



Peeling Back the Thin Veneer of Local Government

Posted by [Glenn](#) on January 21, 2006 - 11:21am in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

Topic: [Environment/Sustainability](#)

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I think Woody Allen once said that 90% of life was just showing up. After the past month, I would say that definitely applies to local government. After a few weeks of emailing back and forth, I arranged a conversation last week with my newly elected councilmember to discuss [greenmarkets on the East Side](#). Then this week I attended my first local community board meeting to discuss the controversial siting of a waste transfer station. The meeting was sparsely attended and as a result, I spoke about ways the community could proactively address the amount of waste it generated - composting, recycling, reusing grocery bags and just consuming less. And my email campaign to the community board has landed me an agenda item for next month's transportation committee.

I think you will find that in many places there is an overwhelming apathy toward local government. Go ahead and attend something in your area. I think you will find that if you show up, you can have an impact. With a dedicated group of about 15-20 people I think a lot could be accomplished in my neighborhood.

Here are two items on the local Community board agenda next month that I have been involved with:

1. The CB8 transportation committee will have a [discussion](#) on the [NYC biking master plan](#) on February 13th. The main goal is to get a recommendation for good bike lanes on 2nd and 1st Avenue which will make biking safer in our area.
2. There will also be a discussion on February 23rd of establishing a [greenmarket](#) on 86th and Fifth. Green markets bring fresh, healthy food ingredients, support local farmers and help build vibrant communities.

If you are interested in helping build support for these two initiatives, please either show up to the community board meetings or email the board directly (info@cb8m.com) and if you living in the district, please include your address to show that you are a resident. Community Board 8's boundaries are north of 59th Street, east of Central Park, south of 96th Street and includes all of Roosevelt Island.

If you are interested in doing some organizing around sustainability issues at the local level, please email me as well at: [glenn_mcan \[at\] yahoo.com](mailto:glenn_mcan[at]yahoo.com)

For NYC residents who want to get more involved in your local government:

To find your local community board, click [here](#)

To find your local councilmember, click [here](#)



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