

180TH STREET BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT – FISCAL YEAR 2011

District Background

The 180th Street Business Improvement District (BID) is funded through a special assessment on properties located within the industrial boundaries. The area bounded by Liberty Avenue on the north, the Montauk Branch of the Long Island Railroad on the east, Brinkerhoff Avenue on the south and 176th Street on the west. This industrial BID which includes over forty businesses is located within the South Jamaica Empire Zone.

The district encompasses mostly manufacturing and warehousing businesses. The types of businesses include a window manufacturer, a storage company, an awning manufacturer, a bus company and a building's supply firm. Area businesses employ approximately 1,000 workers.

The BID is also home to the New York Automotive and Diesel Institute (ADI). New York ADI is a certified automotive school that trains students to become full service mechanics. They have one of the highest employment rates of any institution in New York State.

In 1998 the 180th Street Reconstruction Project was completed. The results of this development have had a substantial impact within the South Jamaica Empire Zone allowing businesses to co-exist with the surrounding residential community. The \$2 million plan reconstructed 2,550' of existing roadway on 180th Street between Liberty Avenue and Brinkerhoff Avenue providing unrestricted access to businesses south of 107th Avenue in the industrial park. This undertaking was a joint venture between the 180th Street BID, the Economic Development Corporation and the Queens Borough President's Office.

Since the BID's inception over 60 businesses have been certified with State Tax incentives, jobs have increased 69%, the Computerized Neighborhood Environment Tracking Program (ComNET) was successfully implemented and over 850 students are educated annually at New York ADI.

In Fiscal Year 2011, the District expanded its website to include Facebook. Unlike the websites of most traditional BIDs, 180th Street's site is designed to be used as an informative tool for the industrial businesses and their perspective clients. The organization also launched the Con Edison Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Electric Rebate Program which is designed to drastically reduce the businesses soaring energy costs.

Review of Fiscal Year 2011 Activities

Overview:

In Fiscal Year 2011 the BID built upon past successes. In addition to providing traditional supplemental services like security, management was able to:

- Launch the 180th Street Business Improvement District website.
- Develop the website to include Facebook.
- Introduce the Con Edison Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Electric Rebate Program.
- Reduce the number of graffiti incidences.
- Monitor the overhaul of the district's drainage system to prevent future flooding.
- Oversee a comprehensive maintenance program.
- Coordinate with the Department of Sanitation (DOS) emergency snow removal from the district during winter snow storms.
- Replace lighting fixtures along 180th Street.
- Increase area security
- Continue to utilize a "Procedure for Reporting Illegal Dumping" document as a tool for quickly removing debris from the district.
- Maintain a high occupancy rate.
- Decrease the level of illegal dumping by 73%, which constitutes a 9% decrease from the previous fiscal year.
- Reduce the number "311" calls by 56% from Fiscal Year 2010.
- Correct 77% of the street level incidences reported by the ComNET program.
- Collect 100% in assessment fees from the Department of Finance.

In addition, management worked closely with the Queen's Borough President's Office, the 103rd and 113th Police Precincts and the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation. The Association also sustained a relationship with the two major local civic organizations; the Brinkerhoff Action Association and the Addisleigh Park Civic Association.

Review of Accomplishments:

Website

The 180th Street BID website was launched in June 2010. In Fiscal Year 2011 the website added Facebook and a detailed business listing. Management was awarded a grant from the Avenue NYC program to develop the custom designed website which was devised to increase the visibility of the area, tract activity, create business profiles and serve as a navigational tool for perspective clients. The website, which is located at www.180thstreetbid.com, will also be used as an informational guide for the industrial businesses with links to many of the City and State primary agencies.

Con Edison Rebate Program

The organization introduced the Con Edison Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Electric Rebate Program. This free program is designed to help 180th Street BID commercial and industrial businesses save money and save energy. Con Edison is providing the district's businesses with free energy efficiency surveys which detail the amount of savings to the individual business if they implemented the recommendations suggested in the survey. The businesses are provided free compact fluorescent lamps, low-flow aerators, high pressure rinse sprayers and a water heater thermostat. The program also offers businesses 70% up front savings on the installation of energy saving items like high efficiency lighting, ballasts and fixtures, and ventilation and cooling (HVAC) systems. 180th Street BID staff accompanied representatives from Con Edison and met with every business owner to discuss the benefits of the program and to fill out free energy savings surveys.

Flooding Repair

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has commenced working on the drainage system which has caused major flooding problems along 180th Street. The sewer system in the industrial zone is being completely overhauled. The project will reduce the amount of flooding incidences affecting the district in past years causing damage and lost of income to several businesses. Management continues to work closely with local officials on the completion of this project.

Illegal Dumping

The BID focused on the reduction and prompt removal of illegal dumping in the district. The organization distributed the "Procedure for Reporting Illegal Dumping" document which continues to be utilized by the property and business owners as a method to expeditiously remove illegal debris from the area. The procedure is also designed to minimize the issuing of sanitation summons by documenting of the number of illegal dumping incidences. This information is provided to sanitation enforcement as a crime statistic to help the BID combat this problem. Due to the system, the number of illegal dumping incidences decreased by 73% this year.

Maintenance Program

The organization continues to implement a maintenance program focused on improving the aesthetic appearance of the district. This includes sidewalk repair, weed removal, cutting grass and landscaping. The program was expanded to include the cleaning and sweeping of the sidewalks. This service is executed quarterly.

Additional Accomplishments:

Sanitation Summons

Management is working with the Department of Sanitation to reduce the increase in unmerited sanitation summons issued to the businesses. These summonses present a financial burden to business owners and disrupt business activity particularly during the current economic climate.

Security

Peace Security is responsible for patrolling the district on various nights and weekends. They patrol the area four days a week. The days and hours of operation change weekly in order to provide optimal coverage. The security firm reports various incidences by faxing daily status reports to the BID's management office. This year the district continued its coverage during winter months.

Parking/Traffic

The organization continues its commitment of addressing the parking concerns of the business owners. Management worked with the Queens South Parking Enforcement District and the 103rd Precinct to reduce the number of tickets given to the business owners, employees, customers and students. In addition, Management also wants parking enforcement to ticket vehicles parking illegally.

180th Street Reconstruction Project

In the thirteen years since the completion of the 180th Street Reconstruction Project, the BID remains involved with the residual affects of the undertaking. In FY' 2011 management continued to work with the Department of Transportation (DOT), Department of Sanitation (DOS), Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and Community Board 12 to ensure lasting positive results.

The 180th Street Reconstruction Project is responsible for:

- Prohibiting commercial vehicles access to the industrial area through the adjacent residential community.
- Reducing the level of noise and disturbances affecting two local housing groups since the opening of 180th Street.
- Opening access to the commercial district from the North (Liberty Avenue) to the South (Brinkerhoff Avenue).

Collections

The BID collected its full assessment of \$53,000 from the Department of Finance.

Financial

The Association submitted the 2010 financial statement to the Department of Small Business Services (DSBS) prior to December 31, 2010. The audit committee reviewed and approved the statement that was prepared by the accounting firm of Schoenfeld, Mendelsohn and Goldfarb.

ComNET

The 180th Street BID was one of the first BIDs to enroll in the Computerized Neighborhood Environment Tracking (ComNET) program. Established by the Fund for the City of New York, ComNET is designed to help improve the performance of non-profit organizations by utilizing hand held computers to quickly capture, record, tabulate and report street level conditions to their perspective government agency. The success of a BID, especially an industrial district, is often judged by the condition of their street; consequently, participating in such a program assists 180th Street in achieving their mission.

The system has allowed the BID to monitor the progress being made by specific city agencies in correcting these various street level conditions. Thus far the number of incidences reported last year has decreased by 77%.

Outreach

The organization maintains a relationship with city agencies, community groups, local development corporations, local politicians and members of the BID. The following are ways the organization preserves these relationships:

- Management serves on the board of the Committee to Improve Perception (C-TIP). C-TIP is composed of business and community leaders committed to improving the perception of Jamaica.
- The BID maintains an open line of communications with the Brinkerhoff Action Association and the Addisleigh Park Civic Association. The Director speaks and meets with members of these two prominent residential groups regularly. Both groups have sent letters of accommodations to the Association for successfully addressing their concerns.
- Management corresponds with the business owners through letters and site visits. The Director has increased his visits to every business to at least six times a year. He also makes site visits to the area weekly.

Looking Ahead Fiscal Year 2012

The following are goals for Fiscal Year 2012 for the 180th Street Business Improvement District:

Quality of Life Initiative

The 180th Street BID quality of life initiative is designed to improve the overall condition of the district by focusing on the following:

- Requesting a lighting survey from the Street Lighting Division of the Department of Transportation (DOT).
- Removing commercial trucks from the area who illegally utilize the district for parking.
- Ticketing cars illegally parked on sidewalks and other unauthorized areas.
- Replacing street signs allowing businesses continuous access to their loading docks.

This will be accomplished continuously throughout the year.

Logo Design

With the launch of the website, the organization will continue to create awareness of the district by developing the first custom designed 180th Street BID logo, which will exemplify the principles of the industrial BID. The logo will be used to market and promote the district on stationary, banners and website. The logo will be designed by December 2011.

Con Edison Rebate Program

Management will complete additional surveys from businesses for the Con Edison Commercial and Industrial Energy Efficiency Electric Rebate Program. The program is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2011.

Website

The organization will continue to utilize the 180th Street website as a navigational site for the district's businesses and directional guide for clients. The organization will also use Google Analytics and Facebook to create a client profile and to track the type of traffic being directed to the site in an effort to market the district. Twitter will be added in November 2011.

Flooding

The organization will monitor the progress of DEP in solving the flooding situation. This problem is ongoing.

Additional Goals:

Maintenance Program

The district will continue an aggressive maintenance program including the quarterly removal of weeds, cutting of grass, landscaping, and the cleaning and sweeping of the sidewalks. The program will also remove debris and rectify all infrastructure concerns.

Capital Improvements

The BID will address capital improvement concerns in the coming year focusing on the beautification of the district.

Security

Peace Security Inc. will maintain the security of the district for 180th Street occupants. The security firm will focus on catching and reporting perpetrators of illegal dumping.

Reconstruction Project

The BID will precede working with the businesses, the community, the Queen's Borough President's Office and City Agencies on making the opening of 180th Street a successful on going venture.

Organizational Information

Board of Directors

Property Owners (Class A)

Steven Dorf (Liberty Properties Management), President (Steven@dorfassociates.com)

Steven Sussman (J. Sussman Inc), Vice President

Sheldon Schiff (Stamar Realty Corporation), Secretary

Lou Adler (The Moving Doctor)

Robert Corwin, Jr. (Kimaqu Corporation)

Barry Dorf (Dorf Management, Inc.)

David Sussman (J. Sussman Inc.)

Commercial Tenants (Class B)

Patrick Hart (New York Automotive and Diesel Institute), Treasurer

Sheldon Flatow (Penner Elbow Company, Inc.)

Government Officials (Class C)

Department of Small Business Services (Representative)

New York City Comptroller's Office (Representative)

Office of the Queens Borough President (Representative)

City Council Member (Representative)

Non-Voting Member (Class D)
Community Board 12 (Representative)

Staff

Executive Director
Derek Irby

