

**Community Board No. 8
Berean Missionary Baptist Church
1641 Bergen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11213**

May 13, 2010

Members Present

Kim Albert
Glinda Andrews
Edo Banach
Viola Bing
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Dr. Flize Bryan
Diana Foster
Ede Fox
Fred Frazier
Nizjoni Granville
Doris Heriveaux
Princess James
Xeerxeema Jordan
Shalawn Langhorne
Priscilla Maddox
Kwasi Mensah
Adelaide Miller
Dr. Fred Monderson
Atim Oton
Robert Puca
Mary Reed
Meredith Staton
William Suggs
Launa Thomas-Bullock
Gregory Todd
Ethel Tyus
Yves Vilus
Sharon Wedderburn
Douglas Williams
Robert Witherwax
Vilma Zuniga

Liaisons Present

Gwen Sumter, Brooklyn Children's Museum
Lt. Mark Secular, 77th Precinct

Members Excused

Akosua Albritton
Helen Coley
Robert Matthews
Clarine Miller
Marlene Saunders
Audrey Taitt-Hall

Members Absent

Julia Boyd
Teri Coaxum
Renaye Cuyler
Jesse Hamilton
Shirley Lee
Marie Louis
Hasoni Pratts
Patricia Scantlbury

Elected Officials Present

Albert Vann, 36th Council District
Ola Alabi, Dist. Leader- 57th A.D

Elected Official's Reps.

Maurice Roberts, Senator Adams
Carl Luciano, Councilman Vann
Jervonne Singletary, Assemblyman Camara
Kristia Beabrun, Congresswoman Clarke
A. Davis, Councilwoman James

CB Staff Present

Michelle George, District Manager
Valerie Hodges-Mitchell

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 7:15 PM by Ms. Nizjoni Granville, Chairperson.

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

Correspondence – CB 8 newsletter and other material were distributed.

Ms. Granville welcomed everyone to the monthly meeting of Community Board 8. She invited Ms. Kristia Beaubrun from Congresswoman Clarke's office to make a presentation regarding Academy Night.

Ms. Beaubrun thanked the board for allowing her an opportunity to share information regarding Academy night. She stated that she brought along Lieutenant Colonel Peter Clunie and Major John Belmont who will be providing information about Academy night.

Academy Night – Lt. Col Peter Clunie, Major John Belmont

Lieutenant Col. Clunie reported that he represents the United States Armed Forces and that representatives from the Air Force, Naval, Merchant Marines, and Coast Guard Academies are all branches that recruit members to join WestPoint. The Armed Forces is a place for many young men and women to meet others from across the country and to seek degrees as officers in the United States Armed Forces.

Major John Belmont stated that he works full-time at WestPoint which is located in upstate New York. Recruits can enter the academy based on recommendations from members of Congress. Community Board 8 is represented by the 10th and 11th Congressional districts and they are both under represented congressional districts.

Ms. Wedderburn asked why he thought the 10th and 11th districts were under-represented? Is it a matter of application or not having the right academic credentials? What do you perceive to be the issue? Major Belmont believes that there is a lack of participation because there is a lack of information or false information being given to the community. He stated that the issue is a mixture of quantity and quality of applicants. Each Congressional office has the opportunity to send one young man or woman per year per academy on average. They can send up to ten names to be considered for one vacancy. What usually happens is that some applicants decide to go to other Service Academies or Civilian Institutions. Some applicants may not be able to pass the medical or physical fitness exams or may not qualify academically. The number of ten applicants will shrink to approximately 2, 3 or 4 names. Many districts throughout the North East forward about 50 or 60 applicants to compete for those 10 slots then compete for one vacancy. He stated that he has not seen a full list of ten names in the better part of a decade especially in 10th and 11th districts. These two districts sent an average of 2-3 candidates to the academy in the last decade as opposed to 4, 5 or 6 from other districts.

Mr. Williams asked what are the educational requirements? Major Belmont stated that high school or GED is required. He stated that there is an Academy Prep-School which offers intensive prep in math and reading for the SAT's. This prep school component also offers physical fitness training.

Major Belmont mentioned that each academy offers a fully funded 4-year college education and additional scholarships. This is an opportunity to learn about the educational opportunities in our nation's service academies and discover the pathways to officership in the profession of arms.

He also informed the board that there is a ROTC (Reserve Training Officer Corps) program. After the applicants finish school, they have the option to leave or continue on. For more information, please contact Ms. Kristia Beaubrun 718-287-1142.

Dr. Monderson thanked Lt. Col Peter Clunie and Major Belmont for their services and announced that he is a proud Vietnam veteran.

Ms. Granville thanked Lieutenant Clunie and Major Belmont for the information and asked for the committee action items.

Transportation – Dr. Frederick Monderson, Chair

Mr. Witherwax read the following report on behalf of the Transportation Committee. The Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. The committee discussed the following items.

The committee heard a presentation from the Panamanian Alliance, they are requesting to co-name Franklin Avenue “Avenida Republica De Panama”. They provided letters of support as well as petitions. The Alliance stated that they have also gone to Community Boards 3 and 9 for approval.

The District Office reported that CB3 and CB9 had already approved the co-naming of Franklin Avenue in their districts. Therefore, the Transportation Committee agrees in principle to the co-naming of Franklin Avenue, however, they voted to **only co-name the corner of Bergen Street and Franklin Avenue** to “Avenida Republica DePanama. The committee hopes the full board will support their recommendation. The board voted 26 in favor, none against and no abstentions.

Spirit Car and Limousine Inc. located at 1433 Bedford Avenue are seeking to renew their FHV Base License. Since there have been no complaints, the committee voted unanimously to support the renewal of Spirit Car and Limousine, Inc. and hope the full board will do the same. The board voted 27 in favor, 1 abstention and none against.

On Thursday, April 29, 2010 NYC Department of Transportation made a presentation before the Transportation Committees of Community Board 6 and 8 regarding the Grand Army Plaza Redesign. The joint meeting was held at Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch at 6:30 p.m. 2nd Floor Meeting Room. The New York City Department of Transportation unveiled a project to make significant safety and public space improvements at Grand Army Plaza. These will build on a series of changes that DOT has already made to Grand Army Plaza and will benefit pedestrians, motorists, and cyclists alike.

The committee supported the improvements with 2 abstentions and hopes the full board does the same. Before the vote was taken Ms. Fuchs stated that she attended the presentation and stated that those present had a number of concerns regarding the elimination of lanes, parking spaces and the repositioning of the new bike lanes. After a brief question and answer period, Mr. Witherwax read the motion and the board voted 22 in favor, 5 abstentions and 2 against.

The next meeting of the Transportation Committee will be held on May 25, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, 727 Classon Avenue at 7:00 p.m.

Housing/ULURP – Nizjoni Granville, Chair

The Housing/ULURP Committee met on Thursday, May 6, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. at 6:30 p.m. The committee discussed the following two items:

Dr. Burton a local dentist made a presentation regarding 1185 Dean Street (between Nostrand and Rogers Avenues). He discussed emergency alterations made to his property after a portion of the façade of the building fell and hit the canopy as a patient was leaving. Due to the concerns that Dr. Burton had for his patients' safety, repairs were made without first contacting the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Community Board 8. Work completed included repair to cracks in the façade, repair to masonry work as initial carvings were weathered and deteriorated, and the main entrance gateway was widened to make it wheelchair accessible. None of the repairs were so extensive as to alter the integrity of the property or reduce its stock in the landmark district. Dr. Burton presented the committee with before and after pictures showcasing the necessary repair work and the current look of the building, taking great pride in illustrating that all repairs were made in such a way as to duplicate the original.

It was the opinion of the committee that the repair work was done in such a way that it benefited the community and did not hurt the landmark district in any way. The committee voted unanimously to accept the minor alterations on the property, finding that they are in keeping with the architectural design of the historic district, and hopes that the full Board will support its recommendation.

Ms. Tyus stated that new findings were discovered which found that Dr. Burton had removed stained glass windows and that Landmarks Preservation Commission mentioned the windows in their documents. After a brief discussion, Ms. Granville stated that these finding were brought to the boards' attention after the Housing Committee had met and voted on this item. At the time of the vote the committee had no knowledge of stained glass windows. Therefore, she moved that the full board support the committee's recommendation based on the information they were provided at the committee meeting. The board voted to support the committee's recommendation with a vote of 28 in favor, 3 abstentions and none against.

Ms. Abigail Patterson, the representative for Eastern Athletic, Inc. located at 17 Eastern Parkway (between Underhill Avenue and Plaza Street East) made a request before the committee to have the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) special permit renewed for the club so that they can continue serving the community as a sports club and gym. The gym is located on the Union Temple premises, which is a building that has a number of violations and has not had a certificate of occupancy since 1997. In addition to renewing the special permit for the sports club and gym, Eastern Athletic is also seeking a waiver for the last three years that their permit has been expired, in hopes that they will not have to start the process of the special permit over from scratch. She informed the committee that the special permit is issued for ten years at a time and the last one expired in 2007.

The committee expressed a number of concerns, primarily with the outstanding violations on the property, the temperamental elevator, and the lack of a certificate of occupancy. While the committee acknowledged that many of these concerns are actually the responsibility of the landlord (Union Temple) to resolve and not the tenant (Eastern Athletic), it was unable to overcome the pressing concern and blatant disregard by Eastern Athletic to apply for a renewal permit in a timely fashion.

In addition, the committee believed that if the waiver were granted and the special permit supported, it would diminish the capacity with which the Board could oversee future developments with the property, especially the acquisition of a certificate of occupancy by Union Temple. As a result, the committee voted to deny both the waiver and special permit renewal with a final tally of 11 members in favor, 0 opposed, with 2 abstentions. The committee hopes the full board will do the same. After a brief discussion this item was tabled. The next meeting of the Housing/ULURP Committee will be held on Thursday, June 3, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, 727 Classon Avenue at 6:30 p.m.

Economic Development – Priscilla Maddox, Chair

The Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. The committee also discussed the following renewal applications:

1. Abby's Level Inc., 1413 Bedford Avenue, Beer/Wine renewal
2. B & B Sports Club, 644 Franklin Avenue, Full Liquor Renewal
3. Cinefel Inc. aka Kombit, 279 Flatbush Avenue, Full Liquor Renewal

The committee voted 7 in favor, 1 against and 3 abstentions. Ms. Oton moved for the Economic Development Committee and recommends that the board support the three license renewals. The motion was seconded by Mr. Staton and carried with a vote of 27 in favor, 1 against and no abstentions.

4. Starlight Lounge, 1086 Bergen Street, Full Liquor Renewal

The committee voted 6 in favor, 1 against and 4 abstentions. The committee voted to support this item based on an understanding that the landlord has allowed the owners to remain in this location until July 31st after that date they will find another location and return to the committee. Ms. Oton moved for the Economic Committee and also recommends that the board support Starlight Lounge. This item was seconded by Dr. Monderson and carried with a vote of 27 in favor, 1 abstention and none against.

The next meeting of the Economic Development Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, 727 Classon Avenue at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Granville thanked the committee for their action item reports and asked for the following committee reports:

Aging/Health & Human Services – Ms. Marlene Saunders, Chair

The Aging/Health & Human Services Committee did not have any action items for the month of May. The next meeting will be held on Monday, June 7, 2010 at 5:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are invited to attend.

Education – Sharon Wedderburn, Chair

The Education Committee did not have any action items for the month of May. However, Ms. Wedderburn announced that Mr. Kwasi Mensah has been appointed as co-chair of the Education Committee. Mr. Mensah stated that he is delighted to serve as co-chair of the Education Committee and one of the 1st things they plan to do is invite the Parent Coordinators and PTA presidents to the Education Committee meetings. It is the hope of the committee that forging a relationship with the coordinators and presidents will create real change for the children of school districts 13, 16 and 17.

Ms. Wedderburn informed everyone 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, May 20, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue at 7 PM. All are invited to attend.

Environment/Sanitation – Ede Fox, Chair

The Environment/Sanitation Committee did not have any action items for the month of May. However, Ms. Fox was delighted to announce that the Committee has two new members. She welcomes their input and pleads for more members. She also stated that the committee will not have their Environmental Breakfast forum this year. They are looking forward to planning one in the fall.

She invited everyone to attend the next meeting of the Environment/Sanitation Committee meeting on Tuesday, May 18, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue at 7 PM.

Fire/Safety – Douglas Williams, Chair

The Fire/Safety Committee met on Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at the Haitian American Day Care Center located at 1491 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. at 7:00 p.m.

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. FDNY puts out the fires from explosions, they handle terrorism reports with the NYPD. These uniformed services should not be reduced. Cost cuts must be found that do not involve public safety.

Mr. Williams stated that Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley, Chair of the City Council's Fire Committee is urging the community to mail post cards and organize rallies to keep the fire companies open. He passed out post cards and asked everyone to write "Save our firehouses" or "don't close fire companies", and be sure to sign their names.

The Committee also discussed the viability of a summer youth program centered around fire safety. Such a program would need a young person aged 18-24 to run it, committee members to advise and counsel, and a venue (school, mediation center etc.) open for the summer. There would need to be a plan, and a source of funds.

The next meeting of the Fire/Safety Committee will be on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at the Haitian American Day Care Center located at 1491 Bedford Avenue at 7 PM. All are invited to attend.

Parks –Glinda Andrews, Chair

The Parks committee met on Tuesday, May 4, 2010 at the St. John's Recreation Center located at 1251 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Andrews announced that "Friends of St. John's Recreation" held a groundbreaking ceremony on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 from 6 to 8 p.m. at St. John's Recreation Center. This event was well attended. She thanked everyone who came out to support. She will keep the board informed regarding upcoming events hosted by Friends of St. John's Recreation.

She also mentioned that the Parks Committee along with Friends of St. John's Recreation Center and NYC Department of Parks will be hosting a Community Awareness Day on Saturday, June 19, 2010 (Rain or Shine) at St. John's Recreation Center location at 1251 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, N.Y., from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, please contact the Community Board office or St. John's Recreation. This event is free and will be fun for all ages.

Mr. Witherwax reminded everyone that Saturday, May 15th is "It's My Park Day" he urged everyone to visit their favorite park and volunteer to spruce it by painting benches, murals, walkways, or plant flowers, etc.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 1, 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, April 19, 2010 at the 77th Precinct located at 127 Utica Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. at 7:00 P.M.

The committee discussed the Nostrand Avenue drug raid that was coordinated by the Brooklyn District Attorney's office and the New York City Police Department. Several businesses were shut down due to an ongoing investigation of drugs being sold inside their establishments. It was reported that shortly after the arrests were made many of the businesses re-opened. However, there is more police coverage along Nostrand Ave. The 77th Precinct reported that twenty- four new officers have been assigned to the 77th precinct.

The committee also discussed two homicide incidents that occurred on April 9th & 18th . No arrest have been made in these crimes. The committee discussed the lack of police presence at the community board meetings. The committee feels that this is an ongoing issue and after meetings and discussions with the commanding officer and community affairs department, that lack of police presence is disrespectful to the community. Residents want representation from the police department at the community board meetings to address public safety concerns.

The committee review the comp stats for both the 77th precinct and citywide. Overall crime within the 77th precinct is up 6.55% compared to the last year at this time. There was an increase in Rape, Felony Assault, Grand Larceny, and Grand larceny assault. There was a decrease in robbery and burglary. Murder remained the same. The comp stats numbers are available on the NYPD's website.

In addition, the committee addressed their concerns of the increase in crime, the lack of professionalism from the precinct's front desk office staff and lack of police presence on the western end of the district. The committee has begun to assess the community through surveys and plan a forum for the May meeting with the commanding officer and other community stakeholders.

Ms. Langhorne also announced that summer youth employment applications are available online until May 21, 2010 at www.nyc.gov/dycd. Anyone between the ages 14-24 should apply.

The next meeting is scheduled for May, 17, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, 727 Classon Avenue.

Youth/Family Services – Akosua Albritton, Chair

The Youth/Family Services met on Wednesday, May 5, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. at 6:45 p.m. In the absence of the chair, Mr. William Suggs report the following report.

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. Princess James invited Carl Joseph so that he could describe his relations/communicating nonprofit service. It is a program focused on men. She also identified a drummer for the men’s event and wanted to know whether he could be included into the program.

Mr. Joseph offered two strategies to keep the audience at the event beyond lunch: 1) getting a sports figure to make an appearance and 2) give the raffle results after lunch and the breakout sessions. The committee will contact Carol’s Daughter and Karyn’s Body Beautiful for samples of men’s toiletries.

The meeting focused on the event where time was spent sequencing the parts of the day. Genel Williams volunteered to write the program/evaluation paper. The committee discussed the ways to ensure the panel discussion is interactive.

The committee also discussed the Administration for Children’s Services Early Learn NYC concept paper that makes dramatic changes to subsidized child care/early childhood education is delivered in the city. The city anticipates making 350 awards. This is a decrease of care providers by more than 50. The Request for Proposals for prospective bidders is due out late June/early July 2010. More information will be given at a later date.

Lastly, Mr. Suggs mentioned that the American Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE-NYMAC ran its first Summer Energy Academy last July. The focus of the academy was to introduce young people to the possibilities that exist in the energy industry when they study science, engineering and technology. The Academy consisted of students selected from a review of their academics, ELA scores, brief essay and interview.

This year the academy will be sponsored by AABE-NYMAC, NYU-Poly, Con Edison, and National Grid. This program will be hosted at NYU-Poly from July 6 through August 12 from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. If you know of any child interested in attending, please send the following info by Wednesday May 28, 2010 to Lima Jones at greaves70@aol.com. Prospective participants will be notified by phone letting them know when to attend. Info Needed: (1) Recent copy of students ELA scores (bring original at time of interview). (2) 300 word essay outlining students interest in the sciences, engineering, or technology as it relates to the energy industry. (3) Copy of student report card showing last three quarters.

The next meeting of the Youth and Family Services Committee will be held on Wednesday June 2, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Granville thanked the committee chairs and reminded them to submit their reports along with attendance sheets to the board office. She opened the floor for public comments.

Public Comments

Ms. Ethel Tyus mentioned two things that were discussed at the Housing Committee meeting. The Charter Revision Commission and recommendations that Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer prepared and submitted to the Commission. His recommendations are available upon request from the CB office. Ms. Granville stated that in April she and the District Manager along with the other 58 community boards attended a meeting with BP Stringer to discuss community boards budgets and what changes to the City Charter could mean to the role of community boards, borough president, public advocate etc.

Ms. Granville also stated that the Charter Commission has conducted public hearings throughout the city over the last few month. The Commission plans to conduct forums over the summer on certain pertinent issues in the charter, hopefully one of the forums will address community boards. She urged everyone to take the Charter Revision Commission very seriously because it will affect all of us in some way.

Ms. Tyus also mentioned that Mr. Wayne Bailey a community resident brought a double parking issue to the committee's attention. Ms. Granville stated that the board is planning a meeting in June to address all of the concerns resulting from and related to the Atlantic Yard project.

Mr. Greg Todd announced that on Saturday, May 15, 2010 there will be a homebuyer's seminar at the Maynard Coop. The Maynard cooperative apartments are available for sale at the newly constructed 47 luxury unit building located on the corner of Bergen Street at Schenectady Avenue from 12 to 2p.m. All are welcome to attend.

Ms. Gail Branch-Muhammad announced that Congressman Ed Towns invites you to come out and tell him your views on the HIV and AIDS crisis is Brooklyn. The Town Hall meeting will be held on Saturday, May 15, 2010 from 10:00 a.m-12:00 p.m. at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation's Billie Holiday Theatre, 1368 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. For more information, contact Edna Johnson at 718-855-8018.

Ms. Granville reminded everyone who has upcoming events to please inform the board office so that these events can be added to our monthly newsletter. She thanked everyone for their information and adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

The next meeting of Community Board No. 8 will be held on Thursday, June 10, 2010 at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue at 7 PM. All are invited to attend.

Guests

Deborah Young
Louise Parks
Audrey Andrews
Yahya Raji
Lula Staton
Shirley M
Lt. Mark Secular
Lenton Clemons
Vielka Maynard
John McCall
Vera Walker

Dennis Parrott
G. Phillips
Danae Oratowski
Desmond Atkins
Kristia Beaubrun
George Bussberg
Veronica Gallardo
Rennie Brooks
Wayne Bailey
Terrence George
Kesha Harmon

Mohammad Rahman
Pascale Felix
Valerie Nero
Consuela Lawless
Veronica Nero
Abigail Patterson

Lt. Col Peter Clunie
T. Washington
Holly Fuchs