



ELIZABETH BRATON  
Chairperson

## COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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KARYN PETERSEN  
District Manager

### REGULAR BOARD MEETING AND INFORMATIONAL PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

January 2, 2020

#### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

B. Braton, R. Ciulla-Frisone, J. Caruso, C. Malizia, M. Vecchio, P. Baumann, N. Bissoon, A. Maharaj, P. Granickas, F. Dardani, E. Fraylon, L. Amorim, I. Van Putten, P. Lynch, E. Holland, D. Mitchell, L. Walker, R. Gendron, G. Russo, P. Kishun, R. Graham, J. Stahl, M. Cherenfant, J. Calcagnile, S. Pace, M. Salim, M. Amin, G. Duldulao, J. Ariola, J. Singh, N. Nigro, D. Sookram-Singh

#### **BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

A. Antonino, A. Cosentino, A. Dhanpat, I. Dimoh, J. Fazio, A. Gellineau, R. Hitlall, R. Martinez, F. Mohamed, J. Quijano, B. Ramsundar, K. Randall, N. Santiago, N. Shuyab

#### **COMMUNITY BOARD 10 STAFF PRESENT:** K. Petersen, D.M.; M. May

#### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Hon. J. Addabbo; C. Moore, Rep. Hon. J. Addabbo; T. Delano, Rep. Hon. J. Addabbo; C. Torres, Rep. Hon. M. Miller; N. Peters, Rep. Hon. S. Pheffer-Amato; J. Kazi, Rep. Hon. A. Adams; D. Brown, QBPO; J. Resor, QDCP; J. Mongeluzo, NYC Comptroller's Office; Capt. J. Costello, CO 106 Precinct; Det. T. Carr, PBQS; P.O. G. Maher, Community Affairs 106 Precinct; C. Goode, Census Bureau; S. Villamil, NYC Dept. of Finance; J. Venezia, NYC Dept. of Finance; Richard David, Census Partner

The Chairperson began the meeting at 7:45pm and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairperson wished everyone a happy new year and acknowledged the presence of State Senator Joseph Addabbo and invited him to speak. The Senator wished everyone a happy and healthy new year and expressed optimism for the future moving forward. He said legislative sessions start next week, January 8, and continue till early June. He reported the Governor is releasing his Executive State Budget in January which is starting off with a \$6 billion deficit; and said, where do we find the revenue, or where do we find the cuts in the \$168 billion budget, to solve the \$6 billion deficit. He encouraged everyone to weigh in with any questions, comments, or concerns as they go through this legislative session and expressed his thanks to everyone.

The Chairperson thanked the Senator.

The Chairperson then opened the informational public hearing for the evening and introduced Sonia Villamil, External Affairs, Queens Outreach Liaison, NYC Dept. of Finance and John Venezia, City Assessor, NYC Dept. of Finance to speak about homeowner exemptions and abatements.

Ms. Villamil wished everyone a happy new year and expressed thanks to the board for inviting the NYC Dept. of Finance to the meeting. She indicated there are ways to reduce property taxes, and joked the NYC Dept. of Finance does not only collect parking tickets but also has friendlier units that can assist in lowering property taxes. Handouts were provided which included booklets, brochures, pamphlets, flyers and exemption application forms, which she



reviewed, highlighted, and summarized. She noted, every January, the DOF mails each property owner in NYC a Notice of Property Value (NOPV) which gives vital information and details about your property, including its market value, assessed value, exemptions on file, and property description. It is not a tax bill and does not require a payment. She stated, the City of New York offers various tax breaks known as exemptions to seniors, veterans, clergy members, people with disabilities, and other homeowners. Exemptions are property tax reductions to your bill. If you qualify for any of the exemptions, these amounts are subtracted from your property's assessed value to determine its taxable value. An exemption reduces your assessed value before your taxes are calculated and an abatement reduces your taxes after they've already been calculated.

(M. Salim arrived 7:49pm)

An overview of the eligibility requirements, benefits, and application process of the various types of exemptions was given and it was noted that the deadline for applying for personal exemptions is March 15. Various examples, scenarios and income guidelines were provided.

(M. Amin arrived 7:50pm)

It was indicated, the Tax Class One category is for a one, two, or three family home. Anything four units or above is a Tax Class Two category, such as coops, condos. It was noted, if a residential property is under a LLC ownership, it does not qualify for a tax exemption. She recommended seniors who have specific questions or concerns seek the advice of a lawyer specializing in elder law.

The NOPV is what the assessors say the value of your home is. It's based on the average sale of properties in the area for the last three years. If you believe that your assessed value is too high, you have the right to appeal to the NYC Tax Commission.

(N. Nigro arrived 7:52pm)

The Senior Citizen Homeowners' Exemption can cut your property tax by half. You must be 65 or older by December 31 of the current year. If you own your property with a spouse or sibling, only one of you needs to meet the age requirement. The Disabled Homeowners' Exemption has no age restriction; the combined income of all owners and their spouses cannot exceed \$58,399.

(G. Duldulao arrived 7:54pm)

She said, all exemptions are available to you and you can have multiple exemptions if you qualify for them. She encouraged everyone to become ambassadors and share anything new with family, friends, and their community. She suggested taking an application and reaching out to her if you're in doubt. She indicated she works closely with the representatives of all the local elected officials such as Senator Addabbo's office and Assembly Member Pheffer-Amato's office. It was indicated the new tax rate is adopted in November.

Ms. Villamil turned the floor over to Mr. Venezia who noted Ms. Villamil provided a lot of information. He said it's important to get to know what the taxes are and the way the system work. An Exemptions Inquiry Contact Information sheet was provided listing the e-mail contacts for the various Exemption Divisions and it was noted call 311 to be directed to them per phone. He also indicated the Office of the Taxpayer Advocate may be a resource for certain issues.

(D. Sookram-Singh arrived 8:01pm)

He said the NOPV could be confusing for some people who don't know the assessment process. He explained there are two values: the market value, which is the value for which you can sell your property, and the assessed value. He explained how the assessment value is determined and noted the assessment can only go up 6% per year or 20% in any five-year period for Tax Class One properties, so the increase is always limited. The assessment increase limit amounts for the other tax classes were also reviewed and examples of exceptions were provided.

Mr. Venezia asked if there were any questions.

(J. Ariola arrived at 8:03pm)

A question was raised by a board member who indicated he is a local architect and gets a lot of questions from clients who see their property on the DOB website indicating DOF Tax Classification: 2 Family – yet they have a Certificate



of Occupancy for a one family. He asked, how did that happen, is that by a visual drive by inspection, and how do they change it back to a one family.

Mr. Venezia said 1, 2, 3 family properties are basically in the same value range and have the same tax rate. If the square footage is incorrect, because someone did a modification or alteration to their property, or the wrong information was put into the computer, you can request an interior inspection and file for a correction. When the assessor comes in and determines that there was an error, and the square footage of the living space is indeed less, you have the right to get a credit going back five years.

The NOPV is sent around mid-January, and if you believe your assessed market value has been set too high, you have the right to appeal. The deadline for appeal for 1, 2, 3 family properties is March 15, and March 1 for commercial properties.

A question was raised about new construction on vacant land, which stops being assessed as vacant land even though a certificate of occupancy has not yet been issued.

Mr. Venezia responded the assessment is based on what's there and not on the certificate of occupancy. Per State law, they can only tax the building after the first year or second year, depending on whatever applies for that particular property, and it has to be ready for occupancy.

The Board Chairperson thanked the guest speakers for the informative presentation.

The Chairperson acknowledged the presence of Mr. Richard David, from a neighborhood census partner, and invited him to speak. Mr. David spoke of the importance of the census.

The Chairperson then acknowledged Ms. Catherine Goode to also speak on census matters. Ms. Goode from the US Census Bureau indicated the census is easy and important and the information you provide is confidential. There are four ways you can respond: paper survey received in the mail (in English and Spanish); on line (a post card is received in the mail with an identification number and you use that number when you sign in to an on-line account to complete it); in person with an enumerator; or over the phone. If anyone needs assistance in completing the census in another language, that's available. It can be completed on line in twelve different languages. If one of those languages is not the one your community needs, there are telephone helpers who can help you in another 59 languages. The census affects everyone from elementary school to retirement age. The response to the census determines how \$675 billion worth of funding is spent over the next ten years. It's spent on schools, for programs like Head Start, teacher training for classroom technology, afterschool programs. It's spent on emergency services for hospitals and fire departments. If people choose not to respond to the census that means that the amount of funding that is available for that community won't be received. She said, people are given the opportunity to self-respond that's why you receive the survey in the mail and receive online access. If people choose not to self-respond, that's when an enumerator will come and try to collect the information in person. She highly recommends self-responding. It was indicated, information given to the census cannot be shared with any other governmental organization; it can't be shared with courts, immigration, customs, or enforcement. If this should occur, they are subject to \$250,000 fine or five years in Federal prison. She warned, if you receive anything in the mail asking for your social security number or your bank account number or asking for a donation for a charity, claiming to be from the census, it's a scam, and please report that organization.

The Chairperson indicated to Board members that there was census information in the board folders and via e-mail they had received translations of the census instructions in the most common languages in Board 10: English, Spanish, Italian, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, and Punjabi. She asked that it please be shared with anyone who needs that. She said if you are aware of anyone who needs language services, there is a list of all of the other languages available, and we have the ability at the office to print out the instructions in those other languages. She noted there is also a map in the board folders, which tells you how every census tract in our area will receive their census form (whether they will be getting it in English, Spanish, etc.). She asked board members to share the information with as many people as they can, and said we are all census ambassadors for our area, so pass on all the information as you get it. She thanked everyone who has been sharing the information they have been receiving. She said it's important that everyone gets counted; it's the dollars that help run our city and state.



The Chairperson continued with the regular order of business and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the December 2019 minutes. There were none.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** The Chairperson reviewed incoming correspondence for the month of December 2019, which included:

- Notice from NYC Charter School Center of their desire to share information
- Public Notice NYC OMB / Combined Notice of Joint Record of Decision & Findings Statement and Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds: East Side Coastal Resiliency Project
- NYC OMB notice on computers for the Dept. of Parks & Recreation
- NYC OMB notice for Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery / Build it Back: Disposition and Redevelopment of Single Family Housing (among other areas of the City also includes properties in Hamilton Beach and Ramblersville)
- NYC OMB Notice of FDNY contracts for the services of architects, engineers, for departmental needs
- Notice from iAfford NY LLC – affordable housing applications being accepted for: 103-23 130 Street
- Letter sent to the Dept. of Parks & Recreation

It was noted that board members should let the Chairperson know if there is anything on the directed mail they are interested in.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** – in the absence of the Treasurer, the Board Chairperson read the report of expenditures for the month December 2019.

**BOROUGH PRESIDENT'S LIAISON REPORT** – Mr. Brown extended best New Year wishes. He clarified the Borough President has moved on to become Queens District Attorney and Sharon Lee is serving as the Acting Borough President. The office is operating as a normal Borough President's Office and they are doing all the things they have done before, which includes renewing and appointing community board members. He reminded everyone, the deadline for submitting the community board application is January 31 and asked to please get them in by that time. He indicated he would be happy to take any completed renewal applications that evening from anyone who had it. He provided his phone number for anyone who may have questions or issues. It was noted, the January 31 deadline is the same for anyone who may be applying to be on the board for the first time.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Brown.

**DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING REPORT** – Ms. Resor wished everyone a happy new year. She reported, they are targeting a January certification for the resiliency text amendment, which will affect parts of Howard Beach. Hopefully if all goes well, that means that within this month, that rezoning will be open for public review and the board will receive the package and will be able to start making recommendations starting the beginning of February. She said let her know if there are any questions.

The Land Use Committee Chairperson inquired as to when the packages would be going out to the Board and it was indicated that it would probably be the beginning of February.

**DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT** – The District Manager reported notification was received that the HOPE 2020 count will take place on January 27, 2020. Volunteers help get an estimate of the number of homeless individuals who are sleeping on the streets and subways so resources can best be used to get them to come inside. To volunteer go to [nyc.gov/hope](http://nyc.gov/hope)

The Queens zoo is recruiting for their adult volunteer program. It provides an opportunity for those that care about animals and enjoy engaging with the public. The volunteer positions include rewards like unlimited access to the Queens Zoo for individuals and their families and yearly passes to all five of their wildlife parks around the city. Applications are accepted until January 17 online at: <https://queenszoo.com/volunteers/adult-volunteers>

The Queens Council on the Arts is accepting applications for the spring session of the High School to Art School program, which runs from March 14 to June 6 on Saturdays from 10 am to 3 pm at the Queens Council on the Arts



in Long Island City. This program provides an introduction to portfolio development for sophomore and juniors and the sessions focus on observational drawing and contemporary art practices preparing students to apply to art school. The program is entirely free and art supplies and MetroCards are provided. Applications will be taken until midnight, Saturday February 1. For more information call Kelly Olshan at 347-505-3016.

The Citizen's Committee for New York City is awarding grants up to \$3,000 for community and school improvement projects. Applications are available on line and will be accepted until January 20. For more information contact Katie Grassie at: kgrassie@citizensnyc.org or 212-822-9567

The District Manager wished everyone a happy and healthy new year.

The Chairperson then acknowledged others present: J. Kazi, representing Council Member Adams; N. Peters representing Assembly Member Pheffer-Amato; J. Mongeluzo representing NYC Comptroller Stringer; C. Torres representing Assembly Member Miller; C. Moore representing State Senator Addabbo; T. Delano representing State Senator Addabbo; Det. T. Carr, PBQS; Capt. J. Costello, CO 106 Precinct; P.O. G. Maher, 106 Precinct.

The Chairperson invited Capt. Costello to speak. The Captain wished everyone a happy new year and said they had a successful 2019. He reported overall crime was up slightly mostly due to grand larceny, most of which was identity theft fraud, check washing, use of credit/debit cards. Robberies were down significantly and burglaries were up slightly by no more than a dozen (mostly attributable to garage break-ins). He reported, there is a change in the State law for 2020 for desk appearance tickets and discovery. For most all class E-felonies and all misdemeanors people are guaranteed a desk appearance ticket. He explained, individuals are arrested and come into the station house, are finger printed, given a ticket and walk out the front door, and no longer go to central booking. There are some exceptions where individuals will be remanded, such as domestic violence, or sexual offenses. He said also, for most all class E-felonies and misdemeanors there is no bail. He reiterated, it's the law and said he can't call the District Attorney's office and ask for high bail, based on someone's criminal record. In terms of property crimes, he reported incidences of two stolen vehicles, both running with keys left in them. He said, you cannot leave your car running; please lock your car and put the key in your pocket, don't keep a spare set of keys in the glove box; don't leave anything of value in your car, don't leave your wallet in center console. He warned of phone scams, and said no one from the police or government office will call you and ask you to send a money order; and if anyone calls asking for your personal information, social security number, etc. hang up. He warned women not to leave their pocket book at the restaurant table when going to the rest room, but to take it with them. He noted criminals are opportunists. He said we've had a safe year. He indicated all 96 mailboxes in the 106 would be retrofitted to prevent mailbox fishing. The THV, which was on 80 Street and Liberty Avenue, which had been there for two months, and was a tremendous success, had to be utilized in another area. He explained there were incidents of assault and robbery in the Bangladeshi community but they were able to mitigate that and have had no incidents in the last two months. They will have a committed patrol in that area and is still keeping a strong eye on that location.

The Chairperson thanked the Captain and wished him a happy new year.

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT** – The Chairperson reported that she, the District Manager and the Transportation Committee Chairperson met in December in regard to a follow-up with NYC DOT regarding the 84 Street 165 Avenue greenway connector. It was noted, more info would be provided by the Transportation Committee Chair in her committee report. She indicated, the only real change to be aware of is that quite a while ago the Board did approve the installation of speed humps on 165 Avenue; however, DOT was asked to hold off on the installation because there was a trucking issue that was going on with the Spring Creek Project. At the point in which the speed humps were approved it was not clear whether or not future work there would involve further trucking, so the Board asked for a hold. Since that project is not moving at the moment, DOT was advised by the Board to go ahead with the installation, which hopefully will be by the spring.

The Queens Borough Board in December had a presentation in regard to the Queens Bus Network Redesign Draft Plan. Addressing the board members, she said, that Draft Plan has been released and you have some information on it. It's too big of a file to download and e-mail to board members, but all are urged to go on MTA's website, download the plan and go into Appendix B (it was noted that a little cheat sheet is in the board folders). Appendix B gives every route, what the old route is and what the proposed route changes are, and she suggested downloading that for one's specific areas and looking at it. She also urged civic leaders to contact the MTA Redesign people and have them come



to speak to their civics. She noted, MTA previously presented to the board in a general context and they have been invited to come back to speak specifically to the changes in our area. There is a stakeholders meeting on January 29 at JHS 202 and she urged everyone who has a concern about bus routes to show up. It was noted that some bus stops would be eliminated, which is a positive (freeing up some parking spaces) and a negative (people need to walk further to the bus).

The Port Authority has released the Draft Environmental Assessment for the JFK Redevelopment (information on this is in the board folders). There is an informational meeting on January 23, from 6-9 pm at the Hilton JFK located on 135 Avenue & 144 Street, and anyone who has concerns about that is urged to attend. She commented that part of what's in the Appendices of that report is a traffic study done by the PA and there are traffic implications for part of our area along the Conduit strip, and when you couple that together with what the future is going to bring with the work that's going to be done on the Van Wyck Expwy., there are some issues that are going to need to be addressed. She said she has spoken with the NYC DOT Queens Deputy Commissioner, J. Banrey, about how DOT plans on implementing some of the mitigation proposed by the PA and whether or not DOT is going to come up with further mitigation. She indicated, the full traffic study is available on line and the Executive Summary is in the board folders.

The Chairperson made reference to an article which had appeared in the Queens Eagle regarding Community Boards and clarified some information in it.

She commented that Gemini Field, which is what is referred to in the letter that went to the Dept. of Parks, would be reported on later by the Parks Committee Chairperson.

She reported there were 26,000 calls to 311 for the six-month period of July - December 2019. At the top of the list were service requests for large bulk pickup, and the top complaints were blocked driveways, illegal parking, and abandoned vehicles. It was noted, due to the winter residential noise complaints have dropped.

The meeting continued with **COMMITTEE REPORTS** as follows:

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS** – the Committee Chairperson indicated report was in board folders.

**JFK INTERNATIONAL** – in the absence of the Committee Chairperson the Board Chairperson indicated the JFK information was in the board folders.

**LAND USE** – the Committee Chairperson indicated a Land Use Committee Meeting will be held as soon as he receives the action from City Planning regarding Old Howard Beach rezoning mentioned by Ms. Resor, and this will probably in February.

**PARKS** – the Committee Chairperson reported the Committee met on December 9 concerning the area referred to as Gemini Field, which is the western part of the Parks property where Sunrise Stables is located. He explained that normally when Parks wants to do a project, the first step is for them to contact the Committee Chairperson for a scoping meeting, which involves an on-site visit to discuss what the plan might be and what they are looking for. He indicated, in this case it appears that Parks had something in mind and then they brought it to our attention. He noted, this is contrary to what we have been asking for in the Lindenwood community for a number of years. He outlined what had been presented by DPR to the Committee. He indicated, after the Parks Dept. attendees left the meeting, the Committee members discussed all the good and bad points of the project and asked that a letter be sent to Parks summarizing that discussion and indicating a lack of support for it as presented by DPR.

The Board Chairperson provided an idea of what was in the letter, which was sent to Parks. She reiterated, there is a normal procedure in how a project moves from start to finish, and noted that nothing was said to her or the District Manager at their Borough Consultation with the Parks Dept. in the fall. She said that she and the District Manager discussed that area with the Borough Commissioner and he made no mention of this plan that was presented to our Parks Committee last month. Part of that discussion at the Budget Consultation revolved around our needs in this community. It was noted, that park concept is in the area that abuts the high-rise apartments in Lindenwood where 40% of the population is over 65, but where there is nothing for seniors. Gallop is already running a senior program, at the stables and what we have brought up to Parks, in our discussions with them, is that there is space there where a



compatible use to the stables could be developed to make a passive area where seniors could safely walk and have space for recreation. That was basically ignored in this proposal.

**PERSONNEL** – in the absence of the Committee Chairperson the Board Chairperson addressing the board members said, as you know, we voted last year as Ms. Turso left and there were some issues with the City where it was changing some of the policy in terms of hiring and salary increases until they promulgated their new policies and our process was at a hold. Ms. May has been performing the function of two people since July for the last half year; we had voted to give her a salary increase commensurate with the new responsibilities she took on, and in order to get the salary increase that we needed under the new policies, it necessitated a change in title. Ms. May is now a Community Coordinator and no longer a Community Associate and the paperwork has been done. The Board Chairperson commented she has been doing the job of two people and doing it well and said we have great staff.

**PUBLIC SAFETY** – the Committee Chairperson indicated Crime Stats report was in board folders.

**SANITATION** – the Committee Chairperson announced the Dept. of Sanitation would be conducting Christmas tree collection January 6 through January 17. Trees which have been removed of all ornaments, lights, tinsel, etc. can be put out for curbside pickup, or you can also drop trees off at designated parks. Call 311 to find a park that will accept them or go on-line: [www.nycparks.org](http://www.nycparks.org)

**SUMMER YOUTH & OTHER EMPLOYMENT** – the Committee Chairperson indicated report was in board folders and announced the Queens Botanical Garden Society has some full-time and part-time positions available as well as internships. Submit resume and cover letter via applicant portal at: [queensbotanical.org/employment](http://queensbotanical.org/employment) (no phone calls).

**TRANSPORTATION** – the Committee Chairperson reported she and the Board Chair and District Manager met with NYC DOT to discuss the traffic calming and protected bike lanes at 84 Street & 165 Avenue. DOT is planning to move ahead with the project and speed bumps will be installed.

**OLD BUSINESS** – None

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

**PUBLIC FORUM** – the Chairperson asked if anyone from the public wished to speak.

Mr. Caruana announced upcoming civic association meetings and expressed concerns regarding the safety/security of the information provided in the Census as well as concerns regarding the moving of bus stops with MTA's Bus Redesign.

The Chairperson asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to speak.

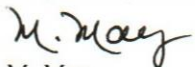
Mr. Mongeluzo, from the NYC Comptroller's Office, indicated he brought some additional policy reports and invited everyone to take copies. He indicated he is reachable via e-mail as well as by phone or text and provided his phone number.

The Chairperson asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to speak.

A resident from the Jewel Street area, which he referred to as the hole, spoke on behalf of himself and neighbors who accompanied him regarding some of the issues they have with flooding, dumping, garbage, etc.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,



M. May

Draft – Subject to Approval