

(Pending Approval)
Minutes of the Environment and Sanitation Committee
November 15, 2017 at Mosaic Mental Health, 5676 Riverdale Avenue, suite 202

Attendees:

Committee members: Laura Spalter, chair, Bob Fanuzzi, vice chair, Bob Bender, Martin Gluck, Steve Froot, Rob Spalter, community committee member

Committee members absent: Karen Argenti (attending a DEP Long Term Control Plan meeting in Queens; she will report back to committee)

Community Board member: Dan Padernacht

Guests: Gerry Kelpin, DEP Director of Environmental Compliance and Effie Ardizzone, DEP Bronx Borough Coordinator, David Kornbluh, representing Senator Jeff Klein

Community: Linda Gelerter, Jodie Colon, Gabriel Duah, Ivania Amoako, Jean Saporito, Myra Fasner, Pam Klyuert, Lourdes Ramry, Carole Haas, Laurie Srebnick, Andrew Cassino, Bob Drake, Ann Rauch, Elisa Medina

Agenda:

The meeting commenced at approximately 7:37. The minutes of October 18, 2017 were unanimously approved.

The committee invited Gerry Kelpin and Effie Ardizzone from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to address noise and air complaints. The community raised the following three issues:

- Construction noise at Stagg site located at 3482 Fort Independence Street. Due to the amount of bedrock at the site, neighbors have been subjected to severe construction noise for over a year. Mitigation measures such as staggering the times of machinery, blanketing the retaining wall to absorb sound and prevent echoing, and wrapping equipment were discussed. Ms. Kelpin, the Director of Environmental Compliance said that DEP has inspected the site many times, but the decibel reading was under their violation range. Residents using their own equipment disagreed with DEP's findings. Ms. Kelpin promised that DEP will continue to monitor the site and that she will meet with the developer regarding noise mitigation, and report back to the committee. Ms. Kelpin noted that while DEP monitors noise, only the Department of Buildings may issue a stop work order for construction noise. She referenced a bill recently introduced in the City Council that would assist DEP in monitoring noise.
- Residents of Skyview on the Hudson Cooperative raised the problem of foul smells emanating from the Yonkers Sewerage Treatment Plant located on the Hudson River about 1.4 miles away. The problem, which does not affect all apartments, has gotten worse in the last two years. They also raised the issue of trucks from the plant using Riverdale Avenue to transport the sludge to New Jersey. Ms. Kelpin said that she did

not think the material being transported was toxic. She advised contacting Congressman Eliot Engel, as the problem does not fall under the jurisdiction of NYC DEP. Other suggestions were to contact the College of Mt. St. Vincent because they are also near the treatment plant, work with their coop board, and work with Senator Klein's office to communicate the issue to Mayor Spano of Yonkers.

- Ms. Ardizzone was asked about the status of a street sinkhole on Johnson Avenue between Edsall Avenue and Kappock Street. The DOT had indicated that fixing it required DEP's repairing the infrastructure. Ms. Ardizzone will look into it and get back to the committee.

New Business: Introduction 1346, City Council law passed on May 30, 2017, "Water Pollution Control provisions re storm water management and discharge to sewers"

The chair shared an informative letter from Councilman Cohen in response to our request for information about the new law. See letter attached. Councilman Cohen supports the new law. It gives the city the authority to regulate activities such as erosion controls on construction sites and new development that can contribute to pollution of our water bodies from the city's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS 4). The MS 4 system is a network of drains, pipes, and ditches that collects storm water runoff. This runoff contains road toxins and other pollutants, and discharges directly into local waterways without being treated in a treatment plant. The city is under a mandate from state DEC to develop a comprehensive storm water management plan to reduce pollution.

The committee discussed our May 2016 meeting with DEP regarding MS 4 locations. We learned from that presentation that Bronx Community Board 8 is not included in DEP's mapping of MS 4 locations. Subsequently our Water Working Group sent DEP locations to consider, which were rejected with the possible exception of Van Cortlandt Park. We agreed to continue discussion of MS 4.

Old Business: The committee discussed following up on Environment and Sanitation and Parks joint meeting. Time prevented discussion of a letter to DEP and Parks to check the status of new Memorandum of Understanding regarding maintenance of Van Cortlandt Lake and Jerome Park Reservoir, including procedures for community gardens.

The meeting ended at 9:00 pm. Our next meeting will be held on January 17th.

Submitted by,
Laura Spalter, chair
Environment and Sanitation Committee