



**Barbara M. Clark-33AD
NYS Assembly Member**

**Statement to
Redistricting Commission**

Submitted January 11, 2013

In this second round of reviews by the Districting Commission it remains a priority to leave the Cambria Heights Community intact within the 27th Council District and if possible to add those few remaining homes in Cambria Heights along the south end of 121st Avenue that were placed in the 31st CD during previous redistricting processes.

The core of this community in the 27 CD spans more than a mile east along the north side of 121st Avenue to the Cross Island Parkway and north to Murdock Avenue and west to Francis Lewis Blvd. A review of the current lines will show that the man-made boundary; Montefiore/Springfield Cemetery has been the principal dividing line between the 27 and 31st Council Districts over the course of the last two redistricting commissions. Leaving that boundary in place, absent those few homes on each side of the Cemetery along 121st Avenue will maintain

the integrity and cohesiveness of the Cambria Heights community. The original map offered for comment by the Districting Commission proposed further incursion into the Cambria Heights community and the Commission eventually withdrew that recommendation, returning to the original lines of the 27th CD in the Dec 4th map submitted to the City Council, for some of the following reasons:

The Montefiore/Springfield Cemetery has been a continuously operating cemetery since 1908. It runs for more than a mile along 121st Avenue principally dividing the Laurelton and Cambria Heights communities into separate districts. This man-made division or boundary has also shaped shopping, traffic and transportation patterns for more than two decades. Many residents of Cambria Heights travel north towards Linden Blvd and east towards the Cross Island Parkway for shopping, gas and public transportation (Q84, Q4) and Q-Express 64). While Laurelton, in the 31st District has made Merrick Blvd more of its shopping and transportation hub.

The proposed change would in fact separate the Cambria Heights community from its representatives and interests with the remainder of the Cambria Heights community. The change would also deny its alignment with the Laurelton community

because of the physical barrier created by the Montefiore/Springfield Cemetery. It should not be the intent of redistricting to contort districts so that previously compact, contiguous communities become isolated and disconnected from other residential communities. Shifting the boundary along 119th avenue, rather than 121st Avenue, for fifteen (15) blocks and then edging north to 118th Avenue for six (6) more blocks and then north again one (1) block to Linden Blvd will split approximately 420-450 homes, as well as one of only two Public Schools (PS 176), away from the 27th Council District.

In terms of delivery of police services, the proposed map would not alleviate the response time issues experienced by either 105 or 113 Precincts. However, the 105 Precinct has a more direct travel route to Cambria Heights via Springfield Blvd, or 223rd Street enabling a quicker response time for its residents. NYC Charter Regulations requiring co-terminality would shift responsibility for that portion of Cambria Heights placed in the 31st to the 113 Precinct, potentially delaying response times for one part of the same neighborhood and not another. For all the above reasons I ask the Commission to leave the entire Cambria Heights community intact in the 27th CD.

Barbara M. Clark