

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

December 1, 2025

Paul DiBenedetto – Chair

PRESENT AT MEETING

CB 11 Staff:

Joseph Marziliano – District Manager

Christina Coutinho – Community Associate

Elected Officials and/or Representatives:

Patrick Jordan Representing Queens Borough President Richards

Kate Boehme Representing Queens DA Katz

Evelyn Mallo Representing Council Member Paladino

Jon Gallo Representing State Senator Liu

Lucia Paredes Representing Council Member Ung

Lya Rothmann Representing State Stavisky

Jess Mueller Representing Assembly Member Braunstein

City Agencies

Mary Charlotte Gitlin - Dept. of City Planning (DCP)

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM by Chair, Paul DiBenedetto.

Mr. DiBenedetto led the audience to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mona Barakat spoke in opposition of the proposed building at 204-37 45th Drive. In her opinion, this site is too narrow to build a 4-story dwelling.

Mohamed Makholf spoke in opposition to the proposed building at 204-37 45th Drive. He stated that this property is not maintained and the proposed dwelling will be too close to their property line. The dwelling will be two feet from the property line.

Hosny Makholf spoke in opposition to the proposed building at 204-27 45th Drive. He stated that the owner does not take care of the site, a homeless man was living on the property.

Mr. DiBenedetto said that the applicant for 204-27 45th Drive asked for tonight's Public Hearing regarding Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) case Cal. No. 2025-47 BZ to be tabled. The applicant will present revised plans to the Zoning Committee this month and then, before the full Board at the January meeting.

Mary Charlotte Gitlin gave an update on filed but not certified applications with DCP.

Jess Mueller spoke regarding upcoming events.

Kate Boehme gave an update on cases DA Katz's is working on.

Patrick Jordan spoke regarding upcoming events hosted by the Queens BP.

Evelyn Mallo spoke regarding upcoming events.

Jon Gallo spoke regarding upcoming events. He also spoke regarding the construction of the sound barrier wall.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Lana Bind, Sharon Chin, Victor Dadras, Paul DiBenedetto, Dilcia Erazo, Henry Euler, C. Omarr Evans, Michelle Fields, Jack Fried, Joan Garippa, Michael Golia, Vanessa Guest, Rosemarie Guidice, Tim Hao, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Zhengyu Kang, Travis Kessel, Jena Lanzetta, Matthew Mamak, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltzes, Eileen Miller, Stephen Pivawer, Megan Rha, David Ro, Amesh Sarecha, Christina Scherer, Jyothi Sriram, Eileen Taylor, David White, Sam Wong

Members Absent

Jessica Burke, Mario Ferazzoli, Elias Fillas, C. Kevin Green, George Guan, George Hadjiconstantinou, Melanie Harster, Bernadette Kelly, Kenneth O'Keefe, Gunjan Rastogi, John Sullivan, Athena Wu, Mina Youn

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the minutes of November 2025, by Karen Mazza. The motion was seconded by David White. A vote by show of hands resulted unanimously in favor. The minutes were approved as written.

(In-favor - Lana Bind, Sharon Chin, Victor Dadras, Paul DiBenedetto, Dilcia Erazo, Henry Euler, C. Omarr Evans, Michelle Fields, Jack Fried, Joan Garippa, Michael Golia, Vanessa Guest, Rosemarie Guidice, Tim Hao, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Zhengyu Kang, Travis Kessel, Jena Lanzetta, Matthew Mamak, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltzes, Eileen Miller, Stephen Pivawer, Megan Rha, David Ro, Amesh Sarecha, Christina Scherer, Jyothi Sriram, Eileen Taylor, David White, Sam Wong)

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

On November 5th, Joseph and I held a virtual meeting (that we requested) with DEP regarding the dangerous and unacceptable flooding conditions that have been occurring in Bayside and Bay Terrace. Due to the consistently heavier than average rainstorms over the past few years, the existing sewer systems in place cannot handle the increased flow and thus, backup into the streets; in particular, at Bell Blvd., the Clearview Expressway and the Cross Island Service Road. Motorists have been stranded in their cars and businesses entirely flooded. Representatives from BP Richards and CM Paladino were in attendance, as was CB7 Chair, Chuck Apelian. CM

Paladino's office has been working with DEP to have storm drains cleaned and BP Richards held a press conference over the summer, that I attended, to bring visibility to the situation. We still have no clear answers as to when we will see relief. This would be a major infrastructure project to increase sewer capacity. The current system can process 1.7-2.0" of water per hour, while a recent storm produced 6" in just 1 hr. After these events and meetings, I do believe DEP has become aware of the paradigm we are in. Now, we need action.

On November 17th, the CB11 North Bayside/East Flushing Zoning Committee met (thank you Jena Lanzetta and Sam Wong, our Co-Chairs) to review a BSA application for 204-37 45th Drive. The applicant has withdrawn the application, we are awaiting revised plans.

On November 18th, the CB11 Parks Committee met to hear a presentation from the Parks Concessions team about a proposed RFP in Crocheron Park that would establish a tennis bubble over the courts. This would be put in place from October 1st through April 1st, run by an outside vendor. The vendor would charge citizens to use the courts for those six months (whereas before it was free). The Parks Committee was not pleased with the proposal and made that clear to Parks Concessions. Facing public outcry from the local community, the CB11 Parks Committee (chaired by Laura James) reached out to CM Paladino for assistance as did the Friends of Fort Totten (thank you Jessica Burke) to BP Richards for assistance. As result of these collective efforts, the Crocheron Park tennis court "bubble" has been cancelled. The courts will remain free throughout the extended outdoor seasons we have been experiencing and the neighborhood does not have to face an unsightly white bubble imposed upon our bucolic, suburban park.

On November 19th, I attended the City Planning Commission (CPC) hearing for the 24th Avenue rezoning application. I represented CB11's position and spoke against the proposal. As Chair, I hoped my expertise and knowledge on the many details of the project and location would be useful to the Commission. Unfortunately, there was little to no interest expressed and Commissioner Garodnick was quick to cut me off when I attempted to offer additional, important background after answering just one question, regarding the potential for flooding. The CPC will make their recommendation in mid-December.

On November 20th, I took the train and subway to City Hall to testify against Intro 948-A and 1107-A at the Committee of Housing and Buildings hearing. These proposals are changes to the AirBnB rules in NYC and would permit as many as four separate clients to rent up to four rooms in a single-family house per day and eight clients/rooms in a two-family house per day. Meanwhile, the owner does not have to be present for these rentals to take place. This absurd proposal will create the incentive for hedge funds, financial groups and real estate investors to start buying up our homes and turn them into full-blown, AirBnB short-term hotels in the middle of quiet residential neighborhoods – a complete commercialization of our communities. CB11 Queens is 71% owner-occupied and the vast majority of our ethnically diverse, owner-occupied housing is one and two-family homes. Thus, these proposals will put the majority of the housing in CB11 and beyond at risk. In 2025, AirBnB has spent over \$1M on lobbying efforts and has promised to spend \$5 million to get this bill passed. They also created and generously funded several grassroots organizations to do so. Hundreds of people testified against the proposals in-person and online (many from the Hotel and Trades Council union) As of now, 5 of 7 committee members reportedly are opposed, including Chair Sanchez, and we hope it will not reach the

Chamber floor this year. We will remain alert to see if these Intro's come back this month or in 2026 under the new Council.

On November 25th, I met with Assemblyman Ed Braunstein and spoke about the residential battery farm issue that we are facing in the district (one is currently proposed for Little Neck). These battery farms are basically a wall array of lithium Tesla batteries where electricity can be stored to deal with power surges. Good idea? Possibly, but under the current, new City of Yes rules, they can be built right in the middle of a residential neighborhood. They can buy a house, knock it down and build one as-of-right. AM Braunstein is reviewing options at the state level to deal with and possibly remove these residential placements of battery farms, moving them instead to commercial zones with a proposed 1000' minimum distance from residential.

I spoke with Northeast Parks Administrator, Liz Asaro, regarding updates on the Crocheron Park gazebos. I'm happy to report that the design phase is 95% completed. The next step is asbestos testing and then it moves into the implementation stage.

On Sunday, December 7, 2025, at 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM, the Queens Civic Congress is having its annual Legislative Reception at The Douglaston Club. Our own Henry Euler will be honored at this event with the Patricia Dolan Preservation Award (congratulations Henry). Come schmooze with the borough's civic titans.

BOARD MEMBER NEW BUSINESS

Karen Mazza spoke regarding an event for non-profit organizations. She announced upcoming events hosted by the Center for the Women of New York. Flyers were left for the public.

Victor Dadras stated that the LDC's Holiday Food Pantry was a success. He thanked all involved. The LDC will be hosting their 8th Annual Holiday Festival.

Jena Lanzetta spoke about the Northwest Bayside Civic Association's holiday events.

Henry Euler spoke regarding BSA open cases. Mr. Euler and Mr. DiBenedetto testified at a very long public hearing regarding Intro 948-A and 1107-A.

David White, Public Relations Committee Chair, stated that events are being posted on Instagram.

Eileen Miller stated that Bayside Hills Civic Association will be hosting their annual Holiday Lighting Event.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!!!

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 PM