

## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

### MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 11, 2007 AT MANHATTANVILLE HEALTH NURSING CARE CENTER 311 WEST 231<sup>ST</sup> STREET

- PRESENT: R. Abbott, R. Bender, D. Bowden, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney, Rev. N. Dixon, W. S. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, T. Feerick, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, M. Katzenstein, J. Kreppel, I. Ladimer, D. McShane, C. G. Moerdler, J. M. Pilsner, C. Prentice, J. M. Reyes, S. Scheinbach, L. Spalter, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, E. Tossas Tucker, M. Wolpoff, H. Young
- ABSENT: A. Fana, B. Feinberg, A. G. Feldmeier, T. Giallorenzi, J. Giegerich, J. Goris, J. Higgins, M. Khury, G. O. Koppell, V. Gray-Lewis, R. Moll, K. O'Brien, J. O'Reilly, K. Pesce, J. Plaza, T. Rubinstein, L. Vazquez
- STAFF: A. Toledo – rep. Borough President Adolfo Carrión, Jr.  
N. Danyluk – Bronx Department of City Planning  
N. Stent – District Manager, CB 8  
S. Alexander – Clerical Assistant, CB 8  
D. Bay – Community Associate, CB 8  
P. Manning – Community Associate, CB 8
- GUESTS: J. Dinowitz – Assemblyman  
R. Press – rep. State Senator Efrain Gonzalez  
J. Sonett – rep. State Senator Eric Schneiderman  
T. Colon – Office of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz  
J. Sewell – rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell  
Capt. D. Shea – 50<sup>th</sup> Pct.  
C. Moran – Commissioner, Bronx DOT  
H. Barret – Memorial Grove  
A. Cohen  
J. DeSio – Riverdale Review  
G. Eng  
C. Gonzalez  
M. Grossman – Riverdale Press  
H. H. Harrison – Van Cortlandt Branch, NYPL  
J. Hockenjos – MTA Metro-North RR  
P. Moerdler  
M. Perron – Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park  
Det. L. Rodriguez – Community Affairs, 50<sup>th</sup> Pct.

Chairman Cassino convened the meeting at 7:35 PM.

## Gallery Session

- A. John Hockenjos, Metro North Railroad, discussed the plans for the improvement project at the Spuyten Duyvil Station. He advised that work is proceeding and Metro North is working closely with DOT. Asphalt and paving work is advancing with completion expected in December 2007. In the spring 2008, DOT will stripe the area. Last year the Community Board No. 8 approved the project plans, and in the metro North proposal is the elimination of some parking spaces on the west side of Edsall Avenue for safe left turn navigation of Metro North buses and larger vehicles.

Borough Commissioner Moran commented on Metro North's diligence in keeping DOT abreast of the project.

B. Trebach, Chair of Traffic & Transportation, thanked Commissioner Moran for her presence.

- B. Herb Barret, advocate for restoration of the Veterans Memorial Grove in Van Cortlandt Park, advised about his efforts to secure funding for the replacement and upkeep of the plaques erected in the Grove. Currently only 18 remain. Mr. Barret announced that the Parks Department will start its restoration. He announced that this past Veterans Day marked the first honoring ceremony held at the Grove. He thanked the community newspapers, Riverdale Press, Riverdale Review, as well as television news channels Bronx 12, 2 and 7 for covering the restoration project. He also requested the Board's full support.

B. Bender, Chair of the Board's Parks & Recreation Committee stated that the Committee has been in full support of the project.

- C. B. Trebach, on behalf of PS 24's Parent Association, announced the performance of "Nutcracker" at MS/HS 368 on Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, at 2 PM and 7 PM.

1. Approval of the Regular Board Minutes of November 13, 2007.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of the Executive Board Committee Minutes of December 5, 2007.

J. Reyes corrected the Economic Development Committee's report to reflect that the joint meeting of Economic Development and Libraries and Cultural Affairs Committees would be held on January 24<sup>th</sup>. The Committee's informal gathering at "Ibiza's (incorrectly spelled with an "A") will be hosted by herself and not Juan Goris.

3. Chairman Cassino welcomed Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz; Robert Press, representing State Senator Efrain Gonzalez; Judy Sonett, representing State Senator Eric Schneiderman; Teri Colon, Office of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz; J. Sewell, representing Councilman G. Oliver Koppell; Andy Toledo, representing Borough President Adolfo Carrión, Jr.; Nestor Danyluk, Bronx Department of City Planning; and Capt. Dermot Shea, 50<sup>th</sup> Pct.; Det. Luis Rodriguez, Community Affairs, 50<sup>th</sup> Pct.; Connie Moran, Borough Commissioner, DOT; Margot Perron, Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park; Horace Harrison, Van Cortlandt Branch Library; John DeSio, Riverdale Review; and Manny Grossman, Riverdale Press.
4. Chairman invited Captain Shea to address the Board.

Captain Shea reported that as of Friday, December 7<sup>th</sup> the number of robbery victims increased to eight. The suspected perpetrator for three of the crimes has been identified as a male Black. He discussed the four separate burglary patterns that have erupted in the community involving both stores and residences. In addition, there have been two solid arrests of young men, ages 17 and 18 years old that are tied to eight separate burglaries that occurred on Reservoir, Strong and Sedgwick Avenues.

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

Assemblyman Dinowitz discussed the recent hearing at the Board of Standards and Appeals for a variance application for 3880/82/84 Cannon Place. He commented on the dangers of allowing the construction to proceed in opposition to Community Board 8's 197-a zoning reform.

Chairman Cassino thanked the Assemblyman for attending the hearing.

6. Chairman's Report

- Chairman Cassino requested the Board's support of the establishment of a Special Committee for Reforming Alternate Side of the Street Parking regulations. Chairman advised that the following members have agreed to serve: B. Trebach, D. McShane, S. Scheinbach, W. Dolny, M. Khury.

Vote: 23 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions

In Favor –

R. Abbott, R. Bender, D. Bowden, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney, Rev. N. Dixon, W. S. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, T. Feerick, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, I. Ladimer, D. McShane, J. M. Pilsner, C. Prentice, J. M. Reyes, S. Scheinbach, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, E. Tossas Tucker, M. Wolpoff, H. Young

- Other than the shortly expected signing of West 230<sup>th</sup> Street/Broadway Development with the Economic Development Corporation, there is no new report on the project.
- Chairman reminded Board Members of their responsibility to attend meetings regularly.
- Chairman congratulated Board Member Rev. Dixon on his ordination into the Ministry.

7. Report from the Office of the Borough President – A. Toledo

- a. Board Membership applications are available in the office and on the website of the Borough President, and at the Offices of the Community Boards.
- b. Borough President Carrión extends wishes to all for a happy holiday, and thanked Board members and staff for their hard work.

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

The application for the Mann residence, 4550 Livingston Avenue, referred to the Board in August 2007, has been returned to City Planning following a delay at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. City Planning should complete its review by January 2008. No need for another review by the Board.

9. Committee Reports

A. Traffic and Transportation – B. Trebach

1. B. Trebach gave a review of the joint Committee meeting held in November with Environment & Sanitation, and referred to the minutes which had been distributed.
2. B. Trebach presented a request from Target Transportation for a letter of support from the Board for recommendation on its TLC license renewal.
3. Chairman Cassino called for a vote which resulted in 23 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

In Favor –

R. Abbott, R. Bender, D. Bowden, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney, Rev. N. Dixon, W. S. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, Feerick, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, I. Ladimer, D. McShane, J. M. Pilsner, C. Prentice, J. M. Reyes, S. Scheinbach, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, E. Tossas Tucker, M. Wolpoff, H. Young

4. B. Trebach presented the following resolutions passed by the Committee:

*WHEREAS*, Community Board No. 8, Bronx, supports the concept of a high-speed commuter ferry from the Riverdale section of the Bronx to Lower Manhattan; therefore

*BE IT RESOLVED*, That Community Board No. 8, Bronx calls upon the relevant authorities to carry out a study of the feasibility of implementing ferry service between Riverdale and Lower Manhattan.

S. Scheinbach raised questions on the planning and feasibility of the project. Discussion ensued over issues of appropriate land for terminal, parking, shelter, bathroom facilities, transportation to ferry, etc. Following discussion, the motion was called.

Vote: 18 in favor, 1 opposed, and 4 abstentions

In Favor-

B. Abbott, B. Bowden, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney,  
W. Dolny, T. Durham, T. Feerick, P. Friedman, I. Ladimer,  
D. McShane, C. G. Moerdler, C. Prentice, J. Reyes,  
I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, E. Tossas Tucker, M. Wolpoff,  
H. Young

Opposed –

S. Scheinbach

Abstentions –

B. Bender, Rev. N. Dixon, R. Fanuzzi, J. Pilsner

Before presenting the next resolution on the Mayor's congestion-pricing plan proposal, B. Trebach advised of two additional "concerns" added to the Committee's draft resolution discussed at the Committee's last meeting.

*WHEREAS*, the Mayor of New York City has presented a congestion-pricing plan to address traffic congestion within a zone of severe traffic congestion in Manhattan; and

*WHEREAS*, the New York City Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission has been established to review, study and receive public comments regarding such a plan, and any other plans presented to it; and

*WHEREAS*, Community Board No. 8, Bronx is pleased to submit its comments herein with respect to congestion pricing; therefore

*BE IT RESOLVED*, That Community Board No. 8, Bronx, asks the New York City Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission to take into consideration the following concerns and comments it has regarding the congestion-pricing plan:

- (1) Concern about any ripple effects the program might have on traffic, pollution, parking and mass transit in areas on the edge of the congestion zone or outside Manhattan. For example, would parts of District 8 turn into virtual parking lots for commuters looking to park here and use mass transit to enter into the zone?
- (2) Concern that rate increases would follow the example of London, where the fees paid by drivers rose greatly after congestion pricing began. It was argued that a system of electronic charging makes it easier to increase prices since drivers tend to be less aware of automatic payments.
- (3) The argument that traffic in Manhattan is no more of a problem than in the busiest parts of the outer boroughs, where traffic congestion similarly threatens business and public health.
- (4) The idea that the plan could be viewed as a stealth tax that will burden both individuals and businesses, particularly small businesses. Conversely, it was noted that, for many self-employed people and small businesses, improved mobility around Manhattan could actually increase profitability.
- (5) Some Board Members contend that the plan would hit hardest those who can least afford it, while others said that the cost of running a car in Manhattan is already high and that those who can least afford to pay the congestion fee are relying on mass transit already.
- (6) Fear that retail businesses in the congestion zone would suffer as people trying to avoid paying the fee would shop elsewhere.
- (7) The argument that if congestion pricing does not end up reducing traffic, motorists would be paying for congestion that they used to get for free.
- (8) Concern that the proposal leaves the decision on whether to renew the pilot program to the Mayor, and that there is no sunset provision that would send it back to the Legislature or City Council for reauthorization.
- (9) Concern that since the Governor and Mayor would appoint the board members of the new congestion-pricing authority, the Legislature would be largely cut out of its operation. By contrast, it was noted that the Governor nominates all 17 of the voting board members of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, though the Mayor recommends four of them. And while all MTA board members must be confirmed by the State Senate, none of

the new congestion-pricing authority's board would require Senate approval.

- (10) Concern that the plan does not include any mass improvements that are specific to Bronx Community District 8.
- (11) Concern that drivers from the Bronx using the Henry Hudson Bridge would end up paying more to get into the congestion zone than drivers from New Jersey who use the George Washington Bridge.

Discussion by the general Board followed. P. Friedman provided an abundance of research information on congestion pricing which included a Quinnipiac Poll dated November 19th indicating that 70% of Bronxites opposed the plan. A motion was called for the resolution.

Vote: 15 in favor, 6 opposed, and 4 abstentions

In Favor –

R. Abbott, R. Bender, A. P. Cassino, A. P. Creaney, W. Dolny, T. Feerick, J. Kreppel, I. Ladimer, D. McShane, C. G. Moerdler, C. Prentice, J. Reyes, S. Scheinbach, B. Trebach, H. Young

Opposed –

Rev. N. Dixon, R. Fanuzzi, P. Friedman, M. Katzenstein, I. W. Stone, M. Wolpoff

Abstentions –

D. Bowden, T. Durham, J. Pilsner, E. Tossas Tucker

J. Reyes raised the question of the Board considering a resolution that clearly states the Board's position on the Mayor's plan for congestion pricing. I. W. Stone offered the following motion:

IT IS RESOLVED that Community Board No. 8, Bronx, takes a stand in opposition to the Mayor's Congestion Pricing plan.

Vote: 16 in favor, 7 opposed, and 2 abstentions

In Favor –

D. Bowden, A. P. Creaney, Rev. N. Dixon, W. Dolny, T. Durham, T. Feerick, P. Friedman, M. Katzenstein, C. G. Moerdler, J. Pilsner, C. Prentice, J. Reyes, I. W. Stone, E. Tossas Tucker, M. Wolpoff, H. Young

Opposed -

R. Abbott, R. Bender, A. P. Cassino, R. Fanuzzi, D. McShane,  
S. Scheinbach, B. Trebach

Abstentions –

J. Kreppel, I. Ladimer

B. Aging

No report.

C. Youth – C. Prentice

C. Prentice reported that her first meeting of the Committee was very good and the minutes have been distributed. The next meeting will be held January 31<sup>st</sup>, Board Office, 1:00 PM.

D. Budget – K. O'Brien

No report.

E. Economic Development – J. Reyes

1. Refer to the Committee minutes for full report.
2. J. Reyes announced the following job trainings:

OAI, Inc. is now accepting applications for a 14 week free job training program in building construction, health and safety, and environmental remediation. For further information call the DEP office at 718-231-8470.

The Department for the Aging Title V program is recruiting trainees for full time and part-time work, who are 55 or older, low income, and unemployed. For further information call 212-442-1355/56 or 311.

3. Representatives from the Bronx Council on the Arts, and Bronx Tourism will attend the joint Committee meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup> to address the trolley proposal for Community Board No. 8 communities.
4. A Taste of the Bronx with the viewing of The Bronx Tradition "*Messiah*," by George Frederic Handel, will take place on December 16<sup>th</sup>, at Lehman. Call the box office 718-960.8833 for tickets.

F. Education – D. Bowden

1. The Committee minutes were distributed.

2. D. Bowden discussed the Committee meeting held in November at which Lori O'Mara, new principal from MS/HS141/RKA, attended as guest speaker. She explained that accounts of the meeting were written up in the Riverdale Review and she had been receiving comments regarding it. D. Bowden stated that the community has an interest in the level of education performance in its local schools, and the community has always prided itself in having a fine academic program. D. Bowden let it be known that hostility was never the intent; that Principal O'Mara was not responsible for the dismal SAT scores or the 89% graduation rate at the school, which may be acceptable across the City, but this community feels it could be higher. To that end, the Education Committee would like to offer assistance and partner with MS/HS 141/RKA to create an educational vision and academic plan to enhance learning and address student achievement to ultimately raise scores. D. Bowden related that substantial progress may take several years, but in the long run it will have great value.
  3. Fourteen schools have closed within the past week. One is PS 79 located in the Board's former school district.
  4. The Committee's next meeting will be held on December 18<sup>th</sup>, Board Office, at 7:30 PM. Guest speakers will be the new principal of PS 37, Ken Petriccone, and Robert Feinerman, Head of Mathematics Department, Lehman College.
  5. W. Stone commended D. Bowden on her excellent efforts with educational issues in the community.
- G. Environment and Sanitation – S. Scheinbach
1. Refer to minutes for full report.
  2. The Board was represented by District Manager N. Stent, at the Croton Filtration Plant Monitoring Committee meeting on November 29<sup>th</sup>. The meeting included presentation of plans for the above ground building; and a resolution on cost overrun for the plant to be voted on at the next meeting.
  3. Construction of the Con Edison's M-29 power transmission line will take up to two years. Work in Community Board No. 8 will be divided simultaneously between north and south areas. The community liaison is Myra Linares, who can be reached at 1-800-799-1083.
  4. S. Scheinbach stated that he looks forward to serving on the special committee for the Alternate Side Parking reform.
- H. Health, Hospitals and Social Services – M. Katzenstein

1. The report is as submitted in the Committee minutes.
  2. M. Katzenstein thanked P. Friedman for his participation on the Committee and taking the minutes.
  3. The Allen Pavilion has been contacted on the issue of operating ambulances in Community Board No. 8. Representatives from the hospital will be invited to a Committee meeting. The same will follow with Montefiore Hospital.
- I. Housing – J. Kreppel
1. Refer to the minutes for full report.
  2. Discussed the hearing at the BSA, re 3880/82/84 Cannon Place.
  3. Discussed the proposed Council bill regarding curtailing of frivolous lawsuits by tenants against landlords supported by Council Member Maria Baez.
- J. Land Use – C. Moerdler
1. A pattern has been developing with non-notification to the Board of BSA hearings, as in the case of 626 West 254<sup>th</sup> Street's application. The applicant went straight to the BSA and it was understood that the applicant would return to the Board. C. Moerdler requested the District Manager to follow-up on the status of this applicant.
  2. Chapel Farm has begun advertising three of its properties for rent, not sale, at a rate of \$35,000 monthly. C. Moerdler will seek a meeting with John Fitzgerald, the developer, to discuss this matter.
- K. Parks & Recreation – B. Bender

There will be no December meeting. The next Committee meeting will be held January 23<sup>rd</sup>, Board Office, at 7:00 PM. There will be a presentation on the work scope for Van Cortlandt Park parade grounds and stadium.

Chairman Cassino wished all happy holidays and a healthy New Year.

Meeting adjourned 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Patricia Manning  
Community Associate

