



29

28

Richmond Hill

Ozone Park

South Ozone Park

Kew Gardens Hills

Hillcrest

Jamaica Estates

Briarwood

Jamaica Hills

Kew Gardens

Jamaica Center

South Jamaica  
St. Albans

Woodhaven

Rochdale

Lindenwood

Brooklyn

Howard Beach

**LATINX, AFRICAN AMERICAN &  
SOUTH ASIANS RESCUE REDISTRICTING MISSION  
156-40 Crossbay Boulevard  
Howard Beach, NY 11414**

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9.24.22

Testimony to the New York City Redistricting Commission

Dear Commission Members,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/texas-voting-rights-redistricting.html>

Justice Dept. Files Voting Rights Suit Against Texas Over New Map

The department said the state's redistricting plan would violate the Voting Rights Act by discriminating against minority voters.

This was published in the NY Times. We have been advised to follow suit should this Commission fail to honor its moral, legal and political obligations toward us.

You will find this very instructive in your deliberations, as several organizations and individuals have confirmed their intentions to get the DOJ involved should your Commission ignore us.

Please TAKE NOTICE ACCORDINGLY!

**DON'T INSTITUTIONALIZE RACISM AND HATE CRIMES BY  
PUTTING HOWARD BEACH & SOUTHEAST QUEENS  
TOGETHER WITH RICHMOND HILL, OZONE PARK AND**

## **SOUTH OZONE PARK IN THE SAME LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT(S)!**

We are a community based organization with various offices in Queens, where we address various issues facing the Latino, Black and South Asian communities. Our membership consists of hundreds of religious, community, business and other leaders. We are informed that we are a protected class, entitled to representation by virtue of being the quintessential community of interest with common characteristics, issues, problems and solutions.

We are in agreement with the following attached maps, and submit them accordingly for your consideration, while we urge you to collectively agree on and implement the following:

**(1) Implement the historic State Assembly Map "AL" as a unifying, compact and contiguous district, which unites the Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park communities under a single City Council District, with the additional population, and was the single thing agreed upon by both Republicans and Democrats on the NYS IRC. Every member must approve and incorporate this, and add in the additional population to this core district to meet the population required for a Council district. This historical, bipartisan agreement is instructive.**

**(2) Unite the Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park communities into a single City Council District also, exclude the outlier, distinctly different communities of Howard Beach and SE**

**Queens, and unite the latter in their own, multiple Black community of interest districts. There is too much tension and irreconcilable differences in these communities, with nothing in common- demographically, heritage, housing, needs, geography. No one wants to divide communities, especially given your mandate and high expectations, the billions of tax dollars spent on this effort, and the groundbreaking initiatives this Commission has espoused. It will be a disgrace for all of you, and us, if you fail to agree, indeed, unlawful. Do your job, enough already with 2 sets of maps! Agree on this!**

This Commission must take geographic, historic and demographic notice that Howard Beach and Hamilton Beach belong more naturally to a different City Council District, and aligns more with the Caucasian (White) identity of the Rockaways, Breezy Point, Roxbury, Rockaway Park, Rockaway Beach, Hammels, Arverne, Neponsit, Belle Harbor, Edgemere, Bayswater, Long Beach, etc. while the area east of the Van Wyck Expressway belongs more naturally to City Council Districts of 27, 31. While you have complied with the former, you have omitted the latter.

You must also take judicial/public notice that people of color are not welcome in Howard Beach and Hamilton Beach, which is predominantly White Italian. Multiple hate crimes, some resulting in murder, have been notoriously and undeniably perpetrated against people of color there, for decades, and, unfortunately still continues. Google it!

Moreover, elected officials routinely take the side of the more affluent white Howard Beach residents, and Black communities in SE Queens, both over the immigrant, minority people of color who live in neighboring Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park. This has been documented in several cases in the last few decades.

**YOU CANNOT INSTITUTIONALIZE RACISM AND HATE CRIMES BY PUTTING HOWARD BEACH AND SE QUEENS OVER THE VAN WYCK EXPRESSWAY WITH RICHMOND HILL, OZONE PARK AND SOUTH OZONE PARK TOGETHER IN THE SAME LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT. YOU WILL BE IN FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF YOUR SWORN DUTIES!**

In several cases, minority homeowners lost their properties and life dreams due to systemic racism, elected and governmental officials. White Council members Joe Addabbo, Eric Ulrich, Queens DA Richard Brown and Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, abused and manipulated the full force of city agencies like the Department of Buildings, the Environmental Control Board, the Department of Highways and other agencies to harass, oppress and hound them out of their homes and life savings in Howard Beach:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=drTSTWFYZ24>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYSxxj8CGdg>

<https://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/nypd-probing-police-race-bias-howard-beach-article-1.237227>

<http://joeaddabboagenda.blogspot.com/2007/11/gounden-family-asked-community-leaders.html>

<https://www.blackstarnews.com/us-politics/justice/kangaroo-court-queens-district-attorneys-racist-vendetta-trial-of>

<https://qns.com/2013/02/star-of-queens-kris-gouden/>

<https://www.blackstarnews.com/ny-watch/crime/vendetta-by-queens-da-brown-against-kris-gouden-shows-need-for-ccrb>

<https://www.blackstarnews.com/ny-watch/politics/kris-gouden-versus-new-york-city-agencies-this-man-needs-serious-help.html>

[https://www.qchron.com/editions/south/ramblersville-incident-brings-out-protesters/article\\_fe2b0ed0-9f92-5f53-b6fc-67a7284e4984.html](https://www.qchron.com/editions/south/ramblersville-incident-brings-out-protesters/article_fe2b0ed0-9f92-5f53-b6fc-67a7284e4984.html)

Only a few months ago, people of color, most of whom are from these minority communities of Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park communities, who were attending a rally in support of a South Asian candidate for City Council 32, Felicia Singh, were harassed, threatened that they were going to be shot with guns, and were hounded out of these White areas. See Rockaway Wave newspaper article attached. You cannot sugar coat, trivialize, nor ignore this.

It is not right, nor legally or morally acceptable, to divide communities that are one, like the Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park communities. They are one and the same, in identity, history, customs, heritage, common issues that affect them, and rely on the same solutions to those issues. To properly address their problems, we respectfully demand that this Commission redraw these marginalized communities into a single City Council. This is a glaring, unpardonable error!

More importantly, depriving the Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park communities of a common, logical City Council seat will be an aberration. We give you notice that we, reluctantly, intend to pursue legal redress as we cannot see, and are advised, that no Court should agree with such arbitrary, capricious and unreasonable actions of perpetrating a race war amongst our communities. We have enough on the record to prove incompetence, retribution and/or *mala fides* on the Commission's part for this blunder, we feel so strongly about this error! Future non-partisan commissions will also be in jeopardy, because you will have failed NY City.

Moreover, there is tension and differences that go to the heart of redistricting principles when you choose to divide communities with uniting heritage, culture, ethnicities and commonalities, such as the South Asian, Latinx, African Americans and Caribbean immigrants, who live in the Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park communities. You are suppressing and stifling those communities from growing, and having a voice, unconscionably, which will be at odds with your charter, duties and mandate.

You must all embrace the opportunity to stop hate and racism and unite these like communities under different City Council Districts, having their own voices, using your unprecedented mandate.

**In conclusion** the communities of South Ozone Park, Ozone Park, and Richmond Hill must be united under one City Council District, and it behooves

you, as an independent redistricting commission, to unite them, in accordance with your mandate and the law. Thank you.

Eduardo Velez (Sgd)

PRESIDENT