

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT & SANITATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2014 AT THE KINGSBRIDGE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CENTER

PRESENT

Robert Fanuzzi
Laura Spalter
James Rather
Robert Spalter
Anthony Brown
Karen Argenti
Lucy Mercado
Malayka Rios
Jodie Colon
Leah Rollhaus
Casey Bassett
Bob Drake
Barbara Denson
Paula Edlavitch
Mary Schneider
Cheryl Rai
Mary Forrester
Melannie Martinez
Ann Rauch
Sara Kempton
Ruby Palma
Angel Gonzalez
Glenn Fleischman
Cecile Lumer
Laura Chenven
Consuelo Hernandez

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair, CB8
CB8
CB8
CB8 committee member
DEP
BCEQ
Marble Hill Green Team/Church of the Mediator
Las Verdo Lagas Collective
NYC Compost Project
Riverdale Community Composting Site

Bailey Place Triangle
Bon Secours Health Systems/NY
The Enchanted Garden

Risses Garden
Bailey Place Triangle
FVCP

FVCP
Marble Hill Community Garden

Church of the Mediator

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p. m.

I. Introductions

Chair Robert Fanuzzi introduced the Community Board members of the committee and the Community Member to participants. Laura Spalter was introduced as Vice Chair of the committee for 2014-15.

II. NYC Compost Project and BxCB8 Community Gardens

Jodie Colon, Director of NYC Compost Project and Bronx Green-Up, made a presentation on the outreach, activities and potential of her programs in BxCB8. Bronx Green-Up is the community outreach program of New York (Bronx) Botanical Gardens. NYC Compost was created in 1993 through the Department of Sanitation Division of Waste Management and is sited at the New York Botanical Gardens. It serves over 70 sites (making or using compost) throughout the Bronx with a variety of support programs, training, and materials to promote composting and community

gardening, both of which reduce the waste stream. BxCB8 is home to 37 of those sites.

Ms. Colon outlined the process: food scraps and organic waste (chipped branches, etc) are converted to compost, which is converted to soil to grow food, which is converted to food scraps, and so on. For the meeting, Ms. Colon invited community gardeners and master composters from CB 8 who have worked with her programs. She stressed the CB8 has been very active in community gardening and composting and that interest in more composting and organic food recycling is extremely high.

A. Programs and Sites

Participants in the NYC Compost Program described the multiple uses and programs of composting at Schervier, Kingsbridge Heights, Spuyten Duyvil Preschool, Amalgamated Housing, Fordham Manor, Friends of VC Park, Riverdale Country and Fieldston Schools, JFK Campus Enchanted Garden, Church of the Mediator, and Manhattan College. NYC Compost supports a range of programs at these sites that demonstrate the across-the-board benefits of community gardening. These include public engagement and volunteer outreach/coordination at all the locations; technical assistance for food scrap collection and composting; construction of bins and facilities on sites; delivery of compost from compost site to garden; education programs and outreach; master composter education and training; organic recovery support, including mulching and chipping; support for larger scale urban farming. Barbara Denison of Bon Secour/Schervier spoke of the range of programs for both seniors and children at both Schervier and the Kingsbridge Heights Community Center; Sarah Kempton of Friends VCP spoke of the youth volunteer groups that support the VC Park site. Spuyten Duyvil School site highlighted potential for elementary and middle school based programs; Manhattan College demonstrates commitment of higher ed, career building college students. Church of Mediator, compost site, relied on volunteers, and serves PS 207, while Amalgamated drew on local CSA. Not all garden or compost sites had a master composter on hand.

B. Problems and Potential

All participants spoke with one voice: the need for volunteers and volunteer coordination.

Ms. Colon stressed the need for training of more “master composters” to accommodate the incredible interest in organic recycling and incoming supply of organic waste. Without equipment and dedicated composters, the food scraps go to waste. She also noted the training required to distinguish between food and food scraps, and the variables involved in siting and concentrating compost sites. Ideally every garden should have a compost site to create its own soil but volunteers are often in short supply for the processing of compost. Centralized compost sites create their own problems. Many participants stressed the need for city to catch up with community interest and organic recycling demand and fund more “green jobs” that will reduce the waste stream and the extraordinary expenses associated with carting garbage out of state. Ms. Colon suggested participation in NYC Composting Council to build pressure for more funding of compost and organic waste collection.

C. Follow up:

- Bring Bronx Trolley for Bx CB8 Community Garden Tour
- Bronx CB8 Community Garden Google Map

- Work with local health care organizations to direct Affordable Care Act mandated community outreach programs to compost training and community garden support
- Connect higher ed and PK-12 school programs to promote student mentoring: “Environ-mentors” (!)
- Develop committee budget priority that will support compost volunteers and NYC Compost program capacity

R. Fanuzzi thanked Ms. Colon and all participants for their hard work in the community and for the meeting. He stressed the need to put community gardens and their sponsoring community organization “on the map”. For this purpose, participants were asked to make a list of their garden or affiliation. Ms. Colon’s Power Point presentation completes the list.

Name and/or organization	Compost site and/or garden
Dominick Lopez, Friends of VC Park	Friends of VC Park Demo Site and Garden
Ruby Palma	Marble Hill Community Gardens
Lucy Mercado and Consuelo Hernandez	Riverdale Kingsbridge Farmer’s Market at Church of the Mediator Marble Hill Community Gardens
Malayka Rios	Church of the Mediator
Casey Barrett, Manhattan College	Manhattan College Rooftop Farm
Bob Drake	Bailey Place Triangle (proposed)
Barbara Denson, Schervier	Schervier Community Garden Kingsbridge Heights Community Center
Cheryl Rai	Risses Community Garden
	Amalgamated Housing Van Cortlandt Village CSA
	Ethical Culture Fieldston School
	Fordham Manor Church
	John F. Kennedy High School Campus Enchanted Garden
	Riverdale Country School Lower
	Spuyten Duyvil Preschool

Finally, in answer to R. Fanuzzi’s question, Ms. Colon stated that no food grown in CB8 goes begging.

III. Old Business

A. JPR Gatehouse Demolition and Reconstruction

Members of the Environment and Sanitation Committee (E and S) were given copies of a Department of Environmental Protection Power Point presentation from the May 2014 meeting of the committee. DEP had attended that May meeting for the purpose of introducing its proposal to demolish and restore the gatehouses (built structures) ringing the Jerome Park Reservoir. In May and June 2014, the E and S committee raised too many questions about the proposal to reach a final determination; their questions were compiled and delivered to the agency by Robert Fanuzzi, in his capacity as the new chair of the committee. The new director of Water Management will be at the October 2014 E and S meeting to answer the questions posed at the May and June E and S committee meetings. K. Argenti stressed the need to consider PDC proposal in light of history of DEP treatment of the JPR and community.

IV. New Business

- A. Angel Rodriguez of Amalgamated Houses raised the issue of pesticides used in our district and effects on play areas and water run-off.
- B. Bob Drake reported on efforts to convert Bailey Place Triangle into a Greenstreet. That program being defunded, Mr. Drake was invited back to the October 2014 E and S meeting to discuss possible community gardening at that site.
- C. R. Fanuzzi discussed DSNY programs in organic recycling for large buildings and single family homes as future agenda topic.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p. m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Fanuzzi
Chair, Environment and Sanitation Committee