

**FULL BOARD MEETING**  
**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1**  
February 26, 2014

**MINUTES**

**Board Member Attendance:** George Rodriguez, Ngande Ambroise, Maria Garcia Baltazar, Robert H. Barnes, Carol Boddie, Betty Bryant-Brown, Josephine Fernandez-Byrne, Maura Cosme, Gloria Cruz, Linda Duke, Linda D. Gaines, Brenda Goodwin, Lucas Henriquez, Richard Iyasere, Theresa Marrero, Nellie Mckay, Evelyn Munoz, Walter Christopher Nash, Justino Rodriguez, Alice Simmons, Marcelo Villagran, Betty Wessley, Maria Davis-Wilson, Tracy Alecia Woodall, Delores Waller-Worrell, Hakiem A. Yahmadi.

**Board Members Absent:** Carmen Aquino, Michael C. Brady, Passyna Bula-Bula, Jessica Clemente, Isabel Figueroa, Silverio Guzman, John Johnson, John Lemon, Jorge Leon, Eileen Marquez, Linda Ortiz, Arline Parks, Freddy Perez, Jr., Carmen Santos.

**Public Session**

**Love Gospel Assembly Church**

Minister Danny Diaz said that I don't know if everyone knows that we do have a low wage worker movement in this nation. You've heard of a lot of different fronts the Living Wage Campaign that happened here in New York City, the State Minimum Wage, the Federal Minimum Wage Campaign, Fast Food Worker Campaign, and the Airport Security Guard Campaigns. These are all campaigns that speaking towards peoples wages and hopefully lifting up that floor. We remember years ago that the Banks were bailed out, corporations were bailed

out so we're fighting for people to get bailed out. We're fighting for our communities for better jobs and better wages.

Those campaigns a new front that came up is called the Carwash Campaign. There's two hundred carwashes in New York City it's an industry that historically has never been regulated and when there's no regulation and no standards there's a lot of exploitation. What we found out that thousands of workers have had their wages robbed there's been no overtime. To scrape the bottom of these carwashers and what comes out of that is a toxic sludge that's built off of degreasers and solvents that build up over time and when they do that they're suppose to get rid of this in an environmentally clean manner and that cost money because they have to have professionals come in and do it. That doesn't happen what happens that these guys get into these pits they scrape it out and without you or me knowing it they go and dump it right in the corner sewer which is effecting our water system. We don't know what studies will show in the future of how that's affected us in our water but nevertheless this is something that's going on in our backyard.

This is why I'm here because Sunny Day was all over the newspapers it was a carwash where the owner decided not to pay his workers. Because why they tried to organize and join a union and we know that's something being dismantled in our nation. We know that so many unions so many of our family and friends have talked about it we've seen it all over the newspaper. We are trying to help these men become part of a union and that's what the Retail Wholesale Department Store Union is doing that's what New York City Communities for Change, that's what Make the Road New York and faith leaders. All these people I just mentioned are a coalition of people that believe this industry should be regulated. Melissa Mark-Viverito who is our first Latina Speaker she is writing a legislation for the carwashers. She's helping to put together a legislation that will protect the community from this illegal dumping and it will also protect immigrant workers. These owners are supposed to provide ample supplies of protective gear OSHA standards. Some people here know what OSHA is these are federal standard guidelines for health and protection for workers. They don't give them goggles or gloves they don't give them aprons. So we've seen a lot of these men come down with skin infections, eye infections, lung infections and so that's what this law is going to do it's going to set standards. Every carwash is going to have to have a license at some point that's what the law talks about and just like a Laundromat has to do that and have a set of regulations that they have to abide by. So in doing this we will be able to make sure that workers are treated right that workers are paid on time that their schedules are just that they're paid overtime that their given a lunch hour. Imagine having to work without a lunch hour five minutes to maybe go to the bathroom. So it's exploitive we've seen people have to work 80 hours even 110 hours a week and even then if there's a scratch on the person's car you would think the management would take care of it they don't do that they go into their tip money and take it out of their tip money. So the machine scratches the car but the immigrant worker has to pay for that so these things were happening in our backyard.

We went to Sunny Day and we told them you know what you're breaking the law. It's illegal to do what you're doing you're not supposed to fire everyone especially because they want to organize. If they're organizing for to join a union it's illegal to fire them. So we want and the workers want not only that they get their jobs back but they got a union contract. So it's one of the 7 unionized car washers in the city so history is being made as we speak it is a national movement. So this carwash movement is happening nationally and this is what's happening in New York out of the 200, 7 have contracts. It would be awesome to have the constituency of this district support the car washers that are unionized sending a message to the industry that you have to treat your workers right. That you should treat them with dignity and respect not hold the deportation issue over their heads, nobody wants to go to work having to fear being intimidated and being disrespected. So that's just a huge part of this too which is to kind of fight for people's dignity. That's why the community of faith is really a part of this because we believe that this is found in all our different religions from Christianity to Islam to Judaism the threat of justice is always there God is always trying to reach out and represent those that have no voice. So that's why we're doing this and that's why I'm a part of it and I just want to let the Community Board know what's going on in your community and we're moving forward.

Tomorrow I'm going to be at a carwash in Queens that's on strike same situation the owner doesn't want to pay the guys. So he said he's going to negotiate possibly this Friday but we're going to have a big rally tomorrow with the press hopefully our Speaker will be there with us and we're just going to be uplifting this issue again and like I said we're at 7, 193 to go. My email is [DannyDiazlifecause@gmail.com](mailto:DannyDiazlifecause@gmail.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

## **Questions**

### **South Bronx Community Congress**

Mr. Ed Figueroa said that I'm here tonight as a member of the community with a concern that we think should be brought to Planning Board #1 and we hope that you guys can take it beyond these rooms which is the elevator at 149<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Concourse subway stop. I don't know if any of you might have been around over 40-years ago when we had the Third Avenue El and it was eliminated. One of the stops in the Bronx was the Hub in Mott Haven along 149<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Concourse. It's been over 40-years that it has not been used and 2-years ago a friend of ours happening to be running for the State Assembly and you know when you're a candidate people tell you what their concerns are and one of the concerns was from a senior citizen about the elevator

We are a volunteer organization we do this out of the goodness and needs of the community. That's why I'm very happy that Brother Rodriguez and you guys allowed us a few minutes to bring this to your attention.

A lot of people use that train station over the years they've seen it when that station was actually active. We need that service we are taxpayers and there are state funds that pertain to that type of occasion. If Yankee Stadium can get theirs in less than 6 to 7 months then why can't we. We're actually the taxpayers. The brother that just spoke was just talking about being bailed out by big corporations but we small class folks the working class folks we need our bailouts too. So we have to raise our voices and you know there was a vacuum and that's why we're out here and its best that we do this instead of letting other authorities do it because it is better when the community has a stake in the services and the authorities tend to pay more attention. The authorities said that they did a service where there was a leak at the station and they did a capital improvement. Now if you go to the train station you see that it is still leaking so it was a cosmetic job. We need them to go in there and break the stuff apart fix it and with the excess money fix the elevator shaft. So that's why we need to continue this petition drive.

We have reached out the Elected Officials in the community we have commitments from two to sit down and speak with us. We do plan another activity in the month of March but we need the communities support to stand behind this issue. We want it to really come to fruition we need the members of the community to come out and have their stake heard as well. So with that we hope you follow us on Face Book and look for us in the media because we will be once again in March meeting with the students at Hostos Community College and we hope to see some of your faces there as well.

### **New York Yankees Community Council Youth Leadership Award**

The District Manager called out the names of the five young people Jewels Marshall, Hannah Holmes, Merry Pena, Denise Adames, and Ryan Ansley that were to receive the New York Yankees Community Council Youth Leadership Award a check in the amount of \$750.00 dollars.

The District Manager introduced the Youth Chairperson Ms. Evelyn Munoz who was to present the checks.

The Board Members applauded the awardees and their sponsors.

### **End of Public Session**

### **The Chairman called for the roll.**

The roll was called and there were twenty-six 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 Prior Meeting Minutes. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed unanimously with 10 abstentions.

**Chairman & District Manager's Report**

The District Manager introduced the New York City Department of Transportation Bronx Borough Commissioner Constance Moran.

The Bronx Borough Commissioner for the New York City Department of Transportation said that Assistant Commissioner Wendy Feuer will be making a presentation this evening on a very important DOT project called Pedestrian Wayfinding. This is a project that's ongoing citywide the first section of the Bronx that we're treating it in is Mott Haven and the Concourse area.

Assistant Commissioner Feuer said that we're trying to get people to walk more. How do you get people to walk more one way is to make sure that they have information about where they're going.

When we began this whole project of designing it we did research and what we found was that about 20 percent of the people walking around New York City still get lost and people who live here who admitted to getting lost 9 percent. So you can imagine in places where you're not familiar when you get out of the subway station if there was a map there that said this is where you're going and this is how to get there. So what is Wayfinding it helps you find your way. It helps you orient yourself to where you're going. Our model was London they have these all over the city. So we hired a team that came together with graphic design, Wayfinding experience in London, industrial design and they started doing focus groups, meetings, workshops and we were lucky to have five different neighborhoods work with us on the prototype. We were really lucky because it represented midtown with the grid, Chinatown which a lot of small streets, Brooklyn with the cultural, and Long Island City that is both industrial and sort of up and coming more residential and a lot of hotels so we were able to have different types.

One of the things they did with it that we thought was very smart was that everybody knows the subway the white on black they know those signs and they use something called Helvetica

typeface. So they said let's use Helvetica typeface everybody knows it and let's use a white on black type and we have now DOT Helvetica which has a round dot instead of a square dot.

There's a whole system and this is a Wayfinding system and what do I mean by system. So you have your pedestrian Wayfinding is something that never happened in the city before where there's a consistent map all over the city and all transportation types. The area sign is close to intersections where possible and where there are wide sidewalks. Path sign reinforces the direction on predictable grid on congested or narrow sidewalks and is good for mid-block locations. Neighborhood signs are for plazas and open spaces. Then we have the fingerpost and you don't need a map it's just a reassurance. The select bus service sign has a bus map on one side and a pedestrian map on the other side and we have real time bus information. So we're working with working with New York City Transit on real time bus information which will say next bus is coming you know three stops away, two stops away.

We have a meeting next week with the Tourism Bureau on the Ancillary map. So on the hand held maps a Business Improvement District a borough can make their own maps but again looks like the maps that we're putting on the street so they're all connected. So we've worked with New York & Company., Long Island City, 34<sup>th</sup> Street and the borough of the Bronx.

So these are the components they tried to make it very simple. It's in the ground we have a footing so it's stable and it's hard to knock over it has a bottom portion and the largest portion is glass where the map is. The interesting thing is that map is vinyl so you can take the glass off and replace it with a new glass piece and then they can take the vinyl off and put new vinyl on. So it's a way of not having to redo the entire thing so you can take it off and on.

The information on it tells you exactly where you are like the bus stop. Tells you the area that you're in, it tells you how to get to the nearest subway station, it tells what's to the east or west and then we have these things called Path Map Pointers that says it's a five-minute walk here. One of the important things about this is that it doesn't say that it's a half-a-mile away it says it's a five-minute walk away or a ten-minute walk away. Then we have the focus map on top and the bottom is the overview map.

People have said what about different languages you know New York has what 150 languages spoken so what we did was make it a map based system so that you don't need different languages. So the icons are universal so people understand that it's all very visual with the names of the streets and neighborhood. So the focus map gives you the street names, building numbers, subway entrances there's a lot of information packed on here and what we think is a really good way that it's not overwhelming. The overview map gives you a wider berth and it says okay this is the context where you are and then in the focus map this is the place you are and it says ten or fifteen minute walk.

The next steps are to finalize location plan, review locations with Landmarks Preservation Commission and Parks, finalize sub-surface review, install new foundations in the spring of 2014 and install signs in the summer of 2014.

Our first installed areas in 2013 were in the Garment District, Long Island City, Chinatown, Prospect Heights and Crown Heights. The planned areas in 2014 are South Bronx/Concourse, Lower Manhattan and Grand Central Terminal area so hopefully these will start going up in June.

## **Questions**

Police Officer Hector Espada from the 40<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct said that there will be a Domestic Violence Forum at Jackson Avenue Family Residence 691 East 138<sup>th</sup> Street, between Cypress & Jackson Avenues on March 5, 2014 from 6 to 8 PM. Once again we're putting a lot of efforts into this forum and it going to help especially our community when it comes to domestic violence incidents. Please make sure that if you have someone that is not a US citizen bring them we have are not required to inquire if they are a US citizen that's not our problem. We don't care whether they are born in the United States or not. A lot of people feel because they are not a US citizen that they can't make a report or they're scared that they are going to get deported it doesn't work that way. We're not here to find out where you're from we're here to find out what's wrong what's going on are you a victim of domestic violence. So it's very important. If a man is getting abused it works the same way let's not forget that because there's a lot of men out there that are physically and mentally abused. So please just spread the word. Deputy Inspector McCormack is putting a lot of effort into this forum because it's a big problem in this area.

## **Questions**

### **Elected Officials Reports**

The State Senator Jose M. Serrano's representative submitted his Reports to the People.

Mr. Angel Santana said that the State Senator had sponsored an important "know Your Rights" Housing Court Community Forum in the Bronx last month at the New Settlement Campus. It was created to show his constituents about how to navigate the Housing Court System. A staunch advocate of affordable housing and is the sponsor of a number of bills to help protect tenants including S1040 to eliminate the ability of landlords to obtain a twenty percent increase in rent upon the vacancy of a rent-controlled apartment and S5597 which requires any NYCHA owned property to obtain community input through New York City's Uniform land use Review Procedure (ULURP) before NYCHA can sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land.

The State Senator's would be holding constituent hours on Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at the Mott Haven Library from 4 to 7 PM.

## **Questions**

Ms. Neyda Franco representative of Assemblywoman Carmen Arroyo said that last month the Assemblywoman came in and spoke about voting and the money not coming into our districts because of the lack of voting. We don't have enough people coming out to vote so she started an initiative where we're going out I have been to Mitchell, Patterson, Board 1, Board 4, Board 2 to the Precinct Council and I'm also working with the schools trying to get people to register to vote. So on the 25<sup>th</sup> I'll be at Mitchell's and I'll be registering we're going to send out flyers to everybody in the community in that building. While they're meeting I will be able to register, change addresses or answer any questions. At the Patterson I will be doing it on March 31<sup>st</sup>. So I will be going around all the different organizations and working with the schools and at the same time anything that they need that I could help them or the Assemblywoman.

My background is education I've been in the community a long time. Housing I've gone to court with tenants. So anything that they don't have to go further than their door if they have any questions I able to answer. Understanding that if we don't register we don't vote and we can't get the money into our community. There are a lot of things going on in our community.

The Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito's representative submitted her report.

Mr. Andrew king said that in January had the privilege of having an historic event at Hostos College inaugurating the first Latina Council Speaker who was joined by dozens of Council Members so we're looking to working with the South Bronx and establishing a new progressive vision for the city with the DeBlasio administration. I think it was a very important event for the Bronx.

My supervisor and Chief of Staff are finalizing plans for that now a new constituent office that will serve community residents here in the Bronx right in the area of Mott Haven.

Our Participatory Budget initiative is moving along smoothly we're getting dozens of project ideas including a lot in the Bronx there are small scale capital projects in Patterson, Betances, Millbrook and Mott Haven. In Mott Haven they're proposing a bundle for nine schools for to have computer labs throughout the South Bronx schools, Highbridge and Mott Haven so that's exciting. On March 13<sup>th</sup> we will be at Bronx – Project Expo science fair at Abraham House where there will be a poster for every project proposal.



We are continuing to partner with the Choice Neighborhood Initiative which is a federal grant. They have community planning grant now trying to get a larger federal grant for the Mott Haven area to try and improve the community in terms of public safety, housing and environmental improvements. They are overlapping with the Participatory Budgeting events and they have been participating in our committees in order to strengthen the Communities Needs Assessment.

The Community Board appointments are coming very soon.

## **Questions**

Ms. M. Medina representative of State Senator Rev. Ruben Diaz said that I would like to inform you guys that the Friday that had just passed we had a beautiful event it was for African Americans. We are currently providing services for the seniors and the disabled filling out the 210 form, and the IT214. We also provide immigration services with one of our workers from our office. So I would just like to inform you guys that we are here and here for open services whatever questions you have.

## **Questions**

### **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 and provided a brief overview on the following presentation.

- South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SoBro)

### **The Chairman called for a motion to provide SoBro with a letter of support on their proposed Senda development project.**

Motion made to approve a letter of support to SoBro on their proposed Senda project located at 506-510 Brook Avenue. Motion duly seconded. Called and passed with 1-abstention.

The Young Adults Committee submitted a written report and provided a brief overview on the following presentation.

- Year Up – New York (YUNY) a program that combines hands on skill development, college credits and internships.

**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**

Board Member Ngande Ambroise said that 4-years ago the Bronx Borough President had formed an African Advisory Council and they would be holding an event tomorrow at the rotunda from 6 to 9 PM.

Board Member Nellie McKay said that she would be holding a cooking class and fashion show on March 10<sup>th</sup> from 11 to 12 PM at 308 East 145<sup>th</sup> Street.

Board Member Marcelo Villagran said that they would be holding the Tenth Annual Legislative Summit at Lincoln Medical Center in the Employee Lounge (Basement) on Friday, March 14, 2014 at 9 AM.

**The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn.**

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

**Meeting adjourn.**

