

COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS
The City of New York

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11 REGULAR MEETING

DATE: February 1, 2010

PLACE: M.S .158 (Marie Curie)
 46-35 OCEANIA STREET
 BAYSIDE, NY 11361

ATTENDANCE:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Susan Seinfeld	District Manager, Community Board 11
Jordan Goldes	Representing Congressman Gary Ackerman
David Fischer	Representing Assemblywoman Carrozza
Dennis Ring	Representing Councilman Dan Halloran
Ali Najmi	Representing Councilman Mark Weprin
Claudia Filomena	Community Assistance Unit, Office of the Mayor
Felix L. Martinez, Jr.	Queens District Attorney's Office
Michael Agnello	NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
D.I. Scott Hanover	111 th Precinct
P.O. William Conway	111 th Precinct
Mark Scott	Queens Borough President's Office

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Jerry Iannece, Chair.

Mr. Iannece introduced Board officers, guests and elected official's representatives attending the meeting.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. **Patrick Chen** spoke about pedestrian safety at Union Turnpike and Springfield Blvd. He spoke of the numerous accidents including a fatal one that occurred last month. He asked for the support of the Community Board and all elected officials to have the safety of this location improved through a pedestrian signal timing change and has gotten over 400 signatures of petition requesting this. DI Hanover stated that the 111th Precinct conducts enforcement at this location on a continuing basis. Mr. Iannece said CB11 will write to DOT regarding the situation.
2. **Ali Najmi**, representing Councilman Mark Weprin spoke about the proposed gaming café at 56-06 Marathon Parkway. Mr. Najmi read a letter written by Councilman Weprin to the Commissioner of the Dept. of Consumer Affairs regarding the concerns of his office, the 111th Precinct and the Community Board about a gaming café being operated in such close proximity to a middle school, a public school and the North Hills branch of the Queens Borough Public Library.
3. **Jack Oshier** spoke about a proliferation of homeless people in the ATM vestibules in the Bayside area. He stated there is an organization called Common Ground that will assist the homeless find a place to stay. They have a 24-hour hotline. Some banks may close their ATM during non-business hours due to the problem. Mr. Oshier said he was told that finding a homeless person in an ATM location after business hours or in another business is a "911" call. He stressed that money should never be given to the homeless.

- Eunice Ok** from the American Red Cross spoke about the relief efforts being conducted for Haiti. She also spoke about the responsibilities of the American Red Cross locally after fires, floods and/or natural disasters etc. They want all New Yorkers to be prepared. They are made up of 98% volunteers. People can volunteer to go directly to the emergencies or can volunteer their time in a local Red Cross office. Ms. Ok stated they are located at 138-02 Queens Blvd. in Kew Gardens and their phone number is 718-598-0053. Mr. Iannece commended the Red Cross on their fundraising efforts on behalf of the people of Haiti.

Mandingo Tshaka spoke about the Dept. of Buildings and the Board of Standards and Appeals. He also stated that he feels that CB11 is apathetic and does not do its job. He said that CB11 does not use section 72-21 of the Zoning Resolution when considering an application made to the BSA. Mr. Tshaka complained that Helms Brother is permitted to service emissions in a residential area. He said that nowhere else in northeast Queens is anything allowed to be conducted as it is on 45 Road. Mr. Tshaka also spoke about the lot on the south side of 48 Avenue used for commercial purposes by Keil Brothers even though there is nothing unique about the property. BSA granted them a 20-year extension for their present use even though it is in a residential area. He demanded that CB11 take some type of action to stop these things from being allowed.

David Weprin spoke about the proposed cuts to the Q79 bus line as well as the other service cuts proposed by the MTA. He stated that he was one of the leaders in opposition to the proposed congestion pricing a few years ago. With no subway lines in the CB11 area, buses are a life-line for many people. He urged everyone to attend the Queens public hearing on March 2, 2010 at the LaGuardia East Marriott in Flushing regarding these and other drastic service cuts proposed by the MTA.

Mr. Iannece introduced the new Deputy Borough President of Queens, Barry Grodenchik. Mr. Grodenchik let all know that the Borough President is very concerned about charter revision and what that may mean for the roles that Borough Presidents' offices and community boards play in their respective communities. The Borough President feels that these roles should be strengthened and not diminished. He requested all Board Members and civic associations to email him at bgrodenchik@queensbp.org with any ideas, questions, concerns etc. regarding this upcoming issue. Mr. Iannece said CB11 may take this issue up through an ad-hoc committee and will keep all interested parties informed. Mr. Grodenchik also requested that any member who is up for reappointment get their application notarized and returned to his office as soon as possible. The purpose of notarizing the applications is to affirm you live at the address you provide on the application.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Henry Euler stated that at last month's meeting, he spoke about the Auburndale/Hollis Hills/Oakland Gardens rezoning. The minutes should have read **192 St. – 165 St.** not 166 St. – 162 St. Mr. Iannece stated the minutes will be amended. The minutes of January 4, 2010 were accepted with this change.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jerry Iannece announced the special election for the 24th Assembly District which will take place on Tuesday, February 9, 2010. David Weprin and Bob Friedrich are running for this seat. He encouraged all within this district to exercise their right to vote.

Mr. Iannece said CB11 will be following up on the cement testing issue at construction sites raised by Mel Meer at last month's meeting. CB11 wrote a letter which was copied to all area local officials. Assemblywoman Carrozza received a response from DOB that they will be trying to address and correct this issue as soon as possible. We will continue to follow-up.

An application to the BSA has been received for the site of the former Seville Diner. It will be brought before the Douglaston Zoning Committee and the full Board in the very near future.

Letters were sent out to several establishments with variances that have expired. CB11 informed them that they must rectify the situation or we will need to contact BSA. So far, we have received four responses.

The preliminary budget is available on-line. Jerry Iannece and Susan Seinfeld will be attending the Queens Borough President's hearings on the budget on February 9, 2010.

Mr. Iannece had set up a meeting with the chairs of CB11's Douglaston Zoning Committee, Little Neck Zoning Committee and Public Safety Committee and the owner of the gaming café proposed at 56-06 Marathon Parkway to see if they are in compliance with Dept. of Consumer Affairs (DCA) regulations. Due to the establishment being within approximately 200' of two schools, CB11 has written to DCA for clarification and is awaiting a response.

CB11 is partnering with the Census Bureau to distribute information about the upcoming 2010 Census. Everyone is urged to participate in the Census.

111th Precinct Community Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 2, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

CB11 will hold elections for Board Officers at next month's Board meeting which will be held on Monday, March 1, 2010.

Mr. Iannece informed any Board Members that are up for reappointment they should fill out the application, have it notarized and return it to Borough Hall by February 10, 2010 as per the Queens Borough President's Office. The Queens Borough President's Office will review each application with the respective Councilman's office. Dennis Ring, representative for Councilman Dan Halloran, announced that the Councilman will **not** reappoint anyone unless they meet with him personally and

give him their resume. Mr. Iannece reiterated that application should be sent to Borough Hall. If an individual wishes to meet with the Councilman, by all means, do so. Additional discussion ensued regarding the reappointment process.

Mr. Iannece thanked Frank Skala for organizing the annual Community Board 11 Holiday Party.

Mr. Iannece reported on the monthly Borough Board Meeting he had attended earlier in the evening. There will be a public hearing on Tuesday, February 16, 2010 regarding DEP's water rates. No location was given. They want to use a minimum/fixed rate billing system. He urged everyone to voice their opposition. Water rates have risen over 50% in recent years. The second item he wanted everyone to know about was that the Streetscape zoning amendment will become effective in the next couple of months. If someone put in a curb cut and paved over their lawn legally, you are grandfathered in. You will no longer be able to pave over your front lawn.

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION

Henry Euler stated that the Getty Station at 204-12 Northern Blvd. is operating under an expired variance and a lot of neighbors complain about this location. Susan Seinfeld said CB11 is awaiting a response from the owner. He also raised the issue of new voting machines that are supposed to be in place before November of 2010. Mr. Euler stated that this is a \$50 million contract. As part of this contract, will representatives be required to visit communities, civic associations, etc. to show people how these machines are to be operated before Election Day? Mr. Iannece said CB11 will reach out to them.

Rose Bruno questioned a request she made for a new bus shelter in front of the Rite Aid store at 193-01 Northern Blvd. She has not heard anything yet. Susan Seinfeld will follow-up on the request and advise Mrs. Bruno.

Zion Halili raised the issue of large storage pods being left in front of residential properties. Mr. Iannece said CB11 can look into this issue as these pods are supposed to be temporary storage.

Andrew Rothman reported that the Bay Terrace Community Alliance feels that the Bay Terrace Shopping Center should become part of CB11. Mr. Iannece said that when the lines were redrawn some years ago, it became part of CB7 to co-terminate with the 109 Precinct etc. Mr. Rothman also stated that construction has begun again at the Grace Korean Church. CB11 District Office has already inquired about this matter.

Janet McEneaney criticized the use of snowblowers at P.S. 159 at 5:15 a.m. This is apparently being done so early because the principal requests her faculty to arrive between 6:30 a.m. and 7 a.m. Mr. Iannece said a letter will be sent to the school's principal.

Frank Skala also discussed the Grace Korean Church. He questioned whether their plans have been changed due to what the community is seeing being erected. Mr. Skala also raised the issue to the church being built on 210 Street and 27 Avenue. He feels that the area residents should not have

given up their fight against the construction of this church. Dr. Grebin of St. Mary's Hospital for Children passed away. Who is replacing him? Will CB11 representatives meet with the new administration? There have been two water main breaks on Bell Blvd. One occurred at 41 Avenue and the other between 39 and 40 Avenues along the same main line. Something must be done before a major catastrophe happens.

Jim Colasante mentioned that when 26 Avenue became the dividing line between CB11 and CB7, no one realized that the shopping center would be part of the 109 Precinct.

Sue Macinick discussed the CERT Team and various presentations they made and the activities they have been involved in.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Education Committee - Laura James gave a report of the Education Committee that was held on January 20, 2010. Schools will be required to provide teachers to grade state exams in the spring. Several actions were taken. The Committee will monitor the situation of the MTA Student Passes and take action in the future if necessary. The State Senate did not raise the cap on charter school funding which will impact the amount of federal money the State will receive. The Committee discussed the proposal to close Jamaica High School. The Panel for Education Policy has since voted to close the school and develop four separate schools. Suggestions were made to cultivate parental involvement in the Education Committee. The Committee discussed the possibility of working with the Teacher's Union regarding the issue of "Teaching for the Test". The Committee will revisit the issue of rezoning P.S. 130 after the Auburndale Rezoning hearing in May. Discussion regarding Gifted and Talented Programs was postponed to a later date. The Committee will work with Mark Weprin to see where they can be most effective. Laura James and Susan Seinfeld will be meeting with Councilman Weprin February 4, 2010.

Frank Skala suggested that some of the teachers who no longer teach but are still being paid be the ones to grade the state exams. Steve Newman asked if the Department of Education was invited to the meeting to explain why they will require teachers (or pay \$3,000 per teacher not released for these duties) to grade the state exams. Rob Caloras explained that certified teachers are needed to grade these tests. He also stated that the cap on charter school funding will not affect the amount of federal funding the State receives. Steve Newman stated that the Secretary of Education did say the cap on charter schools would severely affect the funding we receive. The State legislature will have another opportunity to raise the cap in July. Frank Skala feel there should be less charter schools, not more.

Health Committee – Eileen Miller gave a report of the Health Committee meeting that was held on Wednesday, January 27, 2010. The first item discussed was a proposed resolution to remove tobacco

advertisements targeted to children. The Committee wanted to check on statistics and look into DOH standards regarding tobacco sales in Queens. Three local establishments selling cigarettes were surveyed. They will bring back a revised proposal for a future vote. The Committee also discussed

the issue of PCBs in schools (including MS 158). The Committee recommends that a letter be written to the Dept. of Education as soon as possible requesting the swift removal of these PCBs. The Committee discussed the issue of ambulances taking patients to a hospital of their choice rather than going to the nearest hospital in the event of a non-life threatening illness or injury. This issue will also be brought back at a future meeting as well after some research is done. NYHQ held an open house at their new rehabilitation center at 163 Street and Horace Harding Expressway.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 P.M.