

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Good evening and welcome to the Community Board 1 April board meeting. I'm Evie, the Chair. I'd like to start off by welcoming our brand-new Community Board members who are here tonight. Raise your hand if you're a new board member. I would like you to introduce yourself before we get into the presentation. Just so everybody knows who you are. Speak into the microphone. We can go around starting with Mario. Just say your name and maybe a sentence about yourself.

**Mario Vergara:** I am really excited to be here.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** You can tell us a little bit more, if you want to. Maybe, what you do - any community involvement - it's up to you.

**Mario Vergara:** I lived in the neighborhood for seven years. I'm originally from Miami, Florida. I lived in New York for about half my life so far.

**Quinella Williams:** I live on Steinway and 38th Street - the same building where the Dollar Tree is. I'm lucky. I've been in Astoria and Long Island City and Queensbridge and AOR housing and now on Steinway since 1977.

**Cristian Batres:** I live on 28th and 33rd Street. I grew up in Astoria - 34th & 34th. I'm a union representative for the union carpenters.

**Jaqueline Ibarra:** I was born and raised in Queens. I am proud to be from Woodside. I live in the Boulevard Gardens Complex. I have a Civic Advocacy background - consulting background. I used to work for the Queens Council on the Arts. Now I am a consultant and a proud Public School parent. My daughter is graduating this June from PS 70.

**Patricia Mahecha:** I live in Astoria.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Welcome all. We do have two other new board members who aren't here but may be on their way. When they arrive, we will make sure they are introduced.

We are going to get started because we do have a full agenda. We are going to get started with a presentation of ADA compliance of the 114th Precinct.

#### **Presentation**

**ADA Compliance for 114<sup>th</sup> Precinct** accessibility upgrades and minor renovations at: 34-16 Astoria Boulevard South, Queens, NY 11103 (See attached) Presenters: Steve Reiner, Michael Russo, Karina Laferriere, Tomasz Adach, Shannon Stapleton.

**Daniel Aliberti:** I have a few questions - one is, you said that you're going to do the outside, when will you be doing the inside

**Answer:** When they start construction, they have to work in a way that doesn't upset operations because it's a critical agency that has to maintain their hours and their ability to do their job within the precinct. We can't say if they would do the outside first. They definitely would have to do the ramp in the spring, summer and fall, but not the winter. So that would be scheduled. Whatever is best for the operation of the police department. It's all about scheduling. They would try to make it so that they make the least amount of noise as possible. That's an issue that we would deal with the building department.

**Daniel Aliberti:** The time frame that you mentioned is for the entire project or just the outside?

**Answer:** Both the exterior and the interior are part of the same project. The phasing is going to be different, but the project is going to start in late 2025, probably early 2026 and it's going to last maybe two to three years. It is going to address all interior and exterior components.

**Daniel Aliberti:** You mentioned the outside but on the inside, what type of renovations are you doing? Are you changing the doors? Do you make the doors wider?

**Answer:** The bathrooms are getting upgraded. The doors are getting upgraded. The main component is an ADA elevator that provides access to the second floor and to the basement. Some of the bathrooms are getting upgraded ADA bathrooms are being provided on all floors.

**Amin Mehedi:** Why aren't you going for a permanent ramp? It would be much easier for the people to go in because the door is much bigger. One side could be permanently wheelchair accessible and it would be much easier for operations for the employees and for the public and people wouldn't have to wait. Why wouldn't you do that?

**Answer:** The main entrance is what people are used to, but we are giving an option of both. Normally, the one on the side is for police use - most of the time. We already have a ramp there but it is not ADA compliant. We were able to get the funding to do this so we think it's most cost effective to do both. Remember, that we don't have much room at the front entrance, so we have to use what we can. This type of a lift is the best solution we could come up with.

**Jean Marie D'Alleva:** Are you eliminating the staircase completely?

**Answer:** No. We're not touching the staircase.

**Katie Ellman:** I have a question and then a comment. How will the visitors to the precinct who need access because of ability, let the police department know they are there? There is usually an officer outside, but if it's raining, how will it work? Is there going to be an intercom?

**Answer:** Yes. There is usually an officer in front of most precincts. The new doors are equipped with an accessible operator arm and an activation plate. If somebody in a wheelchair approaches s/he can just push the activation plate and the doors automatically open. The same thing will happen with the wheelchair lift. The rear entrance with the gate will be the same.

**Katie Ellman:** Is there a second set of doors? If so, how will that work?

**Answer:** Yes, there is a second set of doors and they will be wired. As soon as the wheelchair lift is activated the second set of doors opens.

**Katie Ellman:** I think it's great that the precinct is going to be accessible to the entire community in this way, but outside the precinct the sidewalk is a mess. If you are in a wheelchair, there are so many tipping points. Also, the side streets around where the cops are parking - you can't get a wheelchair down those sidewalks to get to the precinct. For this to be a truly accessible space and for the neighbors that live there, I think a holistic approach to making it truly accessible would be great.

**Answer:** Yes. Thank you for that point. We will have to investigate that.

**Adam Fisher-Cox:** I just wanted to very quickly re-emphasize that comment that this is all well and good, but you cannot access these streets because of the way that employees are parking on these streets. There's often far less than the 8 ft that's required. It is to the point where you couldn't get a wheelchair through there. So if you can't access the sidewalks, you can't access the building. I would say that's a necessary part of making this building ADA compliant.

**Cristian Batres:** Are you guys planning to hire any union labor or any local hiring paying area standards?

**Answer:** Yes. This project will easily require that the contractor has to hire 90% union people.

**Cristian Batres:** So, it's going to fall into a PLA or it's going to be open for bidding? And local hiring so we can create more jobs for people living in Queens.

**Answer:** Yes. But it does depend on certain factors.

**Dominic Stiller:** It's ironic, but appropriate, that you're doing this ADA Improvement. I'm echoing the comments you heard before. You've got the ramps coming in and you've got the elevator coming in and I'm not surprised that you don't have any ADA parking spots outside, because you don't need them - you park all over the sidewalks already. I don't mean it to be a discussion - I just want to echo that there's an observable double standard between police personnel's ability to park illegally and the public. Until that's made equitable, I just want to mention it every time I can and hopefully you can bring this back to the powers that be and slowly you can get the police officers on the subway.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Let's try and stick to the topic. I think we can have a conversation with the Public Safety Committee about that. They are here to present the design.

**Jaqueline Ibarra:** Will the design of the lift pose a significant obstruction along the sidewalk for pedestrians?

**Answer:** The wheelchair lift will be within the entry vestibule. They're moving the doors to the right when you're looking at the front of the building. They show a 5ft turning radius here, and lift will be as far away from the doors as possible. When the lift is closed, it's less than 6 inches away from the wall. The main lift is inside the building so it doesn't affect anything.

**Richard Khuzami:** I might have missed this but, this construction will block off that entrance. Is there a secondary entrance that people will be using? How long a time period are we looking at?

**Answer:** It will take at least two years because of the elevator. As far as egress, we're supposed to have two means of egress out of the first floor. We do this work often and we try to have everything as prefabricated as possible and install at times when there are the least number of people using it. That's the best way I can put it.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** So just to summarize, you're asking for a letter of support from the board to go to the Public Design Commission. We will vote on that during the business section of the meeting. Thank you so much for your presentation.

**Answer:** I would just make one comment about the sidewalk. I would be in contact with the City Councilperson about that. A Lot of times, funding is very difficult to get. It may be the Department of Transportation that has to deal with the sidewalk. It was a good point brought up about parking so I would bring that up with your City Councilperson.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Thank you. We are going to move on now to our public hearing. We have two items. The first item is regarding 38-75 11th Street for a BSA permit. The applicants are here to present.

**Presentation**

**38-75 11<sup>th</sup> Street BSA Permit 2022-07 BZY**

BSA Application, filed on behalf of St. John Real Estate Consultant, Inc., seeking a two-year extension of a previously-granted permit to complete construction pursuant to Section 11-332 of the Zoning Resolution. The action would facilitate completion of an 11-story, 175-room hotel located on the east side of 11<sup>th</sup> Street between 38<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Avenues in Dutch Kills. (See attached) Presenters: Erick Palatnik, Elyse Foladare, Konstandinos Vorillas, Tony Raouf, Georgios Krikelis

**Corinne Wood-Haynes:** I would like to know what type of hotel is proposed. We have about 17 hotels in that same radius. Please explain to me what the purpose is of that one. I remember when the job actually shut down. That was before the other 13 hotels went up. So why are we putting this hotel across the street from the development again?

**Eric Palatnik:** Unfortunately, a hotel is one of the few uses allowed. It's a manufacturing district so you're entitled to build the hotel as of right. You don't need any special discretionary approval for it. When they started it, they were allowed to build it, so they're here to renew that. The chain that's coming in is named Yotel. They have a contract with them which we've submitted as a part of the application materials. But that was the business plan and they understand that more hotels have come in since they applied. I understand your concern.

**Corinne Wood-Haynes:** I don't feel you answered my question. You're just saying that it's going to be a hotel but I'm asking the purpose. Is it a shelter?

**Eric Palatnik:** No. The hotel is a for-profit hotel chain. There's no contract with the city. There's no intention to create a contract with the city and I'm not involved in any discussions, negotiations or anything related to a discussion with the city about a homeless shelter.

**Corinne Wood-Haynes:** We have 17 of them in that walking radius and we don't need another hotel. Nobody took care of that property while it was undeveloped. It's being housed by homeless people. Nobody is attending to it. It's an eyesore to the community and I feel now is poor timing to bring that to the table. We literally have 17 hotels. Explain to me how that's going to benefit the community.

**Gerald Caliendo:** Section 11-332 is stated in your application. Could you explain to the board what criteria the Board of Standards and Appeals is looking for you to prove to approve this case?

**Eric Palatnik:** What Gerry is referring to is that, in order for us to make the application, we have to document that we have a valid building permit and that we've entered into substantial contracts with other people, paid them money, entered into business contracts, and owed them more money. We have to demonstrate that we paid money towards the completion of the project to some degree - in this case the project is a \$23 million project and they've committed themselves to 18 million of it through contracts already. They spent \$5 million of that \$18 million in cash money already. That's the criteria that the zoning board is looking at. The same as they would look at it for you. The idea of it being that, if you started a development and something changed in the law and you don't have the ability to finish it, it would be unfair for the government to take away the right for you to finish it if you had a problem and you could show them that you've done everything in good faith, and you've tried to do it, and that you've been an honest broker. Then they - the government - has the right to grant you the ability to extend that permit. I can understand the concern that's been raised, having said all that.

**Cristian Batres:** You're talking about \$23 million. Is that private money or are you guys using any grant money from the City?

**Eric Palatnik:** It's all private money.

**Antonella Di Saverio:** What happens if we don't approve the permit extension? Could that be converted to housing?

**Eric Palatnik:** It cannot be converted to housing right now under the current zoning. That's part of the problem that was mentioned up front. It should be changed in my humble opinion. But having said that, it's not allowed right now to be used for housing. Now, if this were not approved - this is an advisory opinion to the Board of Standards and Appeals - practically speaking, the Board of Standards and Appeals will take your opinion, but more likely than not, they will reinstate the permit. Let's just say they did not reinstate the permit - the site would have to be torn down at some point by somebody, but more likely than not, if it was not reinstated it would go into a foreclosure state or bankruptcy and at that point you'd wait until somebody came along that would buy it and then develop it. But more likely than not, the way the BSA looks at it is the way that I was talking about. Gerry has the experience there, as do I, that there's been an effort made to continue on with the development.

**Stella Nicolaou:** How many years of an extension do you need and have you had commitments already from private investors to invest to complete this project?

**Eric Palatnik:** As you can imagine, the past few years have not been the best time to go get money. We have an active investor that we are hoping, by the summer, will be investing in the project. We're asking for two more years right now. I don't know if that's going to be enough time. We're going to find out when they invest and if not, we'll be making another application to come back to get more

time because the two years will not be enough time. If the investor was in right now, we'd have more than enough time. Every month that goes by gets a little closer. I may be back. Those were very good questions.

**Vanessa Jones-Hall:** As it was stated, there's a lot of hotels in that area. Many times, people come before the board talking about putting up these hotels and later on we discover they become shelters. You're stating that's not going to be the case. Unfortunately, we have discovered that is the case and the community that's affected is ours. Nothing is said in advance that this is going to happen. Those properties are not properly monitored with homeless people not getting the proper care. They are allowed to just roam through the neighborhoods with no care or guidance. That's a concern that we have, because we see this too often in a small area of many clusters of these hotels. You can stand there and say that this is the plan, but oftentimes plans become something else. Then the community is left suffering with a lot of people who have mental issues and other types of concerns that affect our quality of life.

**Thomas Wright:** Sir, when you started this you urged us to extend this because you said this property had been extended and was in the process of securing financing. I wanted to say that the procedure of securing financing would very much be as if you or I were building a hotel and we went to secure financing. You then provided that this is a Yotel ownership or owned by Yotel. I want to share with my fellow Community Board members, Yotel is a company with main shareholders that include Al Vaahar Group, Starwood Capital Group, United Investment Portal and the Kuwait Real Estate Company which, I believe, is sovereign money. My understanding is that Covid did not affect these funds. They were not looking for income. This is a conglomerate which has come into our neighborhood and has abandoned a property. I feel you're selling me a pig in a poke. Something that's in the bag, but I want to look in the bag. I don't understand why would Kuwait sovereign money and all of these other huge funds including Starwood say, "well we don't have enough money to finish the next six stories of a building we've gone halfway through and we're going to abandon it and leave it fallow" then come in. I haven't seen any proof that there is funding behind this project. I would really be interested in the game that's being played here. Has this been seen as an investment which should not have been made and that it doesn't show that it has a return after covid? Or did the money dry up due to Covid and are they looking to abandon this project and you're just here looking for an extension so that it can be sold?

**Eric Palatnik:** Those are a lot of good questions. I don't represent Yotel at all. I know nothing about any international companies or their finances. Yotel has a contract with the ownership of the property which I represent. The contract is for Yotel to occupy the building. The responsibility of ownership is to build that building. It is not Yotel's responsibility to build it. Nor it is their responsibility to provide the funding for it. It is the owner's responsibility to do that. The owner takes the contract with the companies such as Yotel, and Starwood and all the other organizations that presumably have great financial credit, and they go to a bank and they show a lending institution that the owner does have suitable credibility to develop it. I'm not involved in any of that.

**Thomas Wright:** Sir, I was a finance attorney at Presco Rose for years. I understand finance. That's why I'm questioning your introduction of facts that are now said to be extrinsic, including the ownership of the hotel - the financing of the hotel. What financing documents have you provided to show us that you have secured financing that you will receive within the next few months?

**Eric Palatnik:** We don't have any financing. That's what I'm here telling you. There is no financing in place right now.

**Thomas Wright:** I believe you introduced facts that said within the next few months you will receive financing.

**Eric Palatnik:** We're working on obtaining financing. The ownership is. They have not yet secured it.

**Thomas Wright:** You provided that you did have an investor. Is that true?

**Eric Palatnik:** No. We have no investors right now.

**Thomas Wright:** You have a potential investor?

**Eric Palatnik:** I'm representing ownership right now. I'm here representing a zoning action. I'm not involved in any negotiations of any sort.

**Thomas Wright:** Who is your client:

**Eric Palatnik:** I believe it's in the zoning application.

**Brian Hunt:** First of all, Happy Birthday Florence. I wanted to ask - so within the next 24 to 36 hours I think the new 48x 4 21A tax abatement replacement program is going to probably come into effect or be announced at some point. Is this going to affect the ability of whoever you have on deck for financing? Or is this going to have an impact whatsoever on whatever you have allocated to the project or what is left over for the project?

**Eric Palatnik:** No. Not at all. To answer the earlier question, St. John's Real Estate is the owner of the property.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** I have a question. You say the slowdown was caused by Covid and also lack of financing, but there's a stop work order on this property and there have been over 40 violations issued by ECB and other ones issued by DOB. There are many open violations. Is that contributing to the slowdown of finishing this property?

**Eric Palatnik:** No. Once they have funding they'll resolve all the violations and they'll get back in business.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** So, the stop work order doesn't prevent the building from being built?



**Eric Palatnik:** Not right now because they don't have any money to resolve the stop work orders right now. I'm not familiar with what the nature of the stop work order is. It might very well be because of the zoning change itself. I'd have to review that.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** No, it has to do with safety - construction safety.

**Eric Palatnik:** All those items would be resolved when the project gets started.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Okay. I think you're staying up there for the next presentation as well. That's item number two 27-09 40th Avenue for a Fresh certification.

#### **Presentation**

##### **27-09 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue FRESH Certification N240286ZCQ**

Application filed on behalf of Ganyer Green Market, LLC to seek a Chair Certification pursuant to Section 63-30 of the Zoning Resolution to facilitate inclusion of a 12,832 sf FRESH grocery store within a new as-of-right mixed-use development at 27-09 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Long Island City. The action would result in an additional 13,012 sf of additional floor area for residential use. (See attached). Presenter Eric Palatnik

**Quinella Williams:** What is going to be in the manufacturing space?

**Eric Palatnik:** If this is approved, it's just their offices - about 5,000 square feet. That's going to be the offices for the people that are building the buildings that have the different supermarkets. They live in Astoria and they'll use it as their offices. If the application is not approved, I don't think they have tenancies. There's about 10,000 feet more on that floor that's not yet built out, that's awaiting this approval. That's proposed to be residential, but we'll wait to see. Hopefully we get this approval. The building owner and the supermarket owner are the same people.

**Adam Fisher-Cox:** I'm a little unclear on what's able to be switched around and what's already built. One thing I'm noting, talking about creating extra floor area - potential extra residences, is there's more than double the amount of parking here than there is for actual units? I'm wondering if there's any possibility of using some of this basement area that's currently two stories of parking for the food store as well and thus making more room for residential in this first floor and creating more housing.

**Eric Palatnik:** There's no intention to do that. The reason why they provided the additional parking is they'll bring in more people as a result of it. When people go to the supermarket, they will spend more money when they come with a car. It's a very good idea and it's part of the whole national trend right now to turn parking into residential. Thank you for bringing it up

**Dominic Stiller:** I just wanted a clarification on the ability to increase by 13,000 feet should the Fresh application be approved. Keeping it simple, if it's not approved, you're saying you don't have to remove 13,000 feet, but if it is approved, you're not going to add 13,000 feet.

**Eric Palatnik:** The shell of the building - the size of the envelope - is allowed to be the way it is right now. Think of it as a file cabinet. We're not adding anymore no matter what. It's built the way it is right now and it's allowed to be that way in the current zoning. The task is to change some of the uses within the building from the manufacturing uses that give them the bonus. The way the zoning is written, if you have manufacturing, you could have more floor area. So if they eliminate it, they'll change that to the supermarket. It's just an even swap.

**Rod Townsend:** This is an area that does need grocery stores so I applaud the effort. Do these people have experience running grocery stores?

**Eric Palatnik:** Yes: They're local business people. They own Food for Health and a Matter of Health in Manhattan. They own two other supermarkets in Westchester, so they've got experience. They are dedicated business people of the Astoria type that you probably see every day in the neighborhood.

**Elizabeth Erion:** I just wanted to bring up the fact that at the committee meeting, one of the issues that came up had to do with what happens if the supermarket vacates and the additional 13,000 square feet is being used for some other purpose. What is the process that is followed?

**Eric Palatnik:** If they don't get another supermarket, the Department of Buildings and **City Planning** have the right to rescind the approval and to vacate or padlock the units in question and invalidate the Certificate of Occupancy. The applicant can then make a fully public discretionary application to **City Planning** to ask them for mercy if they've demonstrated that they are having a problem of some sort. I have not yet seen that happen, but it is a possibility. I think the law was a little shortsighted in that sense - looking towards the future of what could happen maybe not 5 years down the line but maybe 10 or 15 years down the line. But, that's the way the process plays out.

**Richard Khuzami:** I think that one of the problems with what you're saying is that, if you follow that process, I think the chances of you being able to evict the renters that are in that building are negligible, and they shouldn't be evicted it's not their fault so I really don't think that's really a viable alternative. It's not going to work in the long run.

**Raga Maddela:** You mentioned that this building is part of the way done. If it's already being lived in, are you able to speak to how affordable the housing is in this building?

**Eric Palatnik:** It is already completed. It is not occupied. There's no Certificate of Occupancy for it yet. There are sales going on for condominiums. I haven't been told what the prices are. There is nothing under any State, City or Federal subsidy program for the development. It was all built using private money and there was no tax abatement utilized for it, so there is no affordable or MIH housing within it. It's a market rate.

**End of questions.**

**Colin Ryan Representative:** I just wanted to touch on two things. First: City of Yes for Housing Opportunity - I just want to share with everybody that it is going to be entering public referral in May. I'm prepared and committed to be giving two presentations - one to the Land Use Committee and one to the board. I'm always present at these board and Land Use Committee meetings, so if there's any follow-up questions, I'll be happy to take them. If I don't know the answers, I'll be able to come back and answer them for you at a later time. I'll be working with Liz and Gerry to schedule when those presentations are going to be. I also want to mention that there's going to be an info session tomorrow at 6:30. You can either register online through our website or I can send another link to Florence. There's also going to be a recording so you can watch it later on YouTube. We have a lot of resources online outside of that. There's an illustrated guide, which I know the Land Use Committee has already started looking at, which is a much shorter version than our annotated text. I encourage folks who are not zoning text savvy to look through it. It is very comprehensible.

**Ethan Lowens:** Is this separate and apart from the presentation we got a couple of months ago about a different City of Yes.

**Colin Ryan:** City of Yes is a three-part proposal. There's carbon neutrality, which came last year around this time; Economic Opportunity, which was in the fall and we're in our last section, so congratulations everybody we're almost there.

**Ethan Lowens:** Would the housing one involve rezoning areas that are not zoned residential to become residential?

**Colin Ryan:** No. These proposals are not rezoning anywhere, currently. These are just creating more tools for us to create a little bit more housing throughout the city. I will get into the specifics of that in May.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** I'm going to recommend that all board members come to the May 8th Land Use Committee meeting because we're going to be delving into that there. Even if you're not on the committee, you're encouraged to come so you can hear some of the discussions.

**Gerald Caliendo:** The elephant in the room is ancillary dwelling units where people can convert their garages, basement or cellar, into an apartment. Just thinking about that, what is the other legality to that relative to the building department? Are you dealing with the Building Department as an agency? People look at that law and think, "oh I can convert my garage", but what are the ramifications? What's the code part of it as opposed to the zoning part of it? It's not fair just to say you could build a 50-story building. What does it mean to build that 50-story building? When you start presenting and we have questions, will you have those kinds of answers? Are you dealing with buildings now?

**Colin Ryan:** As far as I'm aware, we've been working with DOB on these pretty closely as there's pretty big implications for how they interpret our zoning codes. We have a FAQ that we're working through, so I think we'll be prepared to answer some of those questions.

**Richard Khuzami:** You also have to deal with the Department of Finance because, I've looked into expanding a building from three to four apartments, but the taxes went up so much that it wasn't worth it. So that's another question that'll come up and it would be great to have an answer.

**Rod Townsend:** In previous City of Yes presentations, we've been told to watch a video. I don't want to watch any videos. I would prefer written or Illustrated things so I can go through it and comprehend it and take notes easily as opposed to watching a video.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** On the website and in the printed materials that we did receive which, has the maps of focus areas, you can't see the street names so it's very hard to know what areas we're really talking about. It would be great if we could actually get maps that are detailed in that way so we know what the boundaries are for these different proposals.

**Colin Ryan:** We do have an illustrated guide for Housing Opportunity. It's a 40-page document that you'll be able to read through at your own tempo. When I come to the board to these presentations, we'll have community district specific applicability maps. I'm not sure the streets will be labeled, but I'll be happy to point them out. I also have one more item I wanted to touch on. I just wanted to talk about One LIC which is our neighborhood study we're doing down in Long Island City. It's predominantly in Community District 2, but also has portions in one. I just want to thank everybody who came out last night. I saw Amy there and I'm sure there's some other folks I just didn't see. We had over 100 people there. I just wanted to note that we have two upcoming events. We have one virtual event that's going to be taking place on May 16th and then on the 20th we'll be hosting an event at MoMA. Both are at 6:30.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** We are closing our public hearing and we're going to move into our business section. After our business section, we'll hear from any elected officials or representatives and then there will be a public session where anybody can come to the mic and speak for 2 minutes about anything that they want to say.

The first thing on the agenda is the adoption of the March 2024 minutes. I hope people have had a chance to read through the minutes.

**Rod Townsend: Motion to adopt the minutes. Tom Wright: Second.**

Motion to adopt by show of hands passes. **None opposed. None abstained.**

#### **Chair's Report:**

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** I want to thank everybody for filling out the Board Member survey. People made comments and suggestions, which I thought were really helpful. Also, I'm working on the committees and hopefully, we'll have those to you very soon. I want to remind everybody that on May 14th, Rod is going to be doing a training session. Also, many people have requested a way to have other board members' contact information. We are going to do an opt-in. You don't have to opt-in if you don't want to. Your information won't be shared with anyone outside the board. We are asking Board members to follow the guidelines. Information should not be used inappropriately - in other words, you cannot sign people up for newsletters, lists etc. Do not send excessive emails or do political lobbying. Board business must still be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. Committee Chairs and board members cannot use email for decision-making votes or formal discussions on substantive matters that are before the board. If you do have any board business, you must copy the board office on that email. You can consent to sharing your contact information with just committee chairs or to the full board membership. Please sign and date the form and turn it in.

#### **Consumer Affairs Report:**

**Dino Panagoulis:** If you look in your packet, Florence has compiled all of the licenses that are up for renewal. There are 28 businesses in front of you that either have signed stipulations or renewals. There are no issues that were brought to our attention by the NYPD. **I would like to have a motion to approve the 28 renewals that are in front of you.**

**Motion to approve: Frank Fredericks. Seconded: Stella Nicolaou.**

#### **Discussion:**

**Thomas Ryan:** When will we be starting to have Consumer Affairs Committee meetings?

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** We will be having Consumer Affairs Committee meetings in the future.

**DM Florence Koulouris** To clarify, the police sent an NYPD report and the NYPD said there was no need for action on these items.

**Brian Martinez:** There are two applications here that have stipulations. I was just wondering what the stipulations were.

**Dino Panagoulis:** In the past there may have been difficulties in getting businesses to be good neighbors, so we created a standard stipulations list. So typically, when we had these businesses sign them, they would come in with their lawyers - they would come in with their representatives, and we would discuss what the issues of concern were. At the end of the day, they would be given this list of stipulations such as: you're not going to have any third party promoters. For nightclub situations, it may ask for an adequate amount of security. There may be a whole host of things requested. The signed and notarized stipulation is attached to their application and sent to the State Liquor Authority when they renew their license.

As time has progressed, there has not really been a need to bring in these businesses. It has become a regular course of action for them to sign the stipulation when they know they have to come to the Community Board for a vote. We've almost never gotten any sort of negative feedback, which we used to get when there was a back and forth. Now the stipulation is signed and the application is brought to the committee and then we bring it to the full board for approval for the renewal or the actual application of the liquor license.

**Brian Martinez:** I was curious as to what the exact stipulations were.

**Dino Panagoulis:** We can circulate a template of what those stipulations are. I can certainly ask Florence to send it over to all board members so we are all familiar with the stipulations that are signed. It's all one form.

**Dominic Stiller:** Maybe we can add a column to the right of this Excel spreadsheet which defines the stipulations.

**Dino Panagoulis:** So again, they are all the same. I think what would be better is, if there is a change to a specific stipulation that is not the standard kind of template, we could add that.

**Rod Townsend:** That was a good explanation of stipulations for the new board members to explain what we're voting on.

**Dino Panagoulis:** One of the things that we look at as a board and as a committee is for these businesses to be good neighbors. Oftentimes you will hear me encourage you to let the board know if these businesses are not being good neighbors. Call Florence. Call 311 and register your complaints. Those complaints are answered by our NYPD partners. When we see an influx of complaints, NYPD will notify us of concerns. That's when we have a committee meeting and bring that business in. Once there is a vote put forth to approve that particular application, it is then sent in a packet by Florence to the State Liquor Authority which then says the Community Board has voted in unison to approve this particular application - there is no concern as to being a good neighbor to the community, so the recommendation of the Community Board is to approve that particular license.

**Kate Ellman:** A general question for whenever meetings reconvene having to do with smoke shops. I'm trying to understand the illegal ones versus the legal ones and the marketing. How that works. They seem to be really marketing toward children. The legal

spots are fine - you walk by and you're not bombarded with images that are cartoon-like and fun. That is something that's been coming up a lot for me personally and with other families.

**Dino Panagoulas:** That doesn't fall under the purview of the Consumer Affairs committee. It falls under the Executive Board. There are not many legal shops, so I think we've discussed this multiple times. There's going to be more enforcement hopefully.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Cannabis is probably going to fall under Consumer Affairs, but right now the Executive Board has been reviewing it. One of the things I am doing is looking at committees and reorganizing to see which are active. We have three licensed dispensaries here in Astoria. All the other ones are unlicensed. That's an issue we will be discussing more in the future.

**Dino Panagoulas requests motion to approve 28 entities, Frank Fredericks motions, Stella Nicolaou: Seconded**

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Vote by a show of hands to approve the motion.

**Motion passes. None opposed. None abstained.**

**Antonella Di Saverio:** I see the Community Affairs officers are here tonight and I was wondering if we could have a report on crime stats in our area.

**Officer Gabe Tovar Community Affairs:** We're going to have a Community Council meeting in this room next Tuesday at 700 p.m. and the Commander will be here to give you all the crime stats and answer your questions.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** There might be interest to also have you speak with the Public Safety Committee at some point so they get to know you.

#### **Housing Committee Report:**

**Kate Ellman:** At our last meeting we had representatives from HPD to go over Housing Connect which is the housing lottery for renters. Something that came up in our Land Use and Zoning committee meeting in the winter, had to do with affordable home ownership. It's our hope, with Florence's assistance, that we'll be able to have reps from HPD come to talk about the City's history of affordable home ownership in the form of co-ops or condos, to educate us. There's a potential site where Ricardo's used to be, where they're looking to have an affordable housing lottery for people to own a co-op. We all know how expensive that is and we'd like to educate members of the board and any members of the public about that option.

#### **Land Use/Zoning Committee Report**

**Elizabeth Erion:** I'm requesting a motion to approve 38-75 11th Street BSA Permit 2022-07 BZY. The request is to renew/extend the permit for two years.

**Rod Townsend: Motion to approve. Jean Marie D'Alleva: Seconded.**

#### **Discussion:**

**Ethan Lowens:** It says here that it's zoned M1 R5. The representative mentioned that it was in a manufacturing only district. I wanted to know what that R5 means and whether it's true that if this development didn't go up it could not be residential.

**Gerald Caliendo:** It's an M1-3 with 5 FAR. The report is wrong. There is no residential option on this plot.

**Richard Khuzami:** I just wanted to make the comment that there is always the option to have a stipulation that we, as a Community Board, strongly urge that this is not converted into housing for migrants.

#### **Member of the Public**

**Gloria Maloney, Dutch Kills Civic Association:** I don't see Mr. Palatnik here. I guess he left. I can understand the position that he's in but, as the people on the board mentioned, we are inundated with hotels. Outside of Manhattan, we have the most hotels in any borough. You can count on one hand how many of them are actually serving tourists and guests. The rest are all converted to migrant shelters. If he's going to build another hotel, and I know Yotel is a chain, I understand it. How long will it stay a Yotel? Will it convert before it's even opened? We've had hotels that didn't even open their doors and the day they open their doors they had migrants in them. I'm really opposed to any more hotels in our area at all. If you looked at the picture he showed - all those new buildings around that piece of land are hotels. If you have a homeless shelter for families, that's one thing, but we don't even have that anymore. All we have are migrants and we don't have the police to police all these migrants. We don't have the facilities to handle all these migrants. The schools are inundated with these families.

On the second one - I live very close to where they want to put the supermarket. I don't have a problem with the supermarket. Supermarkets are good. I don't think I could afford to shop in that supermarket because the apartments in that building are going for upwards of \$750,000 for the smallest apartment. The majority of them are over a million dollars. It's not a crap piece of property. It's going to be high-end apartments unless that folds. If they have parking spaces for the shoppers - excellent.

**Rod Townsend:** I don't know that we've seen a situation like this before, so I'm wondering if you can inform us of some history when we have renewed a BSA after a building has been left as a blight on the community for 4 years. I feel sorry that rich people couldn't



get richer for a period of time, but at the same time, they have not been taking care of the property. It's just become a blight on the community. I don't know why we want to reward someone who has not expressed any interest in benefiting the community.

**Gerald Caliendo:** I can't state exactly which applications were done, but over the past 40 years, I can guarantee we had numerous applications where we had to extend the term of the variance in order to give them more time to complete. At least 10 times.

**Elizabeth Erion:** I would just like to add that when we get applications for this, we have to focus on the findings that the Board of Standards and Appeals has to base its decision on. That has to do with the financing and it has nothing to do with the impact that this particular building has had on the community. With respect to the way we look at it, and we vote, we can take this into consideration because that's who we're representing. This is important for us, especially in the Dutch Kills area that is experiencing the impact of these hotels. I don't know how much power we have over something not being able to convert, but in the letter we send to the Board of Standards and Appeals we can talk about the issues that the community has been dealing with. But, be advised, the BSA has specific findings it has to make and it doesn't have to do with impact on the community. When they're doing zoning variances, that's when that comes into play. but this is very specific. So, we will write the letter reflecting what happened here tonight and include the opinions of the board members and the community in this letter.

**Thomas Wright:** I would urge my fellow board members to think about two things. One, I think it's important that we acknowledge that Covid changed the landscape for the need of hotels. The hotels in Dutch Kills where I live in Long Island City, a huge concentration, would not have had anyone, had we not had these migrant families that were using the hotels to be housed, and allowing the hotels to benefit through the City funds for this housing. I would like us to be careful not to say, "migrants are damaging our community" and these things that are very negative, as they're now our neighbors. That's my personal feeling, and I would just urge us to be mindful in using the term "migrant" in a negative way.

The second thing is, because the hotels have changed, I think that we are going to be complicit in a fraud against our community that should be illegal. Building half a building, leaving it vacant - having so many violations and then coming to us and saying, "we're working on securing financing" then not seeing any financing. Having contracts with the Yotel, a huge conglomerate, then saying, "we can't find the money." The issue is that the landscape of this investment has changed due to Covid. They've chosen not to build this and they were looking to sell the property - or to move it into a different form of investment. They've given us no evidence that they are working to secure financing. We have no documents showing that they do have an investor. They shouldn't be rewarded for building half a building and leaving it to waste and then coming to us asking for additional favor of giving them additional time to do whatever they are going to do with this property that is not being appropriately used .

**Corinne Wood-Haynes:** I just wanted to say that I concur with what you said. For the community that is closest to this development, it's not an issue of who is housed, it's an issue of the intended purpose of the development. I would much rather see it be residential property to house these families and incorporate them into our community - not just hold them temporarily, because they are part of our community, and that's how we treat them. They are part of our community, but they need permanent placement. That's not what the purpose of this building is. I just thank you for hearing the insight, and seeing what we physically experience rather than just abandoning it, and then coming to us to ask for an extension to do what we don't know what.

**Andreas Migias:** I just wanted to make a comment and reiterate what Liz and Gerry were saying. The reason this is in front of us is because, at the end of the previous mayoral administration's term, there was a general ban on hotels in New York City. There was a limbo of hotels already in the process of being built. My understanding is that this hotel was already being built and was allowed to be built during that time. When the general hotel moratorium was put into place, and I think as part of that law, you had to wrap up building your hotel in x amount of years after that law passed, otherwise you would run into issues with permitting. I think that's the position that these individuals are in right now, because of that law. They intended to build it within that time period, but then Covid hit and because of the moratorium, this hotel, which was already approved and what's in front of the BSA right now, appears to be all they can build according to the zoning.

**Rod Townsend:** Call the question. Seconded: Jean Marie D'Alleva

**Richard Khuzami:** I would like us to first vote on a stipulation that if the Board approves the extension they are against any conversions of this property from a use other than a hotel.

**Rod Townsend:** The question was called so we have to vote on calling the question.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** All those in favor of calling the question by show of hands.

Yea 36                      Nay 3                      None abstained    Call the question carries.

**Vote on the Motion to Approve by Roll Call:**

Yea - 2    Nay - 37 Abstain - 0                      Motion fails

**Richard Khuzami:** I would like to make a motion to approve the extension with the stipulation that it can not be converted into a shelter.

**Cristian Batres:** Second.

**Discussion**

**Jaqueline Ibarra:** With all due respect, I don't think that stipulation holds water. I don't think that is something that can be asked of the business. If you recall, during Covid, the Emergency Management agency, as well as the mayor's office and other agencies, put out an executive order to temporarily convert hotels for emergency shelter conditions. I don't think the stipulation will hold water in the long run and I don't think it will have a positive effect either way.

**Jean Marie D'Alleva:** I wholeheartedly agree with that. We have had stipulations before and how many of them have been even looked at or listened to?

**Frank Fredericks:** This is a doomed project anyway, so I'm happy to see this fail again. But let's say it were to succeed, I think the fact that the stipulation wouldn't be maintained is not the main reason to vote against it. I think we should vote against it because it's a terrible stipulation that's not good for our community.

**Dominic Stiller:** They're putting in this application under zoning code 11- 332. The reason I'll still vote no is because the consideration number three by the agency is that there are no considerations of Public Safety, Health and Welfare that have become apparent since the issuance of the permit that indicate an overriding benefit to the public in enforcement of the applicable amendment to the resolution. I think that's accurate. Because there have been many violations and other negative impacts on the community, I'll still be voting no.

**Thomas Wright: Call the question. Seconded: Marie Torniali**

No opposition to calling the question.

**Vote on the Motion to Approve by Roll Call:**

**Yea - 5    Nay - 32                  Abstain - 0                  Motion fails**

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Our next item is 27-09 40th Avenue FRESH Certification N240286ZCQ. Do we have a motion to approve?

**Amin Mehedi: Motion to approve. Seconded: Brian Martinez**

**Discussion**

**Thomas Wright: Call the question. Seconded: Dino Panagoulas:**

No opposition to calling the question.

**Vote on the Motion to Approve by Roll Call:**

**Yea - 36    Nay - 0                  Abstain - 0                  Motion Carries**

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Regarding the letter of support for the Public Design Commission for the ADA requirements for the Police Precinct, do I have a motion?

**Gerald Caliendo: Motion to provide a letter of support clearly stating that we have not fully reviewed the design for ADA or any other code compliance.**

**Amin Mehedi: Second**

**Discussion**

**Daniel Aliberti:** I'm in favor of making it ADA accessible but I had quite a few more questions about their methods of making it accessible. In particular, the ramp versus the lift versus the stair climber, or whatever they're using. I agree with what Gerry said.

**Brian Martinez:** In the letter we should address the concerns that were brought up earlier with the parking and accessibility on the actual street getting to the building.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** I think that is a separate issue. What we can do is try and schedule a conversation between the 114th and our Public Safety Committee about that issue.

**Rod Townsend: Call the question. Marie Torniali: Seconded.**

No opposition to calling the question.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos: Motion to approve by show of hands carries. 1 opposed. 1 abstained.**

**Parliamentarian Report:**

**Rod Townsend:** There will be a training on May 14<sup>th</sup>, and I just want to apologize - I was a little flippant with my answers earlier. I do respect those questions. I do understand that parliamentary procedure can be confusing, I believe this training will be very helpful

to everybody. I'm thankful to the Chair and our District Manager for forwarding me information in advance of that so that I can prepare to provide the training that this board deserves.

### **Transportation Report**

**Dominic Stiller:** We had a Transportation Committee meeting on the 11th of April and I'm going to mention four topics. I believe we're voting on the last two, so I'll mention the first two that we're not voting on. DOT gave a presentation about the south outer roadway - Queens side of the Queensboro Bridge - how they are going to redesign it based on the pedestrianizing of the south outer roadway. It was a good discussion. Number two - we had MTA give a good presentation on the Steinway Subway new elevator installation which will be starting this summer. They gave a website that you can go to for information which I put in my minutes. It's going to be a two-year project from approximately this summer to Q2 of 2026. Thirdly, and this is a letter here in your packet from Florence, so I think we'll be voting on the next two topics, just for letters of support. First: DOT gave a presentation about what they call the 20th Road Pedestrian Safety Improvement. This is between 35th and 36th Street and there's a new novel safety implementation that they're going to utilize and it's called "sidewalk". So, they're going to install a sidewalk and, provided it doesn't get parked on 24/7, it's intended for pedestrian safety in conjunction with their sidewalk that they're installing on the north side of the cemetery. They'll be putting a daylighting type, no standing spot northbound on the west side of this sidewalk installation. Our conclusion was that nobody had any objections to the presentation and it was all very positive. We didn't know we would be voting on this now. I personally support this and I think the whole committee did. The intention is to take a vote to send the letter that has been drafted about this board supporting the 20th Road Pedestrian Safety Improvements.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** May I have a motion to send a letter of support to DOT regarding this project.

**Frank Fredericks:** Motion to approve. **Vanessa Jones-Hall:** Second

### **Discussion**

**Thomas Ryan:** Call the question. **Amin Mehedi:** Second

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Motion to approve by show of hands carries. None opposed. 1 abstained due to conflict.

**Dominic Stiller:** The next item was also discussed under new business and it's the second draft letter in the package. It's a letter of support for a State Senate oversight Bill S 5936 sponsored by Senator Gustavo Rivera of the Bronx. The bill calls for the creation of a public hearing. Discussed in our committee was that this would be something kind of parallel to Dino's world of Community Board review. When auto repair shops that are licensed by the DMV come up for renewal. I personally think it's a positive Improvement. I do live in the Dutch Kills area. There are repair shops with excessive sidewalk abuses, so I see this as a start to fixing the problem. Some of the good comments made in the meeting were regarding how it will be enforced and we all decided that, even though we weren't sure, we were still in favor. We've drafted this letter for your consideration.

**Adam Fisher- Cox:** Motion to send this letter in support of Bill S 5936. Board Member: Seconded.

### **Discussion**

**Rod Townsend:** I would like to amend the letter to include all City and State elected officials.

**Gerald Caliendo:** I would like to add the car dealerships to the letter even though it may not be part of the legislation.

**Thomas Ryan:** Call the question: **Shahenaz Hamde:** Seconded.

No opposition to calling the question.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** Motion to approve by show of hands carries. None opposed. None abstained.

### **District Manager's Report**

**Florence Koulouris:** Hello, good evening to you all, welcome to all our newly appointed Board Members. Our office looks forward to working with you over the next few years. Our office is a New York City Agency here to facilitate the Community and the Board Members. As the Queens BP states, we are not a civic group, not for profit or lobby group, but a NYC Agency. We are here to assist you in receiving NYC agency resolutions. While we cannot promise outcomes, we work diligently to resolve issues. No matter is too big or too small. Questions, concerns, and complaints are always welcome. Please share our phone number and email with your friends when they need help in the community.

Our office works on items such as the recent inundation in the industrial business zone. Our office recently worked with the NYPD Task Force officers regarding 2 RVs that were encroaching on NYC Streets. They were offered services and moved. At Saint Michael's Cemetery there was a recent action with the same taskforce. 31 automobiles were removed behind the cemetery where they were parked for an excessive amount of time. According to law section 4-08(m) (8) Street storage is not allowed. Additionally, Piece of Cake Trucking has leased a lot in our district for parking their vehicles. The hope is we will not see the issues we have seen in the past. Please always feel free to reach out 718 626-1021 or Qn01@cb.nyc.gov.

### **Elected Officials**

**Shawna Morlock:** I am the director of Community Affairs for State Senator Gonzalez. We're working really hard on the budget right now, fighting super hard for good cause eviction protecting the 2019 rent stabilization laws. We're really trying hard to push through our hospital moratorium bill that would prevent any more hospital closures in New York State until it's been investigated. We're also pushing for Sami's Law. Unfortunately, we had another child be hit in our district today. Sami's Law would reduce the speed limit across New York City. We're doing office hours at Astoria Houses on Monday April 22nd, and we're still accepting discretionary funding requests.

**Tiffany Echevaria:** I'm here on behalf of Congresswoman Nydia Valasquez. I have a flier here for you. The Congresswoman's legislation is on the top. In the middle is our community project funding which we are still taking applications for. As of right now, we still do not have guidance from the Appropriations Committee as to what qualifies, but we still encourage you to apply. Lastly, student debt relief. The Biden Administration put out a new set of rules this morning for the elimination of student loans. If implemented, the new plan targets borrowers who have carried debt for many years and those who are at risk of defaulting on their loans. The two main ones that qualify are undergrad debt that started their repayment before July 1, 2005, and another one is grad school debt that started their repayment on or before July 1, 2000. Everything is on this flier. Please feel free to take one from the table along with my business card.

**Megan Puan:** I am from the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit. Happy birthday to Florence. The Mayor announced the New York City first ever non-profit advisory council composed of the leaders and experts in the non-profit sector. The advisory council will work closely with the New York City mayor's office of non-profit service to serve as the link between the administration and non-profit organizations serving New Yorkers. The administration launched the New York City Workforce Development Council - a group of the leaders from the business community, educational institutions, unions and training providers who help New Yorkers and their families find sustained careers and help employers tap the talent they need to succeed. The council will make recommendations to the mayor's office of Talent and Workforce Development. I want to share this number (917) 909-2288. If you want news and updates from the administration, call the number and they will send you a link.

**Angela:** I'm with the office of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez. As our office continues to monitor the developing situation in the Middle East, we understand the impact it may have on communities here in our congressional district. If you have any questions, need resources or would like to discuss how we can support your community during this time, please don't hesitate to reach out. This upcoming Friday, our office will be hosting an art showcase at the Varsity Boys and Girls Club from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. The art show will display submissions for this year's Congressional Art competition which we're still accepting submissions for up until the 26th. Please feel free to attend. We will also have Community Partners in attendance tabling to provide resources available to high school students in New York City.

**Javier Figaroa:** I'm with District Attorney Melinda Katz. I have a statement about Detective Diller. District Attorney Katz stands in solidarity with our Law Enforcement Officers. The DA's office will continue to work tirelessly seeking justice on behalf of Detective Diller, his family, friends and the NYPD. Two individuals were quickly apprehended at the scene and are now charged with serious crimes for their alleged roles in the killing. The alleged shooter is facing a first-degree murder charge in the death of Detective Diller, and first-degree attempted murder charge attempting to fire his weapon at an NYPD Sergeant who was also at the scene. If convicted this defendant faces up to life in prison without the possibility of a parole. A second man - the accused driver of the vehicle the defendant was in - is charged with illegal possession of a weapon after a gun was found in the car. The DA's office will not rest until justice is served in this case. Shifting gears, DA Katz is aware that scooters are, and continue to be a very huge issue across Queens County. Because of that, she has partnered with multiple precincts - the 114th is one of them - which is why I bring them up tonight. So far she has confiscated 315 scooters which were illegally parked on sidewalks and streets along busy commercial strips with high pedestrian traffic. Any more information you can feel free to contact me. I'm here for every meeting.

**Kazi Maryam:** I am from Assemblymember Steven Ragga's office. We have introduced A 9649 which would require schools to include the net cost in their Student Financial Aid award letter so that families can understand how much they are expected to pay to make informed decisions on education. On April 20th, our office will be having Earth Day of Action from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Rusty Wheelbarrow Farm in Woodside. Volunteers will learn about the work of the Rusty Wheelbarrow Farm and will help with composting and street cleanup of the surrounding area in Woodside. On April 20th we will also be having an Earth Day recycling event from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Maspeth Federal Savings. Services will include paper shredding, e waste, as well as a pet adoption truck. On May 11th we will be having our AAPI heritage month celebration from 1:00 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Elmhurst Hospital Center. We hope you guys can all come and enjoy it with us

**Janggo Mahmud:** I represent Assemblymember Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas. I have placed the fliers on the table in English and in Spanish. Our housing clinic with Communities Resist will be on Thursday April 18th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and with AARP we'll be having a paper shredding event at the Jackson Height shopping center on Friday April 26th from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The following day we'll have another paper shredding event in partnership with Councilmember Caban, Saturday April 27th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Astoria parking lot. Look out for a white truck. One policy related update - we received eight calls from Astoria residents voicing their opinion on the housing package. Feel free to call us at 718-457-0384 to let us know what your opinion is as well.

**Claire Collins:** I'm a Community Board liaison at the office of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards. We're happy to announce that our Community Board process has come to a close and we have appointed 117 new appointees throughout all 14 boards in the borough. Everyone, whether appointed or not, has been notified via email. Welcome to all the new board members who have been chosen. I'm the one who interviewed you over the phone so it's nice to see what you look like. If you have any questions about the process, please feel free to reach out. Our director of Community Boards his - name is Khil Bragg - you guys saw him last night at



the ceremony - his email is [KBragg@queensbp.org](mailto:KBragg@queensbp.org). We have a couple of events coming up. All of our events are listed on QueensBP.org.

## Public Session

**Eileen Mandelo:** I'm a longtime Astoria resident. I live in upper Ditmars. My husband was born in Astoria and we wanted to know more about the LaGuardia Plaza Land Use action. Our little area didn't know about it. Was the proposal approved?

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** No. The project hasn't been certified yet. It was a pre certification informational session for the Land Use committee. There'll be another Land Use committee meeting, once it's certified, which the public is invited to attend. Then there will be a public hearing where the public can hear the presentation and speak out for or against. Are you signed up to our email list? Yes. Good. Everybody should know that you can sign up for our email list on our website and receive the notices about all the meetings that we have. If you have concerns about the project you can come to the meetings. You can contact the board office and let them know. You can speak to your council member. You can talk to your neighbors and you can watch the presentation on our Queens Community Board 1 YouTube channel. That Land Use presentation was in March.

**Austin Smith:** I'm here on behalf of the Museum of the Moving Image - I believe it's the only cultural institution in Community Board 1. We don't take that privilege lightly. We have to be very cognizant of all that we can and cannot provide to the community and, in response to that, we've decided to begin a program called "open worlds". This program is going to have two major facets. First: we're going to push our point of sale backwards to the entryways of our exhibitions which will make our cafe lobby/outdoor courtyard space in the William Fox Amphitheater free and open to the public during all of our open hours. Secondly: this will be accompanied by free weekly offerings of community oriented programming that will change on a weekly basis and will have a wide range of themes ranging from science and technology, Pride, content creation. We're looking at partnering with Disco Cinema Tehran and much, much more. It's about 20 weeks. We're very excited to be opening this up to the community. If you have any questions feel free to email me at [asmith@movingimage.org](mailto:asmith@movingimage.org).

**Angel Hart:** I'm with the Long Island City Partnership (LICP). I want to announce our LIC Springs Street Festival that's coming up on May 18th. We have a rain date on May 19th. It's an open, free street festival for the public to enjoy activities with local LIC businesses and organizations. It's free to participate as a business or an organization. If you are one of those, please reach out to participate. We are closing registration this week. You can find all this information at LICQNS.com. I'll leave my cards on the table if you want more information.

**Dan Miller:** I'm a volunteer member leader for Open New York, a pro housing organization. I have the Queens branch. We are excited to testify in front of the board for City of Yes for housing opportunities. We're really interested in it. We thank you in advance for your hospitality and look forward to working with you.

**Chair Evie Hantzopoulos:** If there are no other speakers, the public session is closed. Any new business? Any old business. May I have a motion to adjourn?

**Marie Torniali:** Motion to adjourn. **Brian Martinez:** Second.

Meeting adjourned 8:45 p.m.