



Vincent Arcuri, Jr.
Chairperson

Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale
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Gary Giordano
District Manager

Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting

February 10, 2016

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Peter Comber; Daniel Creighton; Henry Cross; Patricia Crowley; Karamjit Dhaliwal; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Sarah Feldman; Patricia Grayson; Robert Holden; Paul A. Kerzner; John J. Killcommons; Kathleen Knight; John Maier; Lydia Martinez; Katherine Masi; Alexander Maureau; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O'Kane; Michael O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Theodore M. Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; David Sands; Carmen Santana; Connie Santos; Lorraine Sciulli; Jean Tanler; Barbara Toscano; Maryanna Zero

Board Members Absent

Robert Cermeli; Brian Dooley; Thomas C. Dowd; Steven Fiedler; Dorie Figliola; Caroline Fuchs; Angela Giovanniello; Fred T. Haller, III; Fred Hoefflerle; Michael LoCascio; Raquel Namuche; Walter H. Sanchez; Catherine Sumsky; Mercy Wong

Elected Officials

Don Capalbi – US Representative Grace Meng, 6th C.D.
Lauren Capozzi – NYS Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
Anne Krzyzanowski – NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, 37th AD
Diana Santana - NYS Assemblyman Michael Miller, 38th AD
Neil Giannelli - NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., 15th S.D.
Deirdre Feerick - NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, 30th CD
Jennifer Gutierrez – NYC Council Member Antonio Reynoso, 34th CD

Staff Present

Gary Giordano, District Manager, CB5 Queens
Catherine O'Leary and Laura Mulvihill - CB5Q Staff
Catherine Moore – Queens Borough President Melinda Katz

GUESTS

Stephanie Williams, Facilities Coordinator – FDNY Facilities Maintenance Division, 48-67 34 St, LIC, NY 11101
Paul Soehren, Senior Director – FDNY Facilities Maintenance Division, 48-67 34 St, LIC, NY 11101
Capt. Timothy Smith, FDNY Communications Unit, 9 Metrotech Center, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:30pm, following the Salute to the Flag.

Public Hearing re: The Fiscal Year 2017 Preliminary Budget of the City of New York

District Manager Gary Giordano gave a brief outline of his testimony which was submitted to the Queens Borough Board on behalf of Community Board 5 Queens at their Annual Budget Hearing in Queens Borough Hall on January 25th, 2016. He explained that the FY 2017 Preliminary Budget of the City of New York was released on January 22nd, 2016. He pointed out that while last year, the City's Adopted Capital and Expense Budget totaled \$80.569 Billion, this year's budget totals \$82.112 Billion, and there doesn't appear to be any significant cuts in this year's budget.

Regarding the Capital Budget Priorities of CB5Q, he said that with heavy rain storms coming more frequently, it is very important that city sewer lines be replaced with sewers providing increased capacity, in areas that have had significant flooding problems. He said that two major capital improvement projects are fully funded in our Board area this year. The sewer and water main replacement project on 69 Street and Calamus Avenue, on the border with Community Board 2 in Queens, is estimated to cost \$29 Million and is currently underway. Another major water and sewer main replacement project in the vicinity of Penelope Avenue in Middle Village is expected to begin work this Spring.

The District Manager said that in Queens, there are many roadway sinking conditions and cave-in conditions, including those adjacent to corner catch basins, which are not repaired for months, presenting dangerous conditions. He informed everyone that funding has been allocated in this year's budget to replace the bridge deck of the deteriorated Metropolitan Avenue Bridge at Fresh Pond Road over the LIRR. He said that this replacement is vital, considering holes in the bridge deck and a rating of only 3.6, out of a possible 7 rating. The District Manager also testified that the Fresh Pond Rail Yard in Glendale is the location where all freight entering or leaving Long Island has to travel through, and be sorted at. He said that the polluting locomotives used for this purpose are leased by NY & Atlantic Railway from the Long Island Rail Road, with more freight, especially City garbage, being transported by rail now. He said that at present, there are at least 11 locomotives which, at minimum, need to be repowered with new, cleaner burning engines.

The District Manager also stressed the need to construct new school space in the Board 5 area. He said that the Board has advocated for the construction of a new high school at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, in Glendale, which was identified as a possible site for a transitional housing facility for homeless families. He said that other capital improvements that are needed in the CB5Q area include:

- Repair and repaint the elevated "M" Train structure from Wyckoff Avenue to Fresh Pond Road;
- Renovate the Glendale Library (including handicapped access provisions);
- Rehabilitate the Ridgewood Reservoir – Phase 2 (including parts of Highland Park); and
- Provide new street tree plantings and overdue tree stump removals.

Regarding the Board's Expense Budget Priorities, the District Manager said that funding is needed for:

- An additional 20 police officers at the 104th Police Precinct;
- NYC DEP Field Workers in sufficient numbers to decrease the backlog for sewer system and water system repairs;
- Dept. of Building Inspectors and Plan Examiners, in sufficient numbers, to reduce illegal property uses and questionable construction;
- Additional Sanitation Dept. Cleaning Personnel to clean illegal dump sites and for additional weekly litter basket collections;
- Essential Fire Dept. Services, including keeping all Engine and Ladder Companies open and reducing EMS response times;
- Youth Education and Recreation Programs After-School and on Weekends, especially funded through the Dept. of Youth and Community Development;
- Needed services for senior citizens, including for the frail elderly;

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- Sufficient personnel to conduct NYC Dept. of Transportation traffic safety studies, and for the installation of pedestrian and traffic safety improvements;
- Increased funding for the Dept. of Housing Preservation and Development and additional litigation services, to reduce the problem of tenants being harassed by property owners who want to evict tenants so that they can lease their apartments for much higher rents; and
- School garbage and recycling collections 5 times a week.

The District Manager said that he would like to focus on the Board's main capital and expense budget priorities when writing responses to the Fiscal Year 2017 NYC Preliminary Budget.

The Board Chairman said that during the Queens Borough Board's budget hearing, members of the Board agreed that in every budget category, Queens is underfunded on a per capita basis, as compared to the other boroughs of the city.

As there were no other speakers, the Board Chairman closed the public hearing and announced the next item on the Agenda.

Presentation re: Proposed Ambulance Charging Station in the Area of Grand Avenue and 69 Street, in Maspeth, Queens

by Stephanie Williams, Facilities Coordinator - FDNY
Paul Soehren, Senior Director of Facilities – FDNY and
Captain Timothy Smith, Communications Unit – FDNY

Stephanie Williams, FDNY Facilities Coordinator, gave a power point presentation regarding this pilot program to establish ambulance charging stations at various locations throughout the City for the purpose of providing electricity to electrically powered ambulances. She explained that the current fleet of ambulances are required to run their diesel engines continuously, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, because their communication systems must be active at all times and medications that are on-board must be kept refrigerated, as well. As a result, one ambulance emits nearly 45 tons of air pollution on an annual basis.

Under this new proposal, ambulances and other emergency response vehicles could be alternatively powered by electricity, and re-charged as often as necessary, at one of the proposed ambulance charging stations that will be installed at specific sites in each Community District. She said that these chargers will require fixed access to the electrical grid under the sidewalk at designated parking spots. As she spoke, she pointed to several illustrations of the proposed charging station to be located on Borden Avenue, between 69 Street and 69 Place, in Maspeth. She pointed out the proposed site on a map of the area, showing a 12 foot wide parking lane adjacent to the curb, which could accommodate the proposed charging station on the sidewalk, with a parked ambulance alongside the curb, taking up two parking spaces there.

Ms. Williams described the ambulance charging station as having a minimal footprint, approximately 5 feet in height, and 14" in width, with a weatherized cord access door on the rear and an LED lit timer and screen on the front. She said that the access door will be color-coded with a blue flashing light when it is activated, and automatically closes itself after every use.

Ms. Williams explained that each charging station is equipped with a vandal-proof locking device, and a tapered triangular-shaped roof on top, in order to discourage its use as a resting place for people, or items. She said that the charging stations will have an intelligent retractable power-cable that a trained Emergency Medical Technician could plug into a port in the ambulance whenever it needs to be re-charged.

In response to questions from the floor, Paul Soehren, FDNY Senior Director of Facilities, explained that the power cord in the proposed charging station has a reverse ground, as a precaution against emitting an electrical charge or spark.

Mr. Soehren explained that the proposed location was chosen by the FDNY, in consultation with several other agencies, including Emergency Medical Services, the Office of Emergency Management, the Department of Transportation, and public utility services. He explained that they chose this site because it provides easy access

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to the LIE, Grand Avenue and 69 Street, and access to the electrical grid is nearby. He also pointed out that this particular site has been a designated area for stationing ambulances for the past decade, or more.

Mr. Soehren said that in the short term, the City plans to install 40 ambulance charging stations within the 5 boroughs of the City. He said that this is a pilot project, the first of its kind in the City.

In response to a question from the floor about the cost of this project, Fire Captain Timothy Smith said that this project is being funded by a State grant. He said that he expects that once the project is implemented, the cost of the project will be recouped from savings in their maintenance division's budget by reducing repairs and replacement of burned out diesel engines in ambulances each year, and fuel cost reductions. He explained that constant idling of the diesel engines in ambulances requires very costly repairs and/or replacement of the engines on an annual basis. He also pointed out that the design for this project was developed in-house. Mr. Soehren estimated the cost of installation at \$35,000 per station.

John Maier expressed his appreciation for the fact that this new technology should reduce air pollution in our Board area, and eventually throughout the entire City.

Lee Rottenberg said that it is a wonderful proposal, but said he was disappointed to see that so many parking spaces would be eliminated. Mr. Soehren said that the charging station would require two parking spaces. Maryanna Zero agreed in principle with the proposal, and had no objections to the project. She asked whether the "No Parking Area – for the Press" signs might be removed from this location, in the rear of the row of commercial stores on Grand Avenue. Mr. Soehren replied that the NYC Dept. of Transportation has jurisdiction over the signage there.

As there were no further questions or comments, the Board Chairman thanked them for their informative presentation and referred the matter to the Transportation and Public Transit Services Committees for further consideration at their next meeting in the Board office on February 23rd, 2016.

The Board Chairman announced the next Item on the Board Agenda.

PUBLIC FORUM

Colleen Parker, a local resident and founder of Ridgewood Kids, announced plans to hold a Ridgewood Kid's Market, from 11am to 4pm on Sunday, February 28th in the Ridgewood Y, located at 69-04 64 Street, opposite the 104th Police Precinct on Catalpa Avenue. She said that the event will feature handicrafts, products and food that is prepared by local youth, and child-friendly vendors. She said that in addition, free Safe Kid IDs, face painting, handmade children's clothes, and wholesome family entertainment will be provided at the event. In closing, she welcomed everyone to support the work of local talent at this free event. For more information, contact Colleen@ridgewoodkids.com. Flyers were distributed.

Mary Parisen, co-founder of Civics United for Railroad Environmental Solutions (CURES), said that \$9 Million in funding has been allocated in the past 3 years for new freight rail locomotives in the State budget. She said that NY and Atlantic Railway was allowed to do the bidding, and did not comply with the State's procurement guidelines. Instead, only one bid for one switcher locomotive was selected, and they plan to acquire three locomotive engines that do not utilize Tier 4 locomotive technology. She said that this procurement process was completely flawed, and the taxpayers of New York State should not be expected to pay for antiquated diesel engine locomotives that will continue spewing many tons of pollutants into our air, just as they have been doing for the past 20 years. She asked Board members to express their concerns to local elected officials about this waste of taxpayer dollars and request an end to this procurement process.

Tatiana Strickland, Compliance Associate for the NYC Dept. of Consumer Affairs, reminded everyone that under NYS Labor Law, as of January 1st, 2016, if you work for more than 80 hours a year at a business or a nonprofit, you can earn up to 40 hours of sick leave each year to care for yourself or another family member, after

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completing your first year of work for the same employer. In addition, she said that domestic workers are entitled to up to 2 days of paid sick leave, in addition to up to 3 days of paid rest.

Ms. Strickland also announced that Mayor Bill de Blasio recently signed an Executive Order regarding a new paid parental leave policy for New York City employees, providing 6 weeks of paid time off for maternity, paternity, adoption, and foster care leave, at their full salary – or up to 12 weeks total when combined with existing leave. In closing, Ms. Strickland informed everyone about the NYC Commuter Benefits Law, which took effect on January 1st, 2016. She said that under this law, employers with 20 or more full-time non-union employees who live in New York City, are eligible to apply for commuter benefits for their employees. For more information about this law, she said to call 3-1-1, or visit www.nyc.gov/commuterbenefits. Flyers were distributed.

Theodore M. Renz, Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District and member of the Community Board, welcomed Board members and local elected officials to attend a VIP Reception at the new branch of Investors Bank, located at 58-25 Myrtle Avenue, on the corner of Forest Avenue, in Ridgewood. He said the reception will begin at 6pm, next Wednesday evening, February 17th, 2016. He asked that anyone interested in attending to RSVP by calling Susan Placella at (718) 628-8391. Flyers were distributed.

Mr. Renz also announced that next month, work is expected to begin at the proposed plaza project, by the Glendale Memorial at Myrtle Avenue, Cooper Avenue and 70 Street, in Glendale. He said that representatives from the Department of Transportation will be invited to give a presentation on this project in the near future.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.

MINUTES

The Board Chairman asked Board members to review the minutes of the January 13th, 2016 Board Meeting. Dmytro Fedkowskyj made a motion to approve the Minutes, seconded by John Maier. The minutes were accepted by voice vote.

Board Chairman Arcuri welcomed representatives of local elected officials to address the Board.

On behalf of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Don Capalbi reported that the Congresswoman recently sponsored new legislation in Congress, the Zero Tolerance for Terrorism Act, and the Ballistic Missile Act, to address the increased threat of terrorism both home and abroad. He also said that their office is sponsoring a Third Annual Art Competition for participating schools. He said that the students' artwork will be displayed in the Queens Museum in March.

On behalf of State Senator Addabbo, Neil Giannelli announced that their office is co-sponsoring a Valentine's Day Food Drive, along with State Assemblyman Michael Miller's office. He said that non-perishable food items may be dropped off at the district office located at 66-85 73rd Place in Middle Village, or at the Rectory of Sacred Heart Church at 83-15 78 Avenue, in Glendale.

The Board Chairman recognized the press corps in attendance at the meeting, and thanked them for reporting on Community Board matters and events.

LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

The Board Chairman read aloud the list of establishments in the Community Board 5 area that are in the process of applying for liquor, wine and beer licenses since the January Board Meeting. Each Board member received a copy.

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New Liquor License

- 1) * **Fumo Hookah Lounge Corp.** 66-28 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) *1563 Decatur Café LLC d/b/a **Houdini's** 1563 Decatur Street, Ridgewood, NY 11385
 2) *Cream Restaurant d/b/a **Cream** 59-09 71st Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

- 1) Sale Fresh Inc. d/b/a **Antica Trattoria** 68-10 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Wine and/or Beer License Renewals

- 1) **Guadalajara de Dia No. 2 Corp.** 566 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

*Indicates Outdoor Area

Demolition Notices

The Board Chairman reported that the Board did not receive any demolition notices during the past month. He asked that Board members remain vigilant and report any suspicious construction activities to the Board office at (718) 366-1834.

STREET FAIRS in CB5 QUEENS in 2016

Regarding the proposed Street Fairs that are planned in the Board 5 area this year, Board Chairman Arcuri reported that the Executive Committee met this week with the applicants and their representatives who each gave a report about their events and the funds that are raised for various nonprofits from these events. He explained that Committee members voted in favor of permitting all of the Street Fairs, except for the Fresh Pond Road Street Festival, this year. He said that four Executive Committee members voted in favor of issuing a permit for the Fresh Pond Road Street Festival this year, and five voted in opposition.

John Maier commented that the Mayor's Office has issued a moratorium on issuing permits for new applications to hold street fairs in the City, due to the resulting noise, smoke, fumes, traffic congestion, and other problems. The Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the following events:

RIDGEWOOD LDC MYRTLE AVENUE FESTIVAL

MYRTLE AVE btw Wyckoff Ave & Fresh Pond Road – Ridgewood - 11 blocks

SUNDAY – APRIL 17th - 12 Noon to 6pm (Street closing 10am to 7pm)

SPONSOR: RIDGEWOOD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORP.

As there was no further discussion, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation which carried by a vote of – 30 – in favor; - 2 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and - 3 - not voting.

METROPOLITAN AVENUE FESTIVAL

METROPOLITAN AVENUE btw 73 Place & 79 Street, Middle Village - 5 blocks

SUNDAY – APRIL 24th - 12 Noon to 6pm (Street closing 10am to 7pm)

SPONSOR: KIWANIS CLUB OF GLENDALE

As there was no further discussion, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation which carried by a vote of – 33 – in favor; - 2 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and - 0 - not voting.

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MASPETH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE-LIONS-KIWANIS GRAND AVENUE FESTIVAL

GRAND AVENUE btw 65 Street to 72 Street - Maspeth - 7 blocks

SUNDAY - JUNE 12th - 12 Noon to 6pm (Street closing 10am to 7pm)

SPONSOR: MASPETH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE-LIONS-KIWANIS CLUB

As there was no further discussion, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation which carried by a vote of – 32 – in favor; - 2 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and - 1 - not voting.

MYRTLE AVENUE FESTIVAL in Ridgewood

MYRTLE AVENUE btw Fresh Pond Road & Forest Avenue in Ridgewood - 4 blocks

SUNDAY - JULY 24th - 12 Noon to 6pm (Street closing 10am to 7pm)

SPONSOR: KIWANIS CLUB OF GLENDALE

As there was no further discussion, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation which carried by a vote of – 33 – in favor; - 2 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and - 0 - not voting.

MYRTLE AVENUE BID MYRTLE AVENUE FESTIVAL

MYRTLE AVENUE btw Wyckoff Ave & Fresh Pond Rd – Ridgewood - 11 blocks

SUNDAY – SEPT. 18th - 12 Noon to 6pm (Street closing 10am to 7pm)

SPONSOR: MYRTLE AVENUE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

As there was no further discussion, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation which carried by a vote of – 30 – in favor; - 2 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and - 3 - not voting.

FRESH POND ROAD STREET FESTIVAL

FRESH POND ROAD btw Woodbine Street & Menahan Street – Ridgewood – 5 blocks

THURSDAY - SEPT. 8th - 5:30pm to 10pm

FRIDAY - SEPT. 9th - 5pm to 12am

SATURDAY - SEPT. 10th - 2pm to 12am

SUNDAY - SEPT. 11th - 2pm to 10pm

SPONSOR: FEDERAZIONE ITALO-AMERICANA di BROOKLYN and QUEENS

As there was no further discussion, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation to deny this proposal carried by a vote of – 27 – in favor; - 8 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and - 0 - not voting.

The Board Chairman also reported that the Executive Committee has prepared a Liquor License Questionnaire that all applicants are requested to fill out and return to the Board when they're applying for a new liquor license, or to renew their liquor license, or for a wine and/or beer license. He said that the process has been working very smoothly.

Katy Knight asked if there has been any increase in the number of applications being rejected, since the new procedure has been implemented. The Board Chairman replied that most applicants have been very cooperative and agreeable to a stipulated closing time of 2AM.

The Board Chairman reported that Henry Cross and Dmytro Fedkowskyj have agreed to Co-chair the Housing Services Committee, and Kathy Masi has agreed to Chair the Youth Services Planning Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

In Steven Fiedler's absence, the Board Chairman reported that in December of 2015, Community Board 5 sponsored a Public Hearing in cooperation with the Dept. of Parks, in order to obtain input from the public regarding a first rendering of the design plans for the proposed capital project improvements at Frank Principe Park in Maspeth, including two new ball fields and a new soccer field in the Park. He said that this project is slated to cost more than \$5 Million. He said that members of the Parks Committee are currently in the process of reviewing several recent revisions of the proposed plans. He said that the committee plans to meet once more to discuss all of the proposed options and report back to the Board with their recommendations.

Transportation Services and Public Transit Services

Combined Committee

Vincent Arcuri

Board Chairman Arcuri reported that Queens Borough President Melinda Katz has agreed to support the Board's recommendation to build a new bridge deck at Fresh Pond Road and Metropolitan Avenue over the LIRR tracks, and to maintain the existing rail tracks underneath the bridge, instead of eliminating two of the rail tracks as part of a total bridge reconstruction project at that location.

The Chairman reported that funding has been allocated for the reconstruction of Wyckoff Avenue between Flushing Avenue and Cooper Avenue, on the Brooklyn-Queens border. He said work is expected to begin in 2018. And, he reported that funding has been allocated for the reconstruction of the Grand Avenue Bridge over Newtown Creek, which is now in the design stage. He said that at present, emergency repairs to the bridge deck are required on a continuing basis.

Regarding reports about the interruption of service on the L Train line, due to necessary repairs to the Transit Tunnel under the East River, the Chairman reported that the committee is working with Community Board 1, in Brooklyn, to assess the impact that service interruptions might have on daily commuters.

Regarding the Select Bus Service proposal for Woodhaven Boulevard, he reported that the Department of Transportation has decided to re-design this project, based on input from the community.

The Chairman announced that the next committee meeting is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, February 23rd, 2016, in the Board 5 office, beginning at 7:30pm.

New Business

The Board Chairman announced that the Ridgewood Market will host a Market on Saturday, March 5th, from 5pm to 11pm in Gottscheer Hall, located at 657 Fairview Avenue, in Ridgewood.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Board Chairman adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 9:07pm.