



THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

December 4, 2012

The Honorable Benito Romano
Chair, Districting Commission
253 Broadway, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Chair Romano,

We are writing to reiterate our strongest objection to the proposals presented by the New York City Districting Commission and support the concerns of our local civic organizations. Since the release of this plan we have been contacted by many civic leaders, residents and other community leaders in Northeast Queens. This proposal ignores traditional neighborhood boundaries and dilutes zoning. Further, it changes district boundaries in areas that were never discussed or requested by any party submitting public testimony to the Commission. These concerns have been expressed in the enclosed letter dated November 29, 2012 from the Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association, Mitchell Linden Civic Association, North Flushing Civic Association, and the Auburndale Improvement Association.

In North Flushing, two buildings of the Mitchell Linden housing complex and all of the Mitchell Gardens apartments had been placed into Council District 19, while the remainder of that community remains in Council District 20. The proposed district lines adopted by the Commission at its December 4th meeting addresses some, but not all of the problems in this area. The Commission's latest proposal still omits two square blocks of apartment complexes adjacent to Mitchell Linden that are zoned R4, part of the Mitchell Gardens. These blocks, which consist of multifamily attached houses and garden apartments, share similar interests to that of Council District 20. Mitchell Linden is represented by a single civic association; similarly, it has a single board of directors representative of the entire area. Dividing this community into two council districts will seriously hurt the Mitchell Linden board and civic from being able to advocate for their entire community.

MITCHELL LINDEN BOUNDARY: In order to unite these communities within Council District 20, the district boundary line should extend from 25th Road and Parsons Boulevard where the latest proposed district ends, two blocks east on Willets Point Boulevard to 146th Street. The boundary should then extend south five blocks along 146th Street to 28th Avenue, where it would then intersect the Commission's proposed boundary. This proposal would be inclusive of one additional R2A block that was omitted from previous correspondence within the 19th Council District, and inclusive of all the R4 blocks within the 20th Council District.

The other communities which would be seriously adversely affected by the proposed council districts the Broadway-Flushing and Auburndale neighborhoods. The Broadway-Flushing neighborhood is north of Northern Boulevard is between 150th Street and Utopia Parkway. The current proposed council district lines would divide this community in half between Council District 19 and Council District 20. This area has a single civic association, the Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association, which is one of the largest and strongest civic associations in Northeast Queens. The Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association has been a vocal and very strong proponent of protecting the character of their community by preventing up-zoning and enforcing building covenants. Dividing this neighborhood would be detrimental to this community and its ability to continue protecting the historic nature of this area. Reuniting this community within the 19th Council District would offset the removal of the aforementioned North Flushing and Mitchell Linden neighborhoods.

Further the Commission has united much of Auburndale within the 19th Council District, but it split a single-family R2A neighborhood in two, with the dividing line at 169th Street. This places nine square blocks of single-family R2A homes into the 20th Council District where those homes are surrounding by R4 and R5B multiple family attached houses.

BROADWAY-FLUSHING / AUBURNDALE BOUNDARY: In order to keep these neighborhoods intact within the 19th Council District without creating gerrymandered district boundaries could easily be accomplished by moving the boundary one block south on 147th Place to 34th Avenue and then extending boundary line south along 153rd Street from 34th Avenue to Northern Boulevard. The boundary should then follow Northern Boulevard east to 166th Street where it would then go three blocks south to 46th Avenue where it would intersect with the Commission's proposed line.

These district lines which we are proposing would be all inclusive of the R2A, R2 and R1-2A zoned communities in this area. It would prevent low density R2A areas from being divided and being split between Council District 19 with similar zoned areas, and the higher density Council District 20 which has R4 and R7 neighborhoods adjacent to these areas.

We have attached a map provided to us by the Mitchell Linden Civic Association, North Flushing Civic Association, Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association and the Auburndale Improvement Association which illustrates these changes. Making these changes would still keep the population of both Council District 19 and Council District 20 within the Commission's targeted population deviation percentage. We ask that you use any method available to you in order to facilitate these changes. These relatively minor changes would have a major positive affect on these communities. Not only would the communities of Mitchell Linden, North Flushing and Broadway-Flushing be united in single council districts represented by a single council member, their civic associations would be able to continue to represent the neighborhoods in the best way possible.

We urge the Commission to honor the statements made at the final vote in regards to both Council Districts 19 and 20, and promulgate fair district lines in accordance with the directives of the City Charter not to divide communities.

Chair Benito Romano

December 4, 2012

Page 3

As the Council Members representing both of these districts we are in agreement that this proposal is best for Northeast Queens. It would create two districts where the population is consistent with the Commission's goals, zoning is protected and neighborhoods are united. Please do not hesitate to contact either of us directly to further discuss this proposal.

In Service,



Daniel J. Halloran III
Council Member, District 19



Peter Koo
Council Member, District 20

CC: Christine C. Quinn, Speaker, New York City Council
James Oddo, Minority Leader, New York City Council
New York City Council Members
Carl Hum, Executive Director, New York City Districting Commission
Local Civic Associations

