



# The Return of the Newsletter

The Boerum Hill Association is a volunteer organization of residents of Boerum Hill. We seek to preserve and enhance the unique qualities of our neighborhood through advocacy, education and community building. Visit us on the web at [www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org](http://www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org)

May 2007

Volume 1, Issue 1

## Boerum Hill Board Meets with Corrections Commissioner about House of Detention

### Members of the Board:

Sue Wolfe, President  
Joel Potischman, Vice President  
Crispin Roven, Treasurer  
James Forrester, Secretary  
Genevieve Christy  
Jacque Cook  
Erik Fortmeyer  
Regina Kelly  
Howard Kolins  
Leslie Lewis  
Matt Rogers  
Anders Thomsen  
Marc Tremitiere  
Sophie Truslow  
Sarah Wikency

Board meetings are held the first Monday of each month from September through June at 7:00pm in the Mugavero Center.

[www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org](http://www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org)

Many long time residents remember the fully functioning jail as an untrustworthy neighbor. Haphazard parking, litter and an unsightly “gap” on a busy retail stretch of Atlantic Avenue were among its dubious charms.

The current 760 bed jail has been quiet while undergoing renovations the past few years but the city has always planned to reopen the building to house criminal suspects. The HOD points out several factors regarding the need for a Brooklyn jail. Among them are the adjacency to the Court Houses, the reduction of the Rikers Island population where buildings are outdated, reducing the cost and air pollution resulting from busing of prisoners from Rikers and the access for Brooklyn families to those who are under arrest. Keep in mind, the city has always had the right to reopen the building at any time.

On April 23rd several board members attended a meeting at Borough Hall with Corrections Commissioner Martin Horn, Richard Bearak and Jon Benguiat (both from the Borough President’s staff), other city personnel and other HOD stakeholders which followed up on previous conversations regarding the future of the jail.

It was explained that a “Request for Expressions of Interest” (RFEI) was being issued. The RFEI is issued to developers as a non-binding expression of interest to see what might work. The RFEI contains design guidelines and outlines goals.

A document was handed out showing two possibilities for expansion of the jail with commercial and residential additions. Both plans included ground floor retail on 3 sides of the square block with retail on Boerum Place, Atlantic Avenue and Smith Street. Each plan showed the existing jail expanded into a building on State Street in a “T” so that the new building would connect to the existing building. One concept showed 2 commercial towers flanking the existing HOD while the other the east commercial tower as a residential tower. In either plan, an additional 720 beds would be added to the existing jail - essentially doubling the HOD prisoner population.

The BHA board intends to continue being active in these discussions so that the site can be improved. We seek to close the retail gap, upgrade the overall appearance of the block, control the chaotic parking and keep conversing with our recalcitrant “neighbor.”

To their credit, Commissioner Horn and Marty Markowitz have been responsive to our concerns. We intend to stay engaged on these issues. Check out our website for more information.

## Atlantic Yards Continued...The Next Phase

The Boerum Hill Association continues to support the efforts of Brooklyn Speaks ([www.brooklynspeaks.net](http://www.brooklynspeaks.net)) and the Council of Brooklyn Neighborhoods (CBN) in their efforts to modify this immense project. Along with other community organizations we seek to mitigate the effects on traffic, pollution, mass transit, infrastructure, schools among other issues that have not been adequately addressed.

We continue to believe this project lacked true community input, that it’s effects on many neighborhoods were not properly reviewed and that it is out of grossly out of scale for Brooklyn. This 20 year long construction project will require many changes, much monitoring and continued State and City oversight. By working with our elected State and City officials, as well as local community boards we want to address the concerns of our residents. Please get involved and let us know your thoughts on this very important project.

**ARTWALK07 is June 9th and 10th. Experience this great event!**

Visit us daily at  
[www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org](http://www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org)

### Boerum Hill Calendar 2008

The third annual calendar theme will be

#### The Gardens of Boerum Hill

It will feature the beautiful gardens of Boerum Hill, including gardens (private and public), decks, sidewalk displays, window boxes and more.

If you have a garden you are particularly proud of, or other display of floral beauty and greenery, we would like to arrange to have it photographed.

Call Sue Wolfe  
at 718-858-3822 x100

#### JOIN NOW!

Be an active neighbor

Become a block captain

Join a committee

Join the board

#### LOCAL HERO AWARD

In honor of the late  
Jim Vacirca

Know someone who  
contributes to Boerum Hill?

Nominate them for this  
annual award!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
JUNE 20TH at 7:00 PM  
BELARUSIAN CHURCH

At the corner of  
Atlantic Ave. and Bond St.

We will announce the  
results of the BHA board  
election

## Friends of Douglass Greene Park

Boerum Hill is vastly underserved in terms of open space, with less than one-fifth of the recommended public open space for a NYC neighborhood. The Douglass Greene Park on Third Avenue between Douglass and Degraw Streets is underutilized but could be a wonderful resource for many residents.

On June 2nd, the "Friends of Douglass Greene Park" will host the first Community Day Event from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Activities for children will include games, skate boarding demonstrations, performances and refreshments.

Help us raise the profile of this wonderful space! Look for more information as we get closer to the date.

## Transportation Matters

In our recent survey over 90% of you responded in support of Residential Parking Permits. With the unveiling of the Mayor's congestion pricing plan and the change of the DOT commissioner, this idea may be ready for a long awaited pilot.

Our board member, Leslie Lewis, is our liaison with the 84th Precinct. He specializes in public safety and is working with the city DOT to make sure signage is visible on Atlantic Avenue. New speed limit signs will be posted along the avenue and a better "right turn allowed" sign is coming to the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Boerum Place.

Leslie also encourages the safe bicycling. He urges everyone to ride in the street, observe the basic traffic rules and asks you to wear a helmet.

## Quality of Life Issues

Board member Douglas Barnes has been working to bring order to the parking chaos to the State Street environs. Parking in cross walks, by hydrants and in bus stops has been a plague for many years. By documenting window permits and then asking city organizations to identify the employees who flout the parking regulations, we seek to address this issue. Check out [www.nyc.uncivilservants.org](http://www.nyc.uncivilservants.org) if this is *your* issue.

Another quality of life issue is trash. The board is asking the Sanitation Department to place more receptacles at many corners in Boerum Hill. We are seeking residents who want to "adopt" a container. Neighbors will be asked to keep an eye on the overflow and replace bags as needed. Please contact us for further information.

## Landmarks and Zoning

Board member Sophie Truslow is leading a team in the process of inventorying buildings in the neighborhood to develop a building survey. This document, which has immense value of its own, will be the basis for the extension of our historic district. This project involves documenting and researching the history of the neighborhood. The historical research is done our local historian and board member, Erik Fortmeyer.

The BHA is working with Councilman David Yassky to convince city planners to implement appropriate backyard zoning to preserve the rich environmental luxury of our green enclosures where they still exist. We believe this is a profoundly important issue to the character and health of our neighborhood.

## Communication

Check out the Boerum Hill Information website at [boerumhill@yahogroups.com](mailto:boerumhill@yahogroups.com)— this is a great way to stay in touch with the hood. Please no advertising and no politics, but this is a great way to find a nanny, a tutor, a plumber, find a lost dog and so much more.

Future Newsletter topics will include features on shops and restaurants in Boerum Hill. Suggestions for articles, as well as a catchy name for the newsletter, are welcome.

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