

Myrtle Minutes

Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project LDC (MARP)
Myrtle Avenue Merchants Association (MAMA)
Business & Community News in Fort Greene & Clinton Hill

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Business Improvement District (BID) Update

Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn BID, which will reach from Flatbush Avenue Extension east to Classon Avenue, is successfully making its way through the City review procedure. After Community Board 2 voted to support the BID on April 14th, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing on May 12th. Bill Olear, owner of Vanderbilt Auto Care, John Dew, President of the Clinton Hill Co-ops, and Jennifer Gerend, the former Executive Director of MARP, testified at the hearing. The Commission voted in favor of the BID on June 9th. The next step requires receiving support from the New York City Council. The BID will provide enhanced street-sweeping services, graffiti removal, holiday lighting, and marketing for the district. Although most of the property owners have gotten their support letters in already, we are always striving to collect more. Call MARP with any questions.

Recent Changes at MARP

Many of you may have heard that our Executive Director of 4 years, Jennifer Gerend, has left MARP for an exciting new position in Edmonds, Washington, just north of Seattle. Jennifer is now the Economic Development Director for the city of Edmonds and will be closer to her family in Washington. We thank Jennifer for all the amazing work she has done here and wish her the best in her new position. The MARP board has appointed MARP's former Program Manager, Michael Blaise Backer, as the new Acting Director. Blaise has been at MARP for the past 2 years and played the lead role in the BID outreach and planning process. Jennifer Stokes, an urban planner with experience at NYC HRA and at the LDC of East New York, will join MARP in August as a full-time Program Coordinator. Continuing her role as MARP's part-time Communications Coordinator, Amy Sauertieg will be leading the effort to revamp MARP's website to serve as a better resource for avenue merchants and their customers.

Interested in Saving Energy and Money for Your Business?

Myrtle Ave Wastes Less, an energy conservation and solid waste reduction campaign for small businesses on Myrtle, held its first series of workshops on Thursday, May 6th. Representatives from the Dept. of Sanitation, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), Keyspan, and the organization New York Waste Match attended 3 different sessions to provide merchants with money-saving tips and to answer questions. Karen Tappin, owner of Karen's Body Beautiful, took NYSERDA's advice and switched her store's large number of incandescent light bulbs to fluorescent bulbs. While the new light bulbs cost more upfront (about \$7), they last longer and use less electricity. Karen lowered her monthly electricity bill from \$350 to \$82 in just one month's time! Karen also learned of a rebate she could receive from NYSERDA for buying an Energy Star refrigerator for her new in-store kitchen. If you were unable to attend the workshops, please give MARP a call or stop by the office to pick up materials. The campaign is funded by the New York Community Trust.

Recently Seen on Myrtle Ave...the MyrtleBag...and the MyrtleMug

MyrtleMugs and *MyrtleBags* have made their debut on the avenue as part of the *Myrtle Ave Wastes Less* campaign. The distinctive green and yellow mugs and bags are a simple way to produce less trash, help merchants lower costs on disposable items, promote shopping on the avenue, and save consumers money. *MyrtleMug* retails for \$9 and comes with a free coffee or soda with purchase, as well as a 25-cent discount on refills. *MyrtleBag* retails for \$10 and offers a \$1 discount on purchases over \$25. (These retail prices include a modest mark-up for merchants who sell them.) Participating merchants include: Associated Supermarket (at Hall St), Bergen Bagels, D&M Pratt Liquor, Jive Turkey, Karrot, Pillow Café, A-rod Grocery and Urban Monster, with more expected soon. Merchants can opt

for selling the mugs and/or bags, or simply agree to honor them when customers use them in their businesses. Be on the lookout for a new green and yellow decal in the window of these and other businesses on the avenue. If you are interested in participating in the program, please call MARP.

Signs of Progress

Many of our neighboring businesses have recently upgraded their signage, many with the help of the MARP façade improvement program, funded by the Independence Community Foundation. As you walk along the avenue, be sure to check out the new awnings, signs, or window decals at SNAP (322 Myrtle), Jive Turkey (441 Myrtle), Karen's Body Beautiful (150 Clinton Ave, corner of Myrtle), A-rod Grocery (457 Myrtle, formerly Rodriguez Grocery), and Pillow Café (372 Myrtle). For more info on grants or graphic design for signs or see-through security gates, give us a call.

The Bike Racks Are Here! The Historic Street Lights Are Coming!

Yes, bike racks have been installed on Myrtle Avenue between Flatbush Avenue and Bedford Avenue, through the NYC Department of Transportation's City Racks program. Please help us to protect the Avenue's street trees and tree pit guards by using the bike racks to secure your bikes. And thanks to the generosity of the Brooklyn Borough President, it won't be long until Myrtle's historic street lights are installed. The Community Board 2's Transportation Committee gave its support in June, and we expect to get the Art Commission's approval in July. If all goes according to plan, look for the street lights between Flatbush Ave Extension and Classon Ave in late fall.

Gifts, Living Essentials...and a Frosted Moon Too

Frosted Moon Emporium - a new retail venue located at 154 Vanderbilt Avenue, between Myrtle Ave and Willoughby Ave opened on Wednesday, June 16. The shop offers an eclectic array of personal and decorative home accessories including bath, body and spa products, handbags, jewelry and small leather goods, table top, educational toys and children's fun accessories.

New Art Gallery on Myrtle

Frank Jump opened the Fading Ad Gallery on June 19th at 679 Myrtle/880 Bedford. Featuring Frank's photography, the gallery is committed to exhibiting visual art that explores our changing urban landscape. Come check it out in person or online at www.fadingad.com/index.html.

Fort Greene Park: Farmer's Market and More

Fresh produce, meats, bread, milk, flowers and more are available at the Fort Greene Park Greenmarket every Saturday from 8am to 5pm. There's a lot to do in the park this summer, including the **Family All Things Green Day** on Saturday, July 17. Wear your favorite green clothes and bring the kids for storytelling, face painting, cooking demonstrations and more. For more information, go to the Fort Greene Park Conservancy's web site at www.fortgreenpark.org.

Cooking up Some Beauty

Karen's Body Beautiful (150 Clinton Ave) recently inaugurated a beautiful in-store kitchen for making its soaps and lotions on-site and allowing its customers to see first-hand the all natural ingredients that go into Karen's products. Don't see a lotion for your skin type or with your preferred scent? Karen will make custom products with ingredients of your choice, right before your eyes.

Summer Sale at Urban Monster Fort Greene

Urban Monster (388 Myrtle Ave) is celebrating summer with 20% - 80% off seasonal, trend setting & functional styles from spring, summer, fall & winter clothing. Lines include Imps & Elves, Kidscase, Betsey Johnson, Appaman, Zutano & More. There's also 20% off all toys.

MARP support from: New York City Department of Small Business Services, JP Morgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, Independence Community Foundation, Park Avenue Building & Roofing Supplies, Citigroup, Greenpoint Bank, Con Edison, Assemblyman Joseph Lentol, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Councilwoman Letitia James, New York Community Trust, Saint Joseph's College, Long Island University, New York Foundation, US Dept. of Health & Human Services, Pratt Institute