

Bronx Community Board No. 8
Minutes of the Environment and Sanitation Committee Meeting
Held April 20, 2016 at the Board Office

Attendees:

Committee members: Laura Spalter, Vice Chair; Bob Fanuzzi, Bob Bender, Robert Press, David Kornbluh, Rob Spalter, Community Member

Water Working Group: Karen Argenti, Bronx Council for Environmental Quality

Board members: Amy Joy Robateau

Absent: Demetrious McCord, Chair; James Rather

Agenda:

The meeting commenced at 7:35 PM.

The minutes of the March 16, 2016 were unanimously approved.

Report by the Water Working Group (WWG) - Karen Argenti

On March 31 Karen Argenti and Phoebe Mankiewicz attended a meeting with Commissioner Magdi Farag from the NYC DEP Office of Green Infrastructure (OGI) and Greenstreets on behalf of the E and S Water Working Group, BCEQ, and the Harlem River Working Group.

The purpose of the meeting was threefold:

1. To explore the responsibility of landowners for controlling water runoff on their sites.

Commissioner Farag said that there is room in the sewer system for a certain amount of runoff, but that excess has to be taken care of on site. He agreed to attend a future meeting to brief the E and S committee on the regulations and how they are applied.

2. To share our web based map application designed by vista volunteer Phoebe Mankiewicz last year for the WWG and our findings, which are based on our E and S survey developed to identify high flood areas in Community Board 8.

3. To learn about DEP's plans for Community Board 8 regarding their Green Infrastructure Program. DEP's goal is to construct bioswales and other water absorbing strategies (aka Green Infrastructure) to absorb storm runoff before it enters our sewer system. By reducing the volume of water flowing into our sewers, we prevent our system from getting overwhelmed and discharging untreated sewerage into our water bodies (aka Combined Sewer Overflow or CSO). DEP is under a mandate by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to control and reduce the number of Combined Sewer Overflow incidences in NYC.

The DEP shared their preliminary map that they are developing indicating high flood areas in Community Board 8. These areas are in the vicinity of Broadway, Jerome Park, and Bailey

Avenue. **Click NYC DEP GI Referenced Map link:**

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/green_infrastructure/green_infrastructure_combined_sewer_reference_map.pdf

The committee was gratified to learn that DEP's high flood map coincides with the data collected over the past two years by the Working Water Group/ E and S committee. DEP explained that they have specific criteria to meet regarding Green Infrastructure, and must coordinate with other agencies: DOT, DPR, DDC, as well as private owners. When they are ready, DEP will present their plan for Community Board 8 to the committee. A useful informational link that explains CSO issues and types of Green Infrastructure is:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/stormwater/combined_sewer_overflow_bmps.shtml

Capital and Expense Budget Priorities for FY 2018:

The status of last year's budget priorities for DEP and DOS were reviewed. The committee approved additional items to accommodate specific requests by the Department of Sanitation. The vice chair will continue to reach out to the agencies regarding their needs. She will send the proposed list to committee members prior to the next meeting, so that it can be prioritized and approved.

New Business:

- A review of DDC's list of DEP projects referenced a Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) issue at BJ's on Broadway, and replacement of water mains on Waldo Avenue. We discussed the need for regular briefings by DEP on infrastructure projects and issues.
- Bob Press showed pictures of the recently constructed bioswale at 236th street and Riverdale Ave, constructed to absorb water run off. It was filled with litter. Discussion ensued about the critical need for maintenance to avoid ending up with a community eyesore. Note: Vice chair checked on the site the following week and it was litter-free.
- Christ Church is sponsoring an **Environmental Fair on Sunday, May 22 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM**. Committee members are urged to attend. The focus is on reducing our carbon footprint.
- The Department of Sanitation (DOS) is holding a **Safe Disposal Event on Saturday, May 14th (rain or shine)** at the Orchard Beach Parking Lot from 10 AM to 4 PM. City residents may bring automotive products, household products such as paint and poisons, and medical items. For year round disposal options or for more information about the event visit their link, nyc.gov/safedisposal
- DEP Traffic Advisory: Beginning April 25th and continuing through May 6th, the DEP will close a portion of the eastbound right lane of Sedgwick Ave at Dickinson Ave./Goulden Ave. between the hours of 8:00 PM and 6:00 AM in order to excavate, cut and cap an existing water main. For more information contact DEP's Community Hotline at 718-231-8470 or email DEP at GouldenAveWaterLine@CrotonCM.com.

Old Business:

- **238th St. and Summit Step Streets.** There have been continued trash complaints iabout areas under DOT jurisdiction. There are 26 Step Streets in Community Board 8, the most in the city. Cleanliness is a problem because the area inside the railings, are fairly well maintained by DOS. The area outside the railings is cleaned by DOT. The committee recommended that our district manager raise the garbage issue at the next District Service Cabinet meeting.
Note: The DOT is addressing serious capital needs of these step streets, and the Traffic and Transportation Committee is addressing capital projects in their 2018 budget priorities.
- Property Water Overflow Amendment (PWOA): The chair will check on this DEP regulation from 2012, which pertains to water run-off in new developments or renovations over 5,000 square feet.
- The Tibbetts Brook resolution, which was passed by the full board, was distributed to all elected officials, and DEP and Parks commissioners.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Spalter, Vice Chair

Environment and Sanitation Committee