Borough President Adolfo Carrión; Lori Copland, representing Congressman Eliot Engel; Randi Martos, representing Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz; Joseph Gordon, representing Councilman G. Oliver Koppell; Nestor Danyluk, representing Bronx Department of City Planning; Jamin Sewell, representing Councilman G. Oliver Koppell; Judith Sonett representing State Senator Eric Schneiderman; M. Carrion representing NYS Governor Eliot Spitzer; Carlos Ramos representing NYC Comptroller William Thompson; Daniel Contreras representing the Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum; Jay Martin representing State Senator Jeffrey Klein; Captain Dermot Shea, Detective Luis Rodriguez and Police Officer Ramos, 50th Precinct; Rosemary Murray, Riverdale Branch Library; Manny Grossman, Riverdale Press; Margot Perron, Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park; Sybil Dodson and Al Eldin, NYC Dept. Design & Construction.

4. Chairman Cassino invited State Senator Eric Schneiderman to address the Board.

Senator Schneiderman welcomed the new district manager Nicole Stent and provided an update on the state legislative agenda. The agenda includes funding for economic development and capital programs for the Community Board 8 area. The state has passed workers compensation laws reducing costs to businesses; and state ethics laws. In the upcoming weeks, the state will address issues such as environmental conservation, stem cell research, and comprehensive reform of the Rockefeller laws, sub-prime lending and the catastrophes of foreclosures.

5. Chairman Cassino invited Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz to address the Board.

Assemblyman Dinowitz welcomed the new district manager Nicole Stent. He announced his new appointment as the Assembly Committee Chair for the Assembly Aging Committee dealing with senior citizen policies across the state. He presented additional information on the cost overruns of the Croton Water Filtration Plant project and public safety issues such as the chlorine gas leak and the continuing water leakages. He congratulated Community Board 8 for the resolution requesting an investigation into the cost overruns for construction of the Croton Water Filtration Plant. He urged the public to contact the Mayor, legislators and public officials to express their concerns.

6. Chairperson Cassino invited Captain Shea of the 50th precinct to address the Board.

Captain Shea appeared with Detective Louis Rodriguez and Police Officer Mindy Ramos. He reported on the 2 violent incidents, one on Henry Hudson

Parkway and the other on Godwin Terrace and West 231st street. An investigation is underway.

Captain Shea also reported on 10 incidents of stolen tires in the community and an investigation is ongoing. He informed the community to contact the precinct about any unknown people in your community.

Captain Shea reported that there had been a decrease in robberies in the Board area. There are no additional complaints at Ft. Independence Park. Police deployment and Park sweeps are continuing in the park with plain clothes officers on patrol.

Chairman Cassino thanked the Captain for the graffiti arrests and Captain Shea commented that the new city anti-graffiti law is an additional tool in the ongoing fight against graffiti.

7. Chairman Cassino invited the new District Manager, Nicole Stent to address the Board.

Ms. Stent thanked the Board members for selecting her to serve as the district manager and added that the Board office is currently updating the office computer systems and working closely with 311 to address and track the concerns in the community. She noted that the Board staff had worked hard over the years and cultivated excellent relationships with city agencies and the community. The Board Office will continue to work closely with its committees, city agencies and the community to mitigate any issues. She added that she has a special interest in CB8 because she grew up in Riverdale; her family and extended family live in the area and her children attend school in the area.

Chairman Cassino asked the Board members to support and share ideas with the District Manager on improving the operations of the Board Office.

8. Chairman Cassino recognized Martin Wolpoff who offered a motion to recognize and thank the Board staff Diane Bay, Patricia Manning and Sylvia Alexander for their hard work over the past year.

The motion was moved, seconded and approved *unanimously*.

9. Chairman Cassino recognized that with the resignation of Nicole Stent from the Board to become District Manager, the position of chair of the Parks & Recreation Committee was open. Any members interested in this position will have a chance to be placed in nomination at the October meeting where the new chairperson for the Committee will be elected by the Board.

10. Chairman Cassino informed the Board that Manny Grossman had resigned from the Board and would be working for the Riverdale press covering Board meetings.

11. Report from the Bronx Borough President's Office – A. Toledo

- a) On behalf of Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrión, A. Toledo welcomed the new district manager Nicole Stent. He congratulated the Board on its hiring process which is being duplicated in two other Bronx Boards.
- b) With the start of the new school year BP announced approximately \$5 Million in funding to various Bronx Schools. The money will be used for everything from additional computers, science labs, upgrades to school libraries, renovation of school based health centers and rehabilitation of school playgrounds. Carrion will provide approximately \$1 million for school library upgrades, another \$200,000 technology and computer upgrades and another \$200,000 for the rehabilitation of school playgrounds.
- c) The Bronx Borough President invited the community to join in the 13th Annual Tour de Bronx on October 21st.

12. Report from the Department of City Planning – N. Danyluk

- a) There are no new applications.

13. Committee Reports

A. Libraries & Cultural Affairs – L. Vazquez

1. Bronx Council on the Arts has several grants available. Check the website for deadlines.
2. Rosemary Murray was thanked for attending the meeting tonight and updating the community on the library schedule.
3. The Committee will hold its next meeting on October 1st at the Kingsbridge Library.

B. Parks & Recreation

1. Chairman reported in the absence of a Chair on Ft. Independence Park. The Parks Department has placed a fence around certain portions of the park which has alleviated some of the rock throwing.
2. The dog run issue will be addressed at a future Board meeting.

C. Public Safety – A. G. Feldmeier

1. No report.

D. Traffic & Transportation – B. Trebach

1. The street renaming resolution for P.O. Forster was held over from the June Board meeting for verification of the actual street corner. The correction has been made and the resolution was presented as follows:

Whereas, The Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, the 50th Precinct Community Council and the Church of St. Margaret of Crotona request that the Southwest corner of Kingsbridge Avenue and West 236th Street be renamed in memory of Police Officer Neil A. Forster; and

Whereas, Police Officer Neil A. Forster worked in the 50th Precinct and it is the 10th anniversary of his passing;

Therefore be it resolved, that Community Board No. 8 Bronx recommends that it would be fitting that he be so remembered with a street renaming.

Vote: 30 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention

In Favor:

R. Abbott, R. Bender, D. Bowden, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney, Rev N. Dixon, W. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, T. Feerick, B. Feinberg, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, J. Goris, M. Katzenstein, M. Khury, I. Ladimer, D. McShane, K. O'Brien, K. Pesce, J. M. Pilsner, C. Prentice, J. Reyes, T. Rubinstein, S. Scheinbach, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, L. Vazquez, M. Wolpoff, H. Young

Abstention:

T. Giallorenzi

2. B. Trebach discussed the congestion pricing plan. The committee met in July and had a detailed discussion and reflected in the minutes. The committee was lukewarm to Mayors' Plan. Mark Botnick from Community Assistance Unit will be speaking to the committee on the plan in the upcoming meetings.
3. D. Bowden thanked B. Trebach on the Committee's resolution to have a one-way street on West 236th Street between Hudson Manor Terrace and Independence Avenue. The block has a public school that is benefiting from this change.

H. Youth Committee

1. No report

I. Aging – K. Pesce

1. No report.
2. I. Ladimer announced Schervier Cares for Caregivers Day at the Schervier Nursing Care Center on October 14th. It will be a free day of fun, relaxation, socialization and education to honor caregivers in the community who care for an older family member, friend or partner.

J. Budget Report – K. O'Brien

1. No report

K. Economic Development – J. Reyes

1. Meeting will be held September 27th at 7:30 p.m. in the Board office.

L. Education – D. Bowden

1. D. Bowden reported on the City Council vote to override Mayor Bloomberg's veto of legislation to protect parents' right to provide their children with cell phones to be used to and from school.
2. The next meeting will be on September 25th at 7:30 p.m. in the Board office and the speaker will be Karen Worchel, Director of the Marble Hill Nursery School. At the October 23rd meeting the speaker will be Phillip Scharper, new Principal of PS. 24.
3. Chairman Cassino asked about the theft of computers at Public School 7 and if there was funding or a plan to replace these computers. Captain Shea reported that there were no sign of forced entry and an investigation are continuing. D. Bowden is researching funding possibilities with the rotary club.

M. Environment & Sanitation – S. Scheinbach

1. The "no handbill" bill was signed into law as of September 14th by the Governor. Homeowners can place a sign stating "no hand bills" on their property and it would be illegal to leave hand bills. Fines are \$250 to \$2000.

2. The "Sidewalk Obstruction" bill also called the Padavan bill is pending in the Senate.
 3. Sedgwick Avenue next to the Jerome Park Reservoir was voted by the Department of Sanitation (DOS) as one of the worst areas for dog poop in the city. DOS will increase enforcement and the Parks Department has increased the fines from \$50 to \$100 in an effort clean the area.
 4. An Anti-Graffiti bill was passed by City Council makes it illegal for anyone under 21 to carry a graffiti instrument.
 5. Ruth McLaughlin Park was vandalized with graffiti and the Parks Department promptly painted the area.
 6. The Con Edison project is continuing. However, it is required by New York State Public Service Commission that a report on the community impact related to the environmental and construction activity be submitted.
 7. There will not be a meeting in September. However, please attend the Filtration Plant Monitoring Committee to be held on September 20th at 7:00 p.m. at the Mosholu Community Center on Dekalb Avenue. The new contractors will be attending and DEP officials.
- N. Health, Hospitals & Social Services – M. Katzenstein
1. M. Katzenstein invited the community to the EMS meeting on September 20th at the Manhattanville Health Center at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole M. Stent
District Manager