

**STATEN ISLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
TESTIMONY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTH SHORE BID**

**BEFORE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE  
February 26, 2015**

Chairperson Ferreras and Members of the Committee,

My name is Steven Grillo and I am First Vice-President of the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation (SIEDC).

In cooperation with Councilman Vincent Ignizio and the New York City Department of Small Business Services, we have been working for the past four years to develop a valuable partnership between property owners, businesses and government – the South Shore BID.

The South Shore BID consists of 217 tax lots in the towns of Great Kills, Eltingville and Annadale. The towns are connected by the Staten Island Railway right-of-way and generally are also connected by Amboy Road or Richmond Avenue. The proposed district is comprised of roughly 285 unique businesses.

The South Shore Merchants Program was founded in 2010 to create a safe and attractive commercial destination to help foster thriving businesses, provide a variety of retail goods and services, and reap the benefits of collective marketing, events and services.

Some of the successes of the project include \$17 million in various new investment and 42 new businesses in the towns, a \$40,000 grant from Richmond County Savings Foundation, a \$10,000 grant from Walmart and a major drug bust which netted 25 arrests in Great Kills.

In addition to these successes, the South Shore effort has also launched Family Fun Day, the Art in the Towns program, the Annadale Tree Lighting, and annual holiday lighting in each town. The proposed BID has also held over 200 face to face meetings, sent out 7 dedicated email blasts, released 2 television commercials, hung posters in storefront windows, hung banners on street poles and launched a dedicated website and Facebook page.

The groups involved in the creation of the BID recognize the important history and strategic value these towns possess as commercial corridors for the South Shore. However, new and expanded services are required to help keep these areas robust and thriving.

The steering committee of the proposed South Shore BID has proposed a \$185,000 annual budget to provide for private security, private sanitation and street sweeping, general beautification including holiday lighting, marketing and events and general administrative expenses associated with a dedicated BID manager. In addition, the BID expects to raise additional funds through local elected officials, private organizations and foundations to expand on its capacity.

SIEDC and the local community look forward to advancing the South Shore BID in the coming months and helping to expand business opportunities in Great Kills, Eltingville and Annadale.

**SBS TESTIMONY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTH SHORE BID  
BEFORE CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

February 26, 2015

Good morning Chair Ferreras and members of the Finance Committee. I am Blaise Backer, Deputy Commissioner of Neighborhood Development at the Department of Small Business Services (SBS). I am joined today by my Executive Director of the BID Program, Kris Goddard, and Director of BID Formation and Expansion, Patrick Cammack.

SBS supports the establishment of the South Shore Business Improvement District (BID) in the Borough of Staten Island. The South Shore BID Steering Committee has successfully completed the planning and outreach work consistent with SBS policy. In addition, SBS has reviewed the boundaries of the proposed BID and found them to be acceptable.

Geographically, the proposed BID includes three, small, non-contiguous commercial strips located in the neighborhoods of Great Kills, Eltingville and Annadale. The entire area of the proposed BID is within City Council District 51, which is represented by Councilmember Vincent Ignizio. The proposed BID is entirely in Staten Island Community Board 3, which supports the effort.

Services to be provided in the South Shore BID shall include, but not be limited to, sanitation and maintenance, private security, marketing and promotion, advocacy, administration, and additional services as may be required for the promotion and enhancement of the District. The District will be managed by a newly formed District Management Association. The annual budget for the District's first year of operation is \$185,000.

As required by law, the South Shore BID Steering Committee mailed the summary of the City Council Resolution, no less than 10 days and no more than 30 days before today's hearing, to the following parties:

- To each owner of real property within the proposed district at the address shown on the latest City assessment roll,
- to such other persons as are registered with the City to receive tax bills concerning real property within the district, and
- to tenants of each building within the proposed district.

In addition, SBS arranged for the publication of a copy of the summary of the Resolution at least once in the City Record.

I would also like to acknowledge that members of the BID Steering Committee are present today to testify and answer any questions about the specifics of the BID plan.

At this time, we are happy to take any questions.

Thank you.



**Steering Committee Testimony for the Establishment of the South Shore BID  
before the City Council Finance Committee  
February 26, 2015**

Chairperson Ferreras and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gail Castellano. I am a Senior Vice President with Richmond County Savings Bank and the chair of the South Shore BID steering committee. We have 22 bank branches located on Staten Island and one in each of the towns of Annadale, Great Kills and Eltingville. Richmond County Savings bank is deeply committed to the prosperity of the businesses in our communities and to the enhancement of the quality of life on Staten Island.

The South Shore Merchants Program was created and funded by Councilman Vincent Ignizio in partnership with the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation in 2010. Richmond County Savings Bank has been involved since its inception. The mission of this program was to spur economic development in the commercial districts of Annadale, Great Kills and Eltingville. Through this program the merchants received such benefits as promotion, sanitation, security and beautification all in an effort to draw shoppers and visitors to these neighborhoods.

I myself have participated in many of the special community events, most recently the Holiday Tree Lighting ceremony at Annadale Park. This year the event featured Disney characters, a train ride for the kids, holiday bouncy houses, and a live musical performance by an American Idol Finalist. It was a huge success with more than 2000 people in attendance. The town of Annadale was buzzing with excitement and activity. I received phenomenal feedback from all the business owners in the town of Annadale as well as the residents of the community. All are looking forward to this event in 2015!

The Holiday Lighting in all 3 towns is a welcomed sight by merchants and customers. It's a way to spread some holiday cheer and create a more inviting atmosphere to shop locally. The merchants are looking forward to expanding this initiative with the addition of more lights in the years to come.





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Drug abuse has become a major issue for the South Shore communities. As a result of the additional Security Patrol provided by the merchants program, a major drug ring was uncovered which led to 25 arrests. This took place in August of 2011 and is still a major concern of the merchants, which is why this is the most requested service. Security patrol provides customers with peace of mind while shopping, and provides the merchants with protection while operating their businesses.

It is very difficult for small businesses to survive and thrive in today's economic climate. Mom and pop shops are repeatedly over shadowed by the mall and other big box stores. Small businesses have a great impact on the economic landscape of their communities, therefore it is vital to the neighborhood that these businesses thrive! Through the formation of a BID the merchants can take full advantage of joint marketing, events and services that otherwise would not be affordable to them. As a representative of the steering committee we look forward to working together towards the formation of the BID which will enhance the quality of life in these South Shore neighborhoods.

At this time I would like to thank and recognize Councilman Ignizio for his efforts and commitment to these South Shore communities.

Thank you for this opportunity to be heard on behalf of the South Shore Steering Committee.

GAIL CASTELLANO

Senior Vice President, Regional Executive



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