

**Community Board No. 8
Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation
727 Classon Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11238**

April 8, 2010

Members Present

Kim Albert
Akosua Albritton
Glinda Andrews
Edo Banach
Viola Bing
Julia Boyd
Renaye Cuyler
Diana Foster
Fred Frazier
Nizjoni Granville
Xeerxeema Jordan
Marie Louis
Priscilla Maddox
Robert Matthews
Kwasi Mensah
Adelaide Miller
Atim Oton
Marlene Saunders
Patricia Scantlebury
Meredith Staton
Audrey Taitt-Hall
Gregory Todd
Ethel Tyus
Yves Vilus
Sharon Wedderburn
Douglas Williams
Robert Withewax

Liaisons Present

Ben Colombo, Dept. of Buildings
Ian Jack, Parks Department/Forestry

Members Excused

Dr. Flize Bryan
Helen Coley
Ede Fox
Doris Heriveaux
Princess James
Shalawn Langhorne
Dr. Frederick Monderson
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Anyika Nance
Robert Puca
William Suggs
Vilma Zuniga

Members Absent

Teri Coaxum
Jesse E. Hamilton
Shirley Lee
Clarine Miller
Hasoni Pratts
Mary Reed
Launa Thomas-Bullock

Elected Official's Reps.

Maurice Roberts, Senator Adams
Carl Luciano, Councilman Vann
Chris Johnson, Councilwoman Mealy

CB Staff Present

Michelle George
Julia Neale

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 7:30 PM by Nizjoni Granville, Chair.

Acceptance of Minutes – The minutes of the last Community Board meeting were accepted as written.

Correspondence – CB 8 newsletter and other material were distributed.

Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation – Ms. Jackie Kennedy-Saddler

Ms. Kennedy-Saddler welcomed the Community Board to the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation and stated that it was the pleasure of the facility to host the Community Board meeting and strengthen community relations. CNR is a member of Beth Abraham Hospital Services and provides a number of different programs to suit the needs of the elderly and hospice patients.

She announced that Randy Palmira is the new Administrator for CNR and that Clari Gilbert, Senior vice President of Operations, has retired. She asked Mr. Palmira to say a few words on behalf of CNR.

Mr. Palmira provided a brief list of CNR's accomplishments over the years in the field of short term rehabilitation, dementia, Alzheimer's care, and acute care. In addition, CNR has the first Interactive Rehabilitation System in New York City—a system of rehabilitation care that is rivaled by no other. In recognition of CNR's accomplishment, the facility has been selected to make a presentation before the American Association for Homeless Services for the elderly in Los Angeles on October 23, 2010.

As always, CNR seeks to build bridges between the facility and the community. Mr. Palmira stated that he looks forward to working with Community Board 8.

Ms. Granville thanked Mr. Palmira and Ms. Kennedy-Saddler for their words and asked Mr. Ian Jack for an update on Forestry services in the District.

Dept. of Parks and Recreation/Forestry – Mr. Ian Jack, Forester, North Brooklyn

Mr. Jack announced that the Parks Department is in the midst of the spring planting schedule, with a slate of 50 trees being planting by the department and another 144 planted by 3 different private contractors. There are a mixture of varieties being planted based on the best fit and survivability for 100 years at each particular location. Due to the Asian Longhorn Beetle, certain trees are not being planted and those that are planted are not favorable to the beetle.

Trees are extremely important to the health and survivability of not only humans, but the environment in general. The health benefits of trees far outweigh the potential impact on people's allergies and even the head ache of cleaning fallen leaves in the fall. They absorb the grit and particulates of smog from the air, thus cleaning it and making the air we breathe fresher and cleaner. This in turn lowers the rate of childhood asthma. Trees also provide other environmental benefits as the roots and larger tree pits absorb storm runoff and prevents overflow and flooding. The other effects of larger tree pits are that the roots have adequate space to grow without causing the sidewalk to bulge.

Trees are pruned on a seven-year cycle. The Parks Department has a "tree cyborg" program, where any damage caused by a city tree will be repaired free of charge by the NYC Dept. of Transportation. New trees are also being watched more closely and intensively to assure survival. Unlike the past, new trees are being watered bi-weekly to ensure survival.

There is also a stewardship training course courtesy of the city's Million Trees Initiative where individuals are given training and the tools necessary to look after trees after they are planted. The city will pay for training at the New York Botanic Garden, as the course is the highest that can be completed by a civilian. When completed, participants become civilian pruners, which is the highest title that can be obtained.

Mr. Jack informed those present that almost anyone can get a tree for free, but there are restrictions on where they can be planted. For instance, trees will not be planted near power lines, water pipes, or gas lines. All sites are assessed, and if feasible, a tree will be planted free of cost and maintained free of cost as well.

After a brief question and answer period, Ms. Granville thanked Mr. Jack for his report and asked Ms. Pascal to provide information on Public Advocate Bill deBlasio's resolution regarding the Charter Review Commission process.

Public Advocate's Office – Ms. Nancy Pascal

Ms. Pascal announced that the City Charter is presently under revision, and it was last revised in 1989. The charter is like the constitution for the City of New York, and that is why the public advocate's office is asking for frequent, open forums so that residents can get as much information as possible and be able to make an informed vote when it is presented. As part of the process, Public Advocate deBlasio has created a resolution asking that information be dispersed through various media outlets and that transcription of all public hearings be available for review as well.

A motion was made to accept the following resolution and submit a letter of support to Public Advocate deBlasio regarding it:

WHEREAS, The last major charter revision commission (commission) which comprehensively examined the function and operation of city government was over twenty years ago with the 1989 commission;

WHEREAS, Mayor Bloomberg's appointment of a commission presents the City with a unique opportunity to fully examine government operations and to discuss how best to improve our City;

WHEREAS, In order for this commission to be successful, first and foremost it must meaningfully engage New Yorkers by conducting extensive outreach about the charter revision process to ensure they understand what it means and how they can participate;

WHEREAS, Such outreach should use all available modes of communication – social networking media, civic, community and religious organizations, webcasting, video- and teleconferencing, and transcribing and posting all testimony and information about commission meetings and hearings online;

WHEREAS, The commission should also conduct frequent public hearings in every corner of the City that encourage New Yorkers to provide their recommendations about their visions for New York and how to make government more responsive to their needs;

WHEREAS, In addition to public hearings, the commission should also conduct open public meetings to allow it to observe the commission's deliberative process;

WHEREAS, Once the commission completes its deliberative process and decides what Charter changes it would like to put before the voters, it should submit clear and concise ballot question(s) make it easy for voters to know what they are being asked to consider; and

WHEREAS, Finally, the commission with the assistance of elected officials, members of the civic, community and religious community, and the media must then conduct an extensive public education campaign about what voters will see on the ballot;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That Brooklyn Community Board 8 calls upon the 2010 charter revision commission to conduct a comprehensive review of the entire charter, meaningfully engage the public in its process, ensure that any question(s) placed on the ballot is clearly and concisely written, and conduct an extensive public education campaign about the ballot questions that voters will see on Election Day.

The resolution passed unanimously with twenty-five members present.

Ms. Granville thanked Ms. Pascal and asked for the following committee reports:

Aging/Health & Human Services – Ms. Marlene Saunders, Chair; Dr. Flize Bryan, Co-Chair

The Aging/Health & Human Services Committee did not meet for the month of April. The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 3, 2010 at 5:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are invited to attend.

Economic Development – Ms. Priscilla Maddox, Chair; Ms. Atim Oton, Co-Chair

The Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at CNR. The committee discussed the following new liquor license applications:

1. The proprietors of 564 Grand Avenue Corp, located at 564 Grand Avenue (between Dean and Bergen Streets) made a favorable presentation for their establishment complete with support letters. 564 Grand is seeking a Beer/Wine license for the establishment that has been operating in its current location since 1986 under the same ownership. There are eight stools and seven tables with twenty-two seats for the restaurant and the hours of operation are Monday thru Saturday from 7 am to 10 pm.

There were no police objections to the application and the full Board voted to support the application with a final tally of twenty-one in favor, two opposed, with two abstentions.

2. The proprietor of Haru Sushi N Thai, Inc., located at 385 Flatbush Avenue made a favorable presentation complete with letters of support for his venture. Haru Sushi N Thai is seeking a Beer/Wine license for the establishment that will have six tables with twenty-four seats and that will operate Monday thru Thursday from 11 am to 11 pm, Friday and Saturday from 11 am to 11:30 pm, and Sunday from Noon to 11 pm. There is presently a sushi restaurant at the site and the new owner is planning on altering the cuisine to suit the diverse palates of the neighborhood.

There were no police objections to the application and the full Board voted to support the application twenty-two in favor, two opposed, with one abstention.

3. The proprietors of The Butterfly Lounge located at 826 St. John's Place (between Nostrand and Rogers Avenues) made a favorable presentation complete with support letters for their venture and is seeking a full liquor license. The Butterfly Lounge will operate from Noon to 3 am on Monday, Noon to 4 am Tuesday thru Saturday, and 1 pm to 3 am on Sunday. They will seek to serve the mature crowd, ages 25 and older. Live music

and/or a DJ will be utilized on weekends, and a jukebox will provide music on weekdays for the crowd of 30 seated at tables throughout the space.

While there were no police objections to the exact site, there were concerns over the area and general location of the lounge. As part of the former impact zone, St. John's Place between Rogers and Nostrand Avenues is crime riddled and drug infested. Additionally, there was a homicide directly across the street at 817 St. John's a number of months ago. The proprietors were informed that the concerns were not directed at them personally, just the general area, and were also informed that they must strive to maintain a wholesome establishment.

The full Board voted to support the application with a final tally of nineteen in favor, two opposed, with four abstentions.

The committee also discussed the following renewal applications:

1. Udom Thai Restaurant and Bar, 661 Washington Avenue (St. Marks/Prospect)
2. Tao Palate, 329 Flatbush Avenue (Park/Sterling)
3. Plan B, 626 Vanderbilt Avenue (Park/Prospect)

There were no police objections to either of the three applications and the full Board voted to support the applications with a final tally of twenty-three in favor, one opposed, with abstention.

Education – Ms. Sharon Wedderburn, Chair; Mr. Kwasi Mensah, Co-Chair

The Education Committee did not have a meeting for the month of March. However, the Chair announced that Kwasi Mensah was appointed as co-chair of the committee. She also announced that 19 of the proposed school closures have been rescinded because of a lawsuit that found that Mayor Bloomberg did not follow school laws when he proposed them. Unfortunately, these schools are not in the clear yet and may be targeted again for closure. The only sure way to prevent these schools and others from closing is for parents to become more involved in their children's education. It is imperative that school surveys are completed and submitted so that the Dept. of Education can have documentation of the interest that parents have in their children's schooling. Schools with the lowest feedback rates are often the ones targeted because school officials believe no one will fight for them.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 15, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue at 7 PM. All are invited to attend.

Environment/Sanitation – Ms. Ede Fox, Chair; Ms. Helen Coley, Co-Chair

The Environment/Sanitation Committee met on Tuesday, March 16, 2010 at CNR to discuss their upcoming Environment/Sanitation forum. The forum held last year was very successful and the committee determined that it would be worthwhile to hold another. Planning is still in the early stages, and additional input is necessary. Anyone interested in participating in the planning stage can attend the next meeting, which will be held on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue at 7 PM.

Fire/Safety – Mr. Douglas Williams, Chair

The Fire/Safety Committee met on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at the Haitian American Day Care Center. The committee discussed the pending cuts to the operating budget of the NYC Fire Department, and plans by Mayor Bloomberg to close 62 firehouses across the city. They discussed plans to mobilize in protest of these fire cuts.

Mr. Williams deferred the remainder of his committee report time to Ms. Josefina Sanfeliu from Latinas Against FDNY Cuts who went into greater detail about some of the cuts and also announced that the Walk Against Fire cuts will take place on Saturday, May 8, 2010. At 1pm the walk will be at 803 Washington Ave/Bklyn Botanic Garden, at 2pm it will be at 1033 Pacific St.

The next meeting of the Fire/Safety Committee will be on Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at the Haitian American Day Care Center located at 1491 Bedford Avenue at 7 PM. All are invited to attend.

Housing/ULURP – Ms. Nizjoni Granville, Chair

The Housing Committee met on Thursday, April 1, 2010 at CNR. The committee reviewed draft recommendations for improvements to the uniform land use review procedure (ULURP) distributed at the March 4, 2010 meeting. The recommendations are aimed at providing Community Board's with the ability to ensure that there is a fair distribution throughout the city of resources for the homeless. Chairwoman Granville pointed out that the Health and Human Services agencies are putting together a database to improve case management. NB: The City Council is formulating legislation in support of such a database. The committee hopes that the database can be expanded to provide additional information to Community Boards.

To highlight the issues facing the recently convened City Charter Revision Commission, the Pratt Center for Community Development published an issue brief discussing the history of land use planning and community input, which was distributed to attendees. The issue brief, "'City Charter Revision: Where Land Use Fits In,'" outlines the major land use challenges the new commission must confront:

- The City Planning Commission has ceased to plan
- The City Charter's aspiration to community-based planning has not been fulfilled
- Attempts to promote "fair share" of burdens have fallen short
- Side agreements to land use decisions have proliferated without disclosure or enforcement..."

The document can be found at <http://prattcenter.net/>.

The full Board voted to support submitting a letter to the Charter Review Commission addressing the four bulleted issues unanimously with twenty-five members present.

In addition, Ms. Granville announced that the City Charter Revision Commission meeting for Brooklyn will be held April 20 at 4:00 PM at St. Francis College, Founders Hall, 180 Remsen Street. She urged everyone to attend the public hearing not only regarding those and other issues, but also regarding the Community Boards, as Mayor Bloomberg plans to cut the Board's operating budget by almost 35%. In addition, as Community Boards are charter mandated, it is imperative that residents focus part of their attention on saving the Community Board. Fliers were distributed regarding the public hearing with facts about the Community Board.

The next meeting of the Housing/ULURP Committee will be on Thursday, May 6, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue at 6:30 PM.

Parks – Ms. Glinda Andrews, Chair; Mr. Robert Witherwax, Co-Chair

The Parks committee met on Tuesday, April 6, 2010 at the St. John's Recreation Center. Ms. Andrews announced that a Friends of Brower Park has been formed. Their first venture is "It's My Park Day" which is scheduled for May 15, 2010. Everyone is invited to attend the event that will feature live music and a fun filled day. A preparation meeting for It's My Park Day will be held April 11 from 10 Am to 6 PM at Brower Park, where the ground will be sowed and de-turfed to prepare for planting.

In addition, the committee also informed the Board that "Friend of St. John's Recreation" has been created and will have a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 from 6 to 8 PM. All are welcomed to attend.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at the St. John's Recreation Center, located at 1251 Prospect Place (between Troy and Schenectady Avenues) at 6 PM. All are invited to attend.

Police – Ms. Shalawn Langhorne, Chair

The Police Committee met on Monday, March 15 at the 77th Precinct but had no action items. The next meeting will be held on Monday, April 19, at the 77th Precinct, located at 127 Utica Avenue at 7 PM. Anyone interested in police-community relations are encouraged to attend.

Transportation – Dr. Frederick Monderson, Chair

The Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, March 23, 2010. The committee discussed the MV Transit Access a Ride disturbances in the community, including their idling vehicles, vehicles parking in and blocking private driveways, and the overall lack of consideration shown to the partial residential community where the garage is located.

The committee also entertained a request by the Panamanian Alliance to co-name a portion of Franklin Avenue "Avenida Republica de Panama." As additional discussion is necessary, the item has been tabled and will be readdressed at an upcoming Transportation Committee meeting.

The next Transportation Committee meeting will be held jointly with the Transportation Committee of Community Board 6 on Thursday, April 29, 2010 at 6:30 PM at Brooklyn Public Library - Central Branch, Grand Army Plaza, 2nd Floor Meeting Room. All are invited to attend.

Youth/Family Services – Ms. Akosua Albritton, Chair

The Youth/Family Services met on Wednesday, April 7, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. In the absence of the Chair, Ms. Audrey Taitt-Hall chaired the meeting.

The committee discussed the upcoming men's event, "Tools and Resources Men Need for 2010 and Beyond" on June 12, 2010 from Noon to 5 PM at Berean Missionary Baptist Church located at 1641 Bergen Street. Fliers were passed out for distribution throughout the community. Ms. Edelman and Mr. Suggs offered more referrals for groups to set information tables. These organizations in American Association of Blacks in Engineering, Con Edison, National Grid and prison program.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 5, 2010 at 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. All are encouraged to attend.

Ms. Granville thanked the committee chairs for their reports and opened the floor for public comments.

Ms. Elsie Richardson announced that the Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium will be hosting free events throughout the Borough through May 2010. The next event will be April 17th at the Weeksville Heritage Center at 2 PM. There will also be free concerts paying tribute to many jazz greats, including Eubie Blake at many parks, most notably Von King Park on Marcy Avenue in Bedford Stuyvesant.

Sandy Taggart of the Crown Heights Revitalization Movement (CHRM) announced that the intake center proposal has been placed on hold for the time being. She stated that the community should fight against the intake center despite desiring the proposed recreation center in the same space. We, as a community, should not have to settle for something we don't want to get something we need. She announced that a coalition is forming with numerous community organizations to band against the intake center in the hopes that the Community Board will join them in the fight against the intake center and for the recreation center.

Mr. Chris Johnson from Councilwoman Mealy's Office announced that the advisory board will meet on Saturday, April 10, 2010 from 10 AM to Noon at the Councilwoman's District office, located at 1757 Union Street. In addition, the Councilwoman will be holding her annual state of the District address on April 24th at 184 Chauncey Street at 6 PM. On May 2nd in honor of Mother's Day, there will be an empowerment women's spa from 4 to 6:30 PM. The location will be provided upon RSVP at the Councilwoman's District office by calling 718-953-3097.

Ms. Melina Bernardine reminded everyone that she is the liaison between District 8 residents and their local post offices. If you have are having problems with mail delivery, contact the Community Board office with the complaint so that the information can be forwarded to her. Also, you can no longer walk into your local post office and file for a passport application. You must now have an appointment to file for one. Call your local post office to schedule an appointment as it takes a number of weeks to process the application.

Ms. Rita Civant announced that Hebron SDA Church located at 1256 Dean Street is sponsoring a community supported agriculture program. Interested parties can buy a share of a community farmer's organic produce based on sliding scale prices. For more information, contact Hebron SDA Church at 718-778-6454.

Mr. Tyrone McDonald of Neighborhood Housing Services announced the Brooklyn Eco Fair on April 17th from 11 AM to 5 PM at Holy Cross Church located at 2530 Church Avenue (between Rogers and Bedford Avenues). There will be workshops on energy efficiency and other ways to lower energy usage and reduce your carbon footprint.

Ms. Ethel Tyus announced that the Crown Heights North Association will hold a town hall meeting on April 21 at 6:45 PM at St. Gregory's Roman Catholic Church located at 991 St. John's Place, an architectural historian will be on hand to discuss the history of Crown Heights. All are invited to attend.

Mr. Greg Todd announced that affordable cooperative apartments are available for sale at the newly constructed Maynard building on the corner of Bergen Street at Schenectady Avenue. 12 of the 47 luxury units have been sold. There will be an open house on Saturday, April 10 from 1 to 3 PM and another on Sunday, April 11 from 2 to 4 PM.

Ms. Granville thanked everyone for their information and adjourned the meeting at 9:30 PM. The next meeting of Community Board No. 8 will be held on Thursday, May 13, 2010 at Berean Missionary Baptist Church, located at 1641 Bergen Street at 7 PM. All are invited to attend.

Guests

Rita Civant
Melina Bernardine
Tyrone McDonald
Carolyn Sanders-James
Valerie Nero
Veronica Bametti-Flores
L. Smith
Brian Saunders
Joy Kaknann
Lee Lin
Wayne Bailey
I. Bryan
Linnette Grant
C. Sweeny
Y. Sylvester
Kasha Armen
Mark Winston Griffith
Erick Mitchell

Elsie Richardson
Mark Thurton
Albert Tyler
Anthony Taylor
Willard Hawkins
Dorothy Banly
Audrey Andrews
Richard Miller
Curtis Sylvester
Lula Staton
Shanida Carter
Desmond Atkins
Shirley Mondesir
M. Alfred
Maxine Reid
Owen Marks