

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11
GENERAL BOARD MEETING

DATE: January 5, 2015

PLACE: M.S. 158
46-35 OCEANIA ST.
BAYSIDE, NY 11361

ATTENDANCE:

Christine L. Haider, Chair	Present	George Karahalios	Present
Sila Asa	Present	Gordon Keit	Present
Daniel Baek	Absent	Incha Kim	Absent
Edith Basom	Absent	Anthony Koutsouradis	Present
Steven Behar	Present	Linda Lee	Present
Lana Bind	Present	Robert Liatto	Present
Susan Cerezo	Absent	Janet McEneaney	Present
Ocelia Claro	Present	Melvyn Meer	Present
Paul DiBenedetto	Present	George Mihaltses	Present
Henry Euler	Present	Eileen Miller	Present
Mario Ferazzoli	Absent	Douglas Montgomery	Present
JoAnn Ferrari	Present	Steven Newman	Absent
Sonya Fierro-Gladwin	Absent	Allan Palzer	Present
Lee Fiorino	Present	Chris Petallides	Present
Jack Fried	Present	Stephen Pivawer	Absent
Alim Gafar	Present	Christina Scherer	Present
Joan Garippa	Present	Gary Sekdorian	Absent
Roy Giusetti	Present	Frank Skala	Present
Lawrence Gresser	Present	Joseph Sollano	Present
Bernard Haber	Absent	Jyothi Sriram	Present
Zion Halili	Present	Teddy Teng	Absent
Jerry Iannece	Present	Alex Yagudaev	Present
Laura James	Present		
Mohan Jethwani	Present		

ALSO PRESENT:

Susan Seinfeld	District Manager, Community Board 11
Christina Coutinho	Community Board 11 Associate
P.O. John Erdman	111 th Precinct Community Affairs Unit
Meagan Chen	Representing Assembly Member Ed Braunstein
Meagan Molina	Representing Assembly Nily Rozic
Mike Yon	Representing Council Member Paul Vallone
Natalia Kozikowska	Representing Council Member Mark Weprin
Anthony Lemma	Representing Assembly Member David Weprin
Anne Marie Boranian	Representing the Office of the Borough President
Joanne Choi	Representing Congress Member Grace Meng
Scott Solomon	Queens Office - DCP

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chair, Christine Haider.

The Chair led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed in honor of Andrew Rothman.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Walt Constanza, a resident of Little Neck, discussed how a safe and formal bikeway is needed to gain south access to the Joe Michael's Mile from Douglaston Parkway along Northern Blvd. Mr. Constanza stated that the Office of Council Member Vallone supports including this project as one of the final transportation projects on the Spring Participatory Budget ballot. The Westmoreland Association also supports this project. He asked CB11 for their support.

PRESENTATION

Bob Cassara, member of the Brooklyn Housing Preservation Alliance and former member of CB10 Brooklyn, stated that investors are purchasing one-and two-family dwellings and then rapidly converting them into illegal multi-family dwellings, similar to single-room occupancy units. These conversions may include illegal excavation of cellars and basements without the proper city permits in order to make additional living space. He discussed how this is a major problem in the Dyker Heights and Bay Ridge area, as well as in CB11. Another issue discussed is how the DOB can't gain access in a timely manner to inspect a building while construction is taking place. Mr. Cassara said Dyker Heights and Bay Ridge has one of the best public school districts in the City. Those who want their children well-educated are willing to live in substandard housing arrangements to be able to allow their children to attend these public schools. Area schools are now overcrowded by 150% - 175%. He said that local council members and officials, including CB11, need to get involved to stop these illegal conversions. There are bills pending in both the City Council and the State Legislature that need elected officials' support. Intro. No. 393 - Circumstantial Evidence Bill and Intro. No. 439 - A Local Law to amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to mandatory sanctions for submitting incorrect, professionally-certified applications for construction document approval. Mr. Cassara had petitions to the Mayor for anyone interested in signing at the meeting. He asked for community support to stop illegal housing conversions. A question and answer period followed. Board Members requested additional information and agreed to schedule a meeting to discuss this issue further.

P.O. John Erdman gave the monthly crime statistics for the 111th Precinct. He spoke in regard to current crime trends in the area.

Robert Whitehead and Janet McEneaney gave a presentation regarding the current issues with the FAA pertaining to increased airplane traffic over northeast Queens. He discussed the process of a Part 150 Noise Compatibility and Land Use Study and the different procedures to measure airplane noise. Discussion ensued as to how the Board and elected officials could help in this matter. Janet McEneaney asked if the Board would submit a letter of support. She said she would forward an email to Board Members.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the December 1st meeting. The motion was seconded by Douglas Montgomery. A vote by show of hands resulted with the majority in favor. Frank Skala opposed, stating that his statement "LaGuardia Airport should close" was not in the minutes. The minutes were accepted with no corrections.

CORRESPONDENCE

Christine Haider made the following announcements:

With a heavy heart, Mrs. Haider announced the passing of Board Member Andrew Rothman. Many of us attended the services on 12/28/14. His mother has been hospitalized and was not able to attend the services. She is now home. Susan Seinfeld stated that all emails and messages that were sent to CB11, have been forwarded to his mother, Elayne Rothman.

There was a Press Conference conducted because of the destruction of the menorah at 220 Street and Union Turnpike. This was the second time that the menorah was destroyed this year. Eileen Miller, Susan Seinfeld and Christine Haider attended.

Several Board Members attended a vigil at 111th Precinct in honor of Detectives Ramos and Liu.

The 111th Precinct Community Council meeting is tomorrow, Jan. 6th at 7:30 pm and they will be honoring Detectives Ramos and Liu.

The State of the Borough, by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, will be held on Jan. 22 at Queens College at 10 am. RSVP is necessary.

The public hearing scheduled on tonight's agenda for a medical office at 45 Avenue and Francis Lewis Blvd. was postponed by the applicant. At the zoning committee meeting, members told the applicant how egregious the design of the building was. Mrs. Haider said that the architect will rethink the design.

Council Members Dromm and Kallos introduced a Term Limit Bill, Intro. No. 585, for Community Boards. If passed, it would limit new board members to two 6-year terms starting in 2016. Mrs. Haider said that the experience of long-term members is invaluable and she would oppose the passing of this bill.

An electronic waste recycling collection event will be held at the Queens Botanical Gardens on Jan 11. The CB11 newsletter has additional information.

Clothing bins have been a problem in Queens. New legislation requires the registration of bins on private property and requires the property owner to maintain the area. The new law also allows the DSNY to remove the bins on public property immediately. Susan Seinfeld has written a letter to support the new rule on behalf of the board.

There will be a Mulch Fest at Cunningham Park on Jan 10 and 11 to recycle Christmas trees. You will receive the mulch from your tree.

The Parks Dept. is seeking candidates for free lifeguard training to become a lifeguard at City pools. Additional information is on the Dept. of Parks website.

There will be a South/Central Bayside Zoning Committee meeting on Jan. 20 for a variance to build a club house at Windsor Oaks.

There will be a Douglaston Zoning Committee meeting for the expansion of Mizumi on Northern Blvd. on Jan. 28.

Susan Cerezo had cataract surgery and is recovering nicely.

The DSNY issued a snow alert for tomorrow morning at 9 am.

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION

Mrs. Haider said that Andrew Rothman was a very good friend to the community. He had a passion for his community and he will be truly missed.

Douglas Montgomery stated that the first fund raiser for the Douglaston/Little Neck Memorial Day Parade is on Jan. 24 at Monahan and Fitzgerald. Mr. Montgomery said that Andrew Rothman was a supporter and advocate for the Queens Library. He suggested donations from Board Members to dedicate a shelf at the Bayside Branch Library in his honor.

Mel Meer made a motion to oppose the proposal for term limits for Community Board Members. He said that it should be at the discretion of each individual community board. Mr. Meer stated that a letter of opposition should be written and forwarded on behalf of the Board. It should include the importance of losing valuable long-time members with collective memory. The motion was seconded by Paul DiBenedetto. Frank Skala asked that the letter should also include the opposition to 16-and-17 year olds being members of community boards. Mr. Skala was advised that in regard to his request, a letter of opposition was already forwarded. Linda Lee said that 12 years seems like a fair amount of time for an individual to serve and this will allow new members to join. Mrs. Haider stated that the Borough President will be monitoring meeting attendance of board members to see who is participating. This will help with adding new board members. Jerry Iannece stated that each community board should be free to impose term limits in their internal by-laws for executive officers and members. He agreed with Mr. Meer in that if this was imposed citywide, valuable members would be lost. Steve Behar stated that he has been on the Board for 6 years and, in that time, he has seen members leave and new members join. He said CB11 does not have a problem with new members joining. Discussion ensued as to how there are other ways for community residents to get involved. Joan Garippa stated that some boards have trouble getting enough members and to eliminate more members would be a problem. Gordon Keit stated that membership should be proportionate to the area of the board. Jyothi Sriram discussed the need for the Board By-Laws to include a section against discrimination of members. It was pointed out by Mrs. Haider that the City Charter, under which we operate, contains such language. Mohan Jethwani said that if Ms. Sriram knows of someone who is being discriminated against, she should report it. Ms. Sriram suggested that a By-Laws Committee meeting be scheduled. Mrs. Haider agreed. Mrs. Lee stated that a meeting should be conducted to introduce new members to the issues in the district. Mrs. Haider asked for a roll call vote to forward a letter listing the items discussed. Board members suggested a vote by show of hands. Mrs. Haider asked if all agreed. Since all agreed, a vote by show of hands was taken resulting majority in favor, two opposed. Discussion ensued as to how the western and southern parts of the district need more representation on the Board and how that decision comes from local Council Members and the Borough President.

Paul DiBenedetto stated that the Bayside Historical Society is conducting their annual Art Show on January 18th.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded by Jerry Iannece. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.