

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11 REGULAR MEETING

DATE: March 3, 2008

PLACE: MS 158
(MARIE CURIE)
46-35 OCEANIA STREET
BAYSIDE

ATTENDANCE:

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Susan Seinfeld	District Manager, Community Board 11
Linda Vallerugo	Assistant District Manager, Community Board 11
Ron Kim	Representing Governor Eliot Spitzer
Jordon Goldes	Representing Congressman Ackerman
Mark Scott	Representing Borough President Helen Marshall
Arlene Bealin	Representing Assemblyman Mark Weprin

Brenden Foley	Representing Assemblyman Rory Lancman
Steve Behan	Representing Councilman Tony Avella
Mike Agnello	Department of Parks and Recreation
Sgt. Burns	111 th Precinct
P.O. Conway	111 th Precinct
P.O. Schmidt	111 th Precinct
Susan Macinick	CERT Team Leader

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Steven Newman, Chair

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Mary Vaccaro, representing District 26 United Federation of Teachers, spoke regarding the need for our community to participate in the upcoming rally scheduled for March 19th at 4 PM at City Hall against budget cuts. Ms. Vaccaro explained that District 26 is currently operating on a bare bones budget and the rumor is that they are anticipating an additional 3.4 % budget cut in September. Busses are available for those interested in attending the rally. Informational flyers were left at the meeting.

2. Karen Pender voiced her opposition to the St. Mary’s expansion, the restricted time given to speakers during the public participation portion of the February 4th meeting and the letter sent out by the Chair on CB11 letterhead to the Commissioner of the Dept. of Health in support of the expansion without a Board vote. Ms. Pender stated that this is a misrepresentation of the official position of the Board and the community. She pointed out that CB11 has now arranged a meeting with St. Mary’s. This meeting should have taken place before the certificate of need was approved. St. Mary’s should have notified the residents about the January hearing so that their objections could have been heard. This community cannot withstand the negative impact of a five story expansion.

3. Patrick Lyons reported that on February 7th the Dept. of Health approved the certificate of need with an additional contingency that all zoning and land use approvals will be granted. He asked if there would be additional public hearings. Mr. Lyons suggested that the present medical day care programs be moved off site to alleviate crowding. He noted that 85% of the St. Mary’s future revenue will be from Medicaid and with the present economy he believes there is high probability that St. Mary’s will default and have to close. Mr. Lyons requested that an official vote be taken by the entire membership of CB11 on the St. Mary’s expansion.

4. Mike Feiner, President of the Bayside Hills Civic Assoc., announced that the next Bayside Hills Civic Association meeting is scheduled for April 29th. He reported that this is a very important meeting regarding the concerns of the community and the future of Bayside. Topics of discussion will be the Oakland Lake Ravine, Bell Boulevard and Ft. Totten. Representatives from the various City agencies and our local elected officials will be present at the meeting. Mr. Feiner asked for our help in spreading the word about this important meeting. He is hopeful there will be a large community turnout.

5. Tim Vance reported that the community is forming a new civic association called the New John Golden Homeowners Association, of which he is the Acting Co-Chair. He urged the members of CB11 to study the certificate of need document for St. Mary's \$106 million expansion. He explained that the neighbors never had the opportunity to speak against the application at the January hearing because they were not informed of the meeting. Although the neighbors wrote hundreds of letters in opposition to the application, a letter was written on CB11 letterhead in support which greatly damaged their credibility. Mr. Vance requested that a future meeting with CB11 be arranged to discuss the various issues concerning St. Mary's certificate of need.

Steve Newman reported that at the Borough Board meeting earlier this evening they voted on the Borough President's FY 2009 Budget priority requests which were submitted by the various Community Boards. Mr. Newman explained that this year they did something unique by listing where the dollars would come from for funding. He reported that basically all our budget requests were included in this document.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dr. Gloria Black, Chair of Community Board 12, passed away yesterday. We will e-mail the information regarding the services to the Board members.

Steve Newman announced that he has asked Edith Basom to Co-Chair our Senior Citizen Committee. CB 11 has the second largest senior population in the borough and only one government funded senior center. One of our budget priorities is for additional senior programs. Steve Newman explained that he will be meeting with David Millet and Edith Basom sometime next week to discuss various senior issues.

Jerry Iannece stated that the Little Neck Senior Center has just opened.

Joan Garippa has been hospitalized and will be having surgery tomorrow for a gastrointestinal problem. She is at North Shore Hospital and we wish her well.

Steve Newman stated that we have been working at arranging an Education Committee meeting to address the issue of cell phones and the leasing of property. Unfortunately, we would have liked one of the bill sponsors, Cathy Nolan, to attend that meeting. Due to the State Legislature being in session, she cannot meet with us until the summer or the fall. We are looking to have the Education Committee meet in March, and we will have a representative from the Dept. of Education and a member of NYPIRG attend the meeting.

Steve Newman reported that since Star Nissan was discussed at our last meeting, it has caught the attention of the Mayor's office. A meeting was held this morning at Nissan which was attended by Susan Seinfeld and Christine Haider.

Susan Seinfeld stated that all Board members have been given a copy of a report on the meeting in their packets this evening.

Christine Haider gave an update on the meeting stating that it was a very positive meeting. Various problems with the Nissan dealership were discussed, in particular parking on the sidewalk, speeding and parking too many cars in the lot. The representatives from the Mayor's office stated that in the past they have towed cars from other dealerships, at considerable cost to the owner, and they will not hesitate to do the same at Nissan. We were provided with a cell phone number from the dealer to call and report any problems 24 hrs. a day. The various agencies will be monitoring Nissan closely, and we will be meeting with other problem dealerships in the future.

Steve Newman stated that if we can make positive improvements with one dealership this will have an impact on other dealerships and hopefully make them more receptive to cooperate with us in the future.

Rose Bruno suggested that they might consider parking cars as they do in many of the lots in the City on metal gratings one on top of the other. Steve Newman thought that the community would not be agreeable to this type of parking.

The Borough President has asked us for recommendations for the Queens General Assembly. Steve Newman stated that we will recommend from our Board, Mohan Jethwani and Incha Kim. They are also looking for some civic leaders in the community so if anyone has suggestions, please let us know.

Steve Newman stated that we have a meeting set up at St. Mary's Hospital on Wednesday, March 5th, with the Co-Chairs of our Health Committee, Community Facilities Committee and the Zoning Chair. We have also invited several of the neighbors of the community to attend. If there is anyone here this evening who would like to attend the meeting and lives within the vicinity of St. Mary's, you are also welcome to attend. We will then have a follow-up meeting at the committee level to address some of the issues. We may wish to convene on some issues that are within St. Mary's control and other issues about St. Mary's that are within the City government's control.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Frank Skala stated that St. Mary's should not be referred to as a hospital. It is a long term care facility or a pediatric nursing home, but not a hospital. Unless it is written with a capital H as referring to its name, St. Mary's Hospital for Children.

Secondly, Frank Skala stated that he read the minutes carefully and it does not mention him being disruptive. He noted that a letter was written by the Chair stating that he is disruptive at meetings and at times declared people corrupt to which Mr. Skala disagrees. Therefore, he requested that the letter should be withdrawn. Steve Newman denied his request.

The minutes of January 7, 2008 were accepted with corrections replacing hospital with Hospital.

NEW BUSINESS

Eileen Miller reported that she attended a meeting recently of health care professionals and community members at a non-profit organization called Safe Children operated by LIJ. Their goal is to find ways to increase safety for our children because many of children's injuries are preventable. The meeting was very informative. There will be follow-up meetings, and she will keep us updated.

Steve Newman reminded the Board members to stop at the front of the auditorium by Linda and pick up their packets if they have not already done so. This month we have started not to use envelopes. It is just one of the ways we are looking to cut back on expenses due to budget cuts.

Robert Caloras reported that there will be a District 26 Community Education Council meeting on March 27th at MS 67 at 7:30 PM. The public forum will be on School Governance. State legislation has to be passed because the current one is due to expire. You can come and express your ideas at this forum.

Steve Newman stated that on the piano there is a report from Assemblyman Weprin on School Governance. This is something that individuals might be interested in taking a look at because there are some serious issues that face the City within the next few months and how we move forward with education is one of them.

Melvyn Meer stated that School Governance is not just an issue for the Community Education Council but an issue for the community, and he believes the Community Board should represent the community on this issue. He also mentioned that two months ago he brought up the issue of cell phone ban in schools. He was promised that we would have an Education Committee meeting on this issue with Cathy Nolan. He believes it is unlikely that Cathy Nolan, as the Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee, with her busy schedule would be able to attend our meeting. The other issue of concern is the leasing of property for schools. This is a matter of public interest and there should be public hearings on the leasing of these public facilities.

With regard to St. Mary's, he pointed out that there was a lapse in the changing of the legislation in the R2A zone with regard to community facilities. He asserted that under R2, barring a special permit or a variance, the bulk and height requirements for a community facility were the same as for a residence. However, the R2A restrictions were never extended to community facilities either by design or inadvertence. Thus although St. Mary's is in an R2A zone, it is subject to the rules under R2 which could mean much larger facilities. A couple of days ago, he met with Councilman Avella on this issue to discuss what can be done and within what framework of time.

Frank Skala stated that he received a letter about a proposed new taxi and limousine service looking to move to Bell Blvd. and store their cars in a lot of a restaurant at the corner of Springfield Blvd. and Northern Blvd. He noted that there are only 18 spaces in the lot and the application is for 25 to 30 cars. This is a dangerous location, and we should oppose the application. Our recommendation is due within a week, and he questioned what are we doing about it.

Susan Seinfeld stated that we have only received three responses so far and we are waiting for more Board participation before we make a decision.

Bernard Haber explained that we sent a letter to all the members of the Transportation Committee asking them to inspect the site and submit comment in writing. When we receive the responses, we will write a combined letter to the TLC with our recommendation.

Steve Newman stated that we decided instead of having a committee meeting we would ask the members to visit the site and send in their comments.

Mohan Jethwani questioned if we have reached out to the home owners adjacent to the lot and ask if they have any objections. He also stated that he prefers having a meeting because you can discuss the issue and learn information from the comments of others.

Steve Newman pointed out that we have already reached out to CB7, and they have not had any problems with this car service. He encouraged the members of the Transportation Committee to visit the site and comment.

Henry Euler gave an update on the Auburndale rezoning issue. He reported that the Auburndale Improvement Assoc. recently had a meeting with over 100 people in attendance. City Planning did send two representatives to the meeting, but no time frame was confirmed for the rezoning of Auburndale. The only thing they were told is that when they rezone other sections nearby they may be able to break off small sections of Auburndale to be included with the rezoning. He also reported that there will be a forum on rezoning on March 31st at 7 PM at the Kew Gardens Community Center which is located directly across from Borough Hall.

Henry Euler also spoke on the issue of the Nissan Dealership and stated that the NY Times is doing a story on problems with car dealerships and Susan Seinfeld, Mandingo Tshaka and himself were interviewed.

Steve Newman reported that he has a map from City Planning on their planning initiative for rezoning and Auburndale is not included on the map nor Hollis Hills.

Victor Mimoni noted that City Planning does not consider Auburndale as a separate community. It is considered as part of Flushing North and part of Oakland Gardens/Hollis Hills. When they rezone both those areas, Auburndale will be included.

Bernard Haber reported that the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission will have a public hearing on March 18th regarding additional areas in Douglaston being considered for Landmarking. In the past after the hearing, the Community Board has been asked to give their approval or disapproval on these proposed locations. He suggested that Joseph Hellmann provide us with information from Landmarks so that the Board can make an intelligent vote on this proposal.

Gordon Keit asked if there was any new information on the Lawn Litter Bill. Susan Seinfeld stated that we have paper signs from Assemblyman Weprin here with us this evening and the Department of Sanitation is doing the enforcement. We have also been told the Senator Padavan has laminated lawn signs. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to post the sign.

Joseph Hellmann asked for more information regarding the Office of Emergency Management Forum on Queens faith leaders which was referred to in the District Manager's announcements. Susan Seinfeld explained that we received an e-mail from the Office of Emergency Management asking us to recommend churches and synagogues that might be interested in attending the forum and be trained to help in case of an emergency.

ELECTIONS

Jerry Iannece chaired the CB11 election proceedings. He stated that he would accept nominations from the floor. Each nomination must be seconded and the candidate accept the position. We have ballots prepared in the event if more than one candidate is nominated.

For the position of Chair, Steve Newman and Victor Mimoni were nominated, the nominations seconded and both candidates accepted the nomination. Each candidate was asked to make a brief statement to the Board. Ballots were cast resulting in 19 votes for Steve Newman and 17 votes for Victor Mimoni. Steve Newman was elected as Chair.

For the position of 1st Vice Chair, Victor Mimoni was nominated, the nomination seconded and he accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations. Victor Mimoni was elected as 1st Vice Chair.

For the position of 2nd Vice Chair, Joan Garippa was nominated, the nomination was seconded. In her absence, Steve Newman accepted for her stating that he had spoken with her and she expressed her interest in the position. Joan Garippa was elected as 2nd Vice Chair.

For the position of 3rd Vice Chair, Mamie Smith was nominated, the nomination seconded and she accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations. Mamie Smith was elected as 3rd Vice Chair.

Congratulations to all the Executive Board Officers.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Bernard Haber, Transportation Co-Chair, gave a committee report explaining that the Board at times is asked to rename streets, parks or other public facilities after a person in the community. He presented the Board with a proposed resolution to be used as policy by CB11 for naming or renaming of public facilities. The resolution stated that any request for a name change should meet the following criteria: 1) Provide the Community Board with a biography of the individual showing the worthiness of such a nomination and their service in the community. 2) Have the approval of the local civic association. In the event, that there is none in the area of the name change, then the application must have the approval of the Queens Civic Congress. 3) Upon

receiving the approval of the civic association, a vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the members of the community board present at the public hearing is required for the renaming. 4) Any designation should be supplementary to the existing name as recognized by the City of New York. Lengthy discussion followed. Some concerns were raised that the individual should be deceased, and a period of time should pass after the death before any renaming. It was also noted that the resolution needs to be corrected to read naming the facility after the person rather than the person after the facility. Question was raised, as to why if there is not a local civic organization, should we obtain the recommendation of the Queens Civic Congress, and it was explained that this is the umbrella organization for all the civic organizations in Queens. Also, it was mentioned that the Board, under the City Charter, can make a recommendation but not approval and therefore the wording should be changed in item #2. Bernard Haber agreed that these changes in the wording should be made in the resolution. It was suggested that an amendment to the resolution should read "the person must be deceased for at least one year." By a show of hands, the amendment passed. Motion (08-03) was made to recommend the approval of the resolution for naming and renaming of public facilities with the amendment. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 32 in favor (Berrios, Basom, Bruno, Caloras, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Ferrari, Fried, Giusetti, Haber, Haider, Halili, Hellmann, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Keit, Kim, Miller, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rosse, Scherer, Sekdorian, Skala, Smith, Sollano, Walsh), 3 opposed (Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli), and no abstentions. Bernard Haber stated that we will rewrite the resolution with the corrections as discussed and all members will be given a copy of the resolution.

Steve Newman stated that all the Board members were given a copy of a budget memo to be sent to the Mayor on the FY2009 Budget. Gordon Keit, Capital and Expense Budget Co-Chair, reported that two months ago the Board voted on our preliminary Budget items. Susan Seinfeld has prepared a statement for the Mayor that refers to the items which have been funded and areas that have not been funded such as the Quiet Zone, reconstruction of streets, catch basins and our library needs. According to the City Charter, we have to take a vote on this preliminary budget statement. Motion (08-04) was made to recommend approval of the statement to the Mayor on the preliminary FY2009 budget. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 34 in favor (Berrios, Basom, Bruno, Caloras, Claro, Colasante, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Giusetti, Haber, Haider, Halili, Hellmann, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Keit, Kim, Miller, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rosse, Scherer, Sekdorian, Smith, Sollano, Speranza, Walsh), 1 opposed (Skala) and no abstentions.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM