

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 13, 2009 AT AMALGAMATED HOUSING, VLADEK HALL 74 VAN CORTLANDT PARK WEST

- PRESENT:** R. Abbott, S. Alexander, S. Balicer, A. P. Cassino, A. Cohen, A. P. Creaney, W. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, A. G. Feldmeier, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, S. Froot, R. Ginty, A. Goldman, M. Khury, I. Ladimer, Y. Levy, S. Marquez, B. Maybury, D. McShane, K. O'Brien, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, S. Scheinbach, L. Spalter, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, S. Villaverde, M. Wolpoff, H. Young
- ABSENT:** R. Bender, D. Bowden, A. Fana, T. Feerick, B. Feinberg, T. Giallorenzi, J. Goris, V. Gray, G. O. Koppell, C. G. Moerdler, J. O'Reilly, J. M. Pilsner, J. M. Reyes
- STAFF:** N. Stent – District Manager
D. Bay – Community Associate
P. Manning – Community Associate
- GUESTS:** J. Dinowitz, Assemblyman
R. Fedderman – rep. Congressman Eliot Engel
M. Gary – rep. State Senator Pedro Espada
A. Heller – rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell
J. Kim – rep. State Senator Eric Schneiderman
R. Martos – rep. Office of Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz
C. McShane – rep. Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Y. Salih – rep. State Senator Jeffrey Klein
H. Barret – VCP Memorial Grove
B. Bearo
E. Kaufman – Amalgamated Housing
L. Frisch
L. Godfrey – Fit to Lead
C. M. Giove – Riverdale Review
H. H. Harrison – NYPL Van Cortlandt Branch
E. Ivan
L. Koumoulos – Land & Sea Restaurant
M. Koumoulos – Land & Sea Restaurant
Capt. A. Lindquist – 50th Police Precinct
M. McShea – Bronx Community College
F. Pelaez
M. Peron – Van Cortlandt Park
P.O. M. Ramos – 50th Police Precinct
I. Diaz-Reyes
Det. L. Rodriguez – 50th Police Precinct
V. Scelzo
S. Spielberg
W. Suero
R. Press – Bronx News
E. Yaker – Amalgamated Housing

Chairman McShane convened the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Chairman called upon Budget Chairman O'Brien to conduct the Public Hearing on the Capital and Expense Budget Priorities for Fiscal Year 2011.

Chairman O'Brien reviewed the prioritized budget, comprised of 15 Capital and 38 Expense requests. The budget had been sent to the full Board following recommendation by the Executive Board Committee and was being presented for a final vote. The floor was opened for discussion. The budget requests of the Education Committee were given higher priority with renewal of the lease for the Whitehall School Annex moved to number 2 under Expense. The Capital request initiated at the Executive Board Committee to support refunding the EMS station in Woodlawn was removed and replaced with the original request for construction of an EMS station within the boundaries of Community Board 8, under Capital at number 5.

Chairman referred to the Public Hearing Speaker's list and called upon Robert Press.

R. Press advised of his longstanding Community Membership status on the Education Committee and commented about the strong support by the Committee for return of the Whitehall Annex and the renewal of the lease. With respect to the question of the actual expiration date of the lease, he offered that it was due to expire at the end of 2010 school year, impacting on 2011 Fiscal Year.

Hearing from no other public speakers, a motion was made to accept the budget as revised. The motion was seconded. The vote was carried unanimously in favor.

Vote: 30 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions

In Favor –

R. Abbott, S. Alexander, S. Balicer, A. P. Cassino, A. Cohen, A. P. Creaney, W. Dolny, T. Durham, R. Fanuzzi, A. G. Feldmeier, B. Fettman, P. Friedman, S. Froot, R. Ginty, A. Goldman, M. Khury, I. Ladimer, Y. Levy, S. Marquez, B. Maybury, D. McShane, K. O'Brien, D. Padernacht, K. Pesce, S. Scheinbach, L. Spalter, I. W. Stone, B. Trebach, M. Wolpoff, H. Young

The Public Hearing on the Budget Priorities for FY 2011 was closed. Chairman McShane thanked Budget Chairman O'Brien for his work.

Chairman McShane called the regular Board meeting to order.

Chairman gave the unfortunate news of the recent passing of Board Member Cassandra Prentice, following a long illness. Chairman spoke of Cassandra's outstanding contributions that reached beyond her service on the Board. A letter of condolences on behalf of the Board was read by T. Durham at the funeral service. The Chairman added that Cassandra will long be remembered for her strength of character, work effort, kindness and friendship to the Board.

Gallery Session

- A. I. Ladimer announced the plans of Schervier's new Pet Pantry that will operate for a two week period and provide free gifts of food for dogs and cats. A flea market will be held to secure funding, and private contributions are welcome. The Pantry is due to open November 11th. He urged support of this initiative.
- B. Maria Koumoulos, Land & Sea Restaurant, advised of the serious problem with loss of business. Business has significantly dropped since the parking lot on West 230th Street and Broadway had been closed in preparation for the new Broadway Plaza

development. She asked for the Board's intervention in getting the lot re-opened in the interim.

Chairman responded that a meeting with NYC Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has been planned to discuss the parking lot issue and development issues. Assemblyman Dinowitz and the Borough President's office advised that they had each sent a letter to EDC on this matter.

- C. Robert Press presented a letter published in the Riverdale Press of his objection to the installation of a traffic light signal at West 235th and Independence Avenue, citing that the number of lights in close proximity was in place, and an additional light would clog traffic.
- D. Loyce Godfrey, Bronx Christian Fellowship Church, presented information on the FIT TO LEAD program, a collaboration with the U.S. Army. It is a fitness leadership and mentorship program for youth to address childhood obesity. The program will concentrate on goal setting, self respect, character building and more, it is free for 6th – 12th graders, and is a six week certificate program. For further information call 718-231-1033 or email bcfcathedral@aol.com.

At this juncture Chairman McShane announced the appointment of Victoria Gray as the Board's Youth Committee Chairperson. He invited Ms. Godfrey to follow-up with the Committee.

- E. Victor Scelzo, discussed the negative impact of PS 95 extension on the neighborhood with additional teachers impacting on parking spaces. Additionally, there are problems with the unruly schoolchildren hanging out in the Jerome Park Library, on the street, and creating disturbances at neighborhood businesses.

Chairman stated that the District Manager and a representative from the Traffic and Transportation Committee had met with the school's officials last year on parking issues and there will be follow-up.

- F. Michael Gary, Amalgamated Housing advised of the disagreement between some of the cooperators and the Amalgamated Board of Directors with the decision of the Board to conduct apartment inspections. He cited invasion of privacy and other reasons for opposition. He requested that the Community Board act as an intermediary. He also reported problems of longstanding potholes particularly at Van Cortlandt Park South and Gouverneur Avenue.

Both issues will be reviewed by the relevant committees, Housing, and Traffic & Transportation.

1. Approval of regular Board Minutes of September 8, 2009

The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Discussion of Executive Board Committee Minutes of October 7, 2009

The minutes were adopted as written.

3. Chairman welcomed Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz and his staff member Randi Martos; Richard Fedderman, representing Congressman Eliot Engel; Chris McShane, representing Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.; Jihoon Kim, representing Senator Eric Schneiderman;

Arthur Heller, representing Councilman G. Oliver Koppell; Yasmin Salih, representing Senator Jeffrey Klein; Capt. Albert Lindquist, Det. Luis Rodriguez, and P.O. Mindy Ramos, 50th Precinct; Horace Harrison, Van Cortlandt Branch Library; Margot Perron, Van Cortlandt Park; Candice Giove, Riverdale Review; and Robert Press, Bronx News.

4. Chairman invited Capt. Lindquist to address the Board.

Capt. Lindquist gave an overview of crime statistics reflecting graffiti problems, car break-ins of lap tops, GPS, and phones visible in cars. Overall crime has decreased in the 28 day period. Arrests continue to increase.

5. Chairman invited Assemblyman Dinowitz to address the Board.

Assemblyman Dinowitz announced the funding of a graffiti program and his office will accept complaints. A letter was sent to NYC Economic Development Corporation regarding West 230th Street and Broadway regarding parking, urging re-opening of the lot. Attended the Board of Standards & Appeals (BSA) hearing on 3217 Irwin Avenue application for transient parking, and was satisfied with the questions by BSA; the applicant has been given more time to submit documentation in support of the application. Regarding the traffic safety issue at West 235th and Independence Avenue, he recommends a regular traffic light during school hours and flashing red during off-hours; a focus on school rezoning issues has begun to find a balance with underutilized schools versus overcrowded schools in Community Board 8. This year the Assemblyman is only able to offer one day for free flu vaccines, which will be given on October 20th, at Saint Gabriel's Church. Reservations are necessary.

6. Report from the Office of the Borough President – C. McShane

- Borough President Diaz issued his official response to the developer of the Kingsbridge Armory project. The developer's responses were dismissive of the concerns of the surrounding community. Borough President Diaz will issue a 2nd response.
- Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. travelled to Washington, D.C. and met with Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, Adolfo Carrion, Jr., Director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs, and Congressmen Jose Serrano, Joseph Crowley and Eliot Engel. The session covered many issues, including bringing more stimulus funds to the Bronx, green development, and national healthcare reform.
- Borough President Diaz has called upon Mayor Bloomberg to reverse the decision to lay-off school aide workers.
- Borough President Diaz announced the creation of the Disability Advisory Council, in recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The Council is part of a large-scale national effort to promote career development for job seekers with disabilities through hands-on career exploration, on-site job shadowing, and ongoing mentoring leading to internship and employment opportunities. Mentees will be assigned to work in various departments of the Borough President's Office.
- Upcoming events include Bronx DIVA Talk, October 14th, Pregones Theater, 5757 Walton Avenue, 6:30PM – 8:00PM.; October 15th, Borough President's Public Hearing on the Renewal of the Cablevision Franchise Agreement, Bronx County Building, Rotunda, 6:00PM.; October 18th, Tour de Bronx. To register visit www.tourdebronx.org or call 718-590-BRONX (online registration closes October 15th, 5:00PM); October 22nd, Italian Heritage Celebration, Belmont Library, 610 East 186th Street, 6:00PM.

7. Committee Reports

A. Treasurer's Report – P. Friedman

Reviewed the attached report and explained the notable figure changes for Personal Services (PS) and Other Than Personal Services (OTPS).

B. Aging – K. Pesce

1. The next meeting will be held on October 27, 2009, at Methodist Church Home, at 3:30 PM.
2. Riverdale Senior Services is offering a six-week pain management workshop scheduled to begin October 14th.

C. Economic Development – R. Fanuzzi

1. A meeting will be held with NYC Economic Development Corporation to urge the re-opening of the parking lot on West 230th and Broadway and to discuss issues with a temporary use of the site. He thanked Diane and Nicole in the Board Office for following through in setting up this critical meeting.
2. The Committee will be monitoring the Kingsbridge Armory project.
3. The Youth Market will be closing for the season and a Harvest Festival event will be held on Saturday, day October 24th in Marble Hill at West 225th Street between Broadway and Exterior Street. It will be a time to celebrate and thank all the sponsors and volunteers for helping to make the first Youthmarket a great success.
4. The next Committee meeting will be held on October 29th, at the Board office, at 7:30 PM.

D. Education

I.W. Stone reported in the absence of D. Bowden.

The Committee had a presentation by Dr. Bedell, NYC Health Department on the topic of nurse's role with the administering of swine flu in schools. Refer to the minutes for full report.

E. Environment and Sanitation – S. Scheinbach

1. Discussed hydrofracking drilling for natural gas proposal for upstate New York, and the issues of contamination of the water supply and potential dangerous risks with that technique. A 60 day comment period is now underway. The only public hearing in the New York City area will be held on November 12th, at Stuyvesant H.S. at 6:00 PM. The Committee will strategize for this hearing at its meeting on October 21st Board Office, at 7:00 PM.

B. Trebach commented on Congressional bills to repeal the exemption for hydraulic fracturing in the Safe Drinking Water Act. In the Senate, there are four co-sponsors, including both senators from New York. In the House, there are 29 co-sponsors, but Congressman Engel is not among them, even though it has been referred to one of his committees. B. Trebach asked Richard Fedderman to inform Congressman Engel that the Board passed a resolution against hydraulic fracturing on June 9, 2009.

2. S. Scheinbach has been engaged in the removal of illegally posted signs on City lampposts and other public property, and urged others to do likewise.

F. Health, Hospitals and Social Services – M. Khury

1. Refer to the minutes for report on the September meeting.
2. Information on H1N1 is available on the website at www.NYC.gov/flu and in the Board office.
3. The Committee approved its Mission Statement.
4. The Committee will meet jointly with the Education Committee on October 27th, Riverdale Mental Health, at 7:30 PM. The agenda will include a presentation by Leake and Watts Services to operate Individual Residential Alternative homes for seven young adults with developmental disabilities at 543, 545 and 549 West 261st Street. A tour of the properties has been arranged for October 20th. Anyone interested in the tour should contact M. Khury. A formal public hearing will be held thereafter.

G. Housing – T. Durham

1. Refer to the minutes for report on the September meeting.
2. Mayor Michael Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn recently announced a \$20 million pilot program to turn unsold condominiums, unrented apartments, and stalled construction sites into affordable housing opportunities for moderate- and middle-income families.
3. T. Durham will attend the groundbreaking for the Jericho project's Veterans Housing on Kingsbridge Terrace on November 10th.

H. Land Use

Chairman McShane reported in the absence of C. Moerdler.

He advised of the Land Use meeting being held on October 22nd, at Manhattanville Health Care Center, 311 West 231st Street, at 7:30 PM. The agenda will include Urban Pathways / Housing Preservation Development proposal for construction at 3469 Cannon Place; Reinstatement of variance at 3031 Bailey for automotive service station; and report on cutting and pruning trees on Bon Secours New York Health System/Schervier property.

I. Law, Rules and Ethics – I. Ladimer

Reported on the Committee meeting. It was the first organizational meeting. Decisions were made to keep track of legislation with public officials, including information from the Conflict of Interest Board; and formulate a Committee procedure manual. The next meeting will be held on November 10th, at 7:00 PM.

J. Libraries and Cultural Affairs – R. Abbott

1. Over the summer, R. Abbott reviewed programs in all five library branches in Community Board 8. He found them to be quite extensive with something for everyone.
2. Completion date for Kingsbridge Library is scheduled for the end of 2010.

K. Parks and Recreation

1. Refer to minutes for full report.
2. "It's My Parks Day" is October 24th.
3. Chairman McShane reported on the meeting regarding Vinmont Ballfield. Construction is delayed another year until 2011.

L. Public Safety – A. G. Feldmeier

1. The Committee will meet on October 15th, 50th Police Precinct, at 7:30 PM. Will discuss procedure for Night Club applications, as one is being proposed for a location on Broadway.
2. No Activity at Koo Koo's.

L. Spalter discussed the recent emergency incident at the Russian Mission with the Fire Department delay entering the compound. Chairman McShane recommended follow-up with the Fire Department.

M. Traffic and Transportation – A. P. Cassino

1. Muni Meters are being installed throughout the District. To date 225 single space meters were removed and replaced by 25 Muni Meters, allowing for 20% increase in parking space.
2. Electric Hybrid buses are now in the District.
3. 30 locations for bike racks were requested. Selected locations are not known yet. Installation expected next year.
4. Alternate Side Parking reduction will go forward November 2009.
5. October 14th is national "Walk to School Day". PS 24 and PS 81 will participate.
6. The Committee will postpone its meeting for October 20th, and meet jointly with Economic Development Committee in November to address parking issues in commercial areas.
7. Discussed recommendations for traffic safety in the area of 235th Street and Independence Avenue, which include a traffic light.

N. Youth – V. Gray

V. Gray spoke warmly of the close relationship she had with Cassandra. She understood her passion for working with the Youth and goals she tried to attain with services and programs. She will attempt to step into Cassandra's shoes to pursue those goals in the same manner for the youth of this community. T. Durham, who served as Vice Chair of Youth offered his assistance.

Chairman McShane thanked Amalgamated for their graciousness in hosting the Board meeting.

Meeting adjourned 9:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Patricia Manning
Community Associate