



## Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens  
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale  
61-23 Myrtle Avenue • Glendale, NY 11385  
(718) 366-1834  
E-mail: qnscb5@nyc.rr.com



Vincent Arcuri, Jr.  
*Chairperson*

Gary Giordano  
*District Manager*

### Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting March 11, 2015

#### Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Peter Comber; Daniel Creighton; Henry Cross; Patricia Crowley; Brian Dooley; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Dorie Figliola; Caroline Fuchs; Angela Giovanniello; Patricia Grayson; Fred Hoefflerle; Robert Holden; Paul A. Kerzner; Michael LoCascio; John Maier; Lydia Martinez; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Theodore M. Renz; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Connie Santos; Lorraine Sciulli; Catherine Sumsky; Jean Tanler; Barbara Toscano; Mercy Wong; Maryanna Zero

#### Board Members Absent

Venera Lucy Dolce; Fred T. Haller, III; Richard Huber; John J. Killcommons; Luis Rodriguez

#### Elected Officials

Jordan Goldes - U.S. Representative Grace Meng, 6<sup>th</sup> C.D.  
Neil Giannelli - NYS Senator Joseph Addabbo, 15<sup>th</sup> SD  
Lauren Capozzi - NYS Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, 28<sup>th</sup> AD  
Mike Armstrong – NYS Assemblywoman Margaret Markey, 30<sup>th</sup> AD  
Anne Krzyzanowski – NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, 37<sup>th</sup> AD  
David Renz - NYS Assemblyman Michael Miller, 38<sup>th</sup> AD  
Deidre Feerick – NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, 30<sup>th</sup> CD  
Kevin Worthington – NYC Council Member Antonio Reynoso, 34<sup>th</sup> CD

#### Staff Present

Gary Giordano, District Manager, CB5 Queens  
Catherine O’Leary & Laura Mulvihill - CB5Q Staff  
Jeong-ah Choi– Queens Borough President’s Office  
Thomas Smith – Associate Planner, NYC Dept. of City Planning

#### Guests

Mark Hoffer, Vice President, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey  
Ivan Van Praagh, Acting Director, Govt and Community Relations, PA-NYNJ  
Veronica Smith, Senior Legislative Representative – PA-NYNJ  
Matthew Masters, Support Staff – PA-NYNJ  
Michael O’Laughlin, M&R; Jelena Matic, AKRF; Christian Alexiou-Hidalgo – STV – Consultants for PA-NYNJ

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:35pm, following the Salute to the Flag. The Board Chairman requested a Moment of Silence in honor of the seven United States Marines who lost their lives in a military helicopter accident during a flight training session in Florida this morning.

The Board Chairman announced the first item on the Board agenda as:

### **Public Hearing re: The FY 2016 Preliminary Budget of the City of New York as it Relates to the Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale Communities**

District Manager Gary Giordano stated that Community Board 5 Expense Budget Priorities include the need for an additional 20 Police Officers at the 104<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct. He explained that since 1995, the 104<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct has had a 25% reduction in the number of Police Officers assigned to duty in our Board area. He said that while reported crime has been reduced significantly, there are too many tours of duty when the precinct is in alert, and patrol officers are holding several jobs.

He also reported that for the better part of a decade until the last two years, the NYC Department of Environmental Protection repairs backlog numbered approximately 5,000 citywide, and more than 2,000 of this backlog was in Queens last year. He said that the Board continually advocates for sufficient numbers of field workers to be hired to work in the sewer and water system maintenance and repairs division.

In addition, he said that other top Expense Budget requests include:

- Provide NYC Dept. of Buildings Inspectors and Plan Examiners, in Sufficient Numbers to Cope with Illegal Property Uses and Questionable Construction;
- Provide Funding for Education and Recreation Programs Through the NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development;
- Provide Funding for Essential Fire Department Services;
- Provide Needed Services for Senior Citizens;
- Continue 5 Times a Week School Garbage Collections and Recycling Collections;
- Allocate Funding for the Operation and Enhancement of the Parks Department's Forestry Division;
- Provide Sufficient Personnel for the NYC Dept. of Transportation's Traffic Safety Studies and Installations.

Regarding the Board's Capital Budget Priorities, the District Manager said that \$5 Million has been secured this year to rehabilitate Frank Principe Park on Maurice Avenue in Maspeth. In addition, capital budget funds have been secured to rehabilitate the running track in Juniper Valley Park. He thanked Council Member Elizabeth Crowley for securing the funds for both of these projects.

The District Manager reported that major sewer and water main replacement projects will be underway this year:

- Calamus Avenue btw 69 Street and 74 Street, and in 69 Street btw Calamus Avenue and 47 Avenue; and in
- Penelope Avenue and in 74 Street and other local side streets in the immediate area.

He said that both projects should help to alleviate severe street flooding conditions during heavy rainstorms.

The District Manager also reported that Capital Budget funding has been allocated to begin rehabilitating the Glendale Branch Library this year, including handicapped accessible provisions. In addition, he said that capital funding has been allocated to replace the Metropolitan Avenue Bridge at Fresh Pond Road, in Ridgewood.

Regarding the rehabilitation of the Ridgewood Reservoir, the District Manager said that capital budget funding has been allocated for a Phase 2 project to be completed in Highland Park. He encouraged everyone to visit the Reservoir to enjoy its natural beauty.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

As there were no other speakers, the Board Chairman closed the public hearing and introduced the next item on the Agenda as:

### **Presentation re: The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Tier 1) for the Cross Harbor Freight Program**

by Mark Hoffer, Vice President of the Port Authority of NY and NJ

Mark Hoffer gave a power point presentation to illustrate the options that are currently under consideration by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that are included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cross Harbor Freight Program (CHFP). He explained that the primary purpose of the CHFP is to improve the movement of freight across New York Harbor between east-of-Hudson and west-of-Hudson regions. He said that by improving the movement of goods and services across the harbor, the CHFP would provide near-term and long-term improvements to the regional freight network, reduce truck traffic congestion, improve air quality, and provide economic benefits to the greater New York metropolitan area.

Mr. Hoffer informed those present that the public comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for this project has been extended to 5pm on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015. He encouraged everyone to submit their comments in writing to the Port Authority's website at: [feedback@crossharborstudy.com](mailto:feedback@crossharborstudy.com) on or before the deadline.

Mr. Hoffer said that the public comment period on the Tier 1 DEIS began on November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014 when the document was released at [www.crossharborstudy.com](http://www.crossharborstudy.com) and made available at numerous repositories throughout the region and will continue until 5pm on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015. He said that public hearings on this project have been held in Newark, Jersey City, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Long Island – which will provide important feedback in the process to identify an alternative or alternatives that merit further review in a Tier 2 study that will be done after the Record of Decision is issued closing out the Tier 1.

He said that the issue of Cross Harbor freight movement dates back decades as increased cargo coming to the region has continued to result in worsening road conditions stemming from the region's almost total reliance on trucks to transport goods. These worsening conditions included traffic congestion, severe wear and tear on highways and interstate crossings, consumption of fossil fuels and resulting air emissions.

He said that the problem is expected to worsen over the next 20 years, given that freight movement in the region is projected to increase by 37 percent. The DEIS specifically targets the movement of freight such as commodities, raw materials, agricultural and consumer products and other industrial and finished goods. The process of developing potential solutions to the problem began with the compilation of 27 possible alternatives by Port Authority and Federal Highway Administration staff and consultant team, considering previous studies and incorporating input from public participation and stakeholders. After two rounds of screening, the DEIS identified a group of 10 "build" alternatives as the most viable. The DEIS then analyzed each of the 10 alternatives, along with a "no action" alternative, based on their ability to capture a portion of the freight traffic now moving by truck, as well as a high level consideration of potential environmental effects.

Mr. Hoffer said that the ten "build" alternatives each entail the movement of freight across New York Harbor either via barge, ferry or float, or via a rail tunnel. They are:

- An Enhanced Railcar Float Operation
- A Lift on, Lift off Float Operation
- Container Barge
- A Roll on, Roll off Float Operation
- A Truck Float
- A Truck Ferry
- A DoubleStack, DoubleTrack Rail Operation
- Rail Tunnel
- Rail Tunnel with Shuttle service
- Rail tunnel with a Chunnel service. This alternative would carry trucks through a tunnel on special rail cars, similar to the English Channel Tunnel. Trucks would be positioned on the railcars at two terminals located at the Oak Island Yard in New Jersey and the East New York Yard in Brooklyn.
- Rail Tunnel with Automated Guided Vehicle (AGV)
- Rail Tunnel with Truck Access Alternative

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

Mr. Hoffer said that the “no action” alternative assumes that none of the “build” options are implemented and that only projects already committed and programmed in regional transportation and other plans would be implemented. Since 2008, the Port Authority already has invested in ways to more efficiently move cargo throughout the region. He said that the agency has owned and operated New York New Jersey Rail, LLC, since late 2008, the only railcar float operation in New York Harbor. The operation moves cargo by both water and rail between New Jersey and markets east of the Hudson River, including New York City and Long Island. In September 2014, the agency’s Board of Commissioners approved a redevelopment of Greenville Yard – which is the western terminal of the railcar float operation and will invest in major upgrades to the facility, including the development of a new ExpressRail facility.

As he spoke, Mr. Hoffer pointed to illustrations in the power point presentation on the screen behind him.

The Board Chairman opened the floor to questions and comments from the floor.

Bob Holden said that 10 years ago, the NYC Economic Development Corporation proposed similar plans that went nowhere. He said that the New York Harbor is a world-class harbor with interconnecting waterways on both sides of Manhattan, and the outer boroughs. He said that making use of the waterways would be a lot less costly than all of the other build options that are outlined in the Tier 1 DEIS for the Cross Harbor Freight Program. And, he said that the rail harbor tunnel would result in increased truck and vehicular traffic in the outer boroughs. He asked why the waterborne options are not being utilized to the full extent.

Bob Cermeli said that truck terminals over the NY Harbor would distribute the truck traffic and freight movement much better than having rail freight terminals in the midst of residential communities in the outer boroughs.

Peter Comber said that New York has one of the best harbors in the world, which should be upgraded to accommodate the modern container ships that transport goods all over the world.

John Maier commented that of the 54 counties that are included in the DEIS, only 7 counties would derive the benefits of a rail tunnel built across New York Harbor.

Peggy O’Kane said that expanding the size of the local freight rail yard in our residential community would require taking large tracts of land away from local businesses and homeowners in our Board area through Eminent Domain proceedings.

As there were no further comments, Mark Hoffer replied that the best solution to the increasing traffic congestion in the NY metropolitan area may well be some combination of the waterborne and rail options that are included in the Tier 1 DEIS.

Board Chairman Arcuri thanked Mr. Hoffer for his informative presentation and said that the Transportation Committee will deliver the committee’s recommendation regarding this project at tonight’s meeting.

The Board Chairman welcomed local elected officials and their representatives to address the Board.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Mike Miller, David Renz thanked everyone who participated in the Valentines for Veterans Drive this year. For more information, he welcomed constituents to contact their office at (718) 805-0950, or stop by their office at 83-91 Woodhaven Boulevard.

On behalf of State Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Anne Krzyzanowski read the Assemblywoman’s statement of opposition to the proposed options in the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey’s Cross Harbor Freight Program, as per attached letter addressed to Mark D. Hoffer, Director of New Port Initiatives of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

On behalf of State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey, Mike Armstrong read the Assemblywoman’s statement in opposition to the proposed options in the Draft EIS for the Cross Harbor Freight Program. As per attached letter that is addressed to Jonathan D. McDade, Regional Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, and

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

Mark D. Hoffer, Director of New Port Initiatives in the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

On behalf of State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Neil Giannelli said that the Senator remains opposed to the conversion of the warehouse site at 78-16 Cooper Avenue in Glendale into a transitional housing facility. He said that the Senator is pushing for an alternative use for the site.

Katherine Masi said that the Department of Homeless Services has negotiated a contract with Samaritan Village to operate a transitional housing facility at this location. And, the Dept. of Buildings approved their plans, as of March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015, according to their website. The Board Chairman said that the Comptroller's office has not approved the contract, as yet. He said that he believed the Dept. of Buildings incorrectly approved the plans, and he would contact the Commissioner's office to challenge the approval.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Jeong-ah Choi announced that there will be a public hearing on ULURP application #C 150218 PSQ, for the site selection and construction of an aeration facility for aerating the East Branch and portions of Newtown Creek proper, which is required under the Combined Sewer Overflow Order of Consent to improve the water quality of Newtown Creek and its tributaries, located at 58-26 47 Street, in an M3-1 District, in Maspeth, Queens.

Board Chairman Arcuri introduced the first item on the Board Agenda as:

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Mary Parisen, Chair of Civics United for Railroad Environmental Solutions (CURES), said that for the past ten years CURES has advocated for updated technology, equipment and improvements to the freight rail transportation system. Since 2009, CURES has been advocating for the modernization of existing rail freight infrastructure and equipment in greater Long Island. We want to see scarce public funds directed toward practical solutions, so we have taken an interest in Cross Harbor planning. CURES asks you to omit the tunnel from Tier 2 planning. The focus should be on realistic planning that cleans up the currently filthy nuisance of antiquated rail freight for communities like ours that must live with it, utilizes NYC's blue highways, integrates freight and passenger rail planning, develops Build Alternatives for passenger transportation, and supports good growth that benefits New Yorkers in their neighborhoods.

Ms. Parisen said that the tunnel plan actually uses massive public subsidies for the diversion of rail freight traffic from Selkirk and Mechanicville to NYC. It would industrialize NYC neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Queens in the largely unrealistic hope that shippers will come to New York, because the rail route is shorter and cheaper. The rail tunnel has no private rail industry partners (unlike PA-NYNJ's Panamax Global Terminal and Greenville Yards in New Jersey), no plan for financing, no customers lined up, and no plan for what to do with the adverse community impacts and traffic overburden it dumps on the outer boroughs of New York City.

She said that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement freight tonnage projections are based on a 54-county area, not the reality of rail freight in greater Long Island -- where NY & Atlantic Railway works 24 hours per day and 7 days a week to hand off just a single 100-car train a day to CSX, much of it solid waste. Communities around tiny 10-acre Fresh Pond Terminal/Yard -- the bottleneck where all rail freight must come to be switched to get anywhere in greater Long Island -- are already unduly burdened by antiquated facilities, archaic equipment, and all-night operations to achieve this simple task.

She questioned whether New York City support spending \$10 billion so somebody can have a choice of routes for construction and demolition residuals to Ohio? And she said that there already are waterborne alternatives. For example, the NYC Dept. of Sanitation has entered into two 20-year contracts with Covanta to barge and burn NYC Municipal Solid Waste.

In closing, Ms. Parisen said that while the goal of the Cross Harbor Freight Program is to reduce truck traffic into New York City, the local freight rail system is already congested by the amount of freight that is being hauled daily through the Fresh Pond Rail Yard in Glendale. According to the proposed plan, an additional 16 to 21 trains a day could be hauling freight through local residential communities, including Ridgewood, Glendale, Middle Village and Maspeth.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

Dawn Scala, a Glendale resident and member of the Glendale-Middle Village Coalition, said that there have been new developments recently regarding the proposal to establish a transitional housing facility at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, in Glendale. She said that plans to convert the warehouse on the site into a homeless shelter were approved yesterday, according to the Dept. of Buildings website. And, she announced that a hearing date of April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015, was granted for the Article 78 Proceeding in State Supreme Court, which was filed by the Coalition last year in order to halt this project.

Amancia Reyes, a staff member of Unique People Services, said that their not-for-profit organization provides housing and support services for developmentally disabled adults. She said that she has been an employee in one of their homes for the past several years, at 83-34 58 Avenue in Middle Village. She said that volunteers and donations of food, or clothing items are always welcome. For more information and assistance, she welcomed calls to their office at (718) 397-5222.

Patricia Lowenhaupt, a representative of the Queens World Film Festival, announced that the 5th Annual Queens World Film Festival will take place from March 17th to 22nd at various venues in Jackson Heights and Long Island City this year. She said that the film festival kicks off at the Museum of the Moving Image in Long Island City, and includes 116 independent films this year. Flyers were distributed.

Anthony Nunziato, a member of the Maspeth Chamber of Commerce, objected to the option to build an intermodal freight facility in Maspeth that is included in the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cross Harbor Freight Program. He said that expanding the freight rail yard and its operations in the Maspeth area would have a negative impact on the local community. He requested that a public hearing be held in Maspeth to inform the public about this option.

The Board Chairman announced the next item on the Board Agenda as:

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Vincent Arcuri, Jr.**

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

### **MINUTES**

Board Chairman Arcuri asked Board members to review the minutes of the February 11, 2015 Board Meeting. John Maier made a motion to approve the Minutes, and was seconded by Katherine Masi. The minutes were accepted by voice vote.

### **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. Each Board member received a copy of the listing.

#### **New Liquor Licenses**

- 1) **Quick Stop Metro LLC** 67-32 Metropolitan Avenue, Middle Village, NY 11379

#### **New Wine and/or Beer Licenses**

- 1) **Esko Deli Corp.** 50-00 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 2) **Mally's 2 Antojitos Mexicanos Corp.** 602 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

#### **Wine and/or Beer License Renewals**

- 1) Karpenisi Donut Shop Inc. d/b/a **Fame Diner** 69-67 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 2) Tocojo, Inc. d/b/a **Three Sons Pizzeria** 57-27 61 Street, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 3) **Antica Trattoria** in Fresh Inc. 68-10 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 4) **Jie Zhou Er, Inc.** 67-11 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385

## Demolition Notices

The Board Chairman said that no demolition notices were received at the Board office this month. He asked Board members to remain vigilant and to advise the Board 5 staff about any questionable construction work in the area, so they can investigate further.

Regarding the proposed transitional housing facility at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, the Board Chairman said that he believes the most recent set of alteration plans submitted to the Dept. of Buildings was approved in error. He said that he plans to contact the Queens Borough Commissioner's office tomorrow morning in order to request that this set of alteration plans be audited for compliance with NYC Building Codes. He also pointed out that the contract to operate a transitional housing facility at this location was signed by the Commissioner of the NYC Dept. of Homeless Services and Samaritan Village. Their contract has not yet been reviewed and approved by the NYC Comptroller's Office.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Zoning and Land Use Review Committee

#### Walter Sanchez

Mr. Sanchez reported the following IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted to the N.Y. City Planning Commission and the Dept. of City Planning, by the N.Y. City Dept. of Environmental Protection and the Dept. of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the site selection and construction of an aeration facility on property located at 58-26 47 Street (Block 2601, Lot 25), in Maspeth, Queens:

**WHEREAS**, Community Board 5, Queens conducted a Public Hearing regarding this application on Wednesday, February 11, 2015, shortly after 7:30pm. The hearing was conducted in the cafeteria of Christ the King High School, located at 68-02 Metropolitan Avenue in Middle Village, Queens. At this hearing, Mr. Ray Meshkati, the Project Engineer for the proposed aeration facility, explained that this facility is part of an overall project the goal of which is to increase the water oxygen content of the creek in an effort to meet state and federal mandates.

Mr. Meshkati gave a power point presentation that included recent photographs of the site, along with renderings of the proposed aeration facility on the Newtown Creek waterway. He explained that several aeration facilities are required to raise creek oxygen levels, which are near zero at the east end of the waterway. Mr. Meshkati stated that increasing the oxygen content would serve to eliminate most of the heavy sulfur dioxide levels. He said that the subject 1.64 acre site on 47 Street is located approximately 150 feet north of Grand Avenue, in the industrial area of Maspeth, and that the site is currently City-owned. He explained that this particular project includes plans for the installation of 6 pipelines that fan out into the creek from the proposed facility, and that these pipes are the mechanism used to pump air into the water.

Mr. Meshkati stated that the proposed aeration facility will occupy 4,900 square feet on the Creek. He pointed to the illustration which indicated that trees would be planted along the creek, along 47 Street at this aeration facility, and in the grassy area at this address. He said that the construction of this proposed aeration facility is estimated to begin in 2015.

At this hearing, Board members asked about provisions being made to ensure public waterfront access at the proposed aeration facility site. Mr. Meshkati, Project Engineer, replied that public access to Newtown Creek at this site would be difficult because of the 15 foot drop from the creek bank down to the water. He said that, since there are no plans to staff this facility to any extent, there may be safety risks. Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri objected to the fact that the presentation given at the hearing does not include any waterfront access for the public at this site. Richard Huber, Board 5 Queens member, asked about the noise level of the aeration equipment that would be at this location. Mr. Meshkati replied that the pumps will operate at approximately 90 decibels. He said the pumps will be installed inside the facility, where sound proofing will be installed to buffer the sound; and,

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

WHEREAS, Zoning and Land Use Review Committee of Community Board 5, Queens met to consider this Application on Monday, March 9, 2015. Eric Landau, NYC DEP Associate Commissioner for Public Affairs, and Rafael Betenit, DEP Project Manager, attended this meeting. Mr. Betenit gave a power point presentation regarding the proposed aeration facility. He stated that, in 2004, NYC DEP entered into a consent agreement with the N.Y. State Dept. of Environmental Conservation, to improve dissolved oxygen levels in Newtown Creek, and that the minimum goal is 3 mg. of dissolved oxygen per liter of water. It was explained that currently the oxygen content in the subject area of the creek is near zero.

Several committee members asked about plans for public access to the creek at this location. Mr. Landau explained that, in the short term, NYC DEP, as part of this proposed project, plans to install benches along the 47 Street portion of this property, and that DEP would likely be willing to provide a pathway to the creek and along the creek when nearby properties have developed publically accessible waterfront spaces. Mr. Landau stated that the NYC DEP budget is virtually totally funded through water and sewer charges.

Committee members said that on the Brooklyn side of the creek there is waterfront access and a promenade on the creek, and said that they would like to see waterfront access at the 58-26 47 Street planned aeration facility site, as part of the proposed project. It was pointed out that there is a nearby unofficial 58 Road creek access area. Paul Kerzner, a CB5Q Board member, said that DEP could have a liability issue by providing creek access. Mr. Sanchez questioned whether the aeration facility planned will actually cause odors and whether this aeration plan is just a band aid approach to deal with the problems of combined sewer overflows into the creek. After some additional discussion, Walter Sanchez, Committee Chairperson, offered the following Recommendation:

We are in favor of the proposed Aeration Facility Project at 58-26 47 Street, in Maspeth, Queens. However, it does not include a reasonably prompt approach for community access to the site and to the waterfront at this location. We feel that the entire site can be secured with high fencing so that people will not trespass, and a community organization could adopt the space. A reasonably prompt community access plan for the site would allow change from no public access to potentially outstanding community use of a portion of the property and the waterfront. Members of the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee voted - 7 - in favor, -0- opposed and -0- abstaining for this recommendation.

After a general discussion of the matter, Board Chairman Arcuri requested a Roll Call vote on the committee's recommendation, which carried unanimously by a vote of – 27 – in favor; - 8 – opposed; - 0 – abstaining; and - 0 – not voting.

## **Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee**

### **Vincent Arcuri, Jr.**

Board Chairman Arcuri gave the floor to John Maier, Co-Chairman of the Public Transit Services Committee, to give their Committee Report.

John Maier reported that the committee met with representatives of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to discuss their proposal to amend the B26 and Q58 Bus routes in the vicinity of the Myrtle Avenue/Wyckoff Avenue/Palmetto Street transit hub in Ridgewood.

He said that the committee recommends adopting the amended bus routes in order to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety at this busy 6-corner intersection.

As there was no further discussion on the matter, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee's recommendation, which carried unanimously by a vote of – 34– in favor; - 0 – opposed; - 0 – abstaining; and - 0 – not voting.



## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

Mr. Maier also reported that the committee reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Cross Harbor Freight Program and recommends the following Resolution and Recommendations:

“The Transportation Services Committee of Community Board 5, Queens met on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 to discuss the Tier I Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Cross Harbor Freight Plan. There are 11 options presented in this program plan, including No Action Alternative, five Waterborne Alternatives (with implementation estimates ranging from \$100 Million to \$600 Million, and five Tunnel Alternatives (with implementation estimates ranging from \$7 Billion to \$11 Billion). It is the general consensus of the Transportation Committee that the current options of the Cross Harbor DEIS are inadequate for a variety of reasons.

“Committee members spoke at length regarding the fact that our communities are already overwhelmed with the current freight being transported by rail, since all freight transported by rail to and from Long Island (Queens, Nassau and Suffolk) has to come through the Fresh Pond Rail Yard which is at the geographic heart of Community District 5, Queens. This small rail yard, and much of the nearby tracks, support rail car sorting operations done all night long in very close proximity to the residential communities that comprise large portions of our Board 5 area. Not only are these sorting operations very loud, and their seismic impacts felt by the surrounding communities, but they are achieved at the expense of our residents’ health by the use of outmoded and highly polluting locomotives. New York and Atlantic Railway (NY & Atlantic) runs these freight rail operations, under a lease agreement with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s Long Island Rail Road Division (LIRR), using the western section of the Montauk line in Queens that the LIRR has ceded to NY & Atlantic for this purpose. Because of daytime rail track usage constraints throughout the rest of the LIRR system, the great majority of freight rail operations in our communities are undertaken from late in the evening into the early morning hours.

“Committee members discussed the fact that the communities we work to stabilize and improve are already suffering due to freight rail operations that produce one full freight train daily. This daily effort results in approximately a 100-car train comprised of putrescible waste, construction and demolition debris, and empty cars used for hauling stone and other aggregates that then travels to upstate New York, where the train can navigate across the Hudson River from a classification yard in Selkirk, NY. Considering the extensive community impacts this current level of rail freight service has, our committee questions how one can justify the expense and impacts outlined in many of the build alternatives in the DEIS. In the case of tunnel build alternatives outlined in the DEIS, we could see increased freight rail traffic from New Jersey to Brooklyn that bring up to an additional 20-25 trains onto the LIRR Bay Ridge Rail line each day, with 16-21 of these trains passing into the Fresh Pond Rail Yard. Considering the negative impacts that one single train causes each day, this magnitude of growth is unsustainable and would pose a literal nightmare of hardships for the residents of our Community Board area.

“Furthermore, projections related to a freight rail tunnel in the DEIS indicate that, when trains are processed at various yards in Brooklyn and Queens, there would be a tremendous number of truck trips generated with freight from the rail cars. The increased truck trips generated by the tunnel alternatives would flood our city streets, and in many cases be utilizing roadways that are not built for it. Much of this truck traffic would not be destined for New York City location, but would simply be moving the tractor trailer traffic from Hudson River vehicular crossings to the outer boroughs, while increasing that burden in the worst case scenarios presented by the DEIS. The even larger question that needs to be answered is that of demand – there currently is no known significant demand by those shipping goods to utilize the rail network of Long Island. Current attempts by New York State and NY & Atlantic Railway have shown this to be a bleak horizon with only waste export as a demonstrated growth area in the last decade. Furthermore, because none of the tunnel alternatives examine a combined passenger and freight alternative, Community Board 5, Queens cannot support any of the rail tunnel alternatives. We feel that our transportation dollars should be spent improving passenger service in and out of New York City, to remove commuters from cars and alleviate highway congestion, not for freight rail markets where the demand is very questionable.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on March 11, 2015

“Of the ten build options presented in the DEIS, the use of container float operations is preferred and its utilization encouraged by Community Board 5, Queens. The underutilization of New York City’s “Blue Highways” for freight movement is seen as an unfortunate missed opportunity. The fact that much of New York City is comprised of islands makes this approach very realistic, and an environmentally sound alternative that would better address the industrial needs of our Board area on its western boundary with the Newtown Creek.

“Given the limited resources available for infrastructure projects at the current time, Community Board 5, Queens believes that other proposals should take priority over the options presented in the current Tier 1 DEIS for the Cross Harbor Freight Program.

“Whatever alternatives are selected, the communities in the CB5Q area are all too likely to get more rail and truck traffic. Therefore, in the Final Tier 1 EIS, the following considerations need to be included:

- Full study and disclosure of local community impacts all along the freight rail line, at freight yards and at freight terminals being considered or in current use.
- Intelligent planning of any proposed new facilities, so that they have the least negative impact on surrounding communities.
- Commitments for technological upgrades, (i.e. new locomotives, tracks and rails) that reduce community health, environmental and quality of life burdens.”

As there was no further discussion on the matter, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee recommendation, which then carried unanimously by a vote of – 33 – in favor; - 0 – opposed; - 0 – abstaining; and - 1 – not voting.

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 9:45pm.