

## DeCillis, Michael

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**From:** Aaron F. <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 27, 2022 6:09 PM  
**To:** Public Testimony  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony from today's Queens hearing  
**Attachments:** map-image (4).png

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Good afternoon Commissioners and staff. My name is Aaron Fernando and I am a lifelong resident of Richmond Hill, Queens. And last year, I was the field director for a city council campaign along the Hillside Avenue corridor. Today, I want to speak about both of these communities and why they should be kept whole under this year's redistricting maps.

Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park have formed a single immigrant community community of interest for decades. They are defined by rows of single and two family homes that have increasingly been inhabited by Indo-Caribbean and Punjabi-Americans. The area's borders are approximately Hillside Avenue and Forest Park to the north, Woodhaven Blvd to the west, the Belt Parkway to the south, and the Van Wyck Expressway to the east.

Unfortunately, for the last decade this community has been divided into three council districts: 28, 29, and 32. While the bulk of this community of interest is in District 28, the district crosses the Van Wyck to connect to Jamaica and Rochdale Village. The Van Wyck is a clear geographic boundary that should not be crossed in redistricting as much as possible. Meanwhile, various parts of Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park are connected to neighborhoods as far flung as Breezy Point and Forest Hills, neighborhoods that share almost nothing in common with one another.

Meanwhile, the Hillside Corridor refers to the immigrant communities that fall along Hillside Avenue in Eastern Queens. Anyone who has drove along Hillside or sat down at a restaurant there understands the rich Bangladeshi, Indian, Punjabi, and Guyanese-American communities that have settled there. The area's borders are approximately the Grand Central Parkway to the north, the Van Wyck to the west, Jamaica Ave to the south, and the Nassau County border to the east, although these borders are not exact. The neighborhoods and portions of neighborhoods included are Briarwood, Jamaica Hills, Hollis, Queens Village, Bellerose, Glen Oaks, and Floral Park.

Currently, the Hillside Corridor is also split between 3 council districts, 23, 24, and 27. South Asians are split in two at 188th St; District 23 connects Punjabi voters to Bayside and Douglaston, District 24 connects Bangladeshi voters to Kew Gardens Hills, and District 27 connects Indo-Caribbean voters to St. Albans. South Asian neighborhoods should be kept within a single district, not split into 3.

I have submitted a citywide council map to the commission that keeps these South Asian communities together. My proposed District 32 encompasses all of Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park, and Bangladeshi areas of Ozone Park. It is 35% Asian, a plurality. In addition, my proposed District 19 encompasses the entirety of the Hillside Corridor. It is 45% Asian, a near majority.

Both these districts keep neighborhoods whole as well as South Asian communities of interest, allowing them to finally elect the candidates of their choice. I would be happy to take any other questions and further explain the details of my proposed map.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Aaron F. <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, Jun 3, 2022 at 6:49 PM

Subject: Proposal citywide council redistricting map

To: <[PublicTestimony@redistricting.nyc.gov](mailto:PublicTestimony@redistricting.nyc.gov)>, <[NYCRedistricting@redistricting.nyc.gov](mailto:NYCRedistricting@redistricting.nyc.gov)>

Good evening,

Apologies for my late submission, but I've been working on my Council map proposal for the entire city. I believe it effectively preserves communities of interests, better matches the city's diversifying demographics, and unites divided neighborhoods.

An image of the proposal is attached.

Dave's Redistricting: <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap:92ad4ff2-68fa-4fe5-bfe4-c54bef6781c3>

Spreadsheet data: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1viB6rK-2ikzJqRgrnL6Ms8\\_D9PTJ5kUyfspwN8xFKIGs/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1viB6rK-2ikzJqRgrnL6Ms8_D9PTJ5kUyfspwN8xFKIGs/edit#gid=0)

Written summary: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hVgs72XR72tdAGYaplG5Ri8Ufujf3EW7YWSAkGDMvXk/edit>

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if you have any questions. Good luck with your round of maps!

Best,  
Aaron