



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 July 13, 2016

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Peter Comber; Patricia Crowley; Brian Dooley; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Sarah Feldman; Steven Fiedler; Angela Giovannello; Patricia Grayson; Fred Hoeffler; Robert Holden; Paul A. Kerzner; Kathleen Knight; Lydia Martinez; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Theodore M. Renz; Kelvin Rodriguez; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; David Sands; Carmen Santana; Catherine Sumsky; Jean Tanler; Barbara Toscano

Board Members Absent

Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Henry Cross; Karamjit Dhaliwal; Thomas C. Dowd; Caroline Fuchs; Fred T. Haller, III; John J. Killcommons; Michael LoCascio; John Maier; Katherine Masi; Alexander Maureau; Connie Santos; Lorraine Sciulli; Maryanna Zero

Elected Officials

NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., 15th S.D. and Staff Neil Giannelli
NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, 30th CD and Staff Maggie Hayes
Don Capalbi – US Representative Grace Meng, 6th C.D.
Evelyn Cruz – US Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7th C.D.
Diana Santana - NYS Assemblyman Michael Miller, 38th AD
Sergio Galeano – NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer

Staff Present

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

GUESTS

Nicole Garcia, Queens Borough Commissioner - NYC Dept. of Transportation
Jason Banrey, Deputy Queens Borough Commissioner - NYC Dept. of Transportation
Ronni Katz, Director, NYC Prevention Resources Center, The Children’s Aid Society, 4 W 125th St, NY, NY 10027
Sarah Redfield, Community Development Specialist, NYC Prevention Resources Center-The Children’s Aid Society

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Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:35pm, following the Salute to the Flag. He introduced the first Item on the Agenda as:

PRESENTATION Re: Building Coalitions to Reduce Substance Abuse

by Sarah Redfield, Community Development Specialist
Children's Aid Society Prevention Resource Center
and Ronni Katz, Director, NYC Prevention Resource Center

Sarah Redfield began by stating that her agency is offering to assist local community-based groups and organizations in Queens, including schools, churches, businesses and local residents, to form a coalition that is committed to preventing substance abuse in their own neighborhoods. She said that last year, she worked with two groups in the City who were successful in obtaining federal grants for this purpose. She cited yesterday's incident which involved 32 people who overdosed on drugs simultaneously at one street corner in Brooklyn and had to be rushed to emergency rooms for treatment, as an example of the escalating danger to public health that substance abuse presents today.

Ms. Redfield said that she is available to start working on this initiative tomorrow with any local community-based organizations who are willing to take the lead in this effort to educate residents of all ages about how to prevent drug abuse in their homes, work places, parks and community, and form a coalition of like-minded individuals who are committed to saving lives, and preventing drug abuse in their communities.

Ronni Katz pointed out that she's been working in the field of drug abuse prevention for over 20 years now, and that her greatest reward is seeing former clients assume leadership roles in the community and become role models for today's youth. She said that she looked forward to assisting local groups to form a neighborhood coalition that will be able to achieve these same results.

Walter Sanchez asked what type of organization is the most likely to succeed in taking the lead in this effort.

Ms. Katz said that every community is different. She said that it depends on who are the stakeholders with the strongest sense of urgency to reduce substance abuse their own neighborhood and thereby improve everyone's quality of life.

Board Chairman Arcuri thanked both speakers for their presentation and referred the matter to the Health and Human Services Committee to meet with the representatives of local civic associations, community groups and volunteer with the goal of forming a working group that will target substance abuse in our community.

PUBLIC FORUM

Eshawarie Mahadeo-Rambarran, Outreach Coordinator, NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board, explained that the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) is an independent city agency, with subpoena power. She said that it is not part of the City's Police Department. She said that the CCRB investigates 4 kinds of alleged police misconduct, including:

- 1. Force:** this refers to the use of excessive or unnecessary force; behavior that includes punching, shoving or choking a civilian, using pepper spray and up to and including the use of deadly force.
- 2. Abuse of Authority:** this refers to abuse of police powers to intimidate or mistreat a civilian; for example, an officer's refusal to provide name and badge number, an improper strip search or vehicle stop and search, or an improper "stop, question and frisk."
- 3. Discourtesy:** this refers to cursing and using other foul language or gestures.
- 4. Offensive Language:** this refers to slurs and derogatory remarks or gestures based upon race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical disability.

Note: The CCRB is completely separate from the criminal, civil and traffic court systems. In order to dispute a summons, resolve a criminal case or file a lawsuit against the City, call 311 for more information.

Ms. Mahadeo said that currently, there are several vacancies on the CCRB's board, which consists of as many as 13 members, who must all live in the city and reflect the diversity of the city. The NYC Council designates 5

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board members, with one from each borough; the mayor chooses 5 board members, including the chairperson; and the police commissioner chooses 3 board members who have law enforcement experience. The mayor makes the official appointments to the board, she said. CCRB Board members review and evaluate all completed investigations and render their findings on the allegations that are made in each complaint. Panels comprised of three board members – one mayoral designee, one city council designee, and one police commissioner designee – conduct case reviews. Each panel can substantiate any allegation by a vote of two to one. All cases with substantiated allegations are forwarded to the NYPD Police Commissioner, who has the authority to impose discipline in every case.

In closing, she said that complaints can be filed by calling 311, or 1-800-341-2272. For more information or to request a speaker to attend a local community meeting, she welcomed residents to visit the CCRB's website at: www.nyc.gov/ccrb, or call their office at: 212-912-2093. Pamphlets were distributed.

Robert Cermeli, a Board member and resident of Middle Village, reported that the links are broken on the metal mesh screening around the perimeter of the grass ballfield in the center of Juniper Valley Park, leaving a gaping hole in the screen. He provided a photo of the break in the fence. Without the protective screen in place, he said that a pedestrian could be injured when a stray ball passes through this gap in the fence. He urged staff to get it repaired as soon as possible. Steve Fiedler replied that the Parks Department has prepared a work order to repair the screen, and the repairs should be completed soon.

Judy Kottik, a member of Transportation Alternatives and the mother of Ellen Bandis, who was struck and killed by a bus at the intersection of Wyckoff and Myrtle Avenues three years ago, spoke in favor of the creation of a pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue, between Myrtle Avenue and Gates Avenue, in Ridgewood. She pointed out that, despite the initial redesign of this intersection that was completed last year, another pedestrian named Edgar Torres was recently struck and killed at the very same location.

Joshua Katz-Rosene, a Ridgewood resident, and Charice Silverman, a Glendale resident, also spoke in favor of creating a pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue. Ms. Silverman attended the One-Day Plaza Event that was held on Wyckoff Avenue between Gates Avenue and Myrtle Avenue recently, which was enjoyed by a large crowd of community residents with children, who used this safe, open space to socialize there.

Lisa Pearlstein, Dulcie Cantor and Amy Cohen, members of Families for Safe Streets and NYC residents, spoke in favor of creating a pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue between Myrtle Avenue and Gates Avenue in Ridgewood, in order to establish a safer environment for commuters, pedestrians, bicyclists and shoppers to travel through the area surrounding the transit hub at Myrtle and Wyckoff Avenues.

The Board Chairman thanked them for their advocacy and pointed out that the Transportation Committee's recommendation in support of creating a pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue between Gates Avenue and Myrtle Avenue is scheduled for consideration at tonight's meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.

MINUTES

The Board Chairman asked Board members to review the minutes of the June 8th, 2016 Board Meeting. Walter Clayton made a motion to approve the Minutes, seconded by Walter Sanchez. The minutes were accepted by voice vote.

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

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NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley announced that the City Council passed an on-time Capital and Expense Budget for FY 2017 on June 14th, this year, without any significant cuts in funding for capital projects or services. She said that over \$6.5 Million has been allocated to complete capital projects in local parks in the coming year. In addition, she said that she secured \$500,000 in funding to complete a feasibility study for the proposed light rail service on the freight rail line's right-of-way, with the support of the entire Queens delegation in the City Council. She said that in response to the Emergency Medical Services reports that indicate a steady increase in the emergency response times for EMTs each year, 50 new tours have been created citywide to handle to increased workload. She said that 1,300 probationary candidates in the Police Academy are scheduled to graduate this summer, and she expects 8 new police officers to be assigned to patrol the 104th Police Precinct. In closing, the Council Member thanked everyone who participated in the initial Preliminary Budgeting Process for discretionary funds this year. She said that lots of funds will be allocated for local public school programs. In addition, she said that because many public schools do not meet the State's minimum standards for providing physical education in the City's public schools, the Department of Education has allocated \$20 Million to provide physical education programs and instructors in public schools on a citywide basis.

State Senator Joseph Addabbo said that while the State Legislature completed the budget negotiation process on the State budget last month, there are many legislative items that are still pending passage in Albany. He wished everyone a wonderful summer vacation. Pamphlets were distributed to all present.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Catherine Moore announced that their office is conducting a Job Fair from 10am to 3pm, on Friday, July 15, in Room 200 of Queens Borough Hall at 120-55 Queens Boulevard, in Kew Gardens, NY. She also announced that the Queens Borough President is sponsoring a series of free Concerts in Queens this Summer, beginning with a concert at Fort Totten in Bayside at 5PM on Sunday, July 24. In addition, Queens Borough Hall will serve as a new Pop-Up Site to obtain an IDNYC identification card, Monday through Friday, 9am to 5pm, from June 27th until Friday, August 5th.

On behalf of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Don Capalbi said that the Congresswoman joined the Task Force for Light Rail in Queens this year. He also said that she supports a number of tax breaks for small businesses that are currently under consideration in Congress.

He said that the Congresswoman continues to advocate for increased scrutiny of the decibel levels along flight paths that are used by commercial carriers on arrival and departure flights from airports in Queens.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Mike Miller, Diana Santana welcomed constituents to visit their district office located at 83-91 Woodhaven Blvd, or to call their office at (718) 805-0950 for assistance or information.

She said that this summer, a representative from Queens Legal Aid Services will be available in their office to offer counseling to tenants and landlords who live in this area. Flyers were distributed.

Sergio Galeano introduced himself as the NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's representative, replacing Pesach Osina. He welcomed calls from constituents about issues of importance at (212)669-3916.

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 last month's Board Meeting. Each Board member received a copy of the list.

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New Liquor Licenses

- 1) **Mally's 2 Antojitos Mexicanos Corp.** 602 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) **The Celi House, Inc.** 69-56 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 2) **Jorge's Restaurant Corp.** 689 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

- 1) **Ridgewood Room Corp.** 59-15 Catalpa Avenue – 1st Floor, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **Etno Restaurant Inc.** 67-14 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) **El Picolino Restaurant Inc.** 666 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Corporate Change

- 1) **64-63 Dry Harbor Tavern, Inc.** 64-63 Dry Harbor Road, Middle Village, NY 11379
Amended notification correcting landlord's name from Daniel Hickey and James Lecakes to Jia Hao Property, LLC.

Demolition and Construction Notices

The Board Chairman reported that the Board received several building construction notices, as well as demolition notices over the past month, including: **1815 Linden Street**, construction of a 5-story residential building with 9 units ; **46-81 Metropolitan Avenue**, building demolition; **662 Woodward Avenue**, partial demolition to convert the existing 2-family into a 4-family residence; and **54-27 Myrtle Avenue**, construction of a 17-story mixed use commercial and residential tower, between Palmetto Street and Woodbine Street, in Ridgewood.

The Chairman asked Board members to remain vigilant and to advise the Board 5 staff about any questionable construction work in the Board area, so they can investigate further.

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District Manager's Report
Gary Giordano

The District Manager requested a moment of silence in memory of police officers who have been killed in the line of duty, in addition to all of lives lost by innocent victims of shootings nationwide this year.

Regarding the Metropolitan Avenue Bridge over the LIRR at Fresh Pond Road, the District Manager reported that work on this project will be delayed at least until the end of July. He said that this contract was awarded to Mugrose, for the removal and replacement of the bridge deck underneath the roadway. He said that the project is expected to be complete in 18 months.

Regarding the Penelope Avenue Sewer and Water Main Project, the District Manager reported that the contractor has begun work on water main replacement. He said that the project extends on Penelope Avenue from 71 Street to 74 Street, on 74 Street from Juniper Boulevard South to Juniper Valley Road, on 75 Street and Gray Street from Juniper Valley Road to 66 Drive, and a portion of 77 Street between Juniper Valley Road to Gray Street, in Middle Village. He said that this project is estimated to cost a total of \$22 Million, and is expected to be complete in 700 days. He said that the contractor will provide access to block residents only, when the trench cut is open on their block. And, the contractor will install steel plates to cover all open trenches when they're not on-site. Due to the underlying marsh land on certain blocks in Middle Village, drive cast pile tests will be performed prior to driving piles into the soil, where needed.

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In closing, the District Manager announced that the Board will conduct a public hearing regarding the City's FY 2018 Capital and Expense Budget at the next monthly Board Meeting which is scheduled to take place at 7:30pm on Wednesday, September 14th in the cafeteria of Christ the King High School. He wished all a good Summer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Zoning and Land Use Review Committee

Walter Sanchez

Walter Sanchez informed everyone that the Queens Borough President will conduct a public hearing in Queens Borough Hall, starting at 10:30am on Thursday, July 19th, regarding the zoning variance application submitted to the Board of Standards and Appeals by the YGS Yeshiva, for their property located at 74-10 88 Street in Glendale. He said that the application is for a school for over a thousand students, including sleeping accommodations.

In addition, he said that there are a couple of zoning applications that are pending review by the Community Board, including a property located at 57-40 Mazeau Street in Maspeth, where the owner plans to build a private house; and 72-42 60 Lane, where the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is interested in securing a 20-year lease to use the existing warehouse on this site for storage purposes.

The Board Chairman pointed out that city agencies are required to obtain community input when they enter into negotiations to lease and/or acquire properties on a long-term basis.

Transportation Services and Public Transit Services

Combined Committee

Vincent Arcuri

Chairman Arcuri reported that the Committee met with representatives from the NYC Department of Transportation and the MTA on June 21st in the Board 5 office to review the proposed pedestrian safety improvements in and around the Myrtle/Wyckoff Transit Hub on the Brooklyn-Queens border, including the creation of a pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue between Gates Avenue and Myrtle Avenue, and the implementation of a One-Way Southbound direction on Wyckoff Avenue from Myrtle Avenue to Putnam Avenue, in Ridgewood. He said that the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District agreed to maintain services at the proposed plaza on Wyckoff Avenue.

The Chairman pointed out that originally, the Department of Transportation installed No Turn signs at the intersection of Myrtle Avenue, Wyckoff Avenue and Palmetto Street, and several local bus routes that serve commuters who live in Brooklyn and Queens, were re-routed along side streets in that area, in order to reduce traffic congestion at that intersection. In addition, the pedestrian crossings at this six-corner intersection were widened and extended out at the curbs, as part of the pedestrian safety improvements at this location.

The Chairman reported that the Committee recommends the proposed pedestrian safety improvements at this intersection, including the creation of a pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue between Gates Avenue and Myrtle Avenue, and the implementation of a One-Way Southbound direction on Wyckoff Avenue from Myrtle Avenue to Putnam Avenue, in Ridgewood. As there were no questions or comments on this matter, he requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation, which carried unanimously by a vote of 31 in favor, - 0 – opposed, -0- abstentions; and – 1 – not voting.

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Old and New Business

The District Manager thanked Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri for his 40 years of service as a member of Community Board 5, Queens, including decades of service as the Board Chairman. He also thanked Paul Kerzner for his 44 years of service as a member of Community Board 5, Queens. They both received a standing ovation.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Board Chairman Arcuri adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 9:10pm.