

COMMUNITY BOARD 11 QUEENS

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11 REGULAR MEETING

DATE: October 6, 2008

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

ATTENDANCE:

Steven Newman, Chair	Present	George Karahalios	Present
Edith Basom	Present	Gordon Keit	Present
Daniel Berrios	Present	Eileen Kenny	Absent
Lana Bind	Present	Incha Kim	Present
Rose Bruno	Absent	Fanklyn Lloyd	Absent
Robert Caloras	Absent	Susan Macinick	Absent
Ocelia Claro	Absent	Janet McEneaney	Absent
James Colasante	Absent	Melvyn Meer	Present
Joan Corn	Present	Eleen Miller	Present
Paul DiBenedetto	Present	David Millet	Absent
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	Present	John Rosse	Absent
Roy Giusetti	Present	Andrew Rothman	Present
Bernard Haber	Present	Christina Scherer	Present
Christine Haider	Absent	Gary Sekdorian	Present
Zion Halili	Present	Frank Skala	Present
Joseph Hellmann	Present	Mamie Smith	Present
Jerry Iannece	Present	Joseph Sollano	Present
Laura James	Present	Robert Speranza	Present
Mohan Jethwani	Present	Ryan Walsh	Absent
		Alex Yagudaev	Absent

ALSO PRESENT:

Susan Seinfeld District Manager, Community Board 11

Linda Vallerugo	Assistant District Manager, Community Board 11
Hon. Mark Weprin	24 th Assembly District
Mark Scott	Representing Borough President Helen Marshall
Randy Laforge	Representing Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum
Brian Rivera	Representing Assemblyman Mark Weprin
Gene McSweeney	Representing Assemblywoman Ann Margaret Carrozza
Bruce Eiber	Representing Councilman David Weprin
D.I. Scott Hanover	111 th Precinct
P.O. Gary Poggiali	111 th Precinct

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

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of September 8, 2008 were accepted as written.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Steve Newman reported that we were notified last week by the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget that we will be facing a budget cut as all the other City agencies. For the remainder of FY2009, we face a budget cut of \$5,000 and for FY2010, an additional \$10,000 beyond the \$5,000.

All Board members have received a copy of a summary on conflicts of interest from the Conflicts of Interest Board concerning Community Board member ethics regarding voting on issues involving personal business. The full document is available for review at the Board office.

Assemblyman Mark Weprin addressed the Board and spoke against extending term limits for the Mayor without a new referendum, the financial crisis facing the City, and problems in education. Assemblyman Weprin also answered questions from the audience.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. Moses McKoy spoke on the problem of truck traffic and speeding on 47 Ave. at 206 Street. Mr. McKoy requested that speed humps be installed on 47 Ave. to help slow motorists down and control the speeding.

Steve Newman said that members of DOT are present here this evening, and we will also write to them regarding this request.

2. Richard Logalbo discussed the problem of school buses on 223 Street at 37 Ave. blocking traffic and the driveways of the homes. The school buses also keep their engines running for long periods of time polluting the air. (This matter was raised at the District Service Cabinet meeting and D.I. Hanover stated that the police will monitor the situation).

3. George Korahais spoke about the increased number of cell phone communication boxes being installed by Next G Network all throughout the communities of Bayside, Whitestone and Flushing and the health danger these boxes present to the residents. Mr. Korahais asked that all the Community Boards together fight to put a stop to this in our neighborhoods.

Steve Newman explained that they have a franchise with the NYC Dept. of Information Technology and Telecommunications. We have spoken to the Deputy Commissioner and a meeting is being set up regarding the issue of cell towers.

4. Louis Arce reported on the proposed development of two hotels and eighteen two-family homes at Horace Harding Expwy. and 183 Street. Mr. Arce spoke about the negative impact this development will have on the community, decreasing the value of homes, adding more congestion and traffic problems in the surrounding neighborhood. He urged that this development be scaled down.

Steve Newman stated that a meeting has been scheduled on October 29th with the owner of the property and the residents. He reminded all that this is an as-of-right project, however, the owner is willing to meet with the community. He advised that the meeting remain civil if we hope to accomplish anything and address the concerns of the residents.

5. Howard Haider also spoke about the proposed construction of two hotels at Horace Harding Expressway and 183 Street. He pointed out the negative impact this development will have on the community by increasing congestion and traffic, as well as a burden on the existing sewer system. He stated that the City has to take a serious look at the infrastructure of our sanitary and storm sewer system.

COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION

Melvyn Meer remarked that all three of Councilmembers representing our area are opposed to any change in term limits by Council legislation. Mr. Meer introduced a motion to the Board that we make a resolution to oppose any attempt to overturn the two public referendums and change term limits by Council legislation. Discussion followed regarding whether or not it is appropriate for the Board, as a City agency, to make a political resolution. Motion (08-13) was made that Community Board 11 opposes any attempt to overturn term limit law by City Council legislation without a public referendum. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 34 in favor (Basom, Berrios, Bind, Corn, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Garippa, Giusetti, Haber, Halili, Hellmann, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Meer, Miller, Mimoni, Newman, Palzer, Pivawer, Rothman, Scherer, Sekdorian, Skala, Smith, Sollano, Speranza), 1 opposed (Novick). It was suggested that our resolution be distributed to the other Community Boards and that the resolution should point out under local law 39 and the City Charter, the responsibility of the Community Boards in civic matters.

Henry Euler reported that a meeting was held at Councilman Avella's office to discuss a City Planning zoning change in North Flushing, Auburndale and the northwest Bayside areas from Main St. east to CVE and north of the railroad tracks to approximately 25 Ave. He was informed

that the area south of the railroad tracks will be addressed in a few months along with the Hollis Hills and Oakland Gardens rezoning.

Frank Skala stated that the East Bayside Homeowners Assoc. will hold a candidates night on October 21st. Following the candidates night, three members of CB11, Rob Caloras, Victor Mimoni and Rose Bruno, will be honored for their work in the community. Frank Skala volunteered to organize the annual holiday party, as usual, unless someone else would like to volunteer to handle the arrangements.

Jerry Iannece announced that the Federation of Italian American Organization of Queens will hold their annual Columbus Day Parade on Saturday, October 11th in Astoria starting at the Kaufman Studios. Also, the Philharmonic Orchestra from Italy “Giacomo Puccini” will hold a free concert at Holy Cross H.S. on Friday, October 10th at 8 PM.

Joan Garippa stated that recently an e-mail went out to all Board members regarding sixteen year olds being appointed to Community Boards and it started a flurry of e-mails going back and forth. This is not appropriate and in the future any such discussions should be handled at the Board meetings.

Steve Newman commented that all Board members have a letter in their packets from a group of legislators who are proposing that sixteen and seventeen year olds be appointed to Community Boards. The letter is asking for the support of the local Community Boards on this issue. Discussion followed and concerns were raised that sixteen and seventeen year olds are not mature enough or have enough life experience to vote on decisions that affect all of us in the community. Motion 08-14) was made in favor of legislation to have sixteen year olds appointed to the Community Boards. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 6 in favor (Haber, Halili, Hellmann, Jethwani, Newman, Palzer), 28 opposed (Basom, Berrios, Brind, Corn, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Garippa, Giusetti, Iannece, James, Karahalidis, Keit, Kim, Meer, Miller, Mimoni, Novick, Rothman, Scherer, Sekdorian, Skala, Smith, Sollano, Speranza), and 1 present (Pivawer). The motion did not carry.

Steve Newman asked Mark Scott to report back to the Borough President to encourage appointing some younger members in their twenties to the Board.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. 216 Street Pedestrian Bridge over the LIRR – Bernard Haber, Transportation Committee Co-Chair, gave the committee report explaining that in 2004, DOT advised us that the pedestrian bridge was scheduled for replacement and required that the bridge be designed with ADA compliant helical ramps. He explained that the bridge is structurally sound but basically needs new cement, repair to the risers and repainting, which could be done over a period of years. DOT has presented us with two options, either to reconstruct the bridge as designed with helical ramps or demolish the bridge completely. The Committee, after meeting with the residents, recommended the following: 1) The bridge not be removed. 2) The bridge be repainted and repaired where required. 3) The community does not want the construction of a new bridge as

presented by DDC that provides for helical handicap ramps at each end. Maura McCarthy, DOT Queens Borough Commissioner, reported that DOT has been told by legal counsel that if they do any type of major rehabilitation to the bridge, they must make it handicap accessible. The Commissioner stated that DOT engineers believe the alternate proposal to repaint and repair the bridge in phase stages is not feasible and will not maintain the integrity of the bridge. DOT also presented a computer rendered photo of what the new bridge would look like. Lengthy discussion followed. Concerns were raised that a number of local residents do use the bridge, the design of the helical ramps will have a negative visual impact on the surrounding neighbors, will be dangerous by attracting kids to rollerblade on the ramps and become a haven for criminal activities. It was also noted that in the current economic crisis, it makes more sense to repaint the bridge, remove graffiti and repair the bridge in small increments over years, which will save the City a great deal of money. Motion (08-15) was made to recommend that:

1) DOT must not demolish the bridge. 2) DOT should not build a new bridge with helical ramps. 3) DOT should paint and repair the existing bridge through a repair program over time. The painting should be done as to remove all graffiti and the goal should be to maintain the bridge without requiring a capital project. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 35 in favor (Basom, Berrios, Bind, Corn, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Ferrari, Fried, Garippa, Giusetti, Haber, Halili, Hellmann, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Meer, Miller, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rothman, Scherer, Sekdorian, Skala, Smith, Sollano, Speranza), none opposed and no abstentions.

2. 254 Street One-Way proposal – Bernard Haber, Transportation Committee Co-Chair, gave the committee report on the proposal to convert the traffic on 254 Street to a one-way northbound from the Horace Harding Expwy. service road to Thornhill Ave. He explained that 254 Street is being used as a by-pass to enter the LIE westbound. The traffic on 254 Street has increased considerably after the reconfiguration of the entrance to the LIE. The Committee, after discussion with the residents, made the following recommendations: 1) 254 Street should not be converted to a one-way. 2) The preference was for a one-way street from Thornhill Ave. to Leeds Rd., however there were some objections by residents to this proposal. 3) The residents preferred that the entrance “nosing” to the 254 Street westbound entrance to the LIE be extended eastward approximately 100 ft. past 254 Street. This would eliminate the southbound traffic on 254 Street from entering the LIE on-ramp at 254 Street. This suggestion was made to NYSDOT by the Board in 2001. Discussion followed. A resident noted that speeding on 254 Street is a problem and requested speed humps, but DOT stated speed humps are not feasible at this location because the street is not straight and on a hill. Another suggestion was made for additional Stop signs at Thornhill Ave. and 254 Street. Bernard Haber explained that we have requested that NYC DOT revisit the site and find an alternate solution to this problem.

Steve Newman announced that CB11, in conjunction with St. Mary’s Hospital and the NYC Dept. of Health, will sponsor a Flu and Pneumococcal Vaccine Clinic, at St. Mary’s Hospital, on Sunday, October 26th from 2 PM to 4 PM and on Wednesday, October 29th from 7 PM to 9:30 PM. Flyers are available, and we will advertise this event in the local papers.

Steve Newman pointed out that in our monthly newsletter we give an update on variances that

have come before the Board. He noted that frequently what happens is that CB11 votes “No”, the Borough President votes “No” and the BSA votes “Yes” to approve. Steve Newman suggested that for many issues in the future instead of voting to disapprove some of these applications it would be worthwhile to try and negotiate terms and conditions.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Joan Garippa and Gordon Keit, Capital and Expense Budget Co-Chairs, gave the committee report on the FY2010 priority submission. Joan Garippa stated that all the Board members have received a copy of the submissions which include the suggestion to list the neighborhoods and estimated cost. It was noted that the LIRR Quiet Zone improvement project has been removed because the project is going forward and the money has been transferred to the LIRR. Also, Joe Michael’s Mile is in the Capital budget list because all the improvements will be done as a capital project. Some discussion followed on the high priority of the acquisition of the remaining lots in Udalls Cove and why we have so many budget submissions instead of just a few top priority projects. Zion Halili noted that emergency curb repair on Union Tpke. is listed as #14 and he requested that this item be moved up. It was agreed that #14 curb repair will be moved up to #9 and #9 for the construction and repair of catch basins changed to #14. Henry Euler requested that additional funding be given to Dept. of City Planning in order to complete rezoning and that the Landmarks Preservation Commission be funded for further acquisitions. It was decided that these requests will be added to the end of the Expense budget as #25 and #26. George Karahalis questioned why the construction of sidewalks on Commonwealth Blvd. has moved down on the list and it was explained that priorities change. Bernard Haber requested funding for the painting and repair of the 216 St. Pedestrian Bridge. It was agreed that this will be listed as #24. Motion (08-16) was made to recommend approval of the FY2010 Capital and Expense Budget priority submissions with the above additions and corrections. Roll call vote was taken resulting in 28 in favor (Corn, DiBenedetto, Doster, Euler, Ferazzoli, Fried, Garippa, Giusetti, Haber, Halili, Hellmann, Iannece, James, Jethwani, Karahalis, Keit, Kim, Miller, Mimoni, Newman, Novick, Palzer, Pivawer, Rothman, Scherer, Smith, Sollano, Speranza), 1 opposed (Skala) and no abstentions.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM