



The City of New York

Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Christine L. Haider Chairperson / **Susan Seinfeld** District Manager

COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Board Members
FROM: Ocelia Claro, Co-Chair
North Bayside/East Flushing Zoning Committee
RE: BSA Cal. No. 374-71 BZ
Star Toyota-205-11 Northern Blvd.
DATE: June 5, 2014

On June 4, 2014, the North Bayside/East Flushing Zoning Committee met to discuss the above-referenced BSA application. Present were Board Members, Ocelia Claro, 2nd Vice Chair and Committee Co-Chair, Eileen Miller, 3rd Vice Chair, Henry Euler, Andy Rothman, Mel Meer, Christina Scherer, and Dina Quondamatteo, community representative. Also present were Susan Seinfeld, District Manager, Todd Dale representing the applicant, Michael Koufakis, Terry Pouymari, President of Auburndale Improvement Association, and four residents.

Mr. Dale presented the BSA application which is for an extension of the term of the existing variance, with no changes, to allow an automobile showroom and parking. The first variance was granted in 1975 and, in 2006, it was amended to allow parking for customers and staff in the rear lot. He stated there are five open violations relating to the violation of the Certificate of Occupancy for not having a valid variance. The renewal is required to correct these violations.

Henry Euler raised objections to the current operation of the facility.

- 1- The gate on the Clearview Expressway service road side is open at night in violation of the variance conditions.
- 2- The chain link fence on the Clearview Expressway service road side is broken.
- 3- The dumpster is open and a ladder leading to the roof is against the building.
- 4- The grounds are in poor condition with broken asphalt.
- 5- The bollards, required by the variance, are not always there and pulled out completely. The photos in the application show no bollards.
- 6- The Auburndale Improvement Association wrote to the Board of Standard and Appeals several times since the renewal was due in July 2011 and there has been no valid C of O since 2002.

Mr. Dale was not aware of all of the issues, but stated that the owners hired a contractor to repair the fence, the bollards have been stolen and the owner is attempting to chain them together or find an alternative.

Members wanted to know why the renewal was so delayed. Mr. Dale stated that the business relation with the previous architect ended. The title of the property changed in 2011 and the process was slow. In 2012, they were going to remodel and expand but it did not happen, and they have abandoned that plan.

Jeff Mulligan, Executive Director Board of Standards and Appeals, contacted Rothkrug, Rothkrug and Spector regarding the variance renewal because of their prior business with Star Toyota.

Christina Scherer stated that their staff conducts car sales in the public streets and parks cars without plates on the street, and their employees park on the street not in the lot because the lot is being used to show and prepare new vehicles. Ocelia Claro pointed out that the owner has a history of filing applications late.

Residents complained about the new cars in the lot, garbage strewn around the property and on their properties from the dealership, license plate screws in the streets, cars parked on the Clearview Expressway service road and on Northern Boulevard blocking traffic, cars parked on the sidewalk, trading of cars on 205 Street, employees throwing garbage from the rooftop onto the private properties. Neither Mr. Koufakis nor the manager, Richie, are responsive to their requests to stop this behavior.

Mel Meer made a motion to recommend approval of the variance application with a five-year term. Christina Scherer seconded the motion. Eileen Miller asked to include conditions. Mr. Meer did not object to amend the motion to approve with conditions. Dina Quondamatteo seconded the amended motion.

The conditions requested are as follows:

1. Landscape the area along the Clearview Expressway service road and repair the asphalt.
2. Repair the fence along the Clearview Expressway service road side of property.
3. Lock the fence at night.
4. Keep the dumpster closed at all times.
5. Keep the property clean with sufficient number of garbage receptacles.
6. Reaffirm that the lot is for customer and employee parking ONLY.
7. Replace bollards in the front or something in kind to keep cars from being on the sidewalk.

The motion was unanimously disapproved.