**Staten Island Community and Interfaith Long Term Recovery Organization**

**Meeting Minutes July 24th, 2013 12:00-2:00pm 1126 Olympia Blvd.**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Prayer** – Rev. Craig Miller

**Speaker** – Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis

Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis thanked us for our work over the last 9 months. She’s seeing a lot of constituents with insurance problems. They are waiting on insurance related bills to pass the Senate. Making sure that those entitled to reimbursements receive what is their due. Understands that people needed to draw from their savings or even retirement funds to make repairs to their homes. FEMA required people to fill out SBA loans to get FEMA emergency funds – but said they didn’t need to take the loan. Now, the money you were qualified for for a loan counts against you for the Build it Back program. This is wrong – people didn’t take those loans for good reasons – ex. the elderly. Now we cannot hold them to that amount. Congressman Grimm announced that he’s trying to have those who didn’t take those loans forgiven. Locally, we are seeing berms being built. The city council has allocated money to include Midland Beach in that project. Her office, with the help of Tom and others, has a list of abandoned mold infested homes. 20-25 identified, have had 5 cleaned by contacting the owner or banks when the home is in foreclosure – and taking care of the mold at no cost. The hardship is in getting ahold of the owners. Two homeowners wouldn’t allow the city to go in. One was living in their home and didn’t believe it was a health hazard. The other was just waiting on a buy-out. Nicole’s representative Carmine will be at our meetings going forward. Sees that many people still don’t know what Built it Back is- out of 4400 households, 3100 have applied to date. The recent article promoting the program may help. Paul Duffy, the governor’s representative, will also continue to be present at our meetings. 25 million dollars announced for rebuilding/protection measures for Staten Island. They want this to be a community based effort. SI was one of the communities that was allocated the greatest amount of money.

**Introductions**

Vin Lenza is a co-chair of the New York Rising program. There are 40-something programs throughout the state, 18 in NYC. 25 million has been put aside by the state for rebuilding infrastructure. They are looking for cooperation. Because of the work the LTRO has been doing, Staten Island is a bit further along than other groups throughout the city. Public meetings will start in the next two or three weeks on the topic of infrastructure.

Tom McDonough – every county in the state is represented on that committee. SI got some of the highest amount of funds.

**World Renew**

World Renew will be conducting on a needs assessment survey on Staten Island from 7/25-8/7. This volunteer team of 18 people comes in about this point in time after a natural disaster and partners with the local LTRO to assess the amount of unmet financial need after people have received FEMA and SBA assistance. Their surveys connect those in need to the service providers within the LTRO and provides crucial data on the amount of unmet need in the community that we can share with our elected officials and potential donors.

We introduced Walt and Carol Ackerman, the World Renew team leads for SI.

The World Renew database allows us to see who still needs debris removal, who needs roofing, etc. The team comes from all over the country. Uses local cost estimates to determine amount of remaining unmet financial need. The information will be available on the ninth of August. Everyone who completes a World Renew survey must sign the confidentiality statement, understanding that their info is solely for the provision of services by LTRO members.

**Report from the Board/Steering Committee**

The steering committee has been working on the issue of volunteer housing. (We introduced the NYDIS volunteer housing team.) The Southern Baptist Disaster Services Team is still stuck in Long Island and wants to re-establish itself on SI. The board had met with the Borough President in April and we were told there would be a volunteer village created at Bayley Seton on the Salvation Army property. This will not be the case. Beverly Neuhaus has the details on what the Southern Baptist group needs. Terry met briefly with the Borough President to inform him that the Salvation Army plan doesn’t look like it will go forward. We can’t use Fort Wadsworth because it is a Homeland Security risk area since it’s under the bridge. They won’t even allow trucks of supplies in that area. The Borough President will make a phone call for us looking into Mt. Lorreto for volunteer housing. We’re trying to ascertain who is providing food for the families in FEMA funded hotels. ARC is providing for those in city hotels.

The Alliance for a Just Rebuilding has issued a report on Sandy related housing needs to HUD in which the LTRO was mentioned.

Many committee chairs who have been working diligently in the recovery effort were nominated for board consideration.

Our newest board members are: Dr. Victor Dolan (Old Town Civic), Robert Dennis (Parish Manager at St. Margaret Mary’s), Farid Kader (Yellow Boots), Thomas McDonough (Stephen Siller Foundation), and Michelle Bascome (World Cares Center).

According to the requirements set forth in our by-laws, the board has elected its officers: Rev. Terry Troia (president), Thomas McDonough (co-vice president), Derek Tabacco (co-vice president), Robert Dennis (treasurer), Michelle Bascome (secretary).

**Committee Report Backs**

*Needs Assessment*: Has been making preparations for the World Renew team. Continues to manage the sisandyhelp.org website – which includes freshly updated English, Spanish, and Russian resource guides. In the process of creating an inventory database and a dropbox system to store and share committee meeting minutes in.

*Mold*: Met with rebuild. The job stream for mold remediation remains steady but has been complicated by the heat and the presence of abandoned houses.

*Rebuild*: The housing consortium Habitat for Humanity was a part of was unable to commit to helping the 600 homes they were hoping to tackle on SI. MDS clarified that insurance liability issues were very problematic for this consortium. There were 7 member orgs involved in that consortium.
Recommends everyone speak to their civic associations and houses of worship to register for the Build it Back program – at nyc.gov or by calling 311. Build it Back is making appointments at Mt. Loretto – they are there to collect documentation. They can give you ideas for how to find/retrieve this info. Homeowners can choose their own contractor, but these local contractors must be vetted by the city.
Short term goals – get as many people back into their homes as possible. Cross-reference databases to vet out most vulnerable people to assist them. Long term – identify each and every home on SI that was affected – will partner with FEMA to try and get info on addresses with remaining rebuild needs. The committee wants to reach the remaining homes that don’t know there is volunteer help available. Justin, Staten Island FEMA VAL, has put in a routine use request with FEMA for the LTRO, which would give the LTRO access to registrant’s contact info for the purpose of providing services to those who request it.
Rebuild will look into the question of what to do if Rapid Repair did not do rebuilding work properly. At the Ocean Breeze civic association meeting they said that the Build it Back program may be able to address this.
The volunteer committee asked rebuild to create a central portal for them to funnel volunteer requests into.
Rebuild has been getting a lot of unskilled volunteers – they are working on painting, insulating, and beautification.
A petition will be going around at the next meeting asking for SBA loans to be forgiven.
A crew leader safety training course is available through OSHA July 30th-Aug 1st 4-8pm at St. Margaret Mary’s. RSVP today to the Siller Foundation offices.
El Centro is running ongoing OSHA training at 489 Midland in English and Spanish.

*Mission/Structure/Finance*: Discussed how to create voting v. non-voting membership of the LTRO and building up members while getting folks to work on the committees. Worked on a code of conduct, is rolling out ads for the grant writer position.

*Disaster Case Management:* Nazli, commissioner of community affairs spoke at their committee mtg. Emphasized the need for residents to register. Preparing for the NYDIS unmet needs roundtable.

*Donations Management:* In the beginning stages of researching funding for LTRO capacity building.

*Health*: Putting together a brochure for SI residents listing health and mental health resources, working on a grant to fund long term mental health care (which will eventually not be free). Visiting Nurse Service received a one million dollar grant to provide cognitive behavioral therapy privately in resident’s homes. July 25th is the Boardwalk Bash health fair with blood pressure screenings, and free mammographies for all who make apts.

*Clothing:* Coordinating with DCM to launch an unmet need clothing roundtable to get clothing to those who need it.

*Volunteer*: Putting together a brochure for volunteers coming in. Will be re-canvassing faith based institutions in coming weeks to find more space for volunteer housing.

*Food*: Continues to feed 50 people regularly in Midland Ave.

**Announcements**

Small Business workshop at New Dorp High School on the 30th from 6-10pm.

From 1:30-3:30 Mon, Wed, Fri food is served at 78 Winham. The center has a new phone number.

Mike McDonald from the New York Resilience System: There is a resilience dashboard taskforce looking at mirroring what our LTRO is doing for future efforts – what we’re doing has national importance.

FEMA Housing – working on a tool mapping project that allows ngo’s for all 5 boroughs to find areas that have unmet needs based on zipcodes – shows PODS, technical assistance, legal counseling, housing needs. Looking for info that should be included. Will be available to Ngo’s, Catholic Charities, federal and state officials.

Justin’s last day is August 8th. Sal will be here for the long haul as the FEMA local hire. Once the local VAL leaves there will still be a regional VAL to continue to be there to help us.

The rebuild committee has worked on the process for getting out donated rebuild supplies – have distributed to 75-80 families already, only have 2-3 outstanding requests that came in very recently. Have lots of wonderboard. There’s an excess of small items like blinds, shower curtains, bars, potting soil. Sent out an updated list of the available items – happy to share this further.

There’s a buy one get one free paint sale right now – reach out to Yellow Boots for more info.

We are behind in paying Jezreel International for the transportation of donated rebuilding supplies. Project Hospitality and Where to Turn will front this money.

The policy/legal committee has not been meeting because of a strike at legal services. They will resume next week Tuesday.

There’s one week left to apply for a 2,000 grant for a community project.

Sunday afternoon dinner needed for a volunteer group coming from Grace Reformed Church. – Gerri and Justin can offer help.

Steering Committee will be meeting from 6-8 at Olivet. The board will meet after steering at 8pm.

Our next full meeting is at St. Christopher’s August 7th from 7-9pm – Matt Titone will be speaking.