



The City of New York
BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

3024 THIRD AVENUE
BRONX, NEW YORK 10455
(718) 585-7117 • Fax (718) 292-0558 • Email: bx01@cb.nyc.gov

Serving and Representing: Port Morris, Mott Haven and Melrose



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Environmental Justice & Sanitation

March 20th, 2024

Cesar Yoc, Chairperson

Outline

Environmental justice and committee meetings.

- Stephanie Fox, Strategic Organizer Office of the NYC Comptroller Brad Lander, presented to the committee the NYC Climate Dashboard webpage.
- Committee members discuss agenda items, including grant proposals and meeting procedures, with a focus on electing a new vice chair.
- Committee members introduce themselves.

NYC climate dashboard and energy emissions reduction goals.

- Strategic organizer Stephanie Fox explains NYC climate dashboard for environmental justice.
- Stephanie Fox discusses New York City's goal of reducing gas emissions by 80% by 2050 and the importance of public accountability in achieving this goal.
- Stephanie Fox highlights the city's reliance on dirty energy sources, particularly gas, and the need for transmission projects to bring renewable energy from upstate to downstate.

Solar energy potential in NYC.

- Stephanie Fox discusses the goal of installing solar panels on 10,000 low-income households in New York City, with the aim of reducing energy costs and increasing local control over energy production.
- The city is currently working on a program called Public Solar in New York to make solar energy more accessible to low-income households, with the potential to solarize 5,000 homes over the next four years.
- Stephanie Fox discusses the potential for solar power in New York City, mentioning the need for a solar map to track the location and performance of solar panels in real-time.
- Member Argelia Ortiz expresses concern about the impact of skyscrapers and cloudy days on solar power generation, and the potential for a decline in solar power output over time.

Decarbonizing buildings in NYC.

- Anthony Jordan questions whether the city is doing enough to reach its aggressive green building goals, particularly in regards to converting old buildings to make them more energy efficient.
- Anthony Jordan advocates for prioritizing environmental justice communities in climate goals, citing historical injustices and current impacts.
- Stephanie Fox explains a map showing the breakdown of greenhouse gas emissions in New York City, with a focus on buildings, transportation, and waste.
- The map uses GIS to display every building subject to local law 84, with green indicating good performance, yellow indicating okay performance, and red indicating poor performance.

NYC's sustainability initiatives and progress.

- Stephanie Fox highlights the majority of emissions come from regular passenger cars, with a goal to build 50 miles of bike lanes annually.
- Tracking emissions from electric vehicles, New York City's own electric fleet, and environmental justice areas to ensure equitable infrastructure development.
- New York City's organics collection program shows uneven participation, with some areas dropping off in 2019 due to a cut in the program.
- Michael Pimental and Stephanie Fox discuss the importance of educating children about composting and recycling in schools.
- Stephanie Fox highlights the need for more outreach and advocacy to increase diversion rates in New York City, with a focus on overcoming challenges such as lack of investment and outreach.

Renewable energy infrastructure and waste management.

- Infrastructure concerns for offshore wind energy in New York City, including potential sites for converter stations and transmission lines.
- Chairperson Cesar Yoc and Stephanie Fox discuss the longevity of solar panels and batteries, with Stephanie Fox mentioning lithium recycling as a potential solution to the problem of disposing of old batteries.
- Both Chairperson Cesar Yoc and Stephanie Fox agree that investing in research and development of new battery technologies is crucial to address the issue of long-term storage for renewable energy.
- Chairperson Cesar Yoc emphasizes the importance of transparency in addressing climate change, citing the need to communicate the reality of waste production and the progress made in reducing energy consumption through efficient solar panels.

- New York City's pension funds are being steered towards net-zero investments by 2014, with regular progress updates provided through maps and benchmarks.

Investment strategies for climate change mitigation.

- NYC Office of the Comptroller tracks emissions from investments and aims to reach net zero by 2050.
- Stephanie Fox announces upcoming investment announcements, excited about faster progress in green transition.
- Anthony Jordan asks how the office ensures penalties for bad actors who unfortunately perform environmental injustices in communities the Comptroller's Office make investments in.
- Stephanie Fox explains various tools used, including engagement with companies, banks, and divestment, to address racial justice and environmental concerns.

Solar energy and environmental justice.

- Chairperson Cesar Yoc expresses concern about environmental injustice in solar panel installation, specifically regarding land issues and potential impact on fisheries.
- Solar and wind energy development can coexist with agriculture and other land uses, despite fossil fuel industry misinformation.

Environmental quality and pollution in NYC.

- Chairperson Cesar Yoc discusses the environmental impact of technology, including resource depletion and fine particulate matter.
- Stephanie Fox tracks different pollutants like particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and black carbon in New York City, with highest levels found in the South Bronx and other areas with heavy industrial activity.
- The app also shows water quality sampling sites across the city, with the ability to view data on chlorine levels, turbidity, and other parameters in real-time.

Environmental resilience and infrastructure projects in New York City.

- Map shows environmental hazards in NYC, including chemical storage facilities and brownfield cleanup sites.
- Stephanie Fox explains that sea level rise will cause more flooding in the Bronx, especially in areas within the 100-year floodplain, and infrastructure projects are being built to address the issue.
- Member Argelia Ortiz asks about the impact of these projects on the ocean.

NYC's drainage infrastructure and resilience.

- Stephanie Fox highlights the importance of addressing heat risk in the city, particularly in vulnerable areas with lack of vegetation cover.
- City investing in sewers and green infrastructure to mitigate stormwater and flash flood risk.
- Anthony Jordan expresses concern that current efforts to address drainage issues in New York City are not happening fast enough to meet the city's needs.
- Stephanie Fox emphasizes the importance of applying pressure to build more infrastructure to improve drainage systems in the city, citing it as a major problem that needs to be addressed.

Environmental justice and sanitation issues.

- Committee members discussed sanitation and schedules in their neighborhoods.

Sanitation issues in a New York City shopping district.

- Anthony Jordan agrees with Mr. Francis that sanitation collection and enforcement are major concerns in the district, particularly with overflowing bins.
- Chairperson Cesar Yoc mentions that businesses are already putting out their trash early, and there may be a need to adjust the sanitation schedule.
- Anthony Jordan and Michael Pimental discussed the issue of sanitation in the business improvement district, including the presence of street vendors illegally dumping their unsold products and creating a cleanliness problem for the sanitation department and DSNY.
- The deputy chief of sanitation visited the office to discuss potential creative solutions to address the Sanitation Issues, including educating constituents and working with the business improvement district to find a refreshing need.
- Committee members discuss issues of cleanliness and enforcement in the district, including dumping and pollution, and brainstorm actionable items to address these problems.
- Committee members suggest working with local organizations and government agencies to implement cleanup projects and improve enforcement and highlight the need for more effective communication and collaboration.

Environmental issues and cleanup efforts in a NYC neighborhood.

- Committee formed to address environmental issues in Melrose, with action items including outreach and education efforts.

- Member Argelia Ortiz suggests emailing the chair of the metals environmental committee for a statement on the action taken at the meeting to address the remedy agreed upon.
- Anthony Jordan mentions the long-term goal of cleaning up the Third Avenue commercial district, and Chairperson Cesar Yoc expresses concern about the upcoming mandatory bin placement law and the potential for more rats in the area.

Community cleanup initiatives in St. Mary's Industrial Area.

- A mapping project could be an action item to address the issue, potentially involving a group cleanup day.

Dog waste enforcement in NYC neighborhoods.

- Member Argelia Ortiz advocates for enforcement of dog waste cleanup in their neighborhood, citing inconsistent enforcement across districts.
- Member Argelia Ortiz speaks with maintenance workers and other neighbors to gather support for their cause.
- Member Argelia Ortiz complains about dog waste on the streets, particularly near the Mott Haven library, and expresses frustration at the lack of enforcement of environmental laws.
- Member Argelia Ortiz advocates for enforcing animal waste regulations in their district, citing the use of cow manure as a fertilizer.

Action Items

Send ideas and feedback for improving the climate dashboard to Stephanie Fox via the website form.

Investigate the sanitation pickup schedules for residential buildings and commercial areas to understand current issues.

Advocate for increased enforcement and penalties around businesses illegally dumping garbage.

Explore coordinating a community cleanup day in a problem area, potentially engaging local youth.

Map locations with dumping issues in Port Morris and industrial areas.

Follow up with Angel Garcia and the state DEC office about progress and next steps from the environmental awareness meeting regarding the dry cleaner issue.

Add regular sanitation updates and coordination with the Sanitation Deputy Chief as standing items on the committee agenda moving forward.

Identify at least 3 priority issues for the committee with concrete goals and plans of action for the April meeting.