

## **BCEQ Education Committee Meeting Minutes**

July 23, 2009 at Nos Quedamos (We Stay), 754 Melrose Avenue, Bronx, NY

Present: Anne-Marie Runfola (Bronx River Alliance), Mark Stern (DeWitt Clinton HS), Dr. Dena Robins, Yolanda Gonzalez (Nos Quedamos), Paola Sanchez (Nos Quedamos)

### Discussion

-Reviewed the reasons we all gave at first meeting for wanting to participate on Ed Committee to help focus the group. Used these as a basis to create a list of themes/activities the committee agreed were important:

- Disseminate information, act as a clearinghouse
- Promote what existing environmental education groups already do (without adding just another email chain with the same information)
- Evaluate programs/resources that are available
- Identify gaps in resources offered and let other groups know in case they'd like to take something on
- Create social consciousness and environmental justice
- Provide educational resources, background to help people make informed decisions re. issues that BCEQ takes on
- Put issues in layperson's terms and relate them to everyday life

--AMR drafted a short mission statement to help the group communicate our focus: BCEQ's Education Committee is dedicated to helping create an informed and environmentally-just Bronx by connecting communities with quality environmental education resources.

It's a work in progress, but the group thought this was a good starting point. Edits will be on Google Docs "BCEQ Ed Committee Mission"

--Question came up about how different the Education Committee is from overall BCEQ. Will look at education versus advocacy in next meeting, and how that shapes our committee.

-Group agreed to try Google Groups again to see if we can use this as our steering committee planning/communication tool.

- Survey – Environmental Education Advisory Council sent out a survey recently. We could use this as a model to send a survey out to our potential constituents to see what they need, what would interest them. No action taken yet.

Presentation by our host, Yolanda Gonzalez, of Nos Quedamos ("We Stay")

-Nos Quedamos history – Est. 1992. Was started by Yolanda Gonzalez's mother. Built 1500 low to moderate income houses. Scheduled to build 1000 new units. 1<sup>st</sup>

in the So Bro and all over Bx to build with 95-97 % environmentally friendly materials. Have 3 green roofs, 1 solar panel.

- Concern about green roof being accessible to people. Insurance issues because of the height. (\$20,000/green roof).

-Nos Quedamos deals with environmental and social issues.

-Peekers – peek hours dirty turbines Con Ed/Power plant NYPIRG

-Transportation of energy is the problem because our electricity in NYC comes from Niagara Falls

- Working on using lime to restore the coral reefs with Pace University to help increase the oxygen supply in the environment.

Social justice- foreclosure prevention, rent arrears,

Bx. Defenders- legal services agency mainly housing issues

Green jobs for individuals fro 16 years to 30 years to manufacture and install solar/wind etc.

.Concerned about the destructive effects of liquefied gas if it explodes.

Catastrophic comparable to nuclear power plant meltdown.

-NAC – Neighborhood Advisory Council

--Possibility of using Cablevision, BxNet, Open, The Crystal Stairs (Dr. Robins show) to disseminate and gather all the information in the Bronx environmental community to educate the general public.

--Next steps – Getting students involved on Ed Committee (Mark), meeting minutes on BCEQ website (AMR), creating a basic school checklist to encourage a good learning environment (Dena), set next meeting date in Sept.,

--Other ideas to work on: Community service for youth, concert (Roberto Clemente or Van Cortlandt Park), recycling in schools, composting/ gardening in schools, steering committee, offer a social evening for educators at beginning of school year

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Dena Robins and Anne-Marie Runfola, BCEQ