

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT & SANITATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON  
MAY 19, 2009  
AT THE BOARD OFFICE, 5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE**

*Board Members of the Committee present:*

Saul Scheinbach, Committee Chairman  
Bradford Trebach, Committee Vice Chairman  
James Plaza  
Thomas Giallorenzi  
Herb Young

*Other Board Members present:*

none

*Community Members of the Committee present:*

none

*Also in attendance:*

Anne Marie Garti (from the Jerome Park Conservancy)  
Robert Press (resident)

*The Committee met at 7:34 p.m. – S. Scheinbach in the Chair.*

1. It was agreed that the Minutes of the Committee's meeting of February 18, 2009 be adopted.
2. Illegally posted signs.

The Chairman described his recent actions concerning illegal signs. On April 7 he testified at City Hall in support of a bill, Introduction 701A, introduced by Councilman Koppell. The bill makes "open house" and other signs placed on public spaces like crosswalks, sidewalks, medians, Greenstreets and park perimeters illegal. The bill also includes a "rebuttable presumption" that the name, address or other id on the sign is the person responsible and will get the fine. The bill does not change the law concerning A-frame signs on sidewalks fronting residential or commercial property, they are already illegal. Committee members should make their support for the bill known by calling Simcha Felder, Chair, Sanitation & Solid Waste Management, 212-788-7357. The Chairman said signs taped to utility poles are a growing problem, and he has been personally removing them. He urged members to report them to 311, or better yet, take them down using a pen knife.

3. Update on the Facility Monitoring Committee (FMC) for the Croton Water Filter Plant project.

The Chairman said that at the last FMC meeting held April 16th, the major issue discussed was the declaration by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that they would be blasting, beginning in the fall, along Goulden Ave. The DEP said the blasting was required to excavate cavities for valve chambers for treated water flowing from the filtration plant to distribution, and that hoe ramming was inefficient. They said that since blasting was merely a change in construction means and methods, it was a "minor modification" from their 2004

Final Supplemental Environmental Impact statement (FSEIS) and did not require any new filings. The FMC pointed out that DEP specifically stated in the FSEIS they would not use blasting. Therefore they should file an SEIS and follow a documented procedure within a regulatory framework. In support of that the FMC approved a resolution requesting that the DEP file an SEIS for the blasting. The mood of the public was negative and there were hints of a lawsuit. Anne Marie Garti pointed out that the Old Croton Aqueduct, which runs along the eastern wall of the Jerome Park reservoir (JPR) is a National Historic Landmark and could be subject to damage from blast vibrations. The next FMC meeting will be held on June 18, 7pm, at 3660 Jerome Avenue.

The Chairman distributed a copy of a letter from Senator Jeff Klein to Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe. The letter expresses Senators Klein's concerns about the plans for a running track part-way around the JPR, excluding Goulden and Reservoir Avenues before DEP has ruled on public access to the JPR. It also asks that Parks keep Senator Klein informed about their plans.

#### 4. Gas drilling by hydraulic fracturing.

The Chairman asked Ms. Garti to review the issue of horizontal gas drilling by hydraulic fracturing, which has been proposed in New York State. She said the process turns potable water into toxic waste. It uses millions of gallons of water and has the potential to pollute water supplies throughout the state, and this has already happened in Wyoming, New Mexico and Pennsylvania. Water mixed with sand and organic and inorganic chemicals is pumped under high pressure into well shafts. The mixture fractures the surrounding shale deposits, releasing pockets of natural gas, which is collected. Each well can use over a million gallons of water, and only about half the tainted waste-water is recovered. The rest has the potential to travel to the water table, while the recovered waste-water is stored in above-ground ponds, and could contaminate surface waters. The Chairman offered a resolution to the committee that requests state officials, either by legislation or decree by the Governor, to ban horizontal gas drilling by hydraulic fracturing in New York State. The committee approved the resolution unanimously.

#### 5. Graffiti vandalism

The Vice-Chair noted that the Department of Transportation has been lax in removing graffiti from parkway overpasses and embankments, and he would raise the issue at the next Traffic & Transportation committee meeting.

#### 6. Any other business

The Chairman offered a resolution to the committee supporting a bill introduced by State Senator Klein (S1880) requiring that graffiti cleanup be part of a community service sentence for convicted graffiti vandals. The committee approved the resolution unanimously.

The Chairman asked the committee for budget priorities for 2010. After a discussion it was agreed to present a request to the DEP for twice-weekly cleaning around the JPR perimeter, and a request to the Department of Sanitation (DOS) for more Canine Waste Enforcement agents in the Bronx. The Chairman said he would also ask the DOS to place more litter baskets around the JPR.

Thomas Giallorenzi said that broken glass along the streets, presumably from car break-ins is not being removed.

Robert Press asked about recycling compliance in CB8. The Chairman said he would check on it.

*At 8:44 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*