

FULL BOARD MEETING
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1
3024 Third Avenue
Bronx, New York 10455
Mr. George Rodriguez – Chairman

MINUTES

Attendance: George Rodriguez, Carmen Aquino, Maria Garcia-Baltazar, Robert Barnes, Carol Boddie, Josephine Fernandez-Byrne, Betty Bryant, Maura Cosme, Linda Duke, Isabel Figueroa, Linda D. Gaines, Brenda Goodwin, Lucas Henriquez, Richard Iyasere, A. Mychal Johnson, John Lemon, Jorge Leon, Nellie McKay, Evelyn Munoz, Walter Christopher-Nash, Freddy Perez, Jr., Carmen Santos, Alice Simmons, Betty Wessley, Maria Davis-Wilson, Tracy Alecia Woodall, Delores Waller-Worrell.

Public Session

Mayor's Office

Mr. Nivardo Lopez, Bronx Borough Director/Citywide Latino Outreach said that I'm here today to talk about an initiative that we started in the Mayor's Office that specifically affects Community Board 1. The Mayor today made an announcement regarding the food waste challenge and that's very briefly back in 2007 Plan YC one of the goals was to reduce the city's solid food waste by 75 percent. So today's announcement about the food waste challenge is that we have a 100 restaurants that have agreed to reduce their food waste by 50 percent and they are going to engage in composting and other initiatives to sort of reduce the amount of waste that the Department of Sanitation has to pickup and then send out to landfill. It is an initiative in order to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill and would also save the city millions of dollars going forward.

We also announced today the new Community Garden initiative. The city has identified twenty locations throughout New York City that are city owned lots vacant and not being used and we want to transform into Community Gardens. The specific name of the initiative is the Gardens for Health Communities. Last year the Mayor announced an initiative the Mayor's Obesity Taskforce Plan in January 2012 and in May the taskforce put out a report it was for twenty-six initiatives that would reduce obesity in New York City. The most famous one as you all know was the soda ban. But that was one of twenty-six initiatives we put out to combat obesity in New York City that we feel is a rising threat to the health and well being of New Yorkers. Actually obesity is the second leading cause of health problems in the city after smoking. Number fifteen on the list was this Community Garden Program. We've identified twenty locations and two of them are here in Community Board 1, one is located on Westchester Avenue, between St. Ann's & Eagle Avenues and the second is at 757 Melrose, between 157th & 156th. This program is going to be administered by the Parks Department Green Thumb Program but what differentiates these locations from other Community Gardens is that Green Thumb is going to solicit applications from community group. They are going to select a group or groups depending on the location to administer the garden and Green Thumb will provide the supplies in order to

transform these lots into productive gardens. They are going to sort of supply raised beds, rain water harvesting systems and also work with the community groups for participatory design and workshops how to garden, what to garden and how to maintain the site properly. The application for community gardens is online now you can receive it if you go to www.greenthumb.nyc.gov.

Fed Cap Employment Works

Mr. Warwick Williams, Partner Coordinator said that I'm with Fed Cap Employment Works and we're a division of Fed Cap and Fed Cap Rehabilitation Services. The organization was started in 1935 by a group of disabled war veterans. They found out that they could not find employment or a means to support themselves after being or serving in the war and the bottom line is they developed an organization to help people that had challenges and barriers to becoming self-sufficient. That has evolved into a larger organization we are throughout New York City and what we do is work with veterans, people who have disabilities, youth and adults. We help people to become self-sufficient through employment, education and vocational training.

My particular program which is located in the Hunts Point area of the Bronx services Bronx and Manhattan residents. We help people who have what I like to call court involvement find and maintain long term meaningful employment. So when I say court involvement that's what we teach our particular clients our customers to say when they are out there looking for work. Specifically it is people with criminal court convictions and the reason why I use court involvement because it doesn't have that same negative stigma that someone would get if they said that I'm on parole or probation. How we get our clients jobs is rather simple but it is a challenge. What we do is identify companies that are currently hiring they have opened position or positions. Once we find a business or corporation that has an open position the next questions we ask that particular business is will you work with someone who has court involvement?

When we go past the work court involvement to exactly what the court problem this person has is only because the end user may say I was not told this person had issues. The bottom line is we let the businesses know that these particular candidates may or may not have issues. In other words when the candidate goes in front of that business I don't say to that particular organization this individual for example has an aggravated assault in 20004. All our clients do not have criminal convictions overall in the company. We want the businesses to be receptive to the people who are coming to their doors to gain employment. So we do not use the words criminal convictions.

So the businesses know that we are bringing to the table individuals that are qualified and have been trained to do specific jobs. We have culinary, security, maintenance, career design school and do data imaging. But the bottom line is this any business if I were to walk down Third Avenue right now and go into Forman Mills next door and I would ask that particular hiring Manager do you have any open positions and if he says yes then the next questions is would you work with some who has a background or a history if they say yes then those are the companies that now become our best friends. Those are the only companies that we're sending our clients to because they have been vetted out to be receptive to this particular population. Once a company has said yes this is where we start our work at we help the clients prepare their

professional documentation resumes, cover letter, thank you letters and letters of recommendation. We also train our clients or educate our clients on how to answer interview questions effectively there are roughly 15 to 16 interview questions that a company normally asks. More importantly our particular population has to answer a very challenging question and makes a lot of people ill at ease based on their scenario the criminal conviction question. The point is this if a client knows going in the door how to answer those questions well he or she will have what we like to call a successful interview.

New York Restoration Project

Ms. Janet Brouthton, Project Manager discussed the renovation being performed at the Willis Avenue Community Garden on East 143rd Street. NYRP recently received funding to renovate the space. There were 3 community input sessions held on the design. We now have a final design. The existing and final design for the garden was shown to the Board.

End of Public Session

The Chairman called for the roll.

There were twenty-eight members present constituting a quorum.

The Chairman called for a motion on the Agenda.

Motion made to approve the agenda as presented. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously.

The Chairman called for a motion on the prior meeting minutes.

Motion made to approve the minutes as presented. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed with 5 abstentions.

Chairman & District Manager's Report

The District Manager said that there would be a presentation by Ms. Lanny Alexander, Executive Director of the New York City Loft Board.

Ms. Lanny Alexander, Executive Director said that the New York State Dwelling Law – the Loft Law allows for New Yorkers to live in some of what were formerly commercial and manufacturing loft spaces if certain requirements are met. Non-residential buildings used as homes during a specific time periods may be designated as interim multiple dwellings or IMDs.

For Loft Law protection, a building must be registered as an IMD or its tenants may apply for Loft Law protection. Eligibility for the Loft Law includes that the loft unit must have at least one window facing a street, legal yard or courtyard; must be at least 550 square feet and not in a basement or cellar; the building may not be in an industrial business zone (other than Greenpoint/Williamsburg, North Brooklyn and certain Long Island City Industrial business zone area; and as of June 21, 2010 the building may not have been used for certain activities that are inherently incompatible with residential use.

If you're living in a building that is in a mixed use area and you don't have a certificate of occupancy what are you, you're illegal. In a mixed use area the owner can renovate the building and make it a class (A) apartment, doesn't need the Loft Law. But if tenants bring the owner into the Loft Law then he will have to renovate and bring it up to building code. Wouldn't you want to be covered by the Loft Law. But mostly this is for areas that are not mixed use.

By the way you have an IBZ in your area that is excluded from Loft Law coverage. You cannot have loft tenants recognized in the IBZ. That is commercial manufacturing no Loft Law. Under the 2010 amendment there were only three IBZ's that were included as possibly being covered under the Loft Law. The remaining IB Zs are excluded. So that area is not going to have Loft Law coverage. But if you have an M zone somewhere not a mixed use and there's a commercial use there and people living there they are going to want to be covered.

The reason I am telling you this tonight is because in a couple of months all of the Loft Law rules would have been published and enacted. That means there will be a statute of limitations a time period within which tenants in your Community Board district will be able to apply for Loft Law coverage. If they don't know about it they can't use it and that's why I'm here. What we want to see is that the tenants live in a safe environment and that the owners behave properly. So we keep everybody on the straight and narrow that's my job. But my job here tonight is to tell you that I see signs as I go through the Bronx loft building call so and so. I don't know what kind of lofts they're talking about. I don't know what particular zoning it has, whether its mixed use or not what I want to make sure is that those people who are living in the Bronx take advantage of this law just like the people in Brooklyn and Manhattan are doing. So we want to make sure that you spread the word to your constituents and say if you're living in a building that was zoned manufacturing and is use manufacturing or commercial let them know about the Loft Law.

The Chairman called on a motion on his and the District Manager's Report

Motion made to approve the Chairman and District Manager's Report as presented. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously.

Elected Officials Reports

The Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. submitted a written report on the following items.

- The Bronx Borough President on Sunday, April 14 will join together with thousands of community and clergy to join "Hands Across the Concourse" in opposition to the gun and domestic violence.
- The Bronx Borough President made a statement related to the Paid Sick Leave Compromise. The "Paid Sick Leave" legislation will provide economic security and peace of mind for an estimated one million New Yorkers. No one should have to choose between their job and caring for a sick family member.

- The Bronx Borough President made a statement regarding the Marriage Equality /Defense of Marriage Act. “After considerable deliberation and introspection, I support marriage equality”.
- The Bronx Borough President testifies against proposed cuts to Community Board budgets.

The State Senator Serrano submitted his Report to the People on the following items.

- The State Senator reminded all the April 22nd was Earth Day and encouraged everyone to make a commitment to protect our planet.
- The State Senator and his colleagues in the Senate Democratic Conference put forth a package of legislative proposals to root out corruption and restore public confidence by closing current loopholes and creating tougher penalties for committed crimes.
- The State Senator joined New Yorkers Against Fracking, Food & Environmental advocates at a press conference which highlighted the numerous dangers associated with hydrofracking. Hydrofracking is a highly environmentally hazardous natural gas drilling method.
- The State Senator applauds Governor Andrew Cuomo for the introduction of the Public Trust Act. This new legislation would create a new class of public corruption crimes and enhance the ability of prosecutors to investigate and prosecute public corruption across the state.
- The State Senator joined City Councilmembers in a press conference to demand that the New York City Housing Authority improve the Infill Development process to include residents. The infill development plan proposal by NYCHA is to lease land on their open space to developers who would then build private housing developments. The Senator also joined with the Manhattan Borough President in writing a letter to NYCHA regarding their Infill Plan.

The Chairman called for a motion on the Elected Officials Reports.

Motion made to approve the Elected Officials Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

The Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee submitted a written report on the following items:

Voting Items

- New York City Department of Corrections Riker’s Island New Admissions Facility and Central Property Storage Project.

The Chairman called for a motion to provide the New York City Department of Correction’s with a Letter of Support on their Riker’s Island New Admissions Facility and Central Storage Project.

Motion made to approve a Letter of Support for the Riker's Island New Admissions Facility and Central Storage Project. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously with 1-abstention.

- Triangle Equities request for a Special Permit from the Board of Standards & Appeals to allow for rooftop parking at 459 East 149th Street, NW corner of Brook Avenue & East 149th Street.

The Chairman called for a motion to provide Triangle Equities with a Letter of Support on their request for a Special Permit from the Board of Standards & Appeals for rooftop parking.

Motion made to approve a Letter of Support for a Special Permit from the Board of Standards & Appeals to allow rooftop parking at 459 East 149th Street, NW corner of Brook Avenue & East 149th Street. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously.

The Education & Youth Committee submitted a written report.

Ms. Alice Simmons reported on the two health events held at the Board office on April 19, 2013 from 2:30-4:00 PM and 5:30-7 PM by the Health-Human Services Committee in conjunction with the NYU Leadership Institute for Black Nurses. The topics discussed were diabetes, obesity and high pretention.

The Chairman called for a motion on the Committee Reports.

Motion made to approve the Committee Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion made to adjourn. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.