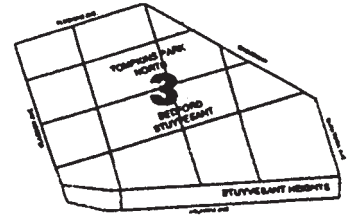




THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMUNITY BOARD No. 3
BEDFORD STUYVESANT RESTORATION PLAZA
1360 FULTON STREET, 2ND FLOOR BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11216



718-622-6601 Phone 718-857-5774 Fax

MARTY MARKOWITZ
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

CHARLENE PHILLIPS
DISTRICT MANAGER

HENRY L. BUTLER
CHAIRPERSON

DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT 2009-'10

INTRODUCTION

Our goals are to mirror the progressive and innovative thinking of this City's leaders to avoid at all costs, the decay and decline of the past to eliminate New York City having to go through the processes of completely re-inventing the wheel from the ground up. That will continue to be a goal of this Community Board, to ever move forward never backward. We encourage the City in its efforts to repair and shore up our physical infrastructure, facilitating our readiness for the expansion which is moving forth at a dizzying rate. There are opportunities abounding wherever you look in this booming era of growth.

Here in the Bedford-Stuyvesant community we are attempting the delicate balance of our infrastructure, and the areas of crime, poverty, education and social services. The strength of this city is measured by its citizenry. So it behooves us to move forward to create a greener, greater New York with provisions for all of the residents.

In the 1820's, the settlements of Weeksville and Carville were established within the boundaries of what was then known as Bedford. They were thriving communities where African-Americans had their own schools, businesses, churches, homes, and social groups.

Throughout the rest of the early to mid twentieth century families from the Caribbean islands and others fleeing from the South continued to seek out our area as a good place to own property and businesses; raise families; and contribute to the social fabric of the time. Today, we owe our tenacity for survival, strength and cultural preservation to those ancestors. We are proud of our image as a jewel in New York's unique mosaic of neighborhoods.

The boundaries of Community Board No. 3 are Flushing Avenue to the north; Broadway to the northeast; Saratoga Avenue to the east; Classon Avenue to the west; and Atlantic Avenue to the south. Despite the construction of large-scale public housing developments which occurred during the late 1950's and early 60's, Bedford-Stuyvesant is best known for its abundance of handsome row houses and brownstones that date back to the turn of the last century. Structures such as "Old Boys High School", the "Tent Building", and the Alhambra Apartments are some examples of the area's architectural treasures.

Community Board No. 3's population continues to represent one of the largest African-American communities in the nation, but it is becoming more diverse making for a rich mix of cultures particularly in this season of expansion. The residents of Bedford Stuyvesant,

in the traditions of old, are always determined that their community would not only survive, but thrive. Individuals and groups are constantly working to shore up the middle-class base; advocating for fair banking practices; pushing for affordable housing, saving our young from the scourge of drugs, rebuilding our economic base; and demanding improvement in city services.

Into the twenty-first century, the community continues to grow. However, like the rest of the City, there are major concerns regarding: our infrastructure, poverty, joblessness, crime, poor health, lack of affordable housing, and homelessness. Community-based organizations, civic groups, elected officials, block associations, and individual activists realize that it is critical to keep the focus on these issues. The partnerships that have been forged between municipal agencies and those local entities working on our issues have become solid. Through such vehicles as the District Service Cabinet, the monthly meetings of the Community Board, and various "Town Hall" meetings an invaluable tool. The ongoing dialogue brings not only an understanding of the issues but a respect for the unwavering level of commitment to positive change.

We continue to capture the recommendations of a larger segment of our neighbors by using the public meetings of the Community Board as the basis for the public hearings that are mandated as part of this process. We strive to bring cohesiveness between the needs of our community and the municipal service agencies that must respond. It is through the lens of the factors outlined in our 197-A Plan; the lessons learned from all who have gone before, and our own long-range vision of our community that this 2010 District Needs Statement is presented.

ARTS & CULTURE

Bedford-Stuyvesant has tenaciously held onto its institutions that reflect the arts and cultural experiences of its people. From the gospel concerts presented by our churches to the extraordinary works proudly displayed at the Fulton Arts Fair, the community has continued to breathe life into these institutions. Our elected officials have consistently provided funding, but the need is great.

Paramount among the concerns is the lack of funding for arts and cultural programs in our schools. We must look to other municipal entities to bring support to the children in our educational systems in areas such as music, dance, filmmaking, and art. Programs that enhanced the curriculum in years past now lie dormant. Any pipelines into the schools in terms of grants must give preference to underserved communities such as Bedford-Stuyvesant. Pilot projects in Districts 16 and 13 would pave the way for future funding.

The Magnolia Tree Earth Center, the Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival, the Skylight Gallery and the Youth Arts Academy at Restoration, and the Weeksville Heritage Center (although just across our borders) all enhance the lives of our neighbors. Increased funding from sources such as the Department of Cultural Affairs would help to undergird these institutions. The Fulton Art Fair will be celebrating its 51st Year in 2009, and there is a critical need to redouble support for this venerable fine arts institution. New collaboratives such as the Bedford Stuyvesant Artists' Association must also be supported.

We need programmatic funding that would address intergenerational cultural storytelling, and a bridge between music genres (jazz, hip-hop, rhythm and blues and classical, etc.). We highly recommend support for community-based organizations,

such as the Noel Pointer Foundation, that will be able to showcase the talents of local artists, with particular emphasis on youth and seniors, without the exclusion of those in between. All are in need of funding and support. There is a need for a program that will train individuals in areas like digital filmmaking and business plan preparation that would facilitate taking an idea from conception to fruition while capturing the culture of our community, to be shared throughout the neighborhood and beyond.

DAY CARE

The concept of a comprehensive early childhood education is the most important start a parent can give to a child, which has not changed over this past year. We are still pitifully deficient in infant/toddler care in this community. With Welfare reform in full operation, parents on public assistance need more qualified infant/toddler services to facilitate their being able to return to work. Parents needing a full-range of services from the Department of Social Services are just not getting it. Additionally, training on how to start, run and maintain a safe, quality environment must be provided.

The problems of under utilization that have plagued child care centers over the past few years are exacerbated in this present climate of financial instability. Adults are without employment or at best underemployed. The question that rises is can government raise the quality of subsidized child care? At this point, there seems to be a divide between family demand, poverty and policy.

As an epicenter of an underserved population, Bedford-Stuyvesant needs to have more ACS funded centers. Parents continue to need subsidized child care services. The parents with children in the age range of birth to three years of age are most affected. This group has the greatest demand for child care. Parents are being urged to return to work or school in a socio-economic climate of struggle of financial crisis.

There needs to be a bridge to connect the necessary components of demand, poverty and policy. At this point it appears that the Administration for Children's Services is uninterested in meeting with the various voucher programs that are available. A meeting of this nature is imperative. Parents, providers and ACS should come together in a concerted effort to breach gaps in services to needy families.

In instances where programs are in place, the reimbursement rate has not been increased for the last four to five years for private centers, creating a hardship to keep their doors open, not to mention that costs have risen drastically. Several centers have inadequate or non-existent funding and have had to close, causing an even greater gap for child care among the underserved of Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Strategies to address child care market rates, policies and an effective voucher program must be addressed. Additionally, a definition of early childhood accredited systems and the role they play in the improvement of program quality and accountability.

EDUCATION

The issues that daunt the Bedford-Stuyvesant community continue. Education must become a priority in this city. The youth are the future leaders and it should be a priority to us now that they receive the very best there is, keeping New York City at the forefront

as one of the greatest cities in the world. Until we take a serious look at the education system and the basic needs for schools in our neighborhood, they will continue to fail the children in unimaginable ways when viewing the big picture.

In 2003, the New York State Court of Appeals, in its ruling on the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, found the following elements to be germane to a "sound basic education":

- High quality teaching
- Small class size, and
- Adequate instrumentalities of learning, such as adequate supplies, textbooks, libraries and computers

These very elements reflect some of our highest priorities for the improvement of our public schools in Districts 16 and 13, which cover the major portions of Community Board 3. The latest data from the Department of Education indicate that many of our schools are still falling behind, when measured by Federal and State standards. Yet, the schools in Bedford-Stuyvesant often lack the tools to provide the "sound basic education" as described. It is hoped that under the new Contracts for Excellence, these fundamentals will be fully addressed.

The element of high quality teaching takes on a deeper meaning in communities of color. It is not unrealistic to state that there are teachers who feel that our children cannot learn, or that socio-economic stigma lead some teachers to approach instruction with lower expectations of performance. There must be innovative and effective professional development programs that immerse all levels of the instructional staff, including district and school-based leaders, in the ethnic and cultural diversity of our community. Old time residents can tell wonderful stories of teachers who lived right in the neighborhood. The advantages are too numerous to mention. Reinstatement of the funding that provides home ownership opportunities for teachers would go a long way toward establishing a cadre of teachers who are familiar with the community and who want to be here.

Our school system would be greatly enhanced with smaller class sizes that would allow for more individualized instruction. Overcrowded schools and classes are deterrents to academic achievement in reading, math and other subjects. However, small class size must be coupled with skilled, competent and concerned teachers if effective learning is to take place.

We also support the use of any additional funding to ensure that all of our schools have fully equipped and functioning libraries; permanent music and art programs, and state-of-the-art science and computer laboratories. Teachers should not be forced to copy pages because there are not enough books for all of the children.

We are experiencing higher and higher drop-out rates from our middle schools. This alarming circumstance is exacerbated by poor academic performance year after year. It is time to examine and institute other models for this age group. This critical situation must be honestly assessed and immediate changes made. By extension, support is needed for additional truancy and support services. Children are out on the streets during school hours, and are falling prey to gang recruitment and crime.

As of this writing, the public school system is slated for yet, another, monumental change. With the entire regional structure less than three years old, the new construct will apparently have some elements of the prior, more localized design. One of the startling

changes is that each principal will be able to select from among a number of management/instructional options. How is a parent to cope with such drastic change? Thus far, there has been very little communication with parents at the local level. Community groups, such as the Education Task Force, organized by Councilmember Al Vann, have stepped into the void to provide as much information and encouragement as possible. However, the Department of Education must use every possible means to conduct a comprehensive informational campaign that reaches every parent. In past years, we have advocated for strong parental involvement, and at no other time is this more critical. Through programs sponsored by the Education Task Force and Community Board 3, we have begun to strengthen the linkages between school and community. Innovative models, such as family empowerment centers that provide access to services offered by local agencies and organizations, should be fully explored, and funding provided for pilot programs. Parenting skills, mediation, workforce development, recreational programs, and a full menu of social services are offered by community groups, and should be readily accessible to parents.

There have been many different ethnic contributions that make this country great. As we encourage children of all ethnicities to learn about the contributions of all of the people that comprise this community, we foster a sense of respect, caring and self worth among our youth. While changes in curriculum are occurring, we continue to advocate for the inclusion of study that highlights the history and contributions of African-Americans and other ethnic groups.

Each school should have after-school or “extended day” programs, in addition to cultural and recreational programs. There needs to be tutoring and anti-violence counseling that is mandatory, especially in elementary schools. In middle schools, there should be an emphasis on preparing students for high school, and special focus on test preparation for specialized high schools. After school programs should also include programming for adults, such as: Adult education, G.E.D. preparation, career counseling, etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Of paramount concern to the Bedford-Stuyvesant community is the recently passed legislation regarding the sale of liens on properties with outstanding water and sewer charges. With the escalating cost of living in this neighborhood, higher tax rates, predatory practices, and financial failings due to the state of our economy, it is of particular interest to Community Board 3 what the impact these issues will have on its residents, particularly the seniors and others with either fixed or low income.

As advocates for the residents, it would be encouraging to see the implementation of some type of program that would protect the rights of the Central Brooklyn residents to ensure they can continue to remain an integral portion of a community that most of them have been in for generations, with an intensive program of education and alternatives to this population for saving their homes.

In addition, with the rapidly expanding population of Bedford-Stuyvesant, we have been experiencing flooding much more frequently. Our catch-basins are blocked with debris that washes down with heavy rain and the corners are impassable. While we are aware that the cleaning of sewers and catch-basins are complaint driven, it would be beneficial to have them on a schedule. Some of the catch-basins have noxious odors emanating from them that pollute the air for at least half block. Once they are cleaned, it

is not long before the problem arises again.

We are pleased with the revised noise regulations city-wide. The combined efforts of DEP and the local precincts is wonderful. With construction noises, car horns, loud music and car alarms, the regulations were long over-do. The only thing left is an increase in staffing for all agencies concerned to enforce those wonderful regulations.

HEALTH CARE

Central Brooklyn, most especially, Bedford-Stuyvesant continues to have more residents are locked out of a health care system that discriminates in its treatment of patients based on skin color, socioeconomic status and geographic location. The resulting health care disparities have had a devastating impact on the prosperity of this community. Many inner city residents are without preventive medicine. They go to the hospital emergency room when ill. Usually this is too late and the condition has escalated beyond control. Minority men are less likely to access preventive health care therefore many of our male residents with diabetes, prostate problems and high blood pressure go undetected. Statistics show that 19% of African-Americans, compared with 12% of whites, have no health insurance. Therefore, we support the efforts by Governor Spitzer to develop and implement a universal health insurance plan. According to the timeline, half of the 2.8 million uninsured New Yorkers would be covered by 2008 and, due to the critical health needs in Bedford-Stuyvesant we should be given top consideration for one of the first pilots.

Woodhull, Interfaith, and as far away as Methodist Hospital, have become untenable due to the previous closings of our area hospitals. Long waits are now the norm, since the uninsured typically use the emergency room for primary care. There is an immediate need to re-examine the impact of these, and other closings, and to bring in the resources that are necessary to serve the population.

Once flu season gets close, we continue to advocate that DOH should look at a variety of non-traditional inoculation sites to serve the people. It may be good to consider area super markets like Foodtown and Key Food, churches, community centers, community rooms within NYCHA developments, and other such venues. Even mobile vans placed strategically in areas where the inoculation rates are low would create a healthier environment for all the residents in the CB3 area.

Brooklyn continues to be ground zero for NYC's HIV epidemic of African Americans, women, and children; and has the third largest AIDS population in the United States, followed by Manhattan and Los Angeles. This borough has more people who have been diagnosed with AIDS than forty-five other states and more children than forty-seven other states... Nearly 25% of the 83,249 New Yorkers living with HIV or AIDS are from Brooklyn, and each year the percentage of Brooklynites who die from AIDS increases, not to mention other sexually transmitted diseases. We applaud the support of our elected officials in providing support for initiatives such as the Black Leadership Commission on AIDS. Those efforts must continue through preventive measures in our schools, and through avenues such as block associations and local community groups.

Conservative estimates based on 197-A data and U.S. 2000 census data indicate that more than 39,000 CB#3 residents have one or more disabilities. Disability categories breakdown as: 7,986 sensory impairment, 14,955 physically, 10,019 mental/emotional,

and 6,834 self-care. Upwards of 18,295 people have disabilities that interfere with full time employment. People dually diagnosed with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities account for over 6,244 people. The prevalence of disabilities outweighs the capacity of service providers whose missions are to serve people with disabilities. Therefore, there is a long-term need for additional funding and technical assistance to these organizations.

Community Board No. 3 has a growing number of asthma sufferers in all age groups. CB3 needs preventive initiatives in the form of exercise, well maintained green spaces, pest-control and lead paint removal. We need to have visiting medical personnel go into the schools periodically to impart preventative steps in combating and controlling asthma. Rodents and other vermin are heavy contributing factors to asthma suffers.

Depression is a serious but treatable health condition that frequently goes undiagnosed. Serious psychological distress is associated with depression and other mental illnesses. Here in Bedford-Stuyvesant 5% of the residents experience serious psychological distress. Mental health patients have requested that increased evening hours be made available for those suffering with mental health issues. Parents utilizing public and private child care facilities should be offered mental health services. Directors all over the community stress the need for mental health intervention in all of their centers. More mental health clinics are needed.

According to the Health Department the increasing prevalence of obesity in the U.S. has contributed to an epidemic of diabetes. About 95% of diabetes cases are type 2 diabetes, which is strongly associated with obesity. Uncontrolled diabetes can worsen the harmful effects of high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other risk factors for heart disease. In Central Brooklyn, 12% of adults have diabetes, compared to 9% in New York City overall. Free exercise classes such as those offered by the Beacon Program should be increased. Doctors should be encouraged to underscore healthy living practices as part of their assessment and treatment. Information on eligibility for food stamps should be more readily available in neighborhood gathering places such as Laundromats and nail salons.

Hospitalizations for mental illnesses are higher in Central Brooklyn than the entire borough of Brooklyn or the City of New York. This rate has been continually higher over the past 10 years, not counting alcohol or drug related illness. This is not even addressing instances of crisis where mentally disturbed persons are either not diagnosed or misdiagnosed as criminals and inadvertently hurt by enforcement officers and in some instances killed. While there is a crisis team located at Interfaith Medical Center, there needs to be more centers placed throughout the community that are equipped to handle emergencies in a timely manner, avoiding instances like the tragic shooting of Khriel Koppin. Mental illness must be treated as the disease that it is just like alcoholism and drug abuse.

HOUSING and LAND USE

In 2007 the passage of the Bedford-Stuyvesant South Rezoning Plan was adopted. Along with the Fulton Park Urban Renewal Plan, the Saratoga Square Urban Renewal Plan, and the forthcoming Bedford-Stuyvesant North Rezoning Plan, our community will have set the course for a comprehensive housing vision that will affect the development and preservation of our buildings and landscape for many years. However, we have been proceeding in a piece-meal approach that makes it difficult to see the future “big picture”. Therefore, one of our major needs is technical assistance from agencies such as City Planning and HPD, and elected officials, to help us make a comprehensive assessment of:

- a. the status of the urban renewal plans
- b. the coordinated development of the plans (how they fit together)
- c. how our housing needs have (or have not) been met by these plans
- d. vacant land under the aegis of several city agencies
- e. how Community Board 3's Affordable Housing Policy impacts all of the plans

As the Community Board enters its 31st year, we feel that such an examination of “where we are” is critical. Such a study will require time, staff, and commitment from agency staff and members of our Community Board, and other stakeholders. It is a project whose time has come, since we are committed to the finalizing the implementation of the 197A Plan Draft during 2008/9.

Bedford-Stuyvesant has one of the highest foreclosure rates in the country. Over the past decade, community groups and elected officials have partnered to fight this rising tide. We note that several city agencies have predatory lending programs, but do not seem to coordinate their efforts. A creative, combined approach on the part of these agencies (mirroring our coordinated efforts in the community), would give our existing initiatives the additional impetus that it needs. This would maximize resources, and make it easier for residents to access services.

A procedure needs to be put in place to monitor the use of private homes used for various social programs within CB3. How many group/programmatic facilities are being placed in this community? By comparison, what is the ratio of similar facilities being placed within other areas throughout the five boroughs?

There is no domain in life that is not obliged to upgrade its relationship to the needs of CB#3 resident with disabilities and their families. This is particularly relevant to housing development. The need for more “accessible” affordable housing is a given. However, utilization of “universal design” practices which go beyond the concept of “barrier free” living is necessary to make living spaces accessible, safe, and practical for all residents.

Last, but definitely not least, is the need for a study to address the seemingly discriminatory housing practices in the northern quadrant of our community. Housing being built on public and private land does not seem to be available to all citizens. In addition, some of the developers have applied for a variety of tax credits, while seeming to offer housing to only one group.

LANDMARKS

There are several areas within the community that are deserving of city landmark status. We should do all we can to preserve the historic housing stock for future generations. Educating home owners and residents on the Landmark process as a major catalyst for preservation and economic development is essential.

In addition to land marking other areas of the neighborhood, there are two endangered buildings which require immediate and long-term attention. These are our priorities. The Slave Theatre, where we are awaiting the status of once had a royal life as the Regent Movie Theatre, where we are awaiting a response to our Request for Evaluation. The Tent House is owned by the United Order of the Tents, one of the oldest women's organizations

of color in the country, which is in the process of organizational reorganizing. Assistance is needed from a number of city agencies to help us move through the proper channels required to save these treasures.

PARKS AND RECREATION

We are justly proud of our parks and green spaces. This past year, there have been more activities and with the influx of new residents to Bedford-Stuyvesant, they are well-used by community residents, young and old and now dogs in Von King Park with its new dog run. During warm weather, the parks are used for quiet sitting, as play areas for day care programs, and for games such as chess and checkers. With the implementation of schedules of events throughout the city, including Bedford Stuyvesant, people have been really coming out to enjoy the parks.

Community Board 3 is still in support of a proposal to provide diverse community facilities in the Sumner Armory including: an indoor track, tennis, basketball, volleyball, racquetball, and paddleball courts, a bowling alley, swimming pool and a roller skating rink. The development of the Sumner Armory for community use would consolidate diverse and needed community facilities into one of Community Board No. 3's most regarded historic buildings. The Park Slope Armory is a perfect example of what can be done with such an existing facility. The Community Board would indeed like to see such an edifice here that would enhance the quality of life across generations and be a hub of multifaceted community space within the confines of CB3.

In past documents we have advocated for the remodeling of the Marcy Pool and we continue to do so. The open-air nature of the Marcy Pool renders it virtually unusable eleven months of the year. We recommend enclosing the pool and creating other recreational and sports facilities within the new enclosure. The remodeling should lead to a facility that complements the remodeled Bedford Y and rival the well-used St. John's Pool. The new facility could encompass a track, fitness center, racquet ball, tennis courts and/or basketball courts. In addition, the site should be explored for additional building construction to provide multi-purpose community use, such as workshop rooms for youth and senior programs.

The area around the C.S. 21 and the Brevoort Houses has been a troubling site for some time. While there is a community center in the Brevoort Houses, many parents are afraid to allow their children to participate. Residents and the school family have requested a new community center, built from the ground up, that would be modeled on the Beacon program; providing recreational activities, and a full menu of programs from after-school study to education and job training for adults.

With the conversion of school playgrounds into parks, there are several considerations that may be unique to Bedford-Stuyvesant. The first is that there are parks on the drawing boards for renovation in the coming years, and we want to insure that there is adequate funding for that initiative to continue. Second, we have had incidents of crime and vandalism in the school playgrounds that remain open after school hours. If the objective is to extend the hours of the newly-renovated areas, there must also be an increase in security.

Our parks are an integral part of life in this community for youth, adults and even pets. Some of the problems facing these wonderful family facilities are that the Park's

Department vehicles are aged out and they need to get new ones. Either the trucks are awaiting repair or they are beyond salvage.

As more people frequent the parks with their pets, it is imperative that animal waste be cleaned up by the individual walking and exercising the dog. Enforcement regarding this issue is imperative for the cleanliness of our city's parks. Some of the parks like Fulton Park and Taaffe Playground have gang activity in and around the park.

The newest issue in the parks is dumping. People are coming around and dumping construction debris and other manner of rubbish in and at the parks. This problem is particularly evident on Lafayette Avenue between Malcolm X Boulevard and on Patchen barrels were actually dumped and DEP hazmat had to be called. There are only 2 officers for all of the boroughs of NYC. With additional Park Police, undercover to catch the perpetrators, this problem can be combated. In addition, with staff shortages in the parks, there is an increase in the trash level.

Lastly, the forestry division of the Parks Department needs to take a closer look at the pruning cycle. It has gone from 10 years to 7 years however the trees grow faster than that. With the change in weather over the years and a more temperate climate, our trees grow at a rapid rate and the branches are growing low over the roadways and sidewalks creating a hazard to pedestrian. They foliage is thicker and obstructs the illumination at night for vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic. Dark pockets create opportunity for crime, which we want to eliminate.

POLICE

This community is so grateful for the 30 man increase in our 81st Precinct. This was so necessary, as we are still experiencing a rise in gang activity, drug sales and illegal use of firearms, and robberies. Innocent people are being shot.

Mistrust of our enforcement officers continues to be prevalent here in this community and creates its own range of problems. Even with Commissioner Kelly's mandate for implementing programs to foster better police-community relations, there is no real impact on the reality of our neighborhood. New recruits do not understand the culture of the people of this community and misunderstandings commonly occur between the police and the residents. As a community board, we are ready to work with the local administration in order to make certain that officers gain a clearer, more positive view of who we are.

Gun suppressions programs are a prime objective of the Police Department it is certainly not evident on these streets. Gun shots are heard, squad cars are rushing from one incident to another all night. These infractions are no long committed under the cover darkness but anytime during the day; in the mornings while residents are on their way to work; during the early afternoon when children are being dismissed from school. In parks where people of all ages are there to enjoy recreational time, gun shots can ring out. We must take an even greater stance to remove guns from the streets.

The Gang Unit appears to operate in a reactive mode, which leaves it to citizens who are justifiable afraid, to report crimes perpetrated by gangs. The Crips and the Bloods still rule areas of the community, and we are not faced with the horror of gang members as young as 12 and 13 years old. These children are assaulting and harassing residents at subway stops, in our parks (Fulton, in particular), and as they walk home from work.

The community needs more sector cars for our precincts, mobile command posts and additional Sky Watch apparatus placed at the disposal of the Brooklyn North Borough Command. In addition, it needs to be determined how illegal firearms are arriving in our community and a comprehensive plan on how to remove them. Also, strategies need to be developed that will truly have an impact on this removal and concerted efforts between the community stakeholders and law enforcement.

Find out how gangs have so easily infiltrated our community, schools and recreational spaces and put a deterrent in place to avoid that behavior. Our precincts should be actively recruiting more blocks to participate in the Block Watchers Program. Beef up our police-community relations initiatives so that they are relevant to the officers and residents. We can truly help each other.

SAFETY/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

By all accounts, a major hurricane is expected to hit the New York Metropolitan area. We need an Emergency Preparedness strategy designed for the uniqueness of the Bedford-Stuyvesant community. It is crucial to know and organize health care providers in case of emergencies, we should be aware of appropriate shelter provisions and strategic locations that people can come to in the event there is a need. Educational tools need to be disseminated to allow residents to know that terrorist's attacks are not the only emergencies. We see that as a pressing need, in the event of natural disasters as well as impending terrorist attacks.

We are just beginning to explore all of the ramifications of establishing such a system, and there is a need for assistance in that development. We are aware that city, state, and federal agencies all have resources and plans that would be of value. There should be a major recruitment drive to train CERT teams throughout our community, particularly within the confines of our community based organizations.

SANITATION

Once again, Community Board 3 is without the start-up of construction for our own sanitation garage. We learned recently that the start-up construction will not begin until fiscal year 2010. Our temporary garage was in Community Board 1, now it has been moved to Community Board 4, a greater distance from the area BK3 services. How long will it be before Community Board 4 is complaining about our garage being in their neighborhood? Since this is the first year, it remains to be seen, how well our garage can respond to the community during inclement weather. The greater distance will create a further hardship on a salt spreaders and the distance they will need to cover.

This community desperately needs to have construction of its sanitation garage begun, particularly since completion can take up to 6 years. We would like to have additional salt spreaders.

Enforcement officers and Sanitation police need to be in place to ensure compliance with littering and dumping regulations which has really gotten out of hand at vacant lots and in the front yards of vacant buildings, on corners at litter baskets, beside commercial establishments, even on the side of corner properties. We need personnel undercover and

uniformed out here at the times (early morning hours and late at night) when the violations are taking place. Our catch basins are being blocked due to litter that gathers at the corners after being washed down the street during heavy rains. They smell and create flooding at the corners. If they were swept on a regular schedule, this would be prevented.

We need printed materials sent out to the community noting schedule changes prior to the changes taking place. Finally, with so many new residents to the community, there needs to be more curb your dog signs printed and strategic placed throughout the community.

SENIORS

As our senior population continues to grow, there are increasing concerns about housing and services. With recent budget cuts, centers have been collapsed and centralized, making it necessary to travel further distances for the seniors to avail themselves of the much needed opportunities provided by the centers. The four year plan, April 2008 – March 2012 have defined their goals for the Older Americans Act. The needs that are outlined in that plan continue to be of great seriousness to Community Board 3.

The elderly have many issues dealing with their quality of life. This portion of our community has paved the way for everything that is happening now. The increased property values which have been kept and maintain by our now elderly population. Wonderful maintained brownstone homes. Green tree lined blocks that have been in place even before we thought of dealing with the Greening of NYC. Our older people deserve every consideration for acquiring, maintaining and holding onto this wonderful community called Bedford-Stuyvesant.

However, our elders need our assistance. There is an increasing percentage of senior citizens living poverty and we need to concretized supportive services targeted specifically for them. These would include Medicaid, SSI, Food Stamps, home delivered meals and the ever crucial housing subsidies.

There must be strategies in place to ensure that our older Americans receive information. This can be done by training community-based, faith-based, religious institutions, block associations and other community entities to advocate on behalf of the elderly. Keep the advocates abreast of new and beneficial legislation that will impact the quality of life for our seniors.

The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Unit must continue to be in place for our older citizens. The price of rent has sky-rocketed and those seniors that do not own their homes are at an impasse as to how to afford to continue living in their rental property. Income eligibility needs to be re-vamped, so more elderly are qualified to remain in place without fear of increases that will force them have to seek shelter elsewhere. The seniors deserve the opportunity to remain in the community they have built, love, have friends in and raised their children. With predatory practices and tax liens that are not only based on property taxes but the ever increasing water bills, our senior population is being displaced. As a basic quality of life issue, older New Yorkers should be allowed to remain living in their homes and communities.

When our seniors find themselves in a legal bind, there should be pro bono legal services available to represent them in issues that are impacting their benefits and general independence. With Bedford-Stuyvesant being one of leaders in foreclosures, of which a large percentage is elderly, legal representation can prevent older residents from being evicted from their homes.

Advocacy needs to be provided to safeguard seniors against crime and abuse. There should be training for all municipalities to recognize when the elderly have been victimized. Assist with fuel and utility costs with programs such as HEAP and Weatherization.

Another crucial matter when considering the elderly is making sure that our public and private are senior friendly. They should be able to continue to go out and enjoy this city without worry that they cannot use the stairs, (i.e., subways), getting in public spaces and places like the theatres, restaurants, houses of worship and the like.

The Department for the Agency's goal of "aging in place" is a far-off dream for our seniors because there are no assisted living facilities, and only limited senior housing. Income guidelines are sometimes unrealistic for people who have paid off their mortgages and have been frugal savers.

As this trend continues, the need for innovative service models that reflect ethnic and cultural sensitivity becomes more pronounced. We fully support the case management concept that is proposed by the DFTA as part of its service delivery redesign.. However, it is our understanding that Bedford-Stuyvesant is not included as one of the 12 current service areas or the proposed consolidated areas under the contracts awarded by the DFY. Given the critical situations under which our seniors must live from day-to-day, we strongly request that our community be added to this pilot

SOCIAL SERVICES

The recent construction boom has promoted many new infill houses and multiple dwellings. These structures are inferior and do not sell. Many of these buildings are being leased to housing programs for the homeless. Not only are these structures being utilized in that way, but as people find it increasing difficult due to present credit crisis homes in our residential blocks are also being converted to house this new homeless population to make ends meet.

The end result of this is the community has been inundated with small shelters. Financial incentives are made available to landlords who are willing to use their property for social programs to house the homeless, formerly incarcerated, victims of domestic violence, mentally ill, sexual abusers, etc. in the community at will. However, no regard is given to the proximity of such housing units to schools, parks or community gathering centers. These new neighbors to our community deserve supportive services to deal with their affairs and become a functional part of the Bedford Stuyvesant community. Without such support, there are negative behaviors that affect the quality for all of the residents living in the vicinity. There should be personnel to make sure that all such facilities are appropriately monitored for the residents of the facility as well as the community at large. The exploitive practices need to be curtailed.

Additionally, it would be beneficial if all sheltering programs in the community be listed and given to organizations like the community board so that we may also monitor with the assistance of the residents of this community to make sure that everyone has a suitable quality of life.

It cannot be left to the landlord to request help. The agencies, such as the Department of Homeless Services, should provide bridge services until people are ready to function independently.

TRANSPORTATION

In this preset climate of expansion and increased density, Community Board 3 has had to really project the future needs of the Bedford-Stuyvesant community. It is obvious that the current status of our community beginning with infrastructure, roadways vehicular and pedestrian traffic, parking and public transportation are not going to accommodate our new expanding community.

Community Board 3 has had Nostrand Avenue in our budget for more than a decade. It was believed that work would have begun since the Spring of 2006 and the project start date for Summer 2006 in the design phase. The construction was supposed to take 18 months. It is now 2008 and to date, nothing has been done. In a climate of budget cuts, we fear that money that already set in place will be moved, further pushing this much project back. The roadway of Nostrand is in such a poor state of disrepair that it is actually to pedestrians as well as pedestrians. Nostrand Avenue traverses from North to South and is heavily used by residents and visitors to Bedford-Stuyvesant.

As our community continues to be developed for affordable housing, more and more residents will need to travel along Nostrand Avenue. It is imperative that the reconstruction not be pushed back further but that construction, actually move forward.

The reconstruction of Fulton Street (HWK973) from Bedford to Clinton Avenues is greatly needed. Our issue is that the project was begun on November 13, 2006 and anticipated completion is to be the winter of 2008. However, there have been several delays dealing with this project, with varying reasons for the delays. We want to understand those delays, but not at the expense of the businesses and residences along that strip. While there is vehicular traffic traveling west along Fulton Street, public transportation has been rerouted to Atlantic Avenue. This has been devastating to the commercial vitality of the area. These establishments rely on the public transportation for their customer base. Some of the businesses are eateries and because of the reconstruction, it is not as attractive for customers to want to dine at their entities. With continued delays, we fear for the economic strength along this corridor. We need this project to be completed in a timely manner.

Throughout the Bedford–Stuyvesant Community there are secondary streets that may not need infrastructure, but definitely should be resurfaced. Our streets are continuously being dug up by cable companies, utilities and the like. Once the job is done, these agencies do not repair the roadway back the way it was prior to their working in the area. The patching of the spots where they needed to dig, is just lightly covered over and soon sinks, creating potholes and depressions. With the onset of our winter months, that problem is exacerbated even further with ice and salt. Each year, these problems continue to grow. Now we have streets that are tenting, water is pooling in areas, the streets are sinking and have been the cause of accidents where vehicles are veering to avoid a depression. Some of the streets that need resurfacing are Quincy Street, MacDonough Street, portions of Decatur Street, Park Avenue and more. Our need is that when work is done on a city street, city inspectors go out once the work is completed to see that the road surface has been put back to its original state.

Another critical problem with our roadways is that there is no enforcement of trucks that do not respect the truck routes but continually use the residential streets. The residential blocks are not constructed to handle such heavy vehicles and they ruin the roadway, not to mention the vibrations from these heavy vehicles also shake the foundation of the

buildings. Over time, this creates an issue to the homeowners.

To accommodate the growing population within the borders of Community Board 3, we have taken a look at the traffic signals along Fulton Street. Our study indicates that we need a left turn signal from Fulton Street to Albany Avenue, a turn signal from Fulton Street to Ralph Avenue and a left turn signal from Fulton Street to Schenectady Avenue. This will help pedestrian crossings and prevent collisions at these intersections.

For some years, we have been requesting an elevator at the Utica Avenue Station. It is the largest station in Bedford-Stuyvesant with several bus lines crossing together at Fulton Street and Utica Avenue/Lewis Avenue. The station is extremely deep, and presents a hardship for the handicapped and the elderly. This is a top priority, and we would like to see movement toward funding, planning, and construction in the near future.

Our community is recommending that a municipal parking lot be placed within Community Board No. 3 and that there be fewer parking meters. As land becomes less available, due to the ever increasing population and opening of new businesses in the area, a Municipal Parking Lot along the Fulton Street commercial corridor is desperately needed.

WORKFORCE PREPARATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In past editions of our district needs statements, we have addressed economic development and workforce preparation as separate entities. However, we are experiencing a ground-breaking investment in Bedford-Stuyvesant via the CNED initiative, the Mayor's Commission on Economic Opportunity, and PlaNYC.

Working with the Coalition for the Improvement of Bedford-Stuyvesant (CIBS), CNED has launched a number of projects that will have a lasting effect on the growth of education and jobs for the underserved, and in building a strong commercial infrastructure. The new workforce pilot and the Work Advancement and Support Center will target unemployed and underemployed men and women. Economic development pilots will bring about positive change on commercial corridors such as Malcolm X Boulevard, Fulton Street, Lewis Avenue, and Tompkins Avenue.

Community Board 3 is a member of CIBS, and fully supports this outstanding opportunity for community growth. One of our roles over the next two years will be to help with the sustainability of these pilot programs after funding has decreased.

CONCLUSION

Community Board 3 would like to close asking that as plans are being decided for this neighborhood, that we are included in all phases of the planning. The residents of this wonderful historic community are a proud and resourceful people. We continue to petition the City not ignore the residents of this community but protect our quality of life and the very contextual foundation that has made Community Board No. 3 so very popular.

Community Board No. 3 is excited about plaNYC2030. We know there will be changes, but change is good when all residents of Bedford-Stuyvesant can benefit from it. Our community embraces the opportunity to usher in the new and celebrate the old at the

same time. Together with the planners of this City, we look forward to orchestrating the most magnificent Bedford-Stuyvesant ever.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry G. Butler". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Henry Butler
Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlene Phillips". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Charlene Phillips
District Manager