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Bedford Stuyvesant Transformation Unfolds in New Exhibit at Brooklyn Historical Society

Brooklyn, NY - The Brooklyn Historical Society presents *Reflections on Community Development: Stories from Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation*, a new exhibit focusing on the rise and importance of community development corporations (CDCs), from their inception during the late 1960s into the present. Focusing on the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, one of the first CDCs in the country, the exhibit will present the story of how federal and state elected officials joined with local community activists, politicians and business leaders to create a cooperative public-private partnership whose mandate was transforming an economically depressed and blighted urban community into a vibrant, safe place to live and work.



Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation became a center for job training, housing development, block rehabilitation, economic development, youth activity, political organization and the arts. It has renovated entire blocks, put thousands of people to work, hosted political forums, attracted businesses to the community, and became a center for the arts and theater. Narrating its auspicious beginnings, struggles, and evolution with oral histories, rare documents and captivating photographs featuring **Robert Kennedy, Shirley Chisholm, Jacob Javits and Franklin Thomas**, this exhibit will tell the story of Bedford Stuyvesant's daring effort to make real the bold vision of a truly democratic society in the midst of America's crushing urban crisis. *Reflections on Community Development: Stories from Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation* has been funded by a generous grant from JP Morgan Chase.

Exhibition Dates: Friday, February 29 – August 31, 2008

Continued

Throughout the run of the exhibition, BHS will host related events and public programs including a genealogy workshop and Bedford Stuyvesant walking tours. Please refer to the BHS website www.brooklynhistory.org for complete event schedule and information. For more information about the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, refer to www.restorationplaza.org.

Saturday, March 10; 2:00pm

Walking our Neighborhood: Bedford Stuyvesant Architecture Walking Tour

Led by author Wilhemena Kelly and Francis Morrone

Colonized in 1667, and originally centered at Bedford Avenue and Fulton Street, the original village of 'Bedford Corners' grew to become the Bedford Stuyvesant of today. Learn of its Revolutionary War history and its evolution from town to urban metropolis. See historic landmarks, beautiful brownstones, fabulous architecture, magnificent churches, and more. Rain or shine.

Saturday, April 26; 7 – 9:00pm

Film Screening: *The Music Inn*

In collaboration with the Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium

There was a time in the 1950s when musical giants from across the country including Brooklyn artists Max Roach and Randy Weston, strutted through the Berkshire Hills in Western Massachusetts. Be-boppers, folk singers, African drummers, blues singers, jazz legends, poets, and musicologists gathered at a place called Music Inn in Lenox, Mass. to share their converging traditions and go looking for roots most people didn't think existed. In their search, they created not only the first summer-long Jazz Festival, and the First School of Jazz, but a new movement in American music. In this case, it changed the world of American music, how we understand the meaning of America, and how the world came to appreciate the art of jazz.

Thursday, May 1; 6- 8:00pm

Community Economic Development in Bedford Stuyvesant and Brooklyn: Where have we been and Where are we going? - Panel Discussion

Hosted by the Brooklyn Historical Society this event will feature a panel discussion focused on the work of CDCs and their impact on the economic health and well-being of the residents and neighborhoods of Bedford Stuyvesant and Brooklyn. Panelists will reflect on the conditions that led to creation of BSRC and the first generation of CDCs. The current economic development plan for the Borough and the role of neighborhood-based organizations will also be discussed.

Saturday, May 3

Walkabout Weeksville: Guided Walking Tour of the Weeksville Neighborhood

Conducted by Society for the Preservation of Weeksville

The Brooklyn Historical Society hours of operation: Wed. – Sun. 12:00 – 5:00 pm.

Entrance to the Historical Society is \$6.00 for adults; \$4.00 for seniors and students; and free to members and children under 12.

The mission of the Brooklyn Historical Society is to connect the past to the present and make the vibrant history of Brooklyn tangible, relevant, and meaningful for today's diverse communities, and for generations to come. Founded in 1863, BHS is a nationally recognized urban history center, comprised of a museum; scholarly research library; and educational center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history.

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