



PHOTO RELEASE

September 23, 2008
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CENTRAL HARLEM RESIDENTS WORK FOR GREEN FUTURE FOR MTA BUS DEPOT 170 Community Members, MTA Officials Have Fruitful Discussions to Advance Design of Depot



NEW YORK – The office of state Assemblymember Herman “Denny” Farrell and members of WE ACT for Environmental Justice, a leading advocate for environmental justice for two decades, led a community planning meeting, or charrette, last Saturday, September 20 on the future of the Mother Clara Hale Bus Depot. The goal of the meeting was to work to prevent the problems of the past with air pollution, soot, traffic, bus idling -- and their correlation with Harlem’s high asthma rate -- when the depot, an obsolete century-old trolley house, is rebuilt on its current site on 146th Street.

The meeting, organized by the Mother Clara Hale Bus Depot Task Force at the A. Philip Randolph Senior Center in Central Harlem, was a resounding success. About 170 community residents turned out not only to hear Metropolitan Transportation Authority officials and professional architects and planners give their expertise – but to provide their own valuable input on ways to make the new depot more environmentally friendly, based on their negative experiences with the old depot. The depot site is across from the Randolph Senior Center, a day care center, and the Esplanade Gardens complex.

Both MTA officials and community groups reported that that the charrette provided common ground for future discussions. MTA officials will further review the design ideas proposed, while the Mother Clara Hale Bus Depot Task Force plans a meeting October 2 on next steps.

PHOTO CAPTION: MTA representative Tammy Petzios (far right, gray jacket) and Millicent Redick (far right, blouse), co-chair of the Mother Clara Hale Task Force and a member of the Esplanade Gardens board of directors, lead a discussion on air quality issues for the new depot. Peggy Shepard (center, green jacket), co-founder and executive director of WE ACT for Environmental Justice, which helped lead the charrette, listens intently with the crowd.

WE ACT for Environmental Justice (West Harlem Environmental Action, Inc.) is a non-profit, community-based, environmental justice organization dedicated to building community power to fight environmental racism and improve environmental health, protection and policy in communities of color. WE ACT accomplishes this mission through community organizing, education and training, advocacy and research, and public policy development.

As a result of our ongoing work to educate and mobilize our base – the more than 600,000 residents of Northern Manhattan – on environmental issues affecting their quality of life, WE ACT has become a leader in the nationwide movement for environmental justice, influencing the creation of federal, state and local policies affecting the environment.

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