

Community Board 1
January 20, 2015

Mr. Vinicio Donato, Chairperson of Community Board 1, commenced meeting at 7:00 pm and he then introduced Mr. Joseph Risi, Chair of the Consumer Affairs Committee, who read public hearing item #16557-2014 - ASWC – Premises 40-17 30th Avenue. (STIX). An application to establish an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 17 tables and 34 seats. Mr. Stathas Koalas stated that he is representing the owner of the establishment. Mr. Risi asked him to give some information about the STIX, what type of establishment it is and the hours of operations will be. Mr. Koulos stated that the establishment is a Mediterranean restaurant sustainable by local gardens. The restaurant is mostly Greek and items on the skewer. They are open from 11am to 11pm and will be open a little bit later on the weekends. This is their 3rd restaurant with the others in Manhattan. They are very excited to be back in Astoria where he grew up. Mr. Risi welcomed him back to Astoria and asked if they have a liquor license. Mr. Koulos stated that they have a full liquor license. Mr. Risi asked where the placement of the table will be for the outdoor café. Mr. Koulos stated that the architect's placed 9 tables on 30th Avenue and 7 tables on 41 Street and there is 1,200 sq. ft. with 36 seats inside the restaurant. The outdoor café will help the business to grow. Mr. Risi asked if they would have waiter/waitress service. Mr. Koulos replied "Yes". Mr. Risi asked if there are apartments above the restaurant. Mr. Koulos stated that there is a doctor's office above and some kind of workout facility and then on the 4th floor there are apartments. Mr. Risi asked if he was aware of the prohibition of excessive noise. Mr. Koulos stated that their restaurant is a sit down style of restaurant they do not have loud music or a DJ. They just want to provide good food and good service. Mr. Risi asked when the restaurant would be open. Mr. Koulos replied that they are open already. Mr. Donato asked if there was any board member who had any questions for the applicant. Ms. Frances McDonald asked who the owner was and stated that the 36 seats inside and add 34 seats outside you are virtually doubling your customer base with the outdoor café, is this true. Mr. Koulos stated yes, for the few months that it is open. Mr. George Stamatiades stated that he counts 16 tables on the diagram and the application is for 17 tables. Mr. Risi asked if they were amending the application to 16 tables from 17 tables. Mr. Koulos replied "Yes". Mr. Risi clarified that the application would be 16 tables and 32 seats. Mr. Koulos replied "Yes". Ms. Ann Bruno asked if there would be any kind of music. Mr. Koulos stated that there will only be soft background music inside. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for or against the application. There was no one. Item closed.

The next item #1277928 - DCA – Premises 21-37 31st Street. (Wave Thai). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 7 tables and 14 seats. Mr. Peter Leahy, owner, with his wife of the small restaurant on 31st Street between 21st Avenue on Ditmars Blvd. The restaurant has 38 seats inside and an outdoor café during the summer, which is an additional 14 seats. They have had the outdoor café for 8 years and never had a police incident or a complaint from anyone related to the outdoor café. They have a wine and beer license and open from 12pm to 11pm during the week and on the weekend they open from 1pm-11:45pm. Mr. Risi asked if there were any changes since the last renewal. Mr. Leahy replied "No". Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone on the Board who had a question for the applicant. There was no one. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for or against the application. Seeing no one. Item closed.

The next item #1422684 – DCA – Premises 23-01 31st Street. (Bareburger). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 12 tables and 36 seats. Mr. Jerry Pelidus stated that they are present to extend their license for their outdoor café. They had the outdoor café for 2 years and at their other location (31st Avenue / 32nd Street) they had it for 5 years. They expanded rapidly over the last 6 years and now have 24 locations throughout the city. Their headquarters is still in L.I.C. Mr. Risi stated that the restaurant is on the corner of 23rd Avenue and 21st Street. Mr. Pelidus replied "Yes". Mr. Risi asked where the 12 tables and 36 seats are placed. Mr. Pelidus stated that the tables will be on the 23rd Avenue side. Mr. Risi clarified that there were no tables and seats on 31st Street. Mr. Pelidus replied "Yes". Mr. Risi asked since the issuance of your license had they received any violations or summonses in connection with the outdoor café. Mr. Pelidus stated that there was an issue with a barrier outside that was screwed into the ground with temporary bolts because that corner is very windy. Without the bolts the barrier fell and hit a kid in the eye and that is when they decided to use the temporary bolts. Someone complained to them about the bolts and they actually removed the barriers altogether. This was the only violation that they received in connection with the outdoor café. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone on the Board who had a question for the applicant. There was no one. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for or against the application. Seeing no one. Item closed.

The next item #1221132 - DCA – Premises 42-21 Broadway (Dandana). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 14 tables and 30 seats. Mr. Steve Wygoda and the owner stated that they are present for the renewal of the outdoor café license for Dandana for 14 tables and 30 seats. Mr. Risi asked since the last renewal of their outdoor café license had they received any violations or summonses. The owner stated that 3 years ago they placed a fence that was too high and it has been corrected. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone on the Board who had a question for the applicant. Ms. McDonald asked if the owner of the restaurant owned the building or just operated the business. The owners stated that he just operates the business. Ms. McDonald stated that the picture

submit from DCA of the premises was not good. Mr. Wygoda stated that the picture was from 2006. Ms. McDonald stated that they should update the picture on file. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for or against the application. Seeing no one. Item closed.

The next item #1451850 – DCA – Premises 28-55 36th Street. (Crave). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 5 tables and 10 seats. Mr. Lance Marek representing the applicant of CRAVE and they have been open for a year with no changes. They are present to renew their outdoor café license. Mr. Risi asked what type of food is served. Mr. Marek stated that they serve Greek/American food. Mr. Risi asked if they have a liquor license. Mr. Marek stated that they have a beer and wine license. Mr. Risi asked if they received any violations or summonses in connection with the outdoor café. Mr. Marek replied “No”. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone on the Board who had any questions for the applicant. Ms. McDonald asked whether the picture was taken in the dawn or at sunset. Mr. Marek stated that he took the picture about 12 noon. Ms. McDonald stated that the picture has a lot of shading. Ms. McDonald asked what the relation the seats were to the poll and the tree in the picture. Mr. Marek stated that as required by law the tables are 8’ away from the tree. All tables are within the limits of a sidewalk café. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for against the application. Seeing no one. Item closed.

The next item #1445109 - DCA – Premises 21-69 Steinway Street. (Victory Sweet Shop). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 6 tables and 18 seats. Ms. Anna Sakalis came up on behalf of the owners of Victory Sweet Shop which is a family owned business for over 42 years and have had an outdoor seating area for over 2 ½ years. They are present to renew their outdoor café license. Mr. Risi asked since the last renewal if there were any violations or summonses in connection with the outdoor café. Ms. Sakalis replied “No”. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone on the Board who had a question for the applicant. There was no one. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for or against the application. Seeing no one. Item closed.

The next item #1285652 - DCA – Premises 33-07 Ditmars Blvd. (Taverna Klyclades). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 14 tables and 22 seats. Mr. Ardian Skendero, owner, has come to renew his license for an outdoor café for 14 tables and 22 seats. Mr. Risi asked how long he had an unclosed café at the current location. Mr. Skendero replied “10 years”. Mr. Risi asked if they had any violations or summonses in connection to the outdoor café. Mr. Skendero replied “No”. Mr. Donato asked when they are going to expand since there are people waiting outside all the time. Mr. Skendero stated that Rome was not built in one day but, they are getting there. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone on the Board who wanted to ask the applicant a question. Ms. Norma Nieves-Blas commented that she was there this past Sunday and the food and atmosphere is great it make her feel like family. She loves eating there twice a month. Mr. Donato asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to speak for or against the application. There was no one. Item closed.

VOTING:

Mr. Risi reiterated public hearing item from DCA #16557-2014 - ASWC – Premises 40-17 30 Avenue. (STIX). An application to establish an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 17 tables and 34 seats. He stated that the committee met and recommended approval of the application, seconded by Mr. Stamatiades. Mr. Donato asked if there were any questions. There was no further discussion. Mr. Donato called for a vote. Motion called and carried with 1 Against.

The item from DCA #1277928 - DCA – Premises 21-37 31 Street. (Wave Thai). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 7 tables and 14 seats. He stated that the Committee met and recommended approval of the application, seconded by Ms. Erion. Mr. Donato asked if there were any questions. No further discussion. Mr. Donato called for a vote. Motion called and carried 1 Against.

The next item #1422684 – DCA – Premises 23-01 31 Street. (Bareburger). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 12 tables and 36 seats. The Committee met and recommended approval of the application, seconded by Ms. Alaforgiannis. Mr. Donato asked if there were any questions. No further discussion. Mr. Donato called for a vote. Motion called and carried with 1 Against.

The next item #1221132 - DCA – Premises 42-21 Broadway (Dandana). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 14 tables and 30 seats. The Committee met and recommended approval of the application, seconded by Mr. Stamatiades. Mr. Donato asked if there were any questions. No further discussion. Mr. Donato called for a vote. Motion called and carried with 1 Against.

The next item #1451850 – DCA – Premises 28-55 36 Street. (Crave). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 5 tables and 10 seats. The Committee met and recommended approval of the application, seconded by Ms. Erion. Mr. Donato asked if there were any questions. No further discussion. Mr. Donato called for a vote. Motion called and carried with 1 Against

The next item #1445109 - DCA – Premises 21-69 Steinway Street. (Victory Sweet Shop). An application to renew the license to operate an Unenclosed Sidewalk Café with 6 tables and 18 seats. The Committee met and recommended approval of the application, seconded by Mr. Prentzas. Mr. Donato asked if there were any questions. No further discussion. Mr. Donato called for a vote. Motion called and carried with 1 Against.

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GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Mr. Phil Connicksberg, CB7 resident, came to present to the Board a public health issue/matter. He would like the Board to consider endorsing a policy for smoke free for multiple apartments. The Smoke Free Air Acts applies to eating establishments or any public place and protects us. You may not smoke but the person down the hall does and the smoke comes into your apartment and you are breathing the fumes. Second hand smoke is a health issue. He has been going to all the community boards in Queens and CB3 in Staten Island, which was the first Board to pass a smoke free resolution. When he heard that he went to CB7, his board, and they passed a smoke free resolution. The smoke free policy is mainly up to the landlord. He has been Community Board 11 and they passed a smoke free resolution with 24 to 2. So, He has been going to the Board in the area hoping that CB1 would consider this resolution.

Ms. Nancy Cooperman, Director of Health Issues of Northern LIJ Health System, stated she has spoken in front of a Board before over the past few years about different types of initiatives regarding decreased tobacco use in our communities. CB1 has one of the highest rates of smoking as well as second hand smoke. One of the thing that they are concerned about as a health system is the amount of emergency department visits, exacerbations of asthma, and seniors that have any kind of lung disease that are coming into their facilities. Part of what they are doing now is as a health system is expanding their efforts by offering tobacco cessation programs as well as educating the public and offering themselves as resources for people who are looking to have smoke free environments or looking for help in connecting with providers that deal with smoker cessation counseling.

Mr. John Bersales, resident, stated that over the last 6 months or so the area in and around the building he owns has been used extensively by some businesses for overnight parking of their vehicles. Vehicles with no license plates parked up on the sidewalks obstructing pedestrian traffic. He has made repeated calls to 311 and the 114th Pct. regarding this matter and he has all of the numbers that were assigned to him by 311 and there has been no action taken. He was able to speak with a 311 operator recently stated that a resolution from CB1 would be able to rectify the situation. He asked that Board to help him with the issue and it is impossible for anyone to park in and around the warehouse. He stated that other businesses have complained and tried to get other people to come down, but it was too short of notice to come down. He asked that the Board look into this matter. Mr. Donato asked if he would come to CB1's office on Tuesday to go over it with him. Ms. Hartmann stated that he could give the office a call. Mr. Bersales stated that he has called CB1's office and no one answers. He stated that will be come into the office to review the documentation.

Ms. Pat Lowenhout, Queens World Film Festival, stated that she came to remind everyone that the wonderful cultural event and arts experience. It is their 5th Annual event taking place on March 17-22, 2015 at the Museum of the Moving Image, The Secret Theatre, and at PS69Q. She asked how many people were aware of the Queens Film Festival. She asked that everyone spread the word about the event. She stated that people can support the event by purchasing tickets and by placing ads for your establishment in their Queens World Film Festival Program. It is an exciting event and will have films from 30 different countries as well as films by Queens film makers. There were 370 participants. She brought flyers and cards for all those interested and for more information. For more information online you can go to www.queensworldfilmfestival.com.

Spiro, resident, stated that he understand that resident can attend subcommittees. Mr. Donato replied "Yes". Spiro asked when are they and how can he find out about them. Mr. Donato stated that he should call the Board office for that information. Spiro stated that he has like the previous gentleman stated and he has not had much luck. Mr. Stamatiades stated that the number that they may be calling is the wrong number. Ms. Hartmann stated that he should give her his contact information.

BUSINESS SESSION:

Mr. Donato motioned to accept the minutes of December 2014 Board meeting, seconded by Ms. Nieves-Blas. Motion called and carried unanimously

Ms. Lucille Hartmann, District Manager, reported that on behalf of Mr. John Carusone regarding the Zoning Committee meeting to be held on January 6th with representatives of the Hallet Point Project. Construction is expected to start this October and is expected to take approximately 6 years. In addition, the committee was introduced to members of the Durst organization, the new partners for this project. Mr. Carusone will give a more comprehensive report at next month's meeting. She reminded everyone that the Borough President's State of the Borough is scheduled for Thursday, January 22nd at 10AM at Colden Hall at Queens College. If anyone is planning on attending, they should have responded to the invitation and received a pass. If you have not received the pass please let her know. Ms. McDonald stated that it should be mentioned that the group will have to come before the Board again for any changes that they make. Ms. Hartmann stated that Mr. Carusone would address that and other point at next month's meeting. Mr. Antonio Melanie asked about Astoria Cove. Ms. Hartmann stated that the Board has not received any updates.

Mr. Daniel Aliberti, Chair of Access and Disability Concerns Committee, reported on the M60/M19 Buses and Disability Access to both an to the subway. Since last month's meeting, he spoke with Mr. Luke DePalma the Community Relations Officer for the MTA and discussed the issue about the cross honoring of the monies between the two buses. Mr. DePalma stated that the policy was the big issue and has to be done by the Board. Mr. Aliberti stated that he is looking for a policy on this issue. Mr. DePalma stated that in the meantime they have written up a memo that is posted in the bus depot where the buses start for all the drivers to see and this should be sufficient. Mr. Aliberti asked if he could see the memo and was told that it was not for public consumption. After some discussion, Mr. DePalma stated that he would show Mr. Aliberti the memo at the next meeting, which was postponed. Mr. Aliberti mentioned to Mr. DePalma that he has spoken to the elected officials about this matter and maybe he could talk with them about it. Mr. DePalma stated that he would not show the memo to the elected officials but he would show it to Mr. Aliberti. Mr. Aliberti stated that it would have to be in an accessible format for him since he can't see it. Mr. DePalma did know what to say at that point. Mr. Aliberti stated that prior to coming to the meeting he rode the M19 bus twice and he paid with the metro on both occasion. He stated that he had spoken to the drivers in regards to the memo that was put up in the bus depot regarding cross honoring of fare between both buses. Both drivers stated that they had no idea of what he was talking about and had not seen any memo. Ms. Hartmann stated that she would reach out to Mr. DePalma. Mr. Aliberti added that he lost his senior/disability metro card and he called the MTA and was told that they would send him a replacement. The replacement will take 6 to 8 weeks and they advised him that he should go to the booth and identify yourself as a person with a disability and they will give you a reduced fare metro card. Mr. Aliberti state that he went to the booth and had problems with obtaining a reduced fare card. The agent refused to sell him a reduced fare card because he did not have proof that he was disabled. He eventually had to call the police to remedy the situation.

Ms. Mary O'Hara, Chair of Housing Committee, reported that last month the Department of Finance adopted a new Condo/Co-op Tax Abatement restriction which now extends to only those who use their apartments as their primary residences. This includes proprietors, LLC and Trusts. Those who live elsewhere, more than half of the year the increase will amount to about 17.5%. To confirm eligibility you must call 311 or contact your managing agent or visit the City's website at nyc.gov/ccabatements. Additionally, whether or not you are eligible for the Co-op/Condo Tax Abatement you may be eligible for other City tax abatements, mainly basic or enhanced STAR, disabled homeowners, senior citizen homeowner, and veterans exemption. Applications are due by March 15, 2015 and it is the responsibility of each apartment owner to file. She went on to report on Air BNB, she went to a meeting earlier in the day and specifics can be read in the papers tomorrow. In New York State it is illegal to rent your apartment. As a result there will be, hopefully an investigation on this issue. She advised people to watch the news later and the newspaper. Mr. Khuzami asked if that relates only to apartments or deals with private rooms within your apartment. Ms. O'Hara stated that you are allowed to rent a spare bedroom in your apartment. Ms. Nancy Silverman stated that if you have an empty apartment you can't rent it for less than 30 days. If it is occupied by the tenant, you can rent the spare room as long as the tenant is in the apartment. Ms. O'Hara stated that the state law states you have to be in attendance in the apartment.

Mr. Richard Khuzami, Chair of Parks & Recreation/Cultural Affairs Committee, reported that on January 5th there was a two part Parks meeting. They had a presentation by Mr. John Hatfield Director of Socrates Sculpture Park and it seems that the Whitney Museum had containers that they were using for renovation and when the renovation was over they donated them Socrates Park. The park is taking advantage of this to create space for schools to do projects during the winter months by affording them to create a classroom. Two containers will be connected creating an administration office for them to move after their current lease is over. It was a great presentation and they are working closely with Parks and they will keep the Board abreast of new developments. The next presentation was by the Parks Department, if you remember back in December there were a couple meetings on Van Alts Playground and Astoria Heights Playground. There were vision meetings as to what they envision what constituents wanted in these facilities. This is from money from the Mayor. They gave a basic layout of how they plan to design these spaces with the visioning, there was no specifics mentioned. They will be reaching out to the Board with further information.

Mr. Robert Piazza, Chair of Transportation Committee, reported that there will be a meeting on January 27, 2015 with the Department of Transportation (DOT) at the Board office. DOT is going to outline to the Board their plans for 21st Street. The Board, residents of 21st Street and local elected officials all have been fighting for changes for 21st Street to make it safer. DOT is coming back to us with what they are seeing as changes to make that area safer.

Mr. Jose Batista, Chair of Youth Committee, reported that next month the Summer Youth Employment Program will have a target date in March 2015. There will also be a breakdown of position filled by CB1 youths. It will have the types of positions filled and what they learned from those positions. The people who employed youths through the program will be able to see how they contributed to the youth's future.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Hartmann called everyone's attention the agenda under New/Old Business for Election for Officers. Listed below is the current Elected Officers of the Executive Board. She asked if there was anyone who wanted to make a recommendation for a position. Mr. Gus Prentzas motioned to accept the list as it is, seconded by Ms. Alaforgiannis. Ms. Hartmann asked if anyone on the floor had any further recommendations. There was no one. Ms. Hartmann called for a vote. Motion called and carried unanimously. Mr. Donato thanked everyone on the Board for having faith in the Executive Board.

Mr. Gus Prentzas wished everyone Happy New Year. He stated that he had a question and a request. Who actually regulates the bikes that are being use for deliveries? He had called 311, because they are parking them by the curb and each establishment has 5 to 6 bikes. He assumed that it would fall under DOT or does it fall under DCA. Deliveries are being made by riding around streets going the opposite direction without lights and may cause someone to get killed. They have no identification which they are required to carry with them. Is the NYPD able to enforce any type of summonses to them if not, who is the agency and can the Board write a letter requesting some type of regulation. Officer Coleman, 114th PCT. stated that he would have to look into it. Electric or gas moped it depends on the speed and what they are considered.

Mr. Donato stated that a long time Board member Denis Syntilas has recently passed away. He asked that everyone stand to give a moment of silence. He was a very giving man; he gave of himself all the time.

Mr. George Stamatiades stated that on Thursday, March 5, 2015 the Central Astoria Local Development Coalition will be sponsoring their 35th Anniversary Celebration at the Melrose Ballroom 33rd Street between 37th and 36th Avenues.. He appreciates everyone's support. It promises to be a very great night. They would be honoring the President of Atlantic Bank and awarding Peter Vallone Jr. his Statesman of the Year Award for his past services for our community.

Ms. Rosemarie Poveromo stated that the United Community Civic Association will hold their annual Community Luv-In Party on Thursday, February 12, 2015 at Central Lounge, 20-30 Steinway Street, at 6:30pm. Donation per person is \$55. Flyers are on the table in the back for more information.

Mr. George Alexious thanked everyone who participated and donations for their Annual Thanksgiving Dinner.

Mr. Rudolpho Sarchese stated that last Thursday they had a meeting regarding the Westway Motel. The Comptroller, Commissioner and over 200 people were in attendance at the meeting. People expressed their opinions, not because we are against the homeless but, we have housed them for 8 years and was not affecting the community because people would come in the night and leave in the morning. We would like to have this way and not be made permanent. There are a lot of issues regarding this motel and look forward to speaking with the Mayor. Mr. Donato stated that Ms. Hartmann gave testimony regarding the homeless shelters in the community. Testimony is on file at the Board's office.

There was no further business before the Board Mr. Stamatiades motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Nieves-Blas. Motion called and carried unanimously.