

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11
GENERAL BOARD MEETING**

April 1, 2024

Paul DiBenedetto – Chair

PRESENT AT MEETING

CB 11 Staff:

Joseph Marziliano – District Manager

Christina Coutinho – Community Associate

Elected Officials and/or Representatives:

Daphne Halkias

Representing Council Member Paladino

Justin Connor

Representing Congress Member Suozzi

Megan Yuan

Mayor's Community Affairs Unit

Jess Mueller

Representing Assembly Member Braunstein

Kate Boehme

Representing Queens DA Katz

FDNY:

Battalion Chief Jim Miller

NYPD:

PO Tom Corey – 111th Precinct Community Affairs Unit

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 PM by Chair, Paul DiBenedetto.

Mr. DiBenedetto led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

David Kuperferburg spoke regarding the negative impact the MTA's bus redesign proposal would have on the community.

Barbara Linton spoke regarding the opposition of eliminating bus routes that are part of the MTA's bus redesign proposal. Mr. DiBenedetto said the Board will be voting on this matter at tonight's meeting.

Christine Petropoulos, representing the Bayside Gables Homeowners and Civic Association, spoke against an application submitted to the NYC Dept. of City Planning to change the existing R1-2 zoning to construct an eight-story, mixed-use building at the site of the Bayside Pool Club located at 217-03 24th Avenue. This application also includes the construction of a school and park.

Paul Graziano, Urban Planner, spoke regarding the proposal of an eight-story, mixed-use structure at the site of 217-03 24th Avenue. That the Bayside Gables is adjacent to the site and the homeowners fought to keep residential zoning. He mentioned that 24th Avenue is a dead-end street; this will cause major traffic problems. Mr. Graziano said this lot is in a flood zone.

Kate Boehme, representing DA Katz, gave a briefing on the charges of the suspects in the gunshot killing of on-duty NYPD Detective Diller. She said the DA Katz is working on this case and will not stop until justice is received.

Justin Conner, representing Congress Member Suozzi, stated that their office is located at 242-09 Northern Blvd and their telephone number is (718)631-0400.

Jess Mueller, representing Assembly Member Braunstein, spoke regarding upcoming events.

Daphne Halkias, representing Council Member Paladino, spoke regarding upcoming events.

Megan Yuan, Mayor's Office of Community Affairs Unit, spoke regarding the quality-of-life application that can be completed on the Mayor's website. Mr. Euler asked for information on the date and venue of the Mayor's Town Hall meeting in northeast Queens. He said the community would like to have a discussion regarding the City of Yes proposal. Ms. Yuan said she will have to get back with that information.

PO Corey said that the 111th Police Council meeting is scheduled for April 4th. He reviewed the monthly crime statistics.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Lana Bind, Michael Budabin, Jessica Burke, Susan Cerezo, Carmen Collado, Victor Dadras, Paul DiBenedetto, Henry Euler, C. Omarr Evans, Michelle Fields, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Matthew Mamak, Fleur Martino, Eileen Miller, Kenneth O'Keefe, Stephen Pivawer, Ann Puckett, Megan Rha, Ralph Ruiz, Seihee Ryu, Christina Scherer, Jyothi Sriram, John Sullivan, Benjamin Turner, David White, Sam Wong, Athena Wu

Members Absent

Adriana Aviles, Sharon Chin, Mario Ferazzoli, George Hadjiconstantinou, Tim Hao, Travis Kessel, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Akshar Patel, Gunjan Rastogi, Amesh Saracha, Eileen Taylor, Mina Youn

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the March 2024 meeting by Mr. Mamak. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collado. There were no corrections or additions. A vote by show of hands was taken resulting unanimously in favor. The minutes were approved as written.

(In-favor - Lana Bind, Michael Budabin, Jessica Burke, Susan Cerezo, Carmen Collado, Victor Dadras, Paul DiBenedetto, Henry Euler, C. Omarr Evans, Michelle Fields, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Matthew Mamak, Fleur Martino, Eileen Miller, Kenneth O'Keefe, Stephen Pivawer, Ann Puckett, Megan Rha, Ralph Ruiz, Seihee Ryu, Christina Scherer, Jyothi Sriram, John Sullivan, Benjamin Turner, David White, Sam Wong, Athena Wu)

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

A proposed zoning change has been submitted to the Dept. of City Planning for site location, 217-14 24th Avenue. This proposal is for the development of an eight-story, 247-unit, mixed-use building that is currently zoned R1-2. This is the definition of overdevelopment as the adjacent neighborhood is composed of single-family detached homes. It is also the definition of spot-zoning (which the Dept. of City Planning has had a long-standing policy of not accepting) as this significant upzoning is for one isolated property in a neighborhood of single-family properties, Bayside Gables. If the building is approved and the City of Yes proposal passes, all onsite parking requirements will be eliminated across the City including the proposal for 217-14 24th Avenue. There has been a significant uptick in ("illegal") squatter cases in our neighborhoods. It's extremely harmful to our communities. In the news just recently, there have been several cases citywide that are being watched closely. There was one in our district where the squatters rented the property for a party and 19 gunshots were fired. There has been conversation with CM Paladino, AM Braunstein and State Senator Liu regarding a squatter house on 218th Street. We hope our legislators will revisit the squatter laws at the City and State levels to reduce the loopholes for fraud and deny criminal opportunities while still effectively protecting renters against slumlords. The laws were created for a reason, but the balance has gone askew. As promised, we initiated an investigation with the Dept. of Buildings for the site location of 33-03 213th Street. This is an extremely oversized and non-contextual community facility. Saturday, April 4th at 11:00 AM the Bayside Hills Civic Association is conducting their annual Spring Festival. The Bayside Historical Society (BHS) will be conducting their Second Sunday's Castle Tours; registration is on the BHS website. Tours are from 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM. On Thursday, April 18th, at 7:00 PM at the BHS Castle, author of Forgotten New York (FNY) and Forgotten Queens book/blog, Kevin Walsh will be conducting a lecture. Bring your FNY books for him to sign. On Friday, April 26th, at 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM the BHS Castle is having a Swing Dance Party. The event starts off with a Swing dance lesson. Tickets for all the BHS events are available online at baysidehistorical.org

Mr. DiBenedetto announced newly appointed Board Members, Kenneth O'Keefe, Ralph Ruiz, Amesh Saracha, John Sullivan, Eileen Taylor, Athena Wu, and Mina Youn.

Mr. O'Keefe, Mr. Ruiz, Mr. Sullivan, and Ms. Wu introduced themselves to the Board by briefly stated why they want to be on the Community Board.

BOARD MEMBER NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Euler said that the Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) reviewed the case for the 215-24 24 Avenue, this was an application for the enlargement of a single-family home. This application was granted. Mr. Euler thanked Ms. Mueller from office of AM Braunstein and DM Marziliano for their assistance with the issues associated with a tire store at 202-01 Northern Blvd. There is a hearing at the State Supreme Court regarding Star Toyota and the adjacent neighbor for the installation of scaffolding equipment that is encroaching on the neighbor's property. It was discussed that this topic would have to go to committee before being presented to the full Board.

Mr. Evans discussed how MS 158 had a lock-down, shelter-in-place due to a student in possession of a firearm. The adjacent neighboring schools did not receive notice. PO Officer Corey said that the principal of the shelter-in-place school is responsible for notifying the neighboring schools. Mr. Evans said this is concerning and needs to be revised as the children were outside the school.

Mr. White made a motion to change the order of the general meeting by conducting the Committee Report session after the Chairperson's Report. This will ensure that Board Members are present for the committee reports. The Board Member New Business session is not time limited, therefore,

a member can speak as long as they want. Mr. Marziliano said that a vote is not needed because the CB11 By-Laws state that the agenda is set at the discretion of the Chairperson. Mr. DiBenedetto said he will think about this request.

Mr. Turner, Chair of the CB11 Library Committee, requested that a letter be sent to local Council Members, the Mayor and the NYC Director of Finance regarding the proposed budget cuts to Queens Public Libraries. Mr. DiBenedetto said that he signed a letter on this topic tonight and it will be going in the mail tomorrow.

Ms. Martino said on April 4th, there will be a garden event at the Pembroke Community Garden.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Transportation – Committee Chair, Mr. Dadras, reviewed the notes of the last Transportation Committee meeting of March 2024. The major topic was the MTA’s Bus Redesign Proposal. He spoke regarding the issues presented at the committee meeting; the Bayside BID and the community have issues with the rerouting of the Q31 and Q13. A motion was made to accept the recommendations made by the Committee by Ms. James. The motion was seconded by Christina Scherer. Discussion on the motion ensued. Mr. Turner said access to Bell Blvd. is a negative but the positive is the accessibility to Francis Lewis HS, St. John’s University, and public libraries. Ms. Garippa and Ms. Lanzetta were against the proposal. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 14 in favor, 19 opposed and 3 abstentions.

(In-Favor- Lana Bind, Michael Budabin, Jessica Burke, Susan Cerezo, Victor Dadras, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Michael Golia, Matthew Mamak, Megan Rha, Seihee Ryu, Benjamin Turner, David White, Sam Wong - *Opposed* – Carmen Collado, Paul DiBenedetto, Henry Euler, C. Omarr Evans, Michelle Fields, Elias Fillas, Joan Garippa, Rosemarie Guidice, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Fleur Martino, Eileen Miller, Stephen Pivawer, Ann Puckett, Christina Scherer, Jyothi Sriram, John Sullivan - *Abstain* - Kenneth O’Keefe, Ralph Ruiz, Athena Wu)

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM