



This is the City of Bridgeport Black Rock NRZ, Inc. annual report for 2010 submitted in accordance with the NRZ Bylaws Section 6.08.

Organization

At the June organizational meeting the following personnel were elected as officers and as members of the executive board:

President:	Joseph Ianniello
Vice President:	Kristine DeMarco
Treasurer:	John Marshall Lee
Secretary	Katherine vanRenesse

The list of the Board of Directors and their terms of office after the June organizational meeting are listed in Appendix A.

The following members of the Board of Directors serve on the Nominating Standing Committee:

John Marshall Lee (Chairperson)
Frank Basler
Laura Hurwitz

In addition to the Nominating Standing Committee, the bylaws define six Standing Committees that drive the implementation process. The Standing Committees and their chairpersons are:



Standing Committee Number	Name	Chairperson
1	Business & Economic Development	Joseph Ianniello
2	Education	Laura Hurwitz
3	Arts, Entertainment & Culture	Katherine vanRenesse
4	Land Use, Development, & Historic Preservation	Open
5	Outreach and Communications	Frank Basler
6	Quality of Life, Environment, & Public Safety	Kristine DeMarco

The Black Rock NRZ, Inc. has worked with members of the City of Bridgeport's administration. The following city employees have been assigned as liaisons to all NRZs:

- ❖ Tom Coble, director of the Neighborhood Revitalization and Anti Blight
- ❖ Angie Staltaro, a member of the Neighborhood Revitalization Department
- ❖ Sam Shaw, a member of the Planning Department

Operations

There were five meetings of the Black Rock NRZ Board of Directors in 2010.

As part of the bylaws the NRZ supports other Black Rock groups. In 2010 the NRZ worked with the following groups:



- ❖ Ash Creek Conservation Association (ACCA)
- ❖ Black Rock Garden Club (BRGC)
- ❖ Black Rock Business Association (BRBA)
- ❖ Black Rock Community Council (BRCC)
- ❖ Black Rock Families for Excellence (BRFE)
- ❖ Black Rock Homeowners Association (BRHA)
- ❖ Bridgeport Census Committee
- ❖ Bridgeport NRZ Leadership Committee (Includes the Presidents of all Bridgeport NRZs)
- ❖ Burroughs Community Center (BCC)
- ❖ Friends of the Bridgeport Public Library (FBPL)
- ❖ Mayor's Beautification Awards Program

Highlights of the 2010 activities of the NRZ are summarized in the following paragraphs. The status of the tasks listed in the Strategic Plan is given in Appendix B.

Communications and Fund Raising

- ❖ Raising funds is necessary for some of the NRZ critical tasks such as developing a Village District. To facilitate fundraising it was decided that the Black Rock NRZ would become a 501 (c)3 organization. To qualify for this the NRZ had to:
 - Revise the bylaws. This was done and the new bylaws were ratified by the Board of Directors.
 - Articles of Incorporation were written and were approved by the State. An Employees Identification Number (EIN) was obtained.
 - The 501 (C)3 application was submitted in November 2010.

Standing Committee 1: Business and Economic Development

- ❖ A Village District to revitalize the business and entertainment area of Black Rock was conceptually defined. Committee members met with members of the Middletown, Connecticut planning department and the special services administration to discuss their very successful approach in revitalizing their downtown area using methods defined by



the Connecticut branch of the Main Street Organization. Lessons learned from the Middletown experience were incorporated into the Black Rock Village District concept. A meeting with Norwich, Connecticut's economic development personnel is expected to occur in early 2011 to discuss their Village District program.

- ❖ Attended meetings and seminars on Bridgeport's Downtown Village District approach and its status. Also attended a meeting of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) three day review of Bridgeport neighborhoods by a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT).
- ❖ Worked with Sarah Donovan, a Certified Historic Architect for the State of Connecticut, on the Black Rock Village District concept and approach and developed a "going forward" development approach.
- ❖ The city received Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the Village District preliminary work along Fairfield Avenue from Ellsworth Street to I95. We wrote a statement of work for the effort which is expected to go to a Request for Proposal (RFP).
- ❖ In order to solicit community input and support, presentations on the Black Rock Village District concept were given to:
 - The Black Rock Community Council (BRCC) Board of Directors
 - The general BRCC membership at one of their monthly meetings
 - The Black Rock Homeowners Association (BRHA)

Several presentations of the concept and implementation ideas were given at NRZ meetings.

- ❖ Auden Grogins, State Representative from the Black Rock District, has been working with the city and State to construct a pedestrian bridge from Black Rock to the new train station in the Town of Fairfield. This will be a major asset to the Black Rock Village District.
- ❖ The NRZ board endorsed the City of Bridgeport Housing Association's (BHA) Albion Street project to construct a medical facility and low income housing a block away from the Village District. The building will consist of medical facilities on the ground floor and four stories of



housing. This will be a major asset to the community, the Village District, and the city.

- ❖ The committee developed an approach to increase parking by adding a parking lot in the area of the Village District, but funding for this is a problem. In 2011 the NRZ may seek a grant to implement this.

Standing Committee 2: Education

- ❖ The effort to make Black Rock School from kindergarten to sixth grade to kindergarten to eighth grade is progressing. Funds are expected to be allocated by the State of Connecticut.
- ❖ The Lighthouse Program may be done at Black Rock School. The mission of the Lighthouse Program is to provide youth within the City of Bridgeport with opportunities to learn and grow in a structured environment. Objectives include providing youth with quality after-school and summer educational and recreational programming in a structured setting; providing a minimum of 100 high school youth with meaningful year round employment opportunities; and increasing current advocacy and marketing efforts.
- ❖ Communication has been established between Saint Ann's and Black Rock Schools. They meet at least every other month.

Standing Committee 3: Arts, Entertainment, and Culture

- ❖ A steering committee has been formed to have the first annual "City by the Sea Art Fair" (CSAF). The Arts Fair is scheduled for May 14 to 15, 2011. It will be held at Captains Cove Marina in Black Rock.
 - The Arts Fair is being sponsored by the NRZ, BRCC, and Captains Cove Marina.
 - They are looking for maritime and urban art submissions. This will be a juried art show. A "juror committee" will receive the art and screen it for the art show. Members of Housatonic Community College are part of the committee.



Standing Committee 4: Land Use, Development, & Historic Preservation

- ❖ The petition to the superior court to reverse the decision on the historic house on Brewster Street has a scheduled date of May 6, 2011 to hear the petition.

The NRZ felt that a decision by the Bridgeport Historic District Commission to allow condominiums on property that has an historic house would have a negative impact on Black Rock's historic district.

Standing Committee 5: Outreach and Communications

- ❖ The function of this committee is to find people to serve on the other committees and do a special outreach to people in the area between Ellsworth Street and Bostwick Avenue that was added to the traditional Black Rock area during the NRZ process. In 2010 the committee was instrumental in appointing board members from these new areas.

Standing Committee 6: Quality of Life, Environment, & Public Safety

- ❖ A Black Rock bike path is being planned with the City administration and the Police Department. The City's Office of Neighborhood Revitalization is securing funding for a portion of the Black Rock section of this bike route as the first for the various NRZ's that are part of a larger effort to connect with the bike/walking route that extends to our neighboring towns. The city has allocated \$10,000 for this project.
 - A meeting was held to discuss the bike path route through Black Rock and into neighboring NRZ's with Brian Bidolli Acting Executive Director of the Greater Bridgeport Regional Planning Agency, Donald Eversley Director of Bridgeport's Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED), Tom Coble Director of Neighborhood Revitalization and Anti Blight, and the NRZ in November to discuss the proposed route.
 - Adjustments were made to the proposed route. Bruce Williams an NRZ board member and an official of Captains Cove Marina offered to allow the bike path through Captains Cove. Other



minor adjustments were made but the use of Captains Cove is a major enhancement to the route.

- ❖ The Saint Mark's Church property was advertised for sale. This three acre property is mainly open space and the community was concerned that inappropriate development could occur there. One of the tasks of the NRZ is to develop open space in Black Rock. The NRZ in conjunction with the BRHA partnered with Bridgeport Housing Trust and applied for a grant from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection to help fund developing this land as open space.

Two appraisals were required for the grant application. Two board members, John Marshall Lee and Patricia Scott, contacted two firms and guaranteed payment for the appraisals. They paid over 80% of the \$6,500 cost of the appraisals on behalf of the community. It was decided to not pursue the application when additional appraisals were required.

Although the application was unsuccessful the effort to develop the request provided critical information that has generated an interest from organizations that have proposed appropriate uses of the property. There are two organizations that have been meeting with the NRZ and the BRHA that are interested in pursuing the acquisition of this property.

- ❖ Saint Mary's Park in Black Rock has sidewalks that provide safe access and recreation around the waterfront. The sidewalks end prematurely and there is a section of the waterfront where people have to walk in the street where the street curves. This is a potential safety issue. The NRZ researched the history of the sidewalks and developed a plan to continue them. Black Rock City Council members, Susan Brannelly and Martin McCarthy – ex officio members of the NRZ Board – have been working with the city to have the sidewalk continued. At this point this effort looks very promising.
- ❖ The NRZ in conjunction with the Friends of the Bridgeport Public Library (FBPL) and the Black Rock Garden Club (BRGC) applied for Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to add a



“Reading Garden” at the Black Rock Library. The application was unsuccessful because the medium income of in the Census Tract in which the library is located does not meet Federal requirements. However, the BRGC raised funds through donations and a grant and work on the Reading Garden has started.

- ❖ The Black Rock Community Council (BRCC) has established a very active and extensive Black Rock Block Watch program under their Public Safety Committee. The NRZ maintains close contact with this organization.
- ❖ The Burroughs Community Center (BCC) is reorganizing its operation. The building of a Boys and Girls Club adjacent to the BCC will result in the children’s programs being transferred to the Boys and Girls Club and the BCC concentrating on adult programs. The NRZ is participating in defining the transition.

Respectfully submitted;

Joseph W. Ianniello
President, Black Rock NRZ, Inc.

Date



Appendix A: Black Rock NRZ, Inc. Board Members

Regular Member	Term Expires (2010 Update)
Christopher Adams	June 2013
Phil Blagys	June 2013
Bishop Kelly	June 2013
Patty Scott	June 2013
Miguel Tomasio	June 2013
Katherine Woodhead	June 2013
Luther Blackwell	June 2012
David Barbour	June 2012
Jackie Heneage	June 2012
Joe Ianniello	June 2012
Gerry Manning	June 2012
Kathy Van Renesse	June 2012
Frank Basler	June 2011
Kristine DeMarco	June 2011
John Hernandez	June 2011
Scott Hughes	June 2011
Laura Hurwitz	June 2011
John Marshall Lee	June 2011
Kraig Steffen	June 2011
Bruce Williams	June 2011

Ex Officio Members	Office
Susan Brannelly	Black Rock City Council Member
Martin McCarthy	Black Rock City Council Member
Angie Staltaro	Office of Neighborhood Revitalization



Appendix B: Status of Strategic Plan Tasks

The table on page 11 of this report is copied from the Black Rock NRZ Strategic Plan page 33 and contains the summary of strategic tasks.

The status of each of the tasks is listed in the tables on pages 12 through 14 of this report.



IX. NRZ Strategy

As a result of careful planning, analysis, and stakeholder input, the consultants recommend the following 39 components to create a successful revitalization strategy for Black Rock. An implementation timeframe is also indicated, with immediate implementation (■) occurring within one year, short-term implementation (□) in one to five years, and long-term implementation (Ⓜ) in six to ten years. Each strategy is further defined on the following pages.

A. Implementation	
1. Identify/create an entity to oversee implementation of the plan	■ Within 1 year
B. Environment and Open Space	Implementation
2. Participate in design of improvements to Ellsworth Park	■ Within 1 year
3. Participate in design of improvements to P.T. Barnum Park	□ 1-5 Years
4. Develop Black Rock Waterfront Linear Park	Ⓜ 6-10 Years
C. Arts, Culture and Entertainment	Implementation
5. Develop a strategic plan for the Arts, Culture and Entertainment Industry in Black Rock (include plan for interface with business and economic development plans)	□ 1-5 Years
6. Identify developer/funding and sites for artist and entertainment venues including live/work spaces, an arts center and multi-use performance venues.	□ 1-5 Years
7. Develop a public art plan to commission juried public art.	Ⓜ 6-10 Years
D. Zoning, Land Use and Historic Preservation	
8. Develop guidelines for and ratify the Conservation Overlay Zone	□ 1-5 Years
9. Influence ordinance re-draft to include denial of zone changes in historic districts	□ 1-5 Years
10. Develop preservation loan program	□ 1-5 Years
11. Draft and promote dock ordinance	□ 1-5 Years
12. Pursue alternative development options for 340-344 Brewster Street	■ Within 1 year
E. Business and Economic Development	Implementation
13. Establish a liaison within the City for business and neighborhood development in Black Rock	■ Within 1 year
14. Eliminate inappropriate commercial uses	□ 1-5 Years
15. Identify, encourage, and support high-priority development opportunities	□ 1-5 Years
16. Create incentives for sustainable development	□ 1-5 Years
17. Plan for the further development of Brewster Street	Ⓜ 6-10 Years
F. Design Review and Development Standards	
18. Establish Black Rock Village District and guidelines	■ Within 1 year
19. Create commercial rehabilitation and façade improvement programs	□ 1-5 Years
20. Develop plan for streetscape improvements	□ 1-5 Years
G. Circulation, Access, Transportation, and Parking	Implementation
21. Develop neighborhood gateways	■ Within 1 year
22. Improve existing municipal parking lots	■ Within 1 year
23. Provide traffic lights or other traffic-calming devices at trouble intersections	□ 1-5 Years
24. Investigate potential for neighborhood trolley route	□ 1-5 Years
25. Investigate potential for foot bridge across Ash Creek	□ 1-5 Years
26. Enable bicycle access in Black Rock	□ 1-5 Years
27. Implement on-street parking regulations	■ Within 1 year
28. Develop parking plan for Black Rock Library	□ 1-5 Years
29. Explore expansion of municipal parking on available sites	□ 1-5 Years
H. Quality of Life	Implementation
30. Increase communication between the City, public safety, and the community	■ Within 1 year
31. Advocate for a police officer position dedicated to Black Rock	■ Within 1 year
I. Education	Implementation
32. Improve infrastructure at Black Rock schools	□ 1-5 Years
33. Increase children's access to education, including transportation to neighborhood events	□ 1-5 Years
34. Emphasize partnerships within Black Rock	■ Within 1 year
35. Identify additional funding for gaps in education	□ 1-5 Years
36. Support keeping Black Rock School as a neighborhood school	■ Within 1 year



Task Number	Activity	Status	Comments
A Implementation			
1	Identify/create an entity to oversee implementation of the plan	Completed	
B Environment & Open Space			
2	Participate in design of improvements to Ellsworth Park	Completed	
3	Participate in design of improvements to P.T. Barnum Park	In process	Report sent to Public Facilities on work needed on 5 parks in the PT Barnum area
4	Develop Black Rock Waterfront Linear Park	Not Started	
C Arts, Culture, & Entertainment			
5	Develop a strategic plan for the Arts, Culture and Entertainment Industry in Black Rock (include plan for interface with business and economic development plans)	In process	The first annual City by the Sea Arts Fair will be held at Captains Cove Marina on 2 days in May 2011
6	Identify developer/funding and sites for artist and entertainment venues including live/work spaces, an arts center and multi-use performance venues.	On hold	
7	Develop a public art plan to commission juried public art.	In Process	Annual Arts Festival (See task 5)
D Zoning, Land Use, Historic Preservation			
8	Develop guidelines for and ratify the Conservation Overlay Zone	Guidelines Developed	
9	Influence ordinance re-draft to include denial of zone changes in historic districts	On hold	
10	Develop preservation loan program	Not Started	
11	Draft and promote dock ordinance	Ordinance drafted	
12	Pursue alternative development options for 340-344 Brewster Street	In process	



Task Number	Activity	Status	Comments
E Business & Economic Development			
13	Establish a liaison within the City for business and neighborhood development in Black Rock	Completed	
14	Eliminate inappropriate commercial uses	On hold	
15	Identify, encourage, and support high-priority development opportunities	In process	
16	Create incentives for sustainable development		City working
17	Plan for the further development of Brewster Street	In process	
F Design Review and Development Standards			
18	Establish Black Rock Village District and guidelines	In process	
19	Create commercial rehabilitation and façade improvement programs	In process	Part of Village District
20	Develop plan for streetscape improvements	In process	Part of Village District
G Circulation, Access, Transportation, & Parking			
21	Develop neighborhood gateways	Identified	
22	Improve existing municipal parking lots	Not started	
23	Provide traffic lights or other traffic-calming devices at trouble intersections	In process (Brewster)	State activity
24	Investigate potential for neighborhood trolley route	On hold	
25	Investigate potential for foot bridge across Ash Creek	In process	City & State
26	Enable bicycle access in Black Rock	In process	
27	Implement on-street parking regulations	Not started	
28	Develop parking plan for Black Rock Library	Not started	
29	Explore expansion of municipal parking on available sites	Not started	Study available



Task Number	Activity	Status	Comments
	H Quality of Life		
30	Increase communication between the City, public safety, and the community	Done by BRCC	
31	Advocate for a police officer position dedicated to Black Rock	BRCC	
	I Education		
32	Improve infrastructure at Black Rock schools	In process	
33	Increase children's access to education, including transportation to neighborhood events	In process	
34	Emphasize partnerships within Black Rock	In process	
35	Identify additional funding for gaps in education	In process	
36	Support keeping Black Rock School as a neighborhood school	On going	