

Boerum Hill Bulletin

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.BOERUMHILLASSOCIATION.ORG

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(*non-board member)

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

OUR RE-ZONING IS APPROVED!

The City Council unanimously approved our zoning proposal in early October which protects our low-rise brownstone neighborhood from out-of-scale development. (See our March 2011 Newsletter for the final map).

“We’re thrilled to preserve the low-rise character and tree-lined streets that make up our neighborhood,” said Howard Kolins, president of the Boerum Hill Association. “People move here to have a quality of life that stresses backyards and brownstone stoops.”

The rezoning limits most blocks to a maximum height of 50 feet but some blocks with commercial activity can rise to 70 feet. Other neighborhoods including Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Carroll Gardens and Park Slope have similar protections.

“We were the last neighborhood to do this – we were the orphaned blocks,” Kolins said. “It’s worth it to everyone to keep Boerum Hill feeling like a small neighborhood.”

Even with this accomplishment, more work remains. Developer Frank DeFalco, who owns the Invisible Dog gallery building and others on Bergen Street would like to add artist living quarters to that building however the new zoning prevents this. The BHA spoke with the Brooklyn City Planning Office about creating a special arts zone for this block but no further discussions have taken place.

More critical may be development on Atlantic Avenue. A sales listing for buildings on the north side of Atlantic Avenue caused some alarm on State Street since new buildings can be as tall as 80 feet. Fortunately there are limitations that preserve the charming wood and glass storefronts but some lots could get new and taller buildings.

A preliminary discussion with Sandy Balboza of the Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association may lead to further discussions and action on this issue.

The BHA wants to thank the many agencies and elected officials who supported us as we worked to change our zoning. The supporters included Rob Perris at CB2, Borough President Marty Markowitz, Richard Bearak, land use director at Borough Hall, and Councilman Steve Levin. We also want to thank everyone at the Brooklyn City Planning Office for working so closely with us. Their patience and insight were instrumental in achieving the satisfying outcome.

**SAVE
THE
DATE!**

**The Annual Pot Luck
Holiday Party**

Saturday,

December 3rd

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Never a dull moment here in Boerum Hill.

While the BHA board usually takes the summer off, we held a long overdue meeting in July with representatives from the United States Postal Service in effort to deter some justifiably disgruntled neighbors from grabbing their proverbial pitchforks and building bonfires in front of the Time Plaza Station.

Long time residents are painfully aware of the long history of poor service from this facility, While we all seem to love our mail carriers (we should to plant a tree to honor the legendary Stanley) there is little love for the rundown lobby, poor package delivery and surly service.

A good dialogue with the Postal staff has brought small progress. The new manager, Bridget L. Jordan, keeps an eye on the line and will personally aid customers waiting and she will expedite package pickups. Clerks have been more helpful and, dare I say, even cheerful. Thank you, Bridget!

We had a follow up in October and we will continue to monitor the situation. The lease is up in 2013 so we will be lobbying for significant upgrades to the appearance of the facility and pressing for a consistent level of good service.

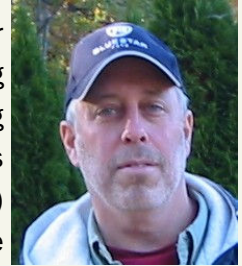
Traffic continues to be a major headache and the pending opening of the Barclay Arena will only bring new plagues. The BHA supports RPP (Residential Parking Permits) as one way to cut down on the through traffic that will develop if arena attendees avoid high-priced parking lots as they have near Yankee Stadium. We've been working with DOT as they evaluate the Fourth Avenue traffic mitigations put in place this past summer.

Add noise complaints to the list. Here and throughout the city, noise has become a major topic. We like the vibrant street life of café society but when is it too much?

And how about bikers who go the wrong way in the bike lanes and ignore red lights without looking for pedestrians? We're thinking an educational campaign and some Police enforcement are in order.

A dose of civility mixed with common sense need to be ordered. So the story below is intentional. My holiday message: let's polish the golden rule and do nicely onto others during the holiday season and beyond.

In community — Howard Kolins



CATCH THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Need to purge yourself of your inner Grinch? Why not get into the holiday spirit by joining the annual door-to-door caroling troupe put together each December by Margaret Cusack (pictured bottom right, lowest step). The 2010 groups of vocalists had a great time so shake the dust off your jingle bells.

To join the Neighborhood Caroling troupe, meet on the steps of the Hopkins Center 155 Dean Street (corner



of Hoyt St.) on Sunday, Dec. 18, 2011 at 7:00 PM (Please be on time!)

Song sheets, Santa hats, and jingle bells are provided. Bring your own musical instrument if you like. No singing experience is necessary. Children are definitely invited. Bring a flashlight or a shielded candle.

They've been caroling in Boerum Hill for many years and it's become a great neighborhood tradition.

(continued next page)

OUR SUPPORTERS

PATRONS

Jean Austin and Ellen Gottlieb, Brooklyn Bridge Realty Ltd
 Building on Bond
 Kim Soule, Corcoran Group
 Sue Wolfe & James Crow, Corcoran Group
 Abby Hamlin, Hamlin Ventures
 Heights Woodworking
 James Kerby, Prudential Douglas Elliman
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 State Renaissance Court

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 Bar Tabac

Tour Ticket Outlets

Exit 9, 127 Smith Street
 Sterling Place, 363 Atlantic Avenue
 Annie's Blue Ribbon General Store, 365 State Street
 Gumbo. 493 Atlantic Avenue

Floral Arrangements

GRDN
 Opalia
 QuartreCoeur

Sponsor Brunch

Mile End

HOLIDAY SPIRIT (CONTINUED)

They sing outside the homes of people who are new to the neighborhood, older residents, shut-ins, people who have a new baby, or those who have suffered a loss. Let us know if you would like us to sing to you at your house. Also, include which doorbell we should ring. We will try to accommodate as many of the requests as is possible. Thanks.

By December 13th, please drop off (or e-mail) any suggested addresses that we should include in our caroling route. Let us know if you would like us to sing to you at your house. Also, include which doorbell we should ring. We will try to accommodate as many of the requests as is possible. Thanks.

Margaret Cusack, President, Hoyt Street Association
 124 Hoyt Street 718.237.0145 cusackart@aol.com

WE NEED YOU TO JOIN THE BHA FOR 2012

USE THE FORM ON THE
OPPOSITE PAGE TO
JOIN OR RENEW
YOUR MEMBERSHIP

RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMITS

On November 3rd 2011 the City Council passed a "home rule message" in support of residential parking permits, or RPP, which was sponsored by Council Member Stephen Levin and supported by the Boerum Hill Association along with many other neighborhood organizations.

In neighborhoods such as Boerum Hill, residents already struggle to find parking near their homes. The drivers circling neighborhoods for parking spots not only increase congestion, they increase pollution and create hazards for pedestrians. The upcoming opening of Barclay's arena will further increase competition for street parking. Yankee Stadium has been plagued by this problem as drivers park on local streets to avoid the high-priced lots.

If approved in the Albany legislature it would enable the city to establish an RPP program in which communities could opt into the RPP program on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis. RPP would affect residential streets, but at least 20 percent of the available spots would be open for non-permit parking. The permits would not be allowed on commercial streets, metered spaces or streets with other restrictions.

Here are some suggested details of the RPP plan:

- 80 percent of the spots would be for residents and 20 percent would be open for non-permit parking.

- The regulation hours would be between 7 AM and 7 PM. Monday through Friday, excluding major holidays when government offices and most businesses are closed. Visitors would be able to park for a maximum of two hours during the period when residential permit parking regulations are in effect.

- The permits would directly fund the upgrading and improvement of NYC subways and buses, providing much-needed revenue for New York's transit system.

- RPP would not be allowed on commercial streets. Spaces with meters and other restrictions could not be affected by RPP.

- Public hearings would be required before implementation of RPP in a neighborhood.

The plan is not without controversy and recently the Fort Greene Association, a long time supporter of the proposal, decided to withdraw its support due to opposition voiced at last June's General Meeting.

Understandably many residents object to imposing a "tax" for what is currently free and fear that the fees imposed will rise sharply just as our water fees have in recent years.

While these concerns are justified, the BHA maintains that a nominal fee would be worth the cost if it discouraged additional traffic on our streets.

B E C O M E A M E M B E R O F T H E B O E R U M H I L L A S S O C I A T I O N

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Your contact info will never be shared or sold, and you may opt out of any communications at any time.

Yearly Membership (open to all residents of Boerum Hill)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 – Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 – Individual Senior/Student/Low-income |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 – Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 – Family* Senior/Student/Low-income |

Business Supporters (listed on BHA website, newsletters, and other publications)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 – Business Donor | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 – Business Sponsor |
|---|---|

Contributions (Not a resident or business owner? Or checked a box above but still want to do more? Contributions of any size are always welcome and help support the important work of the BHA)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> + \$100 “Good Neighbor | <input type="checkbox"/> + \$250 “Neighborhood Hero!” | <input type="checkbox"/> + \$_____ Other |
|---|---|--|

The BHA membership year is from January 1 to December 31. Members in good standing as of June 1 may vote in the June board election. All others, including business supporters, may not vote but are welcome at all BHA events and activities.

* Family memberships (2+ adults in the same household), are entitled to two votes. Individual members receive one vote.

Contribute Your Talent and Energy

Join your neighbors who volunteer to work on BHA activities and community priorities. Identify your areas of interest.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic Yards | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations and Communication (neighborhood calendar, block associations, press releases, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Block Captain (help distribute BHA notices on your block) | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Playgrounds (improving Douglass/Greene Park) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boerum Hill History | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of Life (public safety, sanitation, recycling, noise) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Events (meetings, holiday party, house tour) | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology (website, email, online tools) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greening & Neighborhood Beautification | <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic and Transportation (transit, parking, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use (development, zoning, building noise) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring (homework help to neighborhood youth) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land marking | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership (recruitment, member services) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | |

Make your check payable to the **Boerum Hill Association.**

Mail this form and the check to the:

Boerum Hill Association, P.O. Box 020583, Brooklyn, NY 11202



Boerum Hill

Association
P.O. Box 020583
Brooklyn, NY 11202-0583
www.boerumhillassociation.org

Growing a better Boerum Hill

C H E C K I T O U T

BIEN CUIT

Stroll over to 120 Smith Street, near Dean Street, for bread, pastry, coffee or a sandwich. The handsome brick walls and marble counters set off equally handsome pastries and crusty breads. The welcoming atmosphere is completed by the lovely owners and staff. A very nice addition to Smith Street.

SOTTOCASA PIZZERIA

Neopolitan pizza comes to 298 Atlantic Avenue near Smith Street. Beautiful smoky-crust pizza with fresh ingredients are featured. Fragrant basil, hot sausage, smoked mozzarella along with friendly service fill out the menu. Spare bricks walls and a simple backyard complete the relaxed setting.

MATHNASIUM LEARNING CENTER

Math tutoring for K-8th grade at 392 Atlantic near Bond Street. Walk in for a free, no-pressure assessment. Eight hours of monthly instruction costs \$299; different fees

apply for high school level instruction. Owner Carl Giordano is committed to supporting students in Brooklyn in a welcoming atmosphere.

“Sorry for Blocking Your Car”

Placards are available on the **BHA website**. Although double parking for street cleaning is clearly illegal, the Police do look the other way if we behave. The placard is intended for use during alternate side parking periods to balance the competing problems of street sanitation and the shortage of available parking places. You just put your phone number in the windshield and make sure to move your car when called.

Go to www.boerumhillbassociation.org and print out the form.

JOIN THE BHA

Help us be advocates for Boerum Hill by becoming a member. Join us on the web at www.boerumhillbrooklyn.org