



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

To: Board Members

From: Laura James & Alim Gafar, Committee Co- Chairs

Re: CB 11 Education Committee Report

Date: July 8, 2015

---

The Community Board 11 Education Committee held a meeting on July 7, 2015 in order to discuss the proposed site acquisition for a new high school at 203-05 32 Ave. In attendance at the meeting were: Laura James and Alim Gafar, Co-Chairs, Henry Euler, Christina Scherer, Roy Giusetti, Jessica Sin, Jyothi Sriram, Steve Newman, Janet McEneaney, Christine Haider, Board Chair, and Eileen Miller, CB 11 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair; community member, David Solano called into the meeting and District Manager, Susan Seinfeld, was present. Two residents also attended.

Laura James reviewed the information we have received about the School Construction Authority's proposal to purchase Bayside Jewish Center to build a new high school. There was a great deal of resident opposition expressed at our June Board Meeting. She reviewed the information given at the Borough President's meeting with the SCA and the additional information provided at a meeting that Christine, Laura, Janet and Susan attended at Councilman Paul Vallone's office on June 18<sup>th</sup>. We learned that there were three options for the school, an annex to Bayside HS, as originally discussed at the meeting at Borough Hall, a new location for the World Journalism HS (move out of IS 25), or a specialized or themed high school.

Janet McEneaney spoke as a resident in the community and with the other two residents, discussed their objections to the purchase of the property. The area has three other schools, it is very busy and there is no parking for residents. They did say that should the SCA acquire the property, they would prefer that it becomes the World Journalism School.

David Solano discussed his findings that a new school is not necessary and the DOE should stop the overcrowding in the three high schools in this district. Other schools are underutilized and students should be directed to those schools. Alim pointed out that the available capacity at other high schools will not change the fact that our district high schools are overcrowded driven by the demand based on the policy to allow student to apply to schools they desire.

Roy Giusetti discussed the possibility of a petition drive. The residents and Janet agreed that they would be willing to carry petitions against the school purchase.

Laura said we should be providing alternate sites beyond those we already suggested (one being the former Leviton site on Little Neck Parkway) which were rejected by the SCA. Alim said that at the SCA meeting at Borough Hall, parents from western Queens brought with them suggested sites for schools. Laura also said that SCA was very vague when asked why the Whitestone location was rejected by the SCA.

The committee decided the following:

- 1- That they will support the community in their petition drive to try to stop the purchase of the Bayside Jewish Center and in discussions with Councilman Vallone that the site is inappropriate due to current traffic and parking load and its proximity to three other schools.
- 2- That the community prefers that, should the site be acquired, the use should be for the World Journalism School to move from IS 25.
- 3- That the size should be limited to three stories and that we work with the Dept. of Transportation to minimize the impact of traffic on the area citing that the DOT must conduct traffic studies under expected use conditions, during peak times during the school year and not off-season and off-time.

Addendum:

Regarding the Whitestone site that the SCA did not want to acquire, I learned that the location was 150-33 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The SCA cited the reasons were community opposition, lack of a transit structure and a very high asking price.