

# **COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS**

## **MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11 REGULAR MEETING**

DATE: February 2, 2009

PLACE: MS 158  
46-35 OCEANIA STREET  
BAYSIDE

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Steven Newman, Chair	Present	George Karahalidis	Present
Edith Basom	Present	Gordon Keit	Present
Daniel Berrios	Present	Eileen Kenny	Absent
Lana Bind	Absent	Incha Kim	Present
Rose Bruno	Absent	Franklyn Lloyd	Present
Robert Caloras	Absent	Susan Macinick	Present
Ocelia Claro	Present	Janet McEneaney	Present
James Colasante	Present	Melvyn Meer	Present
Joan Corn	Absent	Eileen Miller	Present
Paul DiBenedetto	Present	David Millet	Present
Edward Doster	Present	Victor Mimoni	Present
Henry Euler	Present	Dennis Novick	Present
Mario Ferazzoli	Present	Allan Palzer	Present
JoAnn Ferrari	Present	Stephen Pivawer	Present
Jack Fried	Present	James Rodgers	Absent
Joan Garippa	Absent	John Rosse	Present
Roy Giusetti	Present	Andrew Rothman	Present
Bernard Haber	Present	Christina Scherer	Present
Christine Haider	Present	Gary Sekdorian	Absent
Zion Halili	Absent	Frank Skala	Present
Joseph Hellmann	Absent	Mamie Smith	Present
Jerry Iannece	Present	Joseph Sollano	Present
Laura James	Absent	Robert Speranza	Present
Mohan Jethwani	Absent	Ryan Walsh	Absent
		Alex Yagudaev	Present

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Susan Seinfeld	District Manager, Community Board 11
Linda Vallerugo	Assistant District Manager, Community Board 11
Mark Scott	Representing Queens Borough President Helen Marshall
Ron Kim	Representing Governor David Paterson
Felix Martinez, Jr.	Representing Queens District Attorney Richard Brown
Randy Lafargue	Representing Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum
John Dorsa	Representing Comptroller William Thompson
Kevin Kim	Representing Congressman Gary Ackerman
Bryan Rivera	Representing Assemblyman Mark Weprin
Gene McSweeney	Representing Assemblywoman Ann Margaret Carrozza
Esther Spindler	Representing Councilman Tony Avella
Bruce Eiber	Representing Councilman David Weprin
Steve Behar	Representing Councilman Tony Avella
Edgar Bajana	Dept. of City Planning
Mike Agnello	Dept. of Parks and Recreation
Mark Edwards	Dept. of Parks and Recreation
D.I. Scott Hanover	111 <sup>th</sup> Precinct
P.O. William Conway	111 <sup>th</sup> Precinct
P.O. Hee Jin Park-Dance	Queens Patrol Borough North

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Steven Newman, Chair

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

1. Melissa D’Andrea, of the Girl Scouts of Greater New York, reported on the need for volunteers in the Girl Scouts, especially in our area. Ms. D’Andrea provided pamphlets on the Girl Scouts and information on how adults can get involved.
2. Moses McKoy asked for speed humps to be installed on the service road of the Clearview Expressway to control the speeding problem. He also requested that parking not be allowed on the service road, as well as on Northern Boulevard, during snowfalls, so that Sanitation can properly clean the roads to the curb area.
3. Elliott Socci, President of the Douglaston Civic Association, spoke in favor of the North Flushing Rezoning, stating that although he does not reside in that area, he supports their position to have their community rezoned to help preserve their neighborhood from overdevelopment. He also strongly supports the creation of the new zoning code, R1-2A. He urged the Board to vote in favor of this proposal.

**PRESENTATION**

Tammy Lee and Denise McCrary, of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, gave an update on the National Children’s Study, which was launched on January 13<sup>th</sup>. The study is the largest long term project that will examine how the environment affects the health and development of children. The study is nationwide and Queens has been selected as one of the first

two counties across the country to pilot the study. Eighteen communities were selected within Queens, and Bayside is one of the areas to be studied. They will be in the Bayside community going door to door beginning in March to ask for participants. The goal is to follow women during their future pregnancies and their children. Participating women and children will help discover answers about the rising rates of many childhood diseases such as asthma, diabetes, obesity and autism. Ms. McCrary also thanked CB11 member, Eileen Miller, who sits on the Community Advisory Board, for her input. Informational brochures and pamphlets were provided.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Steve Newman reminded all Board members that the CB11 elections will be held next month in March. For those Board members whose term will be expiring this year, you must fill out an application form to reapply, have the form notarized and submit it to the Borough President.

Steve Newman announced that he has decided not to run for reelection for the position of Chair.

Tomorrow night is the 111<sup>th</sup> Precinct Council meeting and Sue Macinick will be making a presentation on the CERT program.

James Colasante gave a brief presentation on an informational meeting he attended regarding the Bay Terrace Shopping Center with local residents, representatives of Cord Meyer and managers of Waldbaum's store. The local residents discussed traffic problems at the shopping center. The community had asked for a walkway to be installed in the middle of the parking area so that shoppers could navigate the area more safely, but Cord Meyer rejected that proposal because it would eliminate too many parking spaces. Residents expressed concerns about many of the tenants moving out and several empty stores in the upper section of the shopping center. There was also a lengthy discussion regarding the management of the Waldbaum's store. Cord Meyer reported that they are negotiating leases with several restaurants and it was noted the present state of the economy is impacting on the stores.

Steve Newman stated that the Buildings Department announced today a new set of rules beginning in March where plans for new construction will be posted on the Buildings Department website for public review. This will give the community an opportunity to review and challenge buildings at the early stages. The repeal process will go from the Borough Commissioner, to the First Deputy Commissioner and then to the Board of Standards and Appeals for a final determination.

## **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Frank Skala noted that on page 5 it should be corrected to read "Frank Skala confirmed Steve Newman's comments regarding the intention of our school board to divert funds from public schools, but no funds ever were diverted to catholic and parochial schools". The minutes of January 5, 2009 were accepted as corrected.

## **COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION**

Melvyn Meer apologized for his comments made last month to Deputy Mayor Walcott, which

referred to parents these days having to go to the steps of City Hall to resolve a school problem. At that time, he was personally involved with a controversy taking place between a Principal and his own child. Melvyn Meer met with Deputy Mayor Walcott and as a result of that meeting, the Principal reversed his decision.

Steve Newman stated that Deputy Mayor Walcott is actively pursuing the problem of overcrowding in our high schools. He will be advising our Board in the near future on the outcome of his review.

Henry Euler noted that demolition is taking place at the proposed day care center facility located at 42 Avenue and Francis Lewis Boulevard. He asked if any building permits had been approved for this site. Susan Seinfeld stated that all permits at this point have been disapproved.

Frank Skala reported that our annual holiday party was held on January 18<sup>th</sup> and about two dozen people were in attendance. It was suggested that perhaps next year we should hold the event earlier in the beginning of December when the weather is better.

Gordon Keit asked if we had any news regarding the Douglaston Historic District extension. Susan Seinfeld responded that no hearings have been scheduled to date.

Andy Rothman commented that it is now February and we still do not have an official State representative for our district. He noted that there is something very wrong with our political system if three months after the election, this issue has still not yet been resolved. Discussion followed about our antiquated election process, the counting of disputed ballots and that the Board of Elections does not have sufficient budget for overtime to count these ballots.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Cal. # 303-08 BZ – 34-67 Francis Lewis Blvd. (Getty Service Station) – Carl Sulfaro, attorney for the applicant, gave a presentation on the application to extend the term of the variance for the existing service station for a period of 10 years. Mr. Sulfaro explained that in an agreement with the Zoning Committee, they will discontinue the parking of commercial vehicles on the site and relocate the existing dumpster. There were no members from the public that registered to speak regarding this application. Christine Haider, East Flushing/North Bayside Zoning Committee Chair, read the Committee report giving the specific details of the application and condition of the service station. It was noted that since the existing variance expired in 2002, the term will start at that time and extend until 2012. She pointed out that the Committee had concerns about several commercial vehicles being parked on the property. The C of O clearly states that only vehicles waiting for repair can be parked on the property. Since the Committee meeting, Mr. Sulfaro has supplied the office with a letter stating that the operator of the facility will discontinue the parking or storage of vehicles on the property and the garbage dumpster will be relocated to the Francis Lewis frontage of the building, which was a request made by the Auburndale Improvement Assoc. The Committee had made a motion, which carried, to recommend approval of a ten year variance with the following stipulations: 1) No commercial vehicles or “for sale” vehicles be parked on the site, unless they are waiting for service. 2) That the garbage dumpster be moved to the Francis

Lewis Blvd. side of the property away from the residences. Ms. Haider stated that she would like to amend the first condition to include “no vehicles”, commercial or otherwise, to be stored on the property. Discussion followed by the Board and questions were raised regarding why the commercial vehicles had not yet been removed, that the business was operating with an expired variance, and traffic safety concerns for school children crossing at that intersection. It was noted that the community approves of the gas station and a crossing guard is located at that intersection. Motion (09-03) was made to recommend approval of the application to extend the term of the variance for a 10 year term with the conditions as amended. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 34 in favor (Basom, Berrios, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Giusetti, Haber, Haider, Iannece, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Lloyd, Macinick, McEaney, Meer, Miller, Millet, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rosse, Rothman, Scherer, Smith, Sollano, Yagudaev), 2 opposed (Skala, Speranza) and no abstentions.

Steve Newman suggested that the District Office set-up a tracking system on the computer to follow-up when the variances come due so that we can notify the individual applicants, Buildings and the BSA.

Victor Mimoni stated that the Dept. of Information Technology and Telecommunications has been expanding the power of the City’s computer systems. The Community Board office does not have the funding or available labor to be tracking the actions of the BSA, and he asked that the governmental representatives present at the meeting bring this message back to the City Council.

Steve Newman responded that this would be a simple system to create and would be cost free.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

1.C 090281 ZMQ North Flushing Zoning Map Amendment and N 9090282 ZRY Citywide Zoning Text Amendment – Steve Newman explained that since this issue crossed Community Board lines, we held a joint Public Hearing with CB7 on this issue last week at Holy Cross H.S. He thanked Jerry Iannece and Henry Euler for filling in for himself and Christine Haider at that meeting. Henry Euler read the East Flushing/North Bayside Zoning Committee report describing the specific details of the downzoning. As outlined by Brendan Pillar, of City Planning, the proposal covers 257 blocks, including 50 blocks within the CB11 district, bounded by Utopia Pkwy. to the Clearview Expressway, 26 Ave. to the area by Bayside H.S. and PS 159 and on the western side of the district to Station Road. The amendment changes R2 zones to R2A, some R4-1 to R3X and R-5 areas to R4-1 and R4. Included in the proposal, commercial overlay depths will be reduced from 150 ft. to 100 ft. and existing C1-2 zones will be replaced by C1-3 zones. A Citywide Text Change will be established creating an R1-2A designation within 24 blocks of the Broadway-Flushing section of the rezoning area. The new R1-2A designation will remove sky exposure plane, impose a perimeter wall height of 25’, building height of 35’, 20’ front yards with lineup and limited FAR and lot coverage. Henry Euler noted that several speakers who represent the various local civic associations all spoke in favor of the rezoning stressing that the change is needed to curb overdevelopment and maintain the residential character of the existing neighborhoods. No one spoke against the proposal. Councilman Avella had commented that this rezoning plan could possibly be completed within 3 to 4 months. Discussion followed by the

Board members. Jerry Iannece complimented CB11 and CB7 for coordinating their joint efforts to move this proposal forward. He also noted that all the suggestions we had made to City Planning for R2A have now been incorporated in this new R1-2A zoning designation.

Motion 09-04) was made to recommend approval of the Zoning Map Amendment for the North Flushing Rezoning. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 35 in favor (Basom, Berrios, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Giusetti, Haber, Haider, Iannece, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Lloyd, Macinick, McEneaney, Meer, Miller, Millet, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rosse, Rothman, Scherer, Smith, Sollano, Speranza, Yagudaev), and 1 opposed (Skala), and no abstentions.

(Motion 09-05) was made to recommend approval of the Citywide Zoning Text Amendment for R1-2A. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 36 in favor (Basom, Berrios, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Giusetti, Haber, Haider, Iannece, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Lloyd, Macinick, McEneaney, Meer, Miller, Millet, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rosse, Rothman, Scherer, Skala, Smith, Sollano, Speranza, Yagudaev), none opposed and no abstentions.

2. Bernard Haber, Transportation Committee Chair, gave the committee report on the proposal received from Councilman David Weprin to name 77 Avenue between Springfield Boulevard and Commonwealth Boulevard in honor of Judge Ralph Sherman. He was a State Supreme and Civil Court judge, a decorated WW II soldier, active in the civic association, Mid Queens Boys Club and the Queens Democratic Party. The Board surveyed the neighbors by sending out 62 letters to the residents. Although there was a very poor response from the residents, 13 responded in support and 2 opposed. A letter was sent to the Hollis Hills Civic Association who voted to support the naming and the Transportation Committee was solicited as well for support or opposition. Bernard Haber pointed out that this request meets the criteria established by CB11 for ceremonial street renaming. Discussion followed and concerns were raised that we did not hold a Committee meeting on this issue and many did not know the individual. Others commented that although we may not personally know the individual, the question is was he noteworthy to merit street renaming in his honor. Motion (09-06) was made to recommend approval of naming 77 Avenue in honor of Judge Ralph Sherman. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 24 in favor (Berrios, Claro, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Haber, Haider, Iannece, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Lloyd, Macinick, Miller, Novick, Palzer, Rosse, Rothman, Scherer, Smith, Sollano), 5 opposed (Giusetti, Millet, Newman, Skala, Speranza), and 7 abstentions (Basom, Colasante, McEneaney, Meer, Mimoni, Pivawer, Yagudaev).

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM