



**Ruben Diaz, Jr.**  
*Borough President*

## **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD No. 10**

*3165 East Tremont Avenue • Bronx, New York 10461*

*Tel: (718) 892-1161 • Fax: (718) 863-6860*

*E-mail: [bx10@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:bx10@cb.nyc.gov) • [www.bronxmail.com](http://www.bronxmail.com)*

*Website: [www.nyc.gov/bronxcb10](http://www.nyc.gov/bronxcb10)*



**John Marano**  
*Chairperson*

**Kenneth Kearns**  
*District Manager*

### STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #10 FISCAL YEAR 2014 AUGUST 1, 2012

#### **Opening Statement**

Bronx Community Board #10 is one of the largest Board service areas in the Borough of the Bronx. It is primarily characterized by 1-3 family homes, situated on tree shaded streets. There are a few multiple dwellings concentrated in the Pelham Bay, Zerega and Westchester Square portions of the Board. However, the Board is the host community to Co-op City, one of the largest cooperative housing developments in the United States. One of the most interesting communities within the Board's service area is City Island. This nautically themed community is home to several America's Cup Yacht Race winners, and resembles a quaint New England fishing village. The Board is also home to the City's largest park, Pelham Bay, in which Orchard Beach, the Bartow Pell Mansion and the Thomas Pell Wildlife Preserve are situated.

#### **History**

The areas that comprise Bronx Community Board #10 were once part of the Village of Westchester and before that, the private estates of several families, most notably the Bartow and Pell families. Two significant battles were fought during the American Revolution between British and Colonial forces, in the vicinity of Orchard Beach and Westchester Creek. In the Battles of Westchester Creek and Pell's Point the advance of British forces was thwarted, allowing Washington's troops to regroup in White Plains. The Westchester Square area is home to St. Peter's Episcopal Church, one of the oldest churches in New York City, and one that received its charter from George III, the last ruling British monarch over America. Westchester Square is also home to the Ferris Family Cemetery, with graves dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, and the historic Collis P. Huntington Free Library.

#### **Boundaries**

North-New England Thruway, Eastern Prolongation of Park Drive, Park Drive, Long Island Sound, City Line; East-Western boundary of Pelham Bay Park, Eastchester Bay Long Island Sound (including City and Hart Islands); South-East River; West – Westchester Creek, Northern Prolongation of Westchester Creek to Waterbury Avenue, Waterbury Avenue, Westchester Avenue, Castle Hill Avenue, East Tremont Avenue, Silver Street, Eastchester Road, Blondell Avenue, East Tremont Avenue, Hutchinson River Parkway, New England Thruway.

### **Public Safety**

Bronx Community Board #10 is serviced by the 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct, which is one of the largest patrol areas in the City. One of the greatest challenges to law enforcement in Community Board #10 is the illicit drug trade. The drug trade in this Precinct is characterized by internet sales, the use of unregistered cell phones, and automobiles. Unlike other Precincts, the sales are covert in nature, meaning that they are not readily evident. The Police Commissioner made a decision to combine the Drug Module (a specialized drug enforcement unit) that had resided within the 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct exclusively, with the 43<sup>rd</sup> Precinct. This diminished the ability of the 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct to interdict drug sales in the community, because its resources were spilt with the 43<sup>rd</sup> Precinct. The drug sales in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Precinct are more open and therefore, easier to control than the ones in the 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct. The 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct needs the Drug Module, to control the sophisticated nature of the trade within its environs. Bronx Community Board #10 has been in the forefront of trying to have the 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct's Module re-assigned for the exclusive use of the 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct. This Community Board sits at the junction of the New England Thruway, Cross Bronx Expressway and the Bruckner Expressway. The drug dealers drive in to deliver their pre-ordered product, exchange money for the drugs and leave the community. For this reason, and others, the Board is interested in seeing the Module restored, and has embarked upon a petition drive in the community to have the Module re-instated. It is the sincere hope that this unit will be re-instated, as soon as possible.

The 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct has experienced a reduction in staffing, due to attrition. It is not at its maximum strength. The Board would like to see the Precinct's compliment of officers increased.

The Community Board service area is inundated with illegal tractor trailer trucks parked along City streets overnight. The 45<sup>th</sup> Precinct lacks an adequate number of "parking boots" these devices are used to demobilize any truck that is parked illegally. There is also no truck tow pound in Bronx County. The Board is hopeful that the City will provide the Precinct with the necessary number of boots and that a Bronx towing pound for trucks will be established.

Graffiti is still a major problem within the Board's service areas, especially on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of structures. The City's program to clean graffiti must be expanded to include the 2<sup>nd</sup> stories of structures. The City's reluctance to clean beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> story of the building, often leaves the structure marred, detracting from the appearance of the structure. The Board requests resources to be dedicated to this purpose.

### **FDNY**

Several years ago, the FDNY removed the ambulance from Orchard Beach. Orchard Beach hosts thousands of people every weekend during the summer. The presence of an

ambulance is vital to the health and well being of the beach going community. Therefore, it is essential that this service be restored.

### **Transportation**

Road construction has not kept pace with the production of new cars and trucks. The number of vehicles using the roads has far outstripped the capacity of those roads to handle the traffic. Transportation planners must develop alternatives to car and truck transport. There is no reason why the residents of various Bronx community boards must be burdened by pollution belching truck traffic on the New England Thruway, Bruckner Expressway and the Cross Bronx Expressway, when a readily available alternative exists in the railroad. For over a century, railroads have served the Bronx, and served it well. With the Oak Point Rail Yard in the southern portion of the Borough serving as through passage from New England to the South, most freight needs and bulk cargo transport should be shifted to trains away from trucks. The trains could deliver the goods to central locations like Oak Point, and smaller trucks could deliver these commodities to retail locations and homes. By shifting the shipment of cargo away from trucks, congestion on the highways would dissipate and the quality of the air would be markedly improved.

Additionally, the Metro – North Railroad has expressed an interest in bringing rail passenger service to the Northeast Bronx by establishing a station at Co-op City, in Section #5. The Board has long advocated for this station and enthusiastically supports this concept. The Board has adopted a Resolution to this affect. It is hoped that passenger train service between Co-op City and Pennsylvania Station will soon become a reality. The Board has also advocated for commuter ferry service to serve Co-op City and other areas of the northeast Bronx.

### **Health and Human Services**

Bronx Community Board #10 is serviced by Bronx Municipal Hospital Center, the Jack D. Weiler Hospital of Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center and Westchester Square Hospital. The Board service area is also replete with doctor's offices engaged in all medical practices ranging from general practitioner to specialists. Yet, our Board still suffers from high rates of low birth weight babies, obesity, diabetes, alcoholism, and drug abuse. Recently, the Board learned of a serious problem within its boundaries regarding alcoholism and prescription drug abuse. The Board has taken proactive steps to inform the population of these problems, as well as the bar owning and medical communities. The Board works with both governmental and nongovernment providers to disseminate information on these serious topics. It is the hope that the medical communities, who are the first line of professionals providing important services, understand these problems and are able to facilitate responses. It is equally hoped that the restaurant and bar owning communities will be just as vigilant.

Another major health issue facing the Board is the incidence of air and noise pollution posed by trucks. The Board service area, sits at the junction of the New England Thruway, the Bruckner Expressway and the Cross Bronx Expressway. This road network serves as the principal north-south, east-west route for interstate trucking and on any Page given day, these roads are subject to the most horrendous traffic jams. Miles of trucks buses and cars are stopped on these roads for protracted periods of time, polluting the air. As a result, the ambient air quality of the surrounding community suffers. The incidence of asthma and other respiratory illnesses are on the rise at all of the area hospitals. The perpetual horn blowing and reckless driving habits of motorists also detracts from the quality of life in our community. The Board hopes that transportation planners understand the necessity of developing alternatives to the shipment of goods by truck.

### **Education**

Bronx Community Board #10 is home to fine grammar and intermediate schools. It is also home to three high schools, Herbert H. Lehman, the Renaissance High School and Harry S. Truman. Recently, the City's Department of Education made a decision to close Herbert H. Lehman High School for underperformance. However through a combination of community advocacy and legal action, this school will remain open. The Board will work with the community and its educators to see that adequate funds from the State budget are dedicated to area schools. The Board strongly believes in internships and encourages the Department of Education and the leadership of Herbert H. Lehman, Renaissance and Harry S. Truman High Schools to explore to the fullest, internships with local businesses and government to give their students opportunities that will enable them to succeed in the working world.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Bronx Community Board #10 is the host Community Board for Pelham Bay Park, the largest park in the City's system. It is also home to many community parks, which provide a welcome respite from the rigors of urban life. These are resources that must be preserved and enhanced. The Board is grateful to note that progress is being made at the Ferry Point Park East Golf Course. However, the Board is gravely concerned over the fact that the comfort station planned for Ferry Point Park West has not come to fruition.

For years, the Department of Parks and Recreation has promised a comfort station, and has not delivered one. It is imperative from a public health perspective that this comfort station be built as soon as possible.

Bronx Community Board # 10 is a waterfront community and as such, the Board is interested in providing its residents with as much access to the waterfront as possible. To this end, the Board has made the renovation and dredging of the Hammond Cove Marina its top priority. We are hopeful that the Department of Parks and Recreation, along with other colleague agencies will be able to facilitate this needed project.

The Board would like to see the establishment of private and public partnerships for parks. Parks such as Owen Dolen, with a recreation center and greensward, in the midst of a commercial area, are an oasis of calm and beauty. The Board is grateful that the Department of Parks and Recreation has developed sweeping plans for the renovation of this Park, and has worked, and will continue to work with the electeds, the Board, and stakeholders in the community on renovation plans. The Board is optimistic that Owen Dolen will be a showpiece in our Borough.

However, more resources must be brought to the parks for cultural enrichment, nature programs and support of the Urban Park Rangers, Playground Assistants, Parks Enforcement and maintenance staff. The Board through its Parks and Recreation Committee will continue its efforts to bring more services to our parks.

### **Housing and Zoning**

Bronx Community Board #10 has experienced unprecedented growth in residential construction. Often this construction was not consistent with the existing housing in the area. This has led to a zoning resolution that downsized new construction. However, developers continue to propose new projects that either flout or come close to violating the zoning provisions. It therefore becomes incumbent upon the Board, to do its utmost to assess these projects and work to overcome the more onerous aspects of development. Community Boards are mandated to provide advisory opinions on land use and zoning matters. It is important that the City's central administration commit to supporting Community Boards, so that they are able to provide quality opinions on the many development projects that come before them.

One of the many difficulties that the Board faces in attempting to facilitate rational development, is a tendency on the part of building owners, developers or attorneys to subvert the Zoning Resolution and Special District status for City Island. Members of the aforementioned groups will avail themselves of the right to appeal the Community Board's opinions to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA). Too often, the BSA does not render an opinion that is supportive of the Community Board's views, necessitating repeated hearings and duplicative correspondence on the Board's behalf, defending the City's Zoning Resolution or Special Districts. It is hoped that the BSA, in the future, will recognize the Community Boards' preeminence in community matters.

### **Emergency Management**

Much of Bronx Community Board #10 is shoreline property, and as such, is subject to the negative effects of storms. Central to the City's emergency response system in the Community Board are Civilian Emergency Response Teams or (CERTs). Each CERT TEAM is made up of trained community residents, who have agreed to assist the NYPD, FDNY and EMS during emergencies. Currently, the Co-op City community has a CERT

TEAM. The Board will work with the community organizations to facilitate the establishment of additional CERT TEAMS in the Board's service area.

### **Economic Development**

The attraction and retention of business in the Board's service areas is of utmost importance. The Board established a specific committee, known as the Economic Development Committee, to assist local businesses with information and ombudsman services. The Westchester Square business community has established a Business Improvement District or BID. The BID consists of property owners and merchants who have made a commitment to the community in transforming an older shopping district, into a revitalized economic entity. The Westchester Square experience should be replicated across the other Board's shopping areas along City Island Avenue, East Tremont Avenue, Crosby Avenue, Westchester Avenue and the Dreiser, Einstein and Bartow Avenue Shopping Centers in Co-op City. The Board believes that the City's economic future lies in the preservation and enhancement of its older shopping areas. To this end, the Board calls upon the City's Small Business Services to assist the older shopping areas of the Board.

The Board's business communities are surrounded by regional malls that provide free parking to its patrons. The Board's older shopping areas do not enjoy such benefits. Patrons using these areas must pay for parking at meters. The Ferry Point Park portion of the Board is scheduled to receive major retail development, which will again offer free parking to its patrons. In addition, the former Whitestone Cinema complex will be redeveloped as a shopping mall, while at Bay Plaza near Co-op City, a new Macy's will be constructed. All of these shopping centers will provide free parking for their customers. The Board would like to see the City's Economic Development Corporation consider plans for the creation of public parking, so that these older shopping districts can survive.

The development of the aforementioned shopping centers will create considerable traffic problems for the Board's service area, in that they are all located along the New England Thruway, Cross Bronx Expressway, Bruckner Expressway interchange. The Board is working with the developers and governmental agencies to develop a rational traffic plan.

### **Quality of Life**

The Board receives inquiries from its constituents on a variety of issues. Most often they center on the cleanliness of public spaces, the need for increased parking, concerns over housing that was built but never sold, and many other issues. In response, the Board is working with its partners in government to try and address these matters. Air quality is of great importance to this Board. One way to improve the quality of the air that we breathe is to limit the carbon footprint of the structures in our Board service area. Rampant development should be limited. The City's central government, in making

determinations on vacant land that it owns, should consider turning this land into vest pocket parks or green streets. For land that is privately owned, the owner could be encouraged to land bank it for future use, or to create conservation easements which will be designed to facilitate the cleanliness of our air and water supply.

**Conclusion**

This statement of District Needs has been submitted by Bronx Community Board #10, in an effort to familiarize the appropriate government agencies with the needs of our communities. This Board represents vibrant communities that are the social and economic bedrock of the Bronx. The Board looks forward to working with its partners in government to ensure our quality of life, and the continued viability and growth of our neighborhoods.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kenneth Kearns".

Kenneth Kearns  
District Manager