



THE CITY OF NEW YORK 2022-2023 DISTRICTING COMMISSION

253 Broadway, 4th Floor

New York, NY 10007

PUBLIC HEARING AND PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, September 22, 2022

11:01 a.m. - 12:25 p.m.

Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street, New York, NY 10007

Attendees:

Districting Commission Members:

Dennis M. Walcott, Chair	Hon. Marilyn D. Go	Michael Schnall (Remote)
Kevin John Hanratty	Maria Mateo, Esq.	Joshua Schneps
Lisa Sorin	Msgr. Kevin Sullivan	Kai-Ki Wong
Maf Misbah Uddin	Kristen Johnson	Gregory W. Kirschenbaum (Remote)
Marc Wurzel	Yovan Samuel Collado	Dr. Darrin K. Porcher (Remote)

Staff:

John Fleteau, Ph.D., Executive Director, New York City Districting Commission

Joseph Maligno, Deputy Executive Director, New York City Districting Commission

Grace Pyun, General Counsel, New York City Districting Commission

Minutes by:

A. Michael DeCillis, Esq.

The Chair convened the public meeting regarding a vote on the proposed revised plan. Joseph Maligno, Deputy Executive Director, New York City Districting Commission conducted the roll call for the public meeting and a quorum of Commissioners was present.

The Chair made remarks regarding the commitment of the Commissioners to the districting process and thanked them for their participation.

The first order of business was to hear the Executive Director's report from Dr. John Flateau, Executive Director, New York City Districting Commission. Dr. Flateau read a narrative of the district-by-district report of the proposed revised plan of the fifty-one council districts, highlighting changes that have been made. Dr. Flateau concluded his report and noted that the proposed revised plan contained thirty-eight majority minority districts.

The Chair then asked for a motion to call for a vote on the proposed revised plan. Commissioner Maf Misbah Uddin made the motion to call the vote, and Commissioners Joshua Schneps, Kristen Johnson, Lisa Sorin, and Dr. Darrin K. Porcher seconded the motion.

Commissioner Michael Schnall voted no. Commissioner Schnall discussed the lack of adequate notice and schedule times for meetings and mapping sessions. Commissioner Schnall also opposed the proposed changes to the map where Staten Island crosses over to Brooklyn stating that doing so negatively affected district representation in the Bronx. Commissioner Schnall also opposed the limitations of the 5% population deviation, and discussed the limitations of drawing districts in general with a newly drawn South Brooklyn district and intentionally underpopulated districts.

The Chair voted yes.

Commissioner Yovan Samuel Collado voted yes.

Commissioner Hon. Marilyn Go voted yes. Commissioner Go stated that equitable proportionality is important to the districting process and democracy. She further stated that while she had received a request to delay the vote, the maps were made with many hours of consultations with Commissioners and mappers, and with the input of over nine thousand New York residents, and that she was confident in the process to move forward.

Commissioner Kevin John Hanratty voted no, stating that the proposed revised plan presents adverse effects on certain communities of interest, and certain competitive districts.

Commissioner Maria Mateo, Esq. voted no. Commissioner Mateo stated there has been public comments from Dominican residents made to her, specifically in district 2 and district 7, who are concerned that the proposed revised plan would dilute the Dominican vote.

Commissioner Joshua Schneps voted no. Commissioner Schneps cited the process as the main reason for his no vote.

Commissioner Lisa Sorin voted no. Commissioner Sorin stated that while she wants to move on in the process, she wants to hear more from the Hispanic community, and to have further discussions with other commissioners.

Commissioner Msgr. Kevin Sullivan voted yes. Commissioner Sullivan stated that voting on the proposed revised plan is not a vote to approve the revised plan, but part of the process to move the maps to the New York City Council for their consideration.

Commissioner Kai-Ki Wong voted no. Commissioner Wong stated that zoning districts should be considered when mapping new district lines, as zoning affects population in these proposed districts.

Commissioner Maf Misbah Uddin voted yes. Commissioner Uddin discussed how over nine thousand people testified during the process, and that now is the time to send the proposed revised plan to the New York City Council for consideration.

Commissioner Kristen Johnson voted yes. Commissioner Johnson discussed the difficulty in reconciling testimony with the legal requirements of redistricting.

Commissioner Gregory W. Kirschenbaum voted yes, stating that now is the time to move the revised plan to the New York City council for consideration.

Commissioner Dr. Darrin K. Porcher voted no. Commissioner Porcher stated he had concerns about Staten Island, South Brooklyn and Manhattan, and stated that there were challenging issues that were introduced.

Commissioner Marc Wurzel voted no. Commissioner Wurzel stated that there were several improvements in the revised preliminary plan but said that the Commission should not rush the drawing of the maps. The Commissioner further stated that the new state law regarding the 5% population deviation made the redistricting difficult and resulted in more problems. He stated that Southern Brooklyn, district 8, as well as other communities were adversely affected by the proposed revised plan. He also states that the proposed revised plan negatively affects “fair fight” competitive districts. The Commissioner also stated that he was disappointed that maps were shared with media outlets prior to a Commission vote on the proposed revised plan.

The Vote tally for the vote to send the proposed revised plan to the New York City Council for consideration was 8 votes no, 7 votes yes. The Chair stated that as a result of the vote the proposed revised plan would not be submitted to the New York City Council.

The next order of business was Dr. Lisa Handley discussing her Voting Rights Act review of the revised plan. Dr. Handley stated that the proposed revised plan that was not approved by the Districting Commission complied with Voting Rights Act standards. Dr. Handley then proceeded to discuss minority majority districts in the proposed plan, and opportunity districts.

Commissioner Marc Wurzel asked a question about how many majority minority districts there were in the proposed revised plan. Dr. Handley stated that there were nineteen majority minority districts, and that they were all opportunity districts. Dr. Handley also stated that there were plurality districts as well, that may not be opportunity districts.

Commissioner Wurzel then asked if the Commission keeps the majority minority districts, opportunity districts, and plurality districts intact in further proposed plans, will these districts still meet the requirements of the Voting Rights Act, and Dr. Handley stated it would.

The Chair then stated that any proposed plan would need to be analyzed again by Dr. Handley to ensure that the plan complied with the requirements of the Voting Rights Act.

With all business concluded, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Uddin made the motion to adjourn, Commissioner Sorin seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.