

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2014 AT THE RIVERDALE JEWISH CENTER**

PRESENT

Robert Fanuzzi
Bob Bender
David Kornbluh
Robert Press
Laura Spalter
Andrew Sandler
Danny Steiner
Christina Taylor
Loretta Ryan
Haley Rogers
Glenn Fleischman
Angel Gonzalez
Crista Carody
Suzanne Corber
Mathew Turov
Mary Hemings
JoAnn Gredell
Emily Peterson
Jodie Colon
Leah Rollhaus
Rob Lynch
John Reynolds
Lucy Mercado
Ruby Palma
Jennifer Scarlott
Ann Rauch
Alisa Eilenbert
Meryl N. Spigelman
David Gellman

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair, CB8
CB8
CB8
CB8
rep. Councilmember Cohen
NYC DOE
Friends of Van Cortlandt Park

DSNY, Senior Project Manager for Curbside Programs

Department of Parks & Recreation

Master Composter NYC Compost Project

BCJN
BCJN
Marble Hill Community Gardens
Bronx Climate Justice North
Riverdale Nature Preservancy/BCJN
Hebrew Institute of Riverdale Green Community/BCJN
RNP

I. Acceptance of the minutes

Minutes of the meeting of October 29, were accepted:
In favor: B. Bender, R. Fanuzzi, D. Kornbluh L. Spalter

II. DSNY Organic Recycling Program,

Haley Rogers, Senior Project Manager for Curbside Programs, Division of Recycling and Sustainability

The DSNY Division of Recycling and Sustainability is pursuing two goals: a 25% diversion from the existing waste stream—what ends up in the dump--by 2025, as mandated by Local Law 40 (2010), and beyond that, a 30% goal proposed by the Mayor's Office PlaNYC. The current diversion rate is 15%. To reach that goal, Local Law 77 (2013) created an organic recycling pilot for communities with low to medium density population. Bronx District 8, section 3 (Central and North Riverdale, including Fieldston) was chosen by DSNY, with a 16% rate, and high demand for

more intensive recycling. Organic recycling—food and yard waste—constitutes 31% of available recyclable material, making it a “low hanging fruit” with which to make an impact on the diversion rate. To reach that goal, the city must divert its organic waste by 500,000 tons annually.

Local Law 77 established a two year pilot, concluding in May 2015, to reach 100,000 households and 350 schools with a curbside recycling program. Throggs Neck was chosen in the Bronx. Homeowners and schools are given a plastic recycling receptacle with which to collect organic material of any kind, from food scraps to yard waste. Waste collection occurs on regular 1x week recycling pick up schedule, with no change in garbage collection schedule. Residents can use clear recycling “bio-bags,” which are available for purchase, if they do not use the DSNY supplied plastic receptacles. DSNY has worked with local merchants to bring supply of clear recycling “bio-bags” to pilot communities. DSNY employees go door to door, explaining new program to homeowner, and work closely with superintendants and property managers of multi-family buildings through the Apartment Building Recycling Initiative. ABRI has already brought recycle and “re-fashion” fabric recycling receptacles to apartment buildings over 10 units city wide. Participation in the program by private property owners is voluntary. Participation rate has varied, from 20-50%, and the average increase in the diversion rate is 6%.

Organics Recycling program is expanding to city agencies and municipal buildings, with participation mandatory for public schools. DSNY is working with DOHMH to measure the reduction in rat infestation as a result of utilizing secure organics recycling receptacles. The DSNY Organics Recycling program does not affect DSNY Compost, as the organic waste is processed in centralized locations before being carted to locations in PA and upstate NY.

For Bronx Community Board 8 section 3, DSNY intends to reach 2700 homeowners and 125 large apartment buildings (over ten units). Andrew Sandler of Councilman Andrew Cohen’s office offered to work with the E and S committee to help bring more information to area residents through public forums and town meetings. The DSNY rollout for this program is scheduled to begin in February/March 2015.

III. Recycling and Sustainability at JFK campus

Mr. Danny Steiner, Sustainability Coordinator for Bronx Theater High School reported on the difficulties of local schools meeting DSNY recycling and sustainability protocols and rates for public schools. School custodians work with schools’ sustainability coordinators to attempt to reach goals. In a Power Point, he also noted the plethora of garbage on the approach to the campus, and advocated for more recycling bins to be placed at strategically located street corners to capture the waste. Ms. Rogers of DSNY noted that conventional waste receptacles are not provided except through Councilperson funding.

Chair invited M. Steiner to return for December meeting to report on further outreach of JFK with DSNY and to advance goals of school recycling rates and litter prevention on and around campuses.

IV. Riverdale Nature Preservancy Anti-Pesticide Initiative

Ann Rauch, reporting for the Board of the RNP, presented its research and lobbying efforts to restrict the use of glyphosate, a class 3 pesticide, by NYC in city parks and public areas. Found in Roundup, the popular Monsanto product used by NYC, glyphosate has been linked to impaired

development of children and increased incidences of neurological disorders and cancers in adults. Ms. Rauch offered copies of letters from the RNP and the Children's Environmental Health Center to Councilman Andrew Cohen detailing the rationale for adopting a ban on the use of this project in NYC.

RNP applauds the implementation of Local Law 37, which reduced the amount of pesticides used by NYC in city owned properties, and Local Law 85, which restricted use on playing fields, playgrounds, schools, and day care centers, but notes that according to a 2014 DOHMH report, glyphosate use as increased as other pesticide products are phased out. The DOHMH report avows that glyphosate is safe.

RNP applauds the integrated waste management strategies for protecting areas from rodent infestation, and the bans/restrictions on glyphosate adopted by Chicago, Seattle, and Takoma.

Committee member B. Bender, Chair of Parks Committee, addressed NYC Parks' employee Crista Carmody regarding the DPR use of glyphosate and offered to review and hear more about the facts regarding the chemical and its local usage. Ms. Jodi Colon of RNP supplied the committee with a copy of the DOHMH report for further review. Ms. Rauch provided a fact sheet of the RNP's position on glyphosate, which is appended to these minutes.

Chair also recommended that neighbors adopt pesticide free zones in local parks and public play areas by creating volunteer brigades for manual weed pulling in lieu of pesticide application.

V. New Business

A. Broadway Sewer Overflow and Van Cortlandt Lake Backflow

Vice Chair L. Spalter reviewed local results of Hansen Report, the monthly DEP accounting of complaints, and noted that sewer overflow, particularly on Broadway, is a chronic problem, rating near the top of complaints. DEP has just created a new "green infrastructure" program to expand the natural surfaces and environments which soak up excess rainwater and snow melt that sewers cannot accommodate, but no CB8 areas were included in the DEP expansion program. The US government mandates the rates of Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO), and NYC is currently not in compliance, but an added issue for the Broadway sewer overflow is the underground connection with Van Cortlandt Park Lake, creating backflow. The committee will look further into the overflow and backflow between the Broadway sewer and Van Cortlandt Lake, and its effect on our local CSO rates, at its next meeting. (Original maps are said to be available!)

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

R. Fanuzzi
Chair, Environment and Sanitation Committee