

## **Community Board 1, Meeting Minutes**

**June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

### **Board Member Attendees – List Attached**

#### **OPENING: 6:30pm**

- Chairman Joseph Risi welcomed attendees, asked for the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited, and requested a moment of silence follow the Pledge in honor of senseless acts of violence worldwide as well as those injured in a construction accident in the local area. The Pledge was recited and a moment of silence was taken.

#### **Remarks by Chairman Joseph Risi regarding his resignation as Chairman of Community Board 1, Queens**

- Chairman Risi started the meeting with comments regarding his position as Chair.
  - *".... I have some good news and I have some bad news tonight.... [The] good news is John Katsanos has been recently nominated to be a judge at the Civil Court; I congratulate him. I am fortunate that last week I was nominated by Governor Cuomo to be a judge in the Court of Claims, and yesterday I was confirmed by the Senate. So I just want to say it's been such an honor and such a pleasure; I've been on the board for over 25 years with the elder statesmen, including myself, and the younger people that bring vivaciousness to this board and are so eager to make our community great, and that's what we're all here for. And I'm really honored to serve everybody and to be a member of this board. It's one of the highlights... of my career, to be on Community Board 1, and I thank you for that."*
- **Mr. Risi relinquished his seat to First Vice-Chair Norma Nieves-Blas, to serve as Interim Chairwoman.**
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas thanked Mr. Risi for his service, and proceeded with the meeting.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas acknowledged Nick Wallace of Councilman Constantinides' office, Joseph Nocerino of the Borough President's office, Demaris Moné of Senator Peralta's office, and Debra Tharrington of Councilman Van Bramer's office. Ms. Nieves-Blas also extended an acknowledgement to other distinguished guests in the audience who were not directly addressed.
- Ms. Nieves-Blas introduced Mr. Joseph Nocerino to give a statement to the Board.

#### **Announcement from Joseph Nocerino (Community Coordinator for Borough President Melinda Katz) regarding the Community Board Service Awards**

- Mr. Nocerino extended a farewell to Mr. Joseph Risi, and passed along the regards of the Borough President to all Board Members
- Mr. Nocerino announced the Community Board Awards (which were held on June 27<sup>th</sup>). Among those honored were the following Community Board 1 Members:
  - 10 Years of Service: Frances Luhmann-McDonald.
  - 15 Years of Service: RoseMarie Poveromo.
  - 20 Years of Service: George Alexiou, Ann Bruno, and Jean Marie D'Alleva.
  - 30 Years of Service: Norma Nieves-Blas.
  - 40 Years of Service: Gerald Caliendo and Elizabeth Erion.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas requested a statement from the District Manager, Florence Koulouris.

#### **Statements regarding the resignation of Chairman Joseph Risi, by District Manager Florence Koulouris**

- District Manager Florence Koulouris gave a statement regarding her time working with outgoing Chairman Joseph Risi, which were as follows:
  - *"Good Evening ladies and gentlemen; tonight is a very emotional evening for me. I am close to my second year as District Manager and I am saying good luck and goodbye to a very good friend. In working for the Board I have worked very closely with the Consumer Affairs Committee all these years. So, whomever has been the chair of that committee has had to suffer with enormous amounts of telephone calls and emails from me. Mr. Joseph Risi has worked tirelessly to keep all the businesses in check in our District. Chairing the Consumer Affairs Committee, I was able to get to know Joseph and grow to respect him. Two short years ago, Lucille and Vinny retired, and Joseph*

*was named Chair and I was named District Manager. It has been my privilege to work and grow with Joe. As a chairman he has given me the ability to find my capabilities, he has helped me to learn my strengths and my weaknesses, and never being judgmental. Joseph's a supporting individual and truly cares about his endeavors and all the things he involves himself with. Joseph is a true leader, a family man, a person of intelligence and integrity. I am confident he will be an outstanding judge. So in turn, I would like to wish him all the best in the next chapter of his life."*

- District Manager Florence presented Mr. Risi with a small token of appreciation for his service, a bottle of champagne labeled "Astoria", from the bottles of the Waldorf-Astoria.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas turned the meeting over to Legal, Legislative & Parliamentary Committee Chair Mr. John Katsanos, to discuss changes to the Board's Bylaws.

#### **Remarks by Mr. John Katsanos, Chair of the Legal, Legislative & Parliamentary Committee**

- Mr. Katsanos extended congratulations to Mr. Risi on his appointment to judge, and congratulated/thanked Norma Nieves-Blas for her service as Interim Chair. Mr. Katsanos discussed how operations are to take place in the event of a vacancy, which is regulated under the 1995 Bylaws' Article 11. These Bylaws require a vote be taken at the next regular Full Board Meeting, which will occur on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.
- **MOTION by John Katsanos to first agree to the new Bylaws, and once the Bylaws are approved, then vote to fill the vacancy based on the regulations in the new Bylaws, at the next Full Board Meeting.**
- **MOTION SECONDED by Nancy Silverman.**
- Mr. Katsanos announced that further details regarding the new Bylaws would be discussed during Committee Reports.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas thanked Mr. Katsanos, and proceeded to introduce those distinguished guests who had entered the meeting since her previous statements: Stacey Eliuk of the Public Advocate's office, Eileen Fan of the Comptroller's office, and Ayisha Mayfield of Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan's office.
- **MOTION to first approve the new Bylaws, then vote to fill the vacancy PASSED with no opposition.**
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas called to hear the first Public Hearing item on the agenda.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

##### **Board of Standards and Appeals**

1. **BSA Application No. 2017-190-BZ Catholic Charities, a not-for-profit developer of affordable housing, seeks a variance pursuant to ZR 72-21 to modify FAR, height and setback, and rear yard requirements to facilitate development of the Proposed Project at the referenced site. The variance will facilitate the development of a seven-story building with 92 units of "affordable independent residences for seniors" located at 23-11 31<sup>st</sup> Road, Astoria.**
  - Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas welcomed representatives from Catholic Charities.
  - Eric Knowles, Tim McManus, Jeffery Dugan, and [inaudible] from Catholic Charities were in attendance.
  - Mr. Knowles thanked the Land Use and Zoning Committee for allowing a presentation during the recent Committee Meeting (at which the committee voted to approve the application), and then provided an overview of the application.
  - **PROPOSAL DETAILS** - Plans call for a 69ft., 7 story building with a ~9000<sup>2</sup> ft. senior center on the first floor, and 92 affordable residences for seniors (83 1-bedroom apartments and 9 studios, 1 2-bedroom super's unit) at the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and 31<sup>st</sup> Road (an R6B zone). The development will have a 19 space parking lot. As discussed later by the architect in his presentation:
    - Preliminary plans for the senior center include an activities room, a commercial kitchen, offices, and other program rooms. This service will be open to the public, and may be use by residents of Catholic Charities I as well.
    - The residential space will have a private common areas. There will be two elevators in the central portion of the building, and plans also include the required stairwell.
    - The building will be brick, which will be consistent with neighborhood architecture.
  - **PRESENT SITE CONDITIONS** - The site is presently occupied by a parking lot with 51 spaces for the residents of the building located immediately to the south, across 31<sup>st</sup> Road (this building is also Catholic Charities senior housing). The site is owned by Catholic Charities. As the residents of the current building now own fewer cars than in

the past, parking needs have declined, and the lot is underutilized (and largely vacant) in its current use. A 19 space open parking lot will remain on the east side of the lot, per the plans for the proposed development.

- RELIEF SOUGHT - Catholic Charities requires waivers for several zoning regulations, specifically:
  - Floor Area Ratio (FAR): As of right FAR = 2.2 (or a building of approximately 56K<sup>2</sup> ft.); request for FAR of 3.26 (83,400<sup>2</sup> ft).
  - Height and Setback: Maximum height as of right = 55ft, or 5 stories. Anything over 45ft requires setback of 15ft from street. The proposed building is 69ft, 7 stories, with no setback.
  - Rear Yard Requirements: Zoning permits a one story portion of the building in the required 30ft rear yard (something this proposal includes) only if it is used for specific purposes; a senior center is not one of the permitted uses, and thus a waiver is required.
  - The building otherwise will comply with all provisions of the zoning resolution.
- HISTORY - Catholic Charities Brooklyn and Queens has been in existence as a social service organization for over 100 years, while the real estate division has been in existence for 40 years. One of the first projects conducted by this group was the 240 unit affordable senior housing development affiliated with parking lot the development is being built on; Catholic Charities has 21 buildings in the two boroughs (~3400 apartments), and specializes in senior housing.
- DEMAND - The group believes there is a great need for more affordable senior housing in the city, and that the problem is coming to a “crisis level”. Catholic Charities has a waiting list of over 30,000 people, while on average there are only 100 vacancies a year. This leaves people waiting an average of 7-10 years for an apartment.
  - Catholic Charities follows a model that integrates social services into the housing developments, which allows seniors to live independently longer, and therefore believes that the building will be a great asset to the community.
- The project architect provided a power point presentation with specific details of architectural plan and the site.
- Ms. Nieves-Blas opened the meeting to Board Member questions and comments, leading to the following clarifications:
  - Units will have meters and residents will have control over their thermostats (rather than there being a central system), and they will likely be paying their own utility bills. No specific system has been selected.
  - The building will be fully accessible and ADA compliant. The property is in a flood zone, so the building will have to be placed above flood zone elevation, but the high point entry way will be relatively flush with the sidewalk to permit entry without use of a ramp.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas turned the meeting over to Land Use and Zoning Committee Co-Chair Elizabeth Erion, who further questioned the applicant.
  - There will be a 2.91 FAR for the affordable independence residences and .35 FAR for the community facility and senior center. This results in a collective FAR of 3.26.
- Ms. Erion discussed the concerns of the Land Use and Zoning Committee (which the committee sought to bring the BSA’s attention in their letter of support), though the Co-Chair noted that the committee was very much in favor of the project and did seek to recommend Board approval of the project with no conditions.
  - Astoria is a community that is aging in place, and Catholic Charities has a long wait list for housing. Within the Council District, there are 20000 people wait listed for affordable units. 726 seniors are wait listed for the existing Catholic Charities 1 property. The committee is concerned about prioritizing district residents.
  - A Catholic Charities representative responded that the organization is in contact with local parishes, and these parishes have communicated a need for housing and requested preference for their parishioners.
  - Catholic Charities will comply with fair housing laws, and advocate to provide a preference.
  - The committee has concerns regarding the sufficiency of parking onsite. The property is located in a transit zone where parking isn’t required, though, the 51 space lot being developed on was a condition of approval for the current building across the street from the proposed development. While residents of the properties may not drive, there is a concern for visitors and staff, and the committee questions where these individuals will be accommodated. The area is undergoing extensive redevelopment, and parking is a common issue in the neighborhood. While not a condition of approval, the committee encourages the applicant to take advantage of site design or mechanical options to find feasible ways to increasing parking spots on site from the proposed 19 spaces, which is an extraordinarily low number, and expect Catholic Charities to make an effort to lessen the parking impacts of the development.

- George Alexiou expressed concerns that with 92 apartments, at least 50 or 60 parking spaces would be required. However, a representative noted that for the 240 units in the current property, only 12 individuals park in the lot; visitors aren't permitted to park onsite. While the organization understands the concerns, and can try to accommodate more parking through the methods suggested, the representative also noted that there is a waitlist for popular raised garden beds, but no wait list for parking throughout the entire portfolio.
- There is a shuttle bus that brings residents to senior centers, and on trips to places such as malls, museums, and casinos. The representative stated he could also look in to whether the shuttle runs to the subway. Many current residents utilize bus lines in close proximity to the property as a means of transportation.
- Rod Townsend anecdotally reported the facility's lot being underutilized, as the Board Member passes by frequently given he is a resident in that portion of the neighborhood.
- Additional Board Member questioning resulted in the following clarifications:
  - In response to a concern regarding the possibility that truck deliveries and garbage pickup might result in traffic congestion and other quality of life issues (posed by Mr. Dominic Stiller), a representative clarified that much of this activity would be conducted in the parking lot, which will be adjacent to the commercial kitchen. Many of the deliveries and other truck related activity will occur internally (to the premises), including Meals on Wheels Deliveries expected to come to the property.
  - Senior citizens are defined as 65 or older as it relates to program eligibility. Despite the waitlist, individuals must wait until they are eligible to apply (that is, there a 58 year old would not be allowed to apply for housing to accommodate a possible 7 year wait). The current building (Catholic Charities 1) has Section 8 vouchers that limit residents' rent to 30% of their income (the average tenant pays \$200 a month and has a \$12,000 annual income), and the goal is to obtain additional vouchers for the new building.
- Ms. Erion reviewed a letter submitted by Councilman Constantinides in support of the development, which stated it'll take an underutilized parking lot and transform it into a facility for seniors to live and congregate, and is consistent with extensive community concern regarding affordable housing.
- According to Ms. Erion, "the committee was in support of this project [at the recent Land Use and Zoning meeting], and believes.... developing senior housing on the lot [will be] a better.... use of the land and will provide a greater benefit to the community." Ms. Erion went on to "request the BSA consider the Catholic Charities organization, its nonprofit status, its long standing history in providing affordable and subsidized housing to the elderly, and public good, that this project will provide from this proposed development."
- Ms. Norma Nieves-Blas requested the public be given an opportunity to speak prior to a motion being made, and opened the meeting to public questions and comments. While no members of the public wished to speak on the matter, the following clarification arose from questioning by Demaris Moné (representative for State Senator Peralta) regarding green space, green technology/building elements/infrastructure and water reclamation:
  - The team is exploring opportunities for greenspace on the two roofs of the facility; one atop the residential tower at 7 stories, and one atop the senior center at 1 story. The developer does hope to be able to utilize some environmentally green elements, and do plan on installing energy efficient appliances (as well as making the units entirely wheelchair accessible). However, the developer may be restricted in terms of the extent to which they can use or install green technologies (such as utilization of specific paints and installation of water reclamation systems), given funding for building low income housing may not sufficient to afford such work.
- The Land Use and Zoning Co-Chair stated that "the board understands... there are findings that have to be met in order for this variance to be granted, and in this case [inaudible] variance is required so that the proposed configuration and envelope of the building can accommodate the design specifications [necessary] for senior housing", and the senior center, which will serve both the residents and the surrounding community. Furthermore, it is also "necessary in terms of its size for [the building] to be 100% affordable, for it to be a building of its size". Ms. Erion believes that "the 7 story building [height] is a good transition between the lower rise community to the east and the taller buildings along 21<sup>st</sup> Street" along with the 11 story Catholic Charities 1 building already in existence across the street, and noted these are "higher density districts". Furthermore, because the area where the senior center would encroach into the rear yard abuts only a row of single story garages, allowing development in that part of the lot "won't impair the adjacent lots or development on the adjacent lots". The committee believes the applicant met the findings, and therefore made a recommendation for approval of the variance of the application.
- **MOTION by Elizabeth Erion on behalf of the Land Use and Zoning Committee, for approval of the variance of the application No. 2017-190-BZ to grant a [inaudible] variance to facilitate development by [Catholic**

Charities] of a 7 story building with 92 units of affordable independent residences for seniors and a community center with 19 accessible parking spaces at 23-11 31<sup>st</sup> Road.

- **MOTION SECONDED** by Rod Townsend.
- Mr. Richard Khuzami took roll call.
- **MOTION PASSED**, 38 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 abstained.
- Chairwoman Nieves-Blas thanked Catholic Charities for their presentation, and called for the second applicant on the agenda to take the floor.

2. **BSA Application No. 294-06-BZ** An application to extend the term of a previously granted permit for a Physical Culture Establishment located at 31-11 Broadway (Club Fitness), Astoria. Term to be 10 years.

- Mr. Ariel S. Holtzer of Goldman Harris LLC, representative for the applicant, took the floor to discuss the matter. The applicant is seeking an additional 10 year term on a previously granted physical culture establishment permit. The physical culture establishment (PCE) permit was initially approved by the BSA April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007, and received Community Board approval at that time. The application was amended in 2012 to expand to cellar. This amendment was also approved. The applicant is not seeking any changes to the current plan, only an extension of terms. Provisions of the BSA are met, the hours of the facility are 5am-12am fire, and all safety requirements are complied with. There are currently two open violations on the premises, one for plumbing and one related "to an improperly maintained fence for the parking lot of the Capital One Bank on 32<sup>nd</sup> Street. [These violations are] not related... to the PCE, [and the] applicant is in the process of certifying correction for both violations" (Memo Page 2, as referenced by the representative).
- The Land Use and Zoning Co-Chair, Ms. Elizabeth Erion, questioned the applicant, resulting in the following clarifications:
  - The applicant is a physical culture establishment with spa services, located across three floors (cellar, first, second third floors). The facility contains a cycling room, gym equipment, showers, a spa, massage rooms, and offers fitness classes.
  - The facility also has 38 parking spaces, which were a legal preexisting condition.
- The Board questioned the applicant, resulting in the following clarifications:
  - In response to concerns regarding access to the parking lot and garbage accumulation by Mr. Edwin Cadiz, the representative stated that the establishment could investigate how to resolve the problem.
    - Mr. Rod Townsend, Board Member and a member of gym, can attest to signage alerting members to "behave" when parking, and anecdotally reports that any time there are issues [with the building], they are resolved quickly.
  - The facility is ADA compliant, and there is an elevator. There are no stairs at the entrance of the facility. The representative wasn't certain which fitness courses were accessible to those with disabilities or in a wheelchair, but the representative assured the Board those with disabilities or in a wheelchair could use the facility.
  - Discussion turned to the matter of the certificate of occupancy. Dialogue between the Board and the representative was inaudible.
  - The roof is not utilized for classes, nor does the representative believe there is any intention for the space to be used for classes according to the information the representative had available.
  - The representative believed the cellar was accessible via the elevator, and Board Member Rod Townsend reported anecdotally the elevator does go to the basement floor.
- Ms. Norma Nieves-Blas opened the meeting for public commentary. No requests to comment were heard.
- **MOTION MADE** by Land Use and Zoning Committee Chair Elizabeth Erion on behalf of the committee, to approve the application (as follows):
  - The Land Use and Zoning Committee of Community Board 1, Queens "find[s] that the applicant meets the findings, that the facility doesn't impair the neighborhood character or future development in the area, [that the facility] provides programs and equipment necessary for instruction and classes, necessary background checks were made and the statement was filed [inaudible] to these findings, no changes were proposed to the facility's layout or program, and there have been no complaints against the facility received by Board One's office related to noise or other issues. However, there are the open building violations and [the Land Use and Zoning Committee] want[s] to see them resolved. So with that in mind [The Land Use and Zoning Committee] motion[ed] to

recommend approval of the BSA application 294-06-BZ, to extend the term of the special permit to allow a physical culture establishment to operate at 31-11 Broadway for a term of 10 years as requested.”

- **MOTION SECONDED by Edward Babor.**
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas requested roll call be taken. Roll call was taken by Richard Khuzami.
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (38 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstained).**
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas requested the Board proceed to the business section of the meeting.

## **BUSINESS**

### **A. Approval of Minutes:**

- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas called for a motion to approve the minutes.
- **MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES made by Vanessa Jones-Hall.**
- **MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES SECONDED by Rose Anne Alafogiannis.**
- **MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES PASSED.**

### **B. Statements by Joseph Risi:** Outgoing Chairman Joseph Risi requested to make a final statement to the Board prior to the Chairperson’s report: *“It was, it is an honor, and a privilege to serve on this board. I wish everyone a safe healthy and happy summer. Let’s continue to make this board the number one board in Queens.”* The statement was met with a round of applause by Board members.

### **C. Chairperson’s Report – Norma Nieves-Blas (Interim Chairwoman):** Ms. Nieves-Blas recently attended a meeting at Borough Hall with the Borough President on behalf of then Chairman Joseph Risi. Discussed was a presentation on a proposed self-storage text amendment. Specifically, the presentation related to 31-07 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, in Board 1’s district. As reported by Ms. Nieves-Blas, a special permit was request because there are regulations regarding self-storage, and a permit in an event it isn’t approved. The Chairwoman requested further clarification from Land Use and Zoning Co-Chair Elizabeth Erion, who provided said clarification during the Land Use and Zoning Committee report. Ms. Nieves-Blas also reviewed the content of the Board Members’ folders.

### **D. District Manager’s Report – Florence Koulouris:** The District Manager congratulated Mr. Risi on his recent appointment to judge, briefly reviewed several meetings and events she had attended over the last month (and encouraged Board Members to speak with her if they wanted additional information on any of the topics reviewed), and wished attendees a wonderful summer.

### **E. Committee Reports:**

- **Access and Disability:** No Report.
- **Airport:** Chair RoseMarie Poveromo extended a congratulations and good luck to Mr. Risi and Mr. Katsanos for their recent nominations, and wished all a wonderful summer.
- **Capital/Expense & Budget/Planning:** Chair Norma Nieves-Blas stated that while a letter was sent out by the District Manager regarding the Chair’s plans meet with Committees to discuss the Capital and Expense Budgets, in light of her new position as Interim Chairwoman, this responsibility would be delegated to Vice Chair of the Committee (Edward Babor) for the summer months. Ms. Nieves-Blas also requested Board Members review the old budget distributed via email.
- **Community & Economic Development:** Committee Chair Thomas Ryan alerted Board Members that a one page demographic sheet was included in their folders, and requested Board Members review it and provide commentary in terms of community need in an effort to develop a wish list.
- **Consumer Affairs:** Committee Chair John Katsanos reviewed the outcomes of two Committee meetings held 6/8 and 6/13 (to discuss three liquor license applications and two unenclosed sidewalk café applications):
  - 4218 Restaurant Group LLC (D/B/A TBD), new liquor license application: The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approve with a general stipulation. This location formerly housed Cavo.
  - Room 31 Inc. (D/B/A Room 31), new liquor license application: The Committee vote to recommend approval with a general [strong] stipulation. This location formerly housed Palladium, which had a history of problems according to the 114<sup>th</sup> precinct. The applicant has signed the stipulation and updated their floorplan as requested.
  - Melody Café Restaurant Inc. (D/B/A Melody), renewal of an existing liquor license application: The Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of application due to 34 noise complaints and multiple responses by the 114<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

- All other 30 day advance notices on liquor licenses (list included in Board Members folders) were reviewed/considered, had deficiencies corrected where necessary, and were not of concern.
- Tufino Pizzeria Napoletana Inc. (D/B/A Tufino Pizzeria Napoletana), new unenclosed sidewalk cafe: The Committee voted to recommend approval of an unenclosed sidewalk café with 2 tables and 16 chairs, and a general stipulation agreed to.
- Wayra Restaurant Associates LLC (D/B/A Warique), new unenclosed sidewalk cafe: The Committee voted to recommend approval of an unenclosed sidewalk café with 16 tables and 32 chairs, and a general stipulation agreed to.
- **MOTION by John Katsanos on behalf of the Consumer Affairs Committee to recommend approval of two liquor license applications with stipulations, approval of two unenclosed sidewalk cafes with stipulations, and the denial of one liquor license as outlined above.**
- **MOTION SECONDED by Evie Hantzopoulos.**
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- **Education/Library:** No Report.
- **Environmental Protection:** Committee Chair Antonella Di Saverio extended congratulations to Mr. Risi and Mr. Katsanos.
- **Health/Senior Services:** Committee Chair Judy Trilivas reminded Board Members that information regarding tick borne illness was included in their folders, and that anyone looking for quick tips for protecting one's self, one's family, and one's animals should look on page 2.
- **Housing:** Chair RoseMarie Poveromo extended congratulations to longtime Board Members.
- **Land Use & Zoning:**
  - Committee Co-Chair Elizabeth Erion announced the previous Land Use and Zoning Committee had an excellent turnout, though it was quite long and intensive due to the number of presentations.
  - Ms. Erion thanked Land Use and Zoning Committee Members for their hard work and dedication throughout the year, as well as commending the Committee for working together to construct well-reasoned recommendations for the consideration of the full Board. The Co-Chair stated she looked forward to continuing working with Committee Members the following year.
  - Ms. Erion also extend gratitude to outgoing Chairman Joseph Risi for his work and guidance. Mr. Risi thanked Ms. Erion for her statements.
  - The Committee Co-Chair turned her attention to discussing current flood resiliency efforts, and text amendments being discussed to permanently encode specific efforts that presently exist as temporary regulations. These were established in 2013 in response to flooding from Hurricane Sandy. Storm damaged properties were required to follow these building code regulations (i.e. requiring buildings to be built above flood elevations based on FEMA flood elevation data) as a condition to rebuild. These standards also apply to new construction in the floodplain. The purpose of flood resiliency zoning is to reduce flood risk and damage, and to promote resilience to climate related events.
  - Community Board 1's district includes a significant floodplain along the East River waterfront, including most of the industrial complex north of 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, portions of Hallets Point Peninsula, sections of Ravenswood, and along the seawall south to Queensbridge. Much of the affected property is manufacturing/industrial, which the text amendment doesn't apply to.
  - The text amendments are being reviewed, and what has been learned from applying the regulations over the last few years is planned to be incorporated.
  - The regulations include raising building height to accommodate the portion of the building within the floodplain on the upper levels of the structure, adding FAR, restricting ground floor usage by buildings within the flood plain, and other incentives to get buildings in compliance to limit damage from future storms.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas interrupted the meeting to allow Councilman Costa Constantinides (who had just arrived) to make a presentation.

#### **REMARKS BY COUNCILMAN COSTA CONSTANTINIDES**

- Councilman Costa Constantinides thanked outgoing Chairman Joseph Risi for his service, and wished him well in his future endeavor as a judge.

- The Councilman welcomed new Board Members, and thanked those continuing Board Members for their ongoing commitment.
- Councilman Constantinides discussed specific budget items that will benefit the local district. Noteworthy is the fact that the budget was passed earlier than any budget in the last two decades. Among the allocations for the local community were:
  - \$1.9 Million for a stroke center at Mt. Sinai, Queens.
  - Major investments in Halletts Point Peninsula, including:
    - \$3 Million (on top of a previous \$1 Million allocation) to renovate the library branch, making it ADA compliant along with an elevator with sliding doors, updating the children's room, and adding electronic drop off service.
    - \$3 Million for a multipurpose, year round play/sports area at Halletts Cove Playground.
    - Money to renovate Astoria Houses' basketball court, as well as adding new lighting and security cameras.
    - \$500,000 (allocated by the Councilman) for improvements at Whitey-Ford Field. Borough President Melinda Katz has also contributed funds for the project.
  - Allocation of funds for green technology in Astoria, specifically (and in partnership with the Borough President), solar panels on PS 122 and the Steinway library branch.
  - \$50,000 for every public school in the district for investments in technology.
  - Two new hydroponic science labs, one at PS 85 and one at IS 126, bringing the tally for newly renovated science spaces (in the last two years) to 5/17 district schools.
  - An increased allowance of \$250,000 for ACE (Association of Community Employment Programs for the Homeless) to continue keeping Astoria streets clean, and adding service to Broadway. All major thoroughfares and business districts in the neighborhood will now have street cleaning services.
  - A continuing partnership with the Queens Economic Development Council to continue graffiti removal efforts. Constituents are encouraged to call the Councilman's office at (718) 274-4500 to request graffiti removal, which will typically be complete within 3 days of the request.
  - Adding new garbage cans to the district, locations pending.
  - The Councilman wished the outgoing Chairman good luck, and wished all attendees a happy summer.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas thanked the Councilman for his presentation, and requested the Board resume committee reports.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS CONTINUED**

- **Land Use & Zoning:**
  - Ms. Erion returned to discussion of the flood resiliency text amendment. Presently City Planning is engaged in studying the issue and conducting outreach to affected areas. The Land Use and Zoning Committee has been asked to prepare a letter regarding these issues (i.e. having homeowners retrofit their buildings to avoid future flood damage). The committee found no incentive for homeowners to conduct the requested work, and thus are suggesting the city develop an incentive program (such as tax incentives) to encourage constituents to conduct repairs and increase compliance.
  - **MOTION by Elizabeth Erion on behalf of the Land Use and Zoning Committee to draft a letter over the summer.**
    - In putting forth the motion, Ms. Erion also noted that the text won't come before the Community Board until the end of 2018, and this is an opportunity for the Board to offer input on the matter.
  - **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
  - Ms. Erion then discussed proposed text amendments regulating self-storage facilities in IBZs.
    - This topic was discussed at the recent committee meeting; the issue has been distributed for comment to 27 Boards throughout the city. This is not a ULURP, the topic is only open for comment. Feedback is due July 30<sup>th</sup>.
    - The changes are a part of the city's action plan to support economic growth and business in IBZs, and they do not apply to self-storage facilities outside of these districts (of which there are three in the community; Steinway, Dutch Kills, and Ravenswood). The intention is to address the unregulated development of storage facilities in these areas, given these businesses generate few jobs in significantly sized buildings, detract from the goals of IBZs, and serve households rather than industries. Typically the establishments are typically located in prime locations for industry rather than households.



- There is presently high demand for self-storage facilities, and self-storage facilities constitute 25% of new construction in IBZs (construction which is permitted as of right).
- **GOAL OF NEW TEXT AMENDMENT:** CPC is seeking to require a special permit (similar to a physical culture establishment permit) for self-storage facilities located within IBZs. The permits would be issued on a case-by-case basis, with criteria dictating that self-storage facilities won't preclude job creation in industry.
- **COMMITTEE'S VIEWS:** The Committee generally had two arguments on the matter, one for, one against. 1) **AGAINST – FREE MARKET:** The special permit process can take 2 years, which is a burden on business/property owners, making for an unviable business model. There is a significant demand for these properties, and the permit process doesn't help warehouses. 2) **FOR – BUSINESS PROTECTION:** not only do manufacturing jobs work for business itself, but they bring economic benefit to community beyond what a storage facility will do for the surrounding households.
- **COMMITTEE CONCLUSION:** Ms. Erion remarked that "the committee agreed the city is not incentivizing or adequately marketing the warehouse availability in our IBZs, in Board 1['s district], and the city could add floor area or tax rebates for jobs created in warehouse areas or jobs retained.... The special permit doesn't meet the goal of saving jobs... since city planning doesn't anticipate more than one application made per year in the future, and [further] anticipate[s] most self-storage facilities will be constructed outside of IBZs." Two motions were voted on (based on these conclusions) during the Committee Meeting; one was defeated (i.e. Motion 1) and one was passed, and thus and presented to the Board for discussion and voting (i.e. Motion 2).
- **MOTION 1 (DEFEATED at Committee, 3 to 6):** Approve text amendment with a suggestion that they have a percentage of floor area in new storage facilities be dedicated to manufacturing jobs.
- **MOTION 2 (Passed at Committee and presented for voting by the Board by Elizabeth Erion on behalf of the Land Use and Zoning Committee):** Disapprove text as written, and instead approve a modified amendment to this zoning text that in IBZs:
  - The special permit approach would be eliminated.
  - There would be a requirement for self-storage facilities to set aside 30% of the floor area in the building for manufacturing jobs and for business, which would be certified by the DOB.
  - Any new self-storage facility would be prohibited from displacing existing manufacturing jobs.
- **MOTION (2) SECONDED by Vanessa Jones-Hall.**
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas requested the vote be taken via a show of hands, to which Legal, Legislative & Parliamentary Committee Chair John Katsanos responded, questioning whether any Board Members dissented.
- Discussion between Board Members took place to clarify specific details of the motion prior to a vote being taken.
- The issue of voting procedure was again raised, to which dissent was heard. Mr. Richard Khuzami proceeded to take roll call.
- **MOTION PASSED 26 in Favor, 5 Opposed, 1 abstained**
- **Legal, Legislative & Parliamentary:**
  - Committee Chair John Katsanos wished the Board a great summer, but offered a reminder that per the NY Open Meeting Law, the Board is required to meet for voting purposes should any recommendations need to be made.
  - The revised Bylaws will be voted on at the next regular Board Meeting on 9/19, and a draft has been circulated to all Board Members for comment (which are due to the District Manager by 8/31). The Chair stated comments would then be shared with Committee members for discussion and used as a catalyst to write a revised draft for vote. The present draft of the Bylaws are based on the 1995 Bylaws, the model bylaws provided by the Borough President, and bylaws from a Manhattan Board.
  - Once the vote on the Bylaws is complete, vacancies on the Executive Board can be filled via voting procedures.
  - Nancy Silverman commended Mr. Katsanos on the draft, and questioned whether comments received by the District Manager could be circulated to all Board Members for discussion. Mr. Katsanos responded that a list of interested parties could certainly be developed, and further noted the three sets of model bylaws would also be distributed to those interested (to serve as a comparison).
- **Office Staff:** No Report.
- **Parks/Recreation & Cultural Services:**
  - Committee Chair Richard Khuzami reviewed upcoming parks and culture events, before discussing two resolutions (developed during the recent Committee meeting) that required approval from the Board. The first was related to the placing one of several "Soccer for Success" mini-fields in one of Triborough Bridge Playground B's basketball courts, while preserving the other courts onsite. "Soccer for Success" is a public/private partnership aimed at

bringing soccer facilities, coaching, and supplies to underserved communities. The Committee voted in favor of the project at their recent Board meeting and recommends approval to the Board.

- **MOTION by Richard Khuzami on behalf of the Parks/Recreation and Cultural Services Committee, to send a letter to the Parks Department approving the installation of a mini-soccer pitch on Parks property, located at Triborough Bridge Playground B.**
- **MOTION SECONDED.**
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- Mr. Rod Townsend thanked the Parks/Recreation and Cultural Services Committee on a solution that also requested improvements to the remaining basketball courts onsite.
- The second resolution developed by the Parks/Recreation and Cultural Services Committee is related to improvements at Hallets Cove Playground. The Parks Department requested approval of the new park design, which the Committee voted in favor of, while requesting several additional items: additional lighting, bicycle racks, and increased perimeter fencing between 4 and 5 feet.
- **MOTION by Richard Khuzami on behalf of the Parks/Recreation and Cultural Services Committee, to send a letter to the Parks Department approving the design presented by representatives on 5/22/17 for Hallets Cove Playground, with the following additional requests: additional lighting, bicycle racks, and increased perimeter fencing between 4 and 5 feet.**
- **MOTION SECONDED by Rose Anne Alafogiannis.**
- **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- **Public Relations:** No Report.
- **Public Safety:** No Report.
- **Street Festivals/Special Events:** No Report.
- **Transportation:** Committee Chair Robert Piazza announced the upcoming Transportation Committee meeting (which was held on June 28<sup>th</sup>) at which the MTA was scheduled to attend and discuss the planned improvements and beautification of stations along the N line. The Chair also stated it would be a good opportunity to discuss the topic of elevators along the transit line.
- **Youth Services:** Committee Chair Jose Batista alerted the Board that all participants for the summer youth program have been selected through the lottery, and would be starting their positions during the week of July 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Batista also extended congratulations to Interim Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas called for public commentary.

## **PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

- Mr. Neil Herdan discussed recent monetary allocations to Astoria Houses (for lighting, safety improvements, etc.), and for improvements at Whitey Ford Field. Mr. Herdan thanked Councilman Costa Constantinides, Parks/Recreation & Cultural Services Committee Chair Richard Khuzami, and District Manager Florence Koulouris for their work on the matter.
- Donna [*Inaudible*] discussed concerns that the pooper scooper law is no longer enforced, and also asked what could be done to ensure rules/laws are following in Astoria Park (especially in and around the track), to prevent misuse of the track and ensure quality of life is upheld. The constituent has been in contact with the Parks Department regarding the issue, and asked what can be done to better enforcement of these issues.
  - The District Manager clarified that the pooper scooper law is difficult to enforce, as it requires a sanitation enforcement officer to witness the offense. Ms. Koulouris recommended calling 311 if constituents witness owners failing to clean up after their dogs, since most dog owners walk their dogs at approximately the same time each day. This may result in a sanitation officer coming to the area and being able to catch the person and the dog, at which point a ticket could be issued. The ticket amount has increased, but the issue is challenging to enforce.
  - In terms of parks enforcement at Astoria Park, the District Manager remarked that funds to hire more patrol officers have been on the budget for some time. While , Parks/Recreation & Cultural Services Committee Chair Richard Khuzami could offer more information regarding the matter, in general, complaints should be filed with the Community Board Office (none had been heard leading up to the June Board Meeting). Any complaints directly to the office can be followed up on with departmental liaisons by the District Manager.

- The constituent also volunteered that dogs walking off leash in the park is particularly problematic to which the District Manager responded walking dogs off leash is illegal.
- Autumn Whitefield-Madrano encouraged the closure of Riker's Island sooner than the 10 year goal initially proposed.
- Jillian Elbaum from Grow NYC and manager of the Ditmar's Youth Market was in attendance to discuss the program. It is run entirely by teenagers from the area, located on Steinway between 23<sup>rd</sup> and Ditmars at Ditmars Park, and is open from 8am-3pm on Saturdays from July until November (June hours were 8am-12pm). Multiple payment methods are accepted (including but not limited to cash, credit, WIC & debit). The representative brought a flier with additional information.
  - Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas stated that the previous year's market was a great success, and encouraged attendees to support the market.
  - Board Member Evie Hantzopoulos provided more information on the market, stating that typically 3 teenagers run the market, and there was still one open position at the time of June's Board Meeting. Children ages 16-20 are eligible, and make \$11 an hour. Interested parties were encouraged to contact the appropriate representative, and anyone who knew someone who may be eligible was encouraged to offer a referral.
  - The Chairwoman asked the representative to email the flier to the office.
  - Board Member RoseMarie Poveromo asked for clarification on what a "youth market" is, to which Board Member Evie Hantzopoulos responded that it is a small farmer's market, with very reasonable prices and a good selection, held at Ditmars Park on Steinway Street.
  - In response to a question by Board Member Daniel Aliberti, Ms. Elbaum volunteered that the produce comes from small farms (not city gardens), and while not certified organic, all farms are thoroughly reviewed for quality assurance.
- Chairwoman Norma Nieves-Blas made a final statement to the Boarding, thanking them for their support, stating she looked forward to working with them over the summer months and that the Chairwoman would be working with Mr. Edward Babor (Vice Chair of Capital/Expense and Budget/Planning Committee) on matters related to the budget. The Chairwoman also stated she looked forward to working with the Board for the September public hearing, and that "as a member of the Board for over 30 years, [she has] seen a lot of changes, a lot of good changes, and [she continues] to look forward to working with [the Board]." In closing, Ms. Nieves-Blas thanked the Board for their participation and cooperation.

## **BUSINESS**

### **F. New/Old Business:**

- No requests to discuss new business were heard.
- No requests to discuss old business were heard.

### **G. Adjournment**

- Chairwoman Nieves-Blas called for a motion to adjourn.
- **MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Vanessa Jones-Hall.**
- **MOTION SECONDED by Edward Babor.**
- **MOTION PASSED.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:00pm**

# COMMUNITY BOARD 1, Queens

DATE

6/20/17

Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.
Rose Anne Alafogiannis	✓			Richard Khuzami	✓		
George Alexiou	✓			Nancy Konipol	✓		
Daniel Aliberti	✓			Jerry Kril	✓		
Loren Amor	✓			Melanie La Rocca	✓		
Joan Asselin	✓			Frances Luhmann-McDonald	✓		
Avninder Aujla	✓			Antonio Meloni		✓	
Edward Babor	✓			Prabir Mitra			E
Jose Batista	✓			Stella Nicolaou	✓		
Ann Bruno	✓			Norma Nieves-Blas	✓		
Giselle Aida Burgess		✓		Mary O'Hara	✓		
Edwin Cadiz	✓			Robert Piazza	✓		
Gerald Caliendo			E	RoseMarie Poveromo	✓		
Jean Marie D'Alleva			E	Joseph Risi	✓		
Antonella Di Saverio	✓			Yawne Robinson	✓		
Katie Ellman	✓			Thomas Ryan	✓		
Elizabeth Erion	✓			Manuel Salce		✓	
Mackenzi Farquer	✓			Rodolfo Sarchese	✓		
Dean Feratovic	✓			Nancy Silverman	✓		
Evie Hantzopoulos	✓			Dominic Stiller	✓		
Amy Hau			E	Andre Stith		✓	
Helen Ho	✓			Danielle Tharrington	✓		
Pauline Jannelli	✓			Marie Torniali	✓		
Vanessa Jones-Hall	✓			Rod Townsend	✓		
George Kalergios			E	Judy Trilivas	✓		
John Katsanos	✓						

Number Board Members Present 40

Present 40

Absent 4

Excused 5