

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT & SANITATION COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON NOVEMBER 13, 2008
AT THE BOARD OFFICE, 5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE**

Board Members of the Committee present:

Saul Scheinbach, Committee Chairman
Bradford Trebach, Committee Vice Chairman
Bert Feinberg
Thomas Giallorenzi
James Plaza
Laura Spalter

Other Board Members present:

Bob Bender

Community Members of the Committee present:

Jane Sokolow

Also in attendance:

Megan James (from the Riverdale Press)
Henry Ehrhardt (from the Department of Sanitation)
Paul Visconti (from the Department of Sanitation)
Leon Fendley (from the Department of Parks and Recreation)
Margot Perron (from the Department of Parks and Recreation)
John Atchley (from NYC Department of Environmental Protection)
Nicole Torres (from NYC Department of Environmental Protection)
David Burk (from Grimshaw Architects)

The Committee met at 7:00 p.m. – S. Scheinbach in the Chair.

1. It was agreed that the Minutes of the Committee's meeting of October 13, 2008 be adopted as amended.
2. Presentation of the Sanitation Snow Operation Plan by the Department of Sanitation (DOS).

Deputy Director of Community Affairs Henry Ehrhardt summarized the DOS snow removal plan. He said from November 10 to April 4 of each year workers are assigned to night trash and recycling removal to have manpower ready and available for snow removal. This allows DOS to rapidly respond to a snowstorm with the workers already on hand. He also said laborers are called in to remove snow from crosswalks, step streets

and major intersections. DOS Bronx Borough Chief, Paul Visconti, said CB8 is divided into three sections and that each winter on a rotating basis, one section gets night pickups. This year night pickups will occur in Riverdale and Fieldston. Trash pickups involve two trucks operating between midnight and 8 AM, while recycling uses three trucks from

4 PM to midnight. The Vice Chair asked how DOS would deal with the narrow winding streets, often with parked cars, prevalent in Riverdale. Chief Visconti said the DOS would do it's best to service these streets.

T. Giallorenzi asked about broken glass on step streets. Deputy Director Ehrhardt said that a call to 311 is immediately logged by DOS so they can respond quickly. He said the fine for not cleaning up canine waste has been increased from \$100 to \$250, and he hoped to have more inspectors on the job despite looming budget cuts. He also said that a call to 311 about illegal signs will trigger a response from an inspector who will try to track the responsible person and issue a \$75 fine for each sign. Chief Visconti said any illegal dumping should be reported as a "street condition" rather than trash to generate a faster response and pointed out that 50% of any fine goes to whoever reports the offender.

The Vice Chair commended DOS Inspector Hickey who has been very helpful in the past and always responds quickly to any problems brought to his attention.

3. Presentation of design update for the Croton Golf Clubhouse by Grimshaw Architects.

John Atchley, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Chief of Staff introduced the project. He said the DEP was collecting comments from the community and will be meeting with the NYC Design Commission to review them. David Burk of Grimshaw Architects presented the plans, which won the competition based on a "green" design. He said the project was designed to be in harmony with the park green space, to create amenities for public recreation and education, and to prevent discharge of ground and storm water runoff to sewers. He described a system of water retention, channeling water to a pond, which would be used to irrigate the golf course and surrounding parkland using 5 million gallons a year. Groundwater, at a constant 55⁰F, would pass through heat exchangers to cool or heat the clubhouse, depending on the season. He said the entire system was designed to withstand a once-in-ten-year 24-hour rainstorm without having to discharge to the sewer. He expected the project would be finished in 2011, a year after the filtration plant.

In response to a question from J. Sokolow concerning the taking of extra parkland for a 75-space parking lot, Deputy Director Atchley said the DEP's position is that enlarging a recreational facilitates parking lot does not alienate parkland because it serves a "primary park purpose" there is no need for a supplemental EIS. He was vague when questioned by the Chairman on exactly how much extra parkland was involved. The committee noted that the No. 4 train provides easy access to the driving range and questioned the need for such a large lot. In addition, community activists will likely go to court on this

issue. Mr. Atchley responded that the DEP will consider that possibility when finalizing the plans.

4. Update on the Facility Monitoring Committee for the Croton Water Filter Plant project

The next CFMC meeting is on 11/20 at the DEP office, 3660 Jerome Ave. at 7pm. The meeting will include a presentation by the Office of Emergency Management on emergency response procedures. This stems from the earlier chlorine gas leak at Gatehouse No. 5.

5. Graffiti vandalism

L. Spalter reported that the Riverdale Community Association was hiring AAC Restoration to remove graffiti at several sites on Broadway and in Riverdale.

6. Any other business

The Chairman noted that at the November 12, 2008 full board meeting, concern was expressed during the gallery session that cell phone antennas placed on public light poles could yield dangerous radiation. In response, he cited a report in the August 29, 2008 journal, *Science*. The report stated that the only two peer-reviewed scientific papers purporting to show a link between cell phone radiation and cell (DNA) damage were discredited because the data had been fabricated, and that one paper had already been withdrawn.

At 8:35 p.m., the Committee was adjourned to a day and time to be fixed by the Chairman.

Respectfully submitted,

Saul Scheinbach
*Chairman,
Environment and Sanitation Committee*