

**Community Board No. 8
Berean Missionary Baptist Church
1635 Bergen Street
Brooklyn, NY 11213**

September 8, 2011

Members Present

Kim Albert
Glinda Andrews
Desmond Atkins
LeeAnn Banks
Princess Benn-James
Samantha Bernardine
Viola Bing
Julia Boyd
Dr. Flize Bryan
Helen Coley
Diana Foster
Ede Fox
Fred Frazier
Nizjoni Granville
Curtis Harris
Xeerxeema Jordan
Shalawn Langhorne
Priscilla Maddox
Kwasi Mansah
Dr. Fred Monderson
Atim Oton
Angelina Pinto
Robert Puca
Cy Richardson
Meredith staton
Gregory Todd
Ethel Tyus
Sharon Wedderburn
Robert Witherwax

Liaisons Present

Sam Pierre, Office of the Mayor
PO Pierre-Louis, Comm. Affairs, 77th Precinct
Lieutenant Agate, 77th Precinct
Andrea Phillips-Merriman, BNIA

Elected Officials

Honorable Eric Adams, State Senator
Honorable Ola Alabi, District Leader

Members Absent

Akosua Albritton
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Renaye Cuyler
James Ellis
Jamell Henderson
Doris Heriveaux
Marie Louis
Robert Matthews
Adelaide Miller
Alton Pierce
Mary Reed
Marlene Saunders
Patricia Scantlebury
Stacey Sheffey
William Suggs
Audrey Taitt-Hall
Launa Thomas-Bullock
Yves Vilus
Deborah Young
Vilma Zuniga

Elected Official's Representatives Present

Dottie Lebron, Councilman Vann's Office
Carl Luciano, Councilmember Mealy's Office
Jim Vogel, Senator Montgomery's Office
Simone Hawkins, Councilmember James's Office
Renea Murphy, Councilmember Vann's Office
Lee Church, Councilmember Jeffries's Office
Jesse Hamilton, Senator Adams's Office

CB Staff Present

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Associate
Valerie Hodges-Mitchell, Comm. Service Aide

While awaiting a quorum to begin the Public Hearing on the Capital and Expense Budget for FY 2013, Ms. Granville opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Carl Luciano from Councilmember Darlene Mealy's office invited everyone to their monthly Advisory Board meeting on Saturday, September 10, 2011 from 10am-12pm at the district office which is located at 1757 Union Street 2nd Floor.

Ms. Dottie Lebron from Councilman Albert Vann's office informed the board and guests that new legislation will require window guards to be reviewed and maintained by HPD which is not currently the normal practice. Today this is covered by the Department of Health. This is one of the most important pieces of legislation and once voted on by the City Council, it will be sent to the Mayor. The staff of HPD is constantly out especially in buildings checking for violations and ensuring that they have window guards which tend to be on their radar more when the weather is nice.

Ms. James asked what the procedure was for when tenants create problems and what type of recourse landlords had. She gave an example of a tenant removing something from the wall and creating a violation on her property. She was informed that regardless of whether the tenant is responsible or not, HPD will check to make sure that the infrastructure of the building and apartment remains stable. The landlord can take the tenant to court to have the damages paid for, but the violation must be corrected.

Ms. Simone Hawkins from Councilwoman Letitia James's office announced that elected officials such as Councilwoman James, Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, Senator Eric Adams, Assemblyman Hakeem Jeffries and Senator John Sampson are hosting a free comedy show for seniors. This event will take place on Thursday, October 27, 2011. Additional information will be given to the Community Board at a later date. Free transportation will be offered to seniors.

Ms. Hawkins reminded everyone that Forrest City Ratner is offering free trash cans to those who are directly impacted by the Atlantic Yards project which has caused a major rat infestation problem. She also suggested that anyone with questions regarding this matter should call their district office at 718-260-9191.

Ms. Hawkins also informed the board that there are applications available for affordable housing located at 1825 Atlantic Avenue and at Madison Putnam, which is located at 1054 Putnam Avenue and the deadline is September 23, 2011. These applications come in packet form and those who wish to obtain a copy can call or visit the district office.

Mr. Jim Vogel from Senator Velmanette Montgomery's office announced that redistricting is coming up which is a great deal to everyone in this community. There are meetings coming up more specifically in Brooklyn which is due to take place in approximately ten days. It is imperative to come out and speak about the importance of keeping communities together that are bound by common interest, language, ethnic background and other areas that are important to that community to ensure that they are being represented correctly. This movement of redistricting will dilute the voting rights act designations which are very important.

On Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 11 AM, there will be a press conference on the Smart Scholars Program held at Long Island University which is a new rationale on education. There will be four schools from this area participating in this program: Boys & Girls High School, City Poly Tech, Medgar Evers College Prep and Pathways in Technology Early College High School.

The Smart Scholars Program consists of juniors and seniors completing high school and college work. This will allow students to enter college with a minimum of twenty and a maximum of sixty credits which is equivalent to two years of college. Ultimately, this program will allow families to save money. This program has been proven to motivate the entire school and increase graduation rates.

Mr. Vogel stated that Senator Montgomery will be re-introducing the Micro Stamping Bill which requires that every gun sold and used in New York have a unique identifying number so that every bullet used can be traced back to that gun. This bill has been introduced three times in the last ten years. Each time it was introduced, it was defeated by the gun lobby. When this bill comes up this year, a lot of help will be needed.

After a brief question and answer session, Ms. Granville opened the public hearing.

Public hearing items on the budget for FY 2013 were distributed to all community board members and community residents. The Capital and Expense Budget items for FY 2013 were read by Mr. Robert Witherwax and Ms. Shalawn Langhorne.

Ms. Tyus asked if it was too late to add a request to the submissions. She was informed that it was. Stating that there was an update period in November, she requested that equipment for community patrol be added to the list of items if and when the resubmit period is an option in November.

The full Board voted to accept the items unanimously. There were 25 members present.

Ms. Granville closed the public hearing and opened the general meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE –Information pertinent to the District was distributed.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES - The minutes of the last meeting were adopted with any necessary corrections.

Ms. Granville asked for a report from the following committees:

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 September due to the Labor Day holiday. The next meeting will be Monday, October 3, 2011 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, September 6, 2011 at 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue. The committee discussed the following new application:

The proprietor of 606 R&D located at 606 Vanderbilt Avenue (between St. Marks Avenue and Prospect Place) made a favorable presentation for their establishment that is seeking a full liquor license. R&D will operate Sunday from 9 AM to 9 PM, Monday thru Thursday from 7:30 AM to

10 PM, and Friday and Saturday from 7:30 AM to Midnight. The bar/restaurant will employ 12 individuals and will have standard surveillance cameras throughout, with seating for 5 at a separate bar, and 24 more at tables. There is a church located within 90 feet of the establishment at 635 Vanderbilt Avenue, but because the church is not housed in a building utilized specifically for its purposes, the establishment is not bound by the 200 foot rule.

There are 9 other establishments within 500 feet of 606 R&D that have a liquor license of some variety, be it a full liquor license, or wine and beer only. There were no police objections to the application and community residents in the vicinity praised the establishment for its long business hours, surmising that the long business hours would make the area favorable for other types of vendors (non restaurant and bars) to come into the area. Subsequently, full Board voted to support the application with 23 members in favor, 3 opposed, with 3 abstentions and moves that the full Board support its recommendation.

The committee also discussed the following renewal applications:

- a. Thirstbar, located at 629 Classon Avenue (corner of Pacific Street).
- b. Lotus 45, located at 293 Flatbush Avenue (between St. Marks Avenue and Prospect Place).
- c. Abigail's, located at 807 Classon Avenue (corner of St. John's Place).

There were no police objections to either of the three applications and the full Board voted on the above three applications with a final tally of 24 in favor, 4 opposed, with 0 abstentions.

- d. Maroc Sip and Chat, located at 741 Park Place (corner of Rogers Avenue). There were no police objections to the application but the District office has received complaints of the establishment operating an illegal sidewalk café. Support for the renewal application is contingent upon the proprietor removing the tables and chairs from in front of the establishment. She agreed, and the full Board voted to support the renewal application with a final tally of 23 in favor, 5 opposed, with 1 abstention.
- e. 95 South, located at 778 Franklin Avenue (between Lincoln and St. John's Places). The 77th Precinct offered the following list of infractions within the last 6 months: use of a controlled substance in front of the establishment, disorderly conduct, alcohol consumption outside of the establishment, and an increase in public urination in the area. A community resident present at the meeting questioned whether or not all of these infractions were the result of 95 South or perhaps another establishment on the block or the bodega at the corner where there is a lot of loitering. He defended the establishment by stating that 95 South does not have the traffic and patronage most nights to be the nuisance that it is being made out to be.

After a brief question and answer period, the owner also defended his business by stating that he has not had any incidents in the last 2 years. The full Board voted to support the renewal application contingent upon the owner/proprietor adhering to the committee's request that he meet with the 77th Precinct to discuss the issues and ways to eliminate them. The final vote tally was 20 in favor of support, 2 opposed, with 6 abstentions.

Finally, the committee heard a presentation from a representative for Basil, located at 268 Kingston Avenue (corner of Lincoln Place) concerning a sidewalk café. Basil is seeking to place

12 seats at 6 tables in front of the pizzeria and wine bar. The sidewalk café would operate from 8 AM to midnight Sunday thru Thursday and 4 PM to midnight Friday and Saturday. Over the summer, the District office had received numerous complaints that Basil was operating an illegal sidewalk café. District office staff contacted the manager of the restaurant on numerous occasions, who stated that she would remove the tables and chairs from in front of the establishment. They were never removed.

Despite the popularity of the restaurant and the need for refreshing new businesses on Kingston Avenue, the application for the sidewalk café was denied by the committee because it felt that a complete disregard for rules and regulations should not be rewarded and ignored. The final vote tally was 21 in favor of rejecting the application, 1 in favor of supporting it, with 6 abstentions.

Finally, Ms. Oton reminded everyone present of the Catalyst Network Foundation Launch Event on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at Kai Studios, located at 1011 Dean Street from 7-11 PM. She invited everyone to attend.

The next meeting of the Economic Development Committee will be Tuesday, October 11, 2011 at 6:30 PM. All are invited to attend.

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

Ms. Wedderburn announced that District 8 has 3 community school districts that cover the area: 13, 16, and 17. Community School District 13 has a middle school task force because there are few choices of middle schools in the District.

Visit www.schoolbook.org. The site contains information on reform that is being advocated for and test scores for each school. When evaluating schools, it looks at learning environment, parental rating from surveys, and test scores.

The committee will now meet the third Wednesday of the month instead of the third Thursday. The committee is calling for members who are parents, grandparents, and caregivers, or anyone with an interest in schools and education. The next two meetings will be held on September 21, 2011 followed by October 19, 2011 at 7 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are encouraged to attend.

ENVIRONMENT/SANITATION – Ms. Ede Fox and Ms. Helen Coley, Co-Chairs

The Environment/Sanitation committee will meet on Tuesday, September 20, 2011 and Tuesday, October 18, 2011 at 7 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. All are encouraged to attend.

FIRE/SAFETY – Mr. Robert Witherwax, Chair

Mr. Witherwax is encouraging people to attend Fire/Safety committee meetings as there is a need for more involved membership. There are two things noticed when one walks the community: there are a lot of dilapidated buildings and a lot of boarded up, vacant properties. These properties are the first buildings that go up in flames and need to be watched for. If you notice a property such as one of the two mentioned, please keep an eye out for squatters or illegal activity and report it.

Also, he reminded people about the dangers of double parking. Many streets are very narrow and when vehicles are double parked, it makes it difficult for emergency service vehicles, particularly fire trucks, to navigate. If you have to pull into the space designated for the hydrant momentarily, it is better than double parking in most cases. You must keep your vehicle out of the fire truck's way.

The meetings will now be held on the second Wednesday of every month. The next two meetings will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 and October 12, 2011 at 7 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are encouraged to attend.

HOUSING/ULURP

The Housing/ULURP Committee met on Thursday, September 1, 2011 at 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 727 Classon Avenue. The committee heard a presentation on BSA Cal. No. 112-10-BZ, 915 Dean St. - Special Permit from BSA to Reduce Number of Parking Spaces.

Jordan Most appeared to request the Boards' support for reducing the number of parking spaces at 915 Dean St. from 28 to 21. The second floor of the facility will be used as professional offices (UG 6) instead of warehouse/storage (UG 16). The prior application required correction to accurately state the number of parking spaces being requested. The current layout will provide a mandated shelter for a parking attendant. The Committee questioned the impact the patient drop-offs would have on the bike lane traffic. Mr. Most indicated: that the second floor will not be used for dialysis services; that the fewer parking spaces will facilitate ambulettes pulling into the lot to discharge their dialysis patients; and that more greenery would be added to the front of the building.

Ms. Tyus clarified that the owners had made an error in calculation in the beginning when they first came before the Board for support. There is no effect on street parking with the reduction.

The full Board voted 26 in favor, 1 opposed, with 1 abstention to send a letter of support to the Board of Standards and Appeals in support of Special Permit.

Ms. Tyus also announced that St. Gregory's is having their centennial celebration on September 15th at 10 AM at the school. She also reminded everyone of the upcoming house tour of the historic district on Saturday, October 1, 2011.

The next meeting of the Housing/ULURP Committee will be held on Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn, NY.

PARKS AND RECREATION – Ms. Glinda Andrews, Chair; Ms. Kim Albert, Co-Chair

The Parks & Recreation Committee met on September 6, 2011 at St. Johns Recreation Center located at 1251 Prospect Place. Portia Dyrenforth, Julie Nymann and Harrison Chang from the New York City Parks Department Capital Projects presented the design for the Plaza and the Comfort Station for St. Johns Playground. Along with the staff from the Parks Department, the Architect Tom Cleveland attended the meeting. The two capital projects will run simultaneously.

The Plaza design includes upgrading all benches and tables in the rear of the Center. Some of the tables will have three chairs to allow wheel chair accessibility. Some asphalt surface will be removed to add more greenery such as trees, shrubs, grass and flowers.

The comfort station will be located on the Southwest side of the building (facing the children's playground). The Comfort Station will include a men's and a women's bathroom with three (3) stalls in each bathroom. A green water tank would be added to the building to help the rain water flow to the green area. A maintenance area not accessible to the public will be added behind the comfort station.

The project time line is as follows:

January 2012 – Drawing of design completed

July 2012 - details of construction completed

September 2012 - project begins

March 2014 - project completed

The rear and the southwest portion of the building will be closed during construction, but this will not interfere with the parks outdoor activities.

In the presentation there was no evidence of lighting near or on the comfort station for safety reasons. The committee requested that some lighting be added near or on the comfort station to the design. The Parks Department agreed to consider the committee's request.

The full Board voted unanimously with 27 members present to support the plans.

The next meeting of the Parks Committee will be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2011 at 6 PM at the St. John's Recreation Center, located at 1251 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, NY. All are invited to attend.

TRANSPORTATION – Dr. Frederick Monderson, Chair

The Transportation Committee will meet on Tuesday September 27, 2011 and Tuesday October 25, 2011 at 7 PM at the Haitian American Day Care Center located at 1491 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY. As there are numerous transportation projects ongoing in the District, all are invited to attend.

YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES – Ms. Akosua Albritton, Chair

The Youth and Family Services Committee will meet on October 5, 2011 at 6:30 PM at the Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, located at 727 Classon Avenue. All are invited and encouraged to attend.

Ms. Granville thanked the committee chairs for their reports and asked Senator Adams to give a brief report.

SENATOR ERIC ADAMS

Senator Adams provided his email address, voiceofconcern@aol.com, to those present. He stated that if you have an issue, please email him, and he will work with you to get it resolved.

He stated that he is preparing to unveil a major crime initiative for the community. The police cannot stop crime or solve cases alone. The community also needs to get involved. Crime has to be stopped in the home, first and foremost. Too often, parents know that their children are committing criminal offenses and are keeping silent. They often know when their children are carrying guns, and are also keeping silent, creating reasons for the need such as, "he needs to carry it to protect the family." This type of logic is pervasive and damaging.

Operation Take Back Our Community creates a space where people learn that we should not wait for others to protect the community, and we should start ourselves.

Ms. Langhorne asked what legislation is out there concerning gun laws and what can be done to make the laws stricter. She was informed that the guns that are coming into New York City are coming from down south where it is much easier to apply for a gun license and obtain a firearm. Real gun legislation is needed on the federal level in order to have any impact in NYC. Unfortunately, the NRA (National Rifle Association) has a very strong and powerful gun lobby preventing harsh laws.

Mr. Harris asked what could be done to deal with the issue of babies having babies, which seems to lead to a lot of the issues facing our community. He was informed that we are currently dealing with the crack baby generation, and before we can deal with the general issue, we need to be able to deal with the social issues creating the general issue.

Mr. Mensah asked if it would help to have random searches for guns at the NY/NJ crossings. He was informed that it would not be a lucrative idea because of the manpower needed and the traffic snarls it would cause. Senator Adams agreed that something does need to be done, and it needs to begin at the federal level.

Mr. Atkins stated that with community policing, we are finding that many officers brought into the community are very hostile toward residents. He asked how we could change the tone and tenor of policing so that residents could feel safe and protected, and also not have to endure hostility. Senator Adams stated that it is unfortunate that so many officers have bought into the concept of rudeness and hostility. The NYPD's C.P.R. motto (Courtesy, Professionalism, and Respect) has to stand for something. The community controls the police, not the other way around.

Ms. Langhorne stated that many officers behave the way they do because there are no repercussions for their behavior. Too often, police issues go unreported. These issues of disrespect must be reported to have an impact on the mentality. Senator Adams agreed.

Ms. Granville thanked Senator Adams for his report and also thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting. She adjourned the meeting at 9:30 PM.

The next meeting of Community Board No. 8 will be held on Thursday, October 13, 2011 at Hope City Empowerment Center, located at 650 Washington Avenue (corner of Bergen Street). All are invited and encouraged to attend.

Guests

Emmitt Hoskins
Lisa Friedman
Shirley Mondesir
Anthony Taylor
Nicholas Kaufman
Myrna Despyne
Leslie Sierva
Adjua Starks
Sebastien Cornut
Josemae Boyce
Rachel Weinstein
Jacqueline Wells
James Walker
Rodney Walker
Rodney S.
Willard Hawkins
Dorothy Bembry-Guet
Laura Bahdel
Josh Marx
Sarah Wolf
Paula Pinnock
Samantha Ridge
Valerie Nero
Vanessa Babb
Marlon Peterson
Rammel H.
Helen Beichel
Simeon Kitt
Wayne Bailey
Alexa B.