

# **COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS**

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

DATE: May 4, 2009

PLACE: MS 158  
46-35 OCEANIA STREET  
BAYSIDE

### **ATTENDANCE:**

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

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Susan Seinfeld	District Manager, Community Board 11
Linda Vallerugo	Assistant District Manager, Community Board 11
Amit Bagga	Representing Congressman Anthony Weiner
Bryan Rivera	Representing Assemblyman Mark Weprin
Gene McSweeney	Representing Assemblywoman Ann Margaret Carrozza
Bruce Eiber	Representing Councilman David Weprin
Franklin Byum	Representing Councilman Tony Avella
Edgar Bajana	Department of City Planning
D.I. Scott Hanover	111 <sup>th</sup> Precinct
P.O. Gary Poggiali	111 <sup>th</sup> Precinct

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

The meeting opened with the Boy Scout/Eagle Scouts Color Guard leading the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jerry Iannece introduced the new Executive Board and thanked Steve Newman for his work as Chair and also thanked the former Executive Board members.

D.I. Scott Hanover addressed the Board and reminded all that the Queens Triathlon will be held on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 8 AM which will result in the closure of CIP northbound and Douglaston Pkwy. between the Immaculate Conception Center to Union Tpke. Northern Blvd. from Douglaston Pkwy. to Nassau County will be closed for the Memorial Day Parade beginning at 10:30 AM on Memorial Day. D.I. Hanover also reported that there has been an increase in vehicle break-ins and stealing of spare tires.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

1. Amit Bagga, of Congressman Weiner’s office, reported that the House of Representatives recently passed civil rights legislation which will allocate funding and resources to State and Municipal law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute hate crimes. The Federal government is also pursuing new avenues for cyber security in an effort to prevent identity theft. Mr. Bagga welcomed all to contact him at the Congressional office at (718) 520-9001.
2. Larry Cioppa spoke about the “No Parking” construction signs on 202 Street by Ozanam Hall, which creates a hardship for the residents of the block. Mr. Cioppa presented the Board with a petition signed by the residents and noted that the signs have since been removed. He asked for the Board’s support to make certain that the signs are permanently removed and also requested help with trucks idling their engines, blocking residents’ driveways and breaking curbs.
3. Lenny Fazioli reported on health concerns and support for the disabled. He has been working with community leaders all over the borough advocating for low cost health insurance coverage through discount cards for the uninsured, low-income families and the disabled. He has asked Councilman Weprin to introduce this proposal to the City Council and asked for CB11’s support.

4. Dennis DeVoti spoke regarding concerns with the construction of the day care center at 42 Ave. and Francis Lewis Blvd. Mr. DeVoti noted that there are various building and fire code violations, parking problems and storm sewer concerns. He pointed out that the present plan provides for children in the sub-basement and the proposed number of children in the building has increased. Mr. DeVoti asked for the Board's help with this issue.

5. Carol Santis reported on the construction of the church at 26-18 210 St. and stated that the East Bayside Homeowners Assoc. held a community meeting regarding the church. She acknowledged that Jerry Iannece wrote a letter to the bank stating that the documents filed for the mortgage indicate the property was to be used as a private residence and not for a community facility. Ms. Santis is hopeful that the letter will have some positive results for the community.

6. Anthony Naletelic also spoke about the church property stating that the NY Times article written on the church was inaccurate and a propaganda ploy to promote the proposed church. The community has formed a Block Association and has not intimidated or harassed the pastor. He reported that they have made a FOIL request of Buildings to access all records and is asking for a full audit of the building. It was also noted that the application filed for place of assembly has increased the number of occupants and is now listed as non-profit.

#### **PRESENTATION**

Anthony Iuliano and Donald Ranshte, Intergovernmental and Community Relations of the Department of Buildings, gave a presentation on the new Public Challenge Process. Donald Ranshte explained that this new process is actually a zoning diagram and schematic for as-of-right approved properties. Any applications for new buildings or alteration permits which change the outline of the building will now be required to post the schematics on the web. He commented that the challenge time frame may actually be longer than the initial draft which proposed 30 days. When the application is approved, the clock will start for the public challenge period. The challenge forms will be available on-line to complete and submit. At the close of the challenge period, the Borough Commissioner will conduct a full audit review of the application and post all the challenges and answers on line. If you do not agree with the answers, a second appeals process is available with the Deputy Commissioner for Technical Affairs to review the challenge and give a second determination. Ultimately, if you disagree with the second determination, the challenge can then be taken to the Board of Standards and Appeals. Mr. Ranshte explained that the goal is for more transparency and to correct any problems early in the process before actual construction begins. An informative question and answer period followed.

#### **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

The minutes of April 6, 2009 were accepted as written.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Jerry Iannece thanked all for electing him to the position of Chair.

Everyone has received a copy of their Committee Assignments in their Board member packets.

Jerry Iannece introduced and welcomed two new Board members, Lee Fiorino, of Douglaston, and Ed Braunstein, of Bayside. Also, introduced were Dina Quantimateo, new community member of the East Flushing/North Bayside Zoning Committee and Marion Millet of the Senior Citizens Committee.

Jerry Iannece gave a brief update on the swine flu epidemic at St. Francis Prep, which was the epicenter in Queens. Many individuals became ill with the flu. Fortunately, it was a mild strain, everyone has recovered and the school reopened today.

Compliments to Christine Haider, our First Vice Chair, on being highlighted by the Queens Courier.

Jerry Iannece reported on the house of worship which is being constructed on 210 Street. After research, he discovered that the owner of the property took a loan out from a private mortgage company, said they were buying it as a one or two-family home, and signed an affidavit that they were going to occupy it as their personal residence. This is illegal and could be considered as fraud. He contacted the bank personally, and a letter was sent to the bank with copies to the Attorney General and State Banking Board. Mr. Iannece reminded all that community facilities can be built as-of-right. This has nothing to do with religion or ethnicity.

Jerry Iannece stated that he recently attended the BSA hearing on Lund Fire Products, which the Board and community are overwhelmingly against. He spoke on behalf of the community and also argued each of the five findings of the variance individually. As a result, the BSA is now asking that the applicant not come before them looking for relief as a commercial establishment but rather relief as a residential property. Another BSA hearing has been scheduled for June 9<sup>th</sup>. It is not over yet but appears to be a big win for the community.

The Mayor has announced even further budget cuts, which will significantly impact on the Community Boards. The cuts would result in approximately a \$33,000 cut for the Board, and we would have to lose a member of our staff. Jerry Iannece said that he contacted all the Queens Chairs and sent out a joint Community Board Chair letter to the Mayor asking him to reevaluate his policy. He pointed out in comparison to the entire City budget, the cut to the Community Boards would only represent a small fraction.

There will be a meeting on Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at Bayside H.S. at 7:30 PM regarding US Post Office cuts in services which would result in rerouting our mail and most likely creating a delay in our mail delivery. Susan Seinfeld will be attending the meeting and he encouraged other members of the Board to also attend the meeting.

The Federation of Italian Americans of Queens will be hosting a concert at St. Joseph's located in Astoria to benefit the earthquake victims of Abruzzo, Italy.

The Memorial Day Parade in Douglaston/Little Neck is the largest Memorial Day Parade in the country. The parade will be held on Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>. All are invited to join the festivities.

The 111<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct Council will hold there meeting on Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>.

DOT will be milling roads in our community in preparation for road resurfacing. We will keep you updated on the locations

### **COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION**

Victor Mimoni commented that banners, flags and various printed material for the Memorial Day Parade, which were being stored at St. Anastasia's over the winter, were destroyed by water damage. Fund raising letters will be going out to the community.

Christine Haider stated that PS 177 was also shut down due to the swine flu and is scheduled to reopen Wednesday.

Frank Skala reported on the Church property at 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Cross Island Parkway. It appears the Church will not be expanding but rather selling the property. He hopes that we will be constructing residential homes at this location.

Andy Rothman suggested that the Church property at 28 Avenue and the Cross Island Parkway be considered for funding as a green park for the community. It would be an ideal location for a green space with its close proximity to the Bayside Marina.

Mamie Smith questioned the DEP water rate increases. Jerry Iannece reported that the Queens Civic Congress passed a resolution against the water rate increases including various alternative suggestions. He stated that we will e-mail copies to the Board members.

Henry Euler reported that the North Flushing rezoning was adopted on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. He thanked Jerry Iannece and CB11 for their cooperation and the recent letter to City Planning regarding rezoning the rest of Auburndale. He also noted that the gas station at 35 Ave. and Francis Lewis Blvd. was storing trucks on the lot and operating with an expired variance. The same condition exists at the gas station located at 204-12 Northern Blvd. Jerry Iannece explained that the new zoning code R1-2A, which is part of the North Flushing rezoning proposal, mimics all the suggestions the Community Board made for the R2A zoning code.

Steve Newman commented that if you add up all the total cuts proposed for the Community Boards it would be the equivalent of 25 to 30 police officers. He would prefer to have the police officers. CB11 operates with 4 staff members whereas most of the Boards operate with 3 employees, and he does not believe it is appropriate for us to oppose the Community Board cuts.

Susan Macinick reported that CERT gave a presentation at the Bayside Senior Center and Deepdale NORC. Jerry Iannece praised all the work that the CERT team does in our community.

Janet McEaney spoke about traffic problems at the intersection of 205 Street and 35 Avenue. She asked that DOT initiate a study for that area to determine what measures could be taken to improve traffic safety at that location. She also questioned the Building code which permits taking down an entire building except for one wall and lists it as an alteration instead of a complete demolition and new building. Susan Seinfeld stated that as long as a foundation and one wall remains it is considered an Alteration 1 permit.

Gordon Keit suggested that the nursery location on Northern Blvd. might be considered as a new site for the Douglaston/Little Neck library. Jerry Iannece explained that there is \$20 million in the budget for the expansion of the library. He is actively looking into renewing the proposal to lease the church property adjacent to the library. In previous meetings with the library, it was determined that it would be too costly to relocate the library. Mario Ferazzoli suggested adding a third floor to the shopping center at 248 St. and Northern Blvd. for library space. Ed Doster noted that library is opposed to leasing property but instead wants to own the property.

Victor Mimoni noted that we are mandated in the City Charter to meet ten times during the year. Since we did not have a March meeting, he asked if we will be meeting during the summer to fulfill that requirement. Jerry Iannece said we will take that under advisement.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Douglaston Hill Street Renaming – Jerry Iannece explained that although this item was listed on the agenda as a public hearing for this evening, the hearing was actually held at the April meeting and tabled for further review and discussion. Bernard Haber, Transportation Committee Chair, reported that as requested at our last meeting, we have written to both the NYPD and the FDNY to find out the map change effect on emergency response time. Bill Sievers, of the Little Neck/Douglaston Historic Society, spoke in favor of the proposal and a statement was read for Stuart Hersch, a member of the same society, also in favor of restoring the historic street names. Bernard Haber read the response received from the NYPD which stated that upon proper notification, the necessary changes are made to the 911 computer systems to reflect the name changes and all emergency services will continue without any confusions or unnecessary delays. The FDNY sent a similar response. He further reported that the local civic association canvassed the community and we received 61 letters from the 86 residents, which represents 71% of the community, in favor of the name change. Bernard Haber continued to point out the numerous streets throughout Queens county which have multiple names. The Committee voted 4 to 1 to recommend to the City Council the name change for the streets. Discussion followed by the Board and some concerns were still raised about confusion with duplicate names. Joseph Hellmann noted that the original street names are an integral part of the Hill's historicity and should be adopted. Frank Skala gave a minority report stating that he was opposed to the procedure used, that sequential numbers are easier to locate and the neighbors are requesting this change for the purpose of increasing property values. Motion (09-10) was made to recommend to the City Council that the six streets in Douglaston Hill be reverted back to their original historic street names. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 26 in favor (Berrios, Braunstein, Bruno, Caloras, Claro, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Firorino, Garippa, Haber, Haider,

Hellmann, Iannece, James, Karahalidis, Keit, Newman, Palzer, Rothman, Scherer, Sollano, Speranza, Tong), 17 opposed (Basom, Colasante, Corn, Fried, Giusetti, Halili, Jethwani, Kim, Macinick, McEneaney, Miller, Millet, Novick, Pivawer, Skala, Smith, Yagudaev) and 2 abstentions (Mimoni, Meer).

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM.