



The City of New York

## Queens Community Board 11

Serving the Communities of Auburndale, Bayside, Douglaston, Hollis Hills  
Little Neck and Oakland Gardens

Michael Budabin **Chair** / Joseph Marziliano **District Manager**

TO: All Board Members  
FROM: Victor Dadras, Committee Chair  
DATE: April 28, 2021  
RE: Various issues

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On Tuesday, April 27, 2021, a joint meeting of the CB11 Transportation Committee was held via Zoom teleconference regarding several issues.

### **Present**

Michael Budabin, Board Chair

Victor Dadras, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair and Committee Chair

Christine Haider, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

Henry Euler, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair

**Committee Members** Albert Galatan, Rob Liatto, Mary Donahue, Allan Palzer, Christina Scherer, John Kelly, Joan Garippa, Eileen Miller, Stephan Popa, Lander Bravo, Ben Turner, Barbara Gillespie

**CB11 Board Members** Jessica Burke, Vidya Pappachan

### **CB11 Staff**

Joseph Marziliano, District Manager

Jane Bentivenga, Community Coordinator

Christina Coutinho, Community Associate

### **Guests**

Christine Silletti, Bayside Village BID

Mr. Marziliano called the meeting to order. Mr. Dadras requested that two-week notice should be given for proposed agenda items so that they are placed on the meeting notice which needs to be sent to members within that time frame.

Mr. Dadras introduced Ms. Silletti who requested a letter of support from Community Board 11 for a curb management proposal on Bell Blvd. between 39 and 42 Avenues. Ms. Silletti screen-shared a sketch of the proposal. This proposal would create seven 15-minute parking spaces to reduce the amount of double parking and clear bus stops. There had been a proposal, prior to Covid-19, to reroute the Q13 and Q31 buses from Bell Blvd. However, many people who work in the shops and restaurants located on Bell Blvd. use these buses to travel to work. This proposal is a pilot program that would create a loading zone in front of Walgreens on the westside of Bell Blvd. between 39 and 40 Avenues. There would be four 15-minute parking spaces on Bell Blvd. between 41 and 42 Avenues over the LIRR, two at the corner of 40 Avenue

and Bell Blvd. and one adjacent to the bus stop on the eastside of Bell Blvd. between 38 and 39 Avenues. This pilot program would last three to six months.

Mr. Dadras asked if these are currently two-hour parking spaces. Ms. Silletti said yes, and the businesses are very happy about it. Mr. Dadras added businesses like the open streets program very much. However, curb space has become very valuable and it has created pickup and drop off issues by the LIRR station; many restaurants do curbside pickup as well. Ms. Scherer inquired if there will be meters for the 15-minute parking spots. Ms. Silletti said for now it will be enforced by signage. Markings may also be installed. Ms. Silletti said the BID will conduct various forms of outreach. Mr. Kelly feels this is a great idea but thinks it should be done on a much larger scale. He asked if more of these spaces were considered during the morning rush hour. Ms. Silletti said the Department of Transportation (DOT) installed cameras and used time-lapsed photography to track the patterns. Ms. Silletti stated that the program can be expanded in the future if warranted. Mrs. Garippa questioned calling this a loading zone. Ms. Silletti said there are two things being proposed: 1. a loading zone in front of Walgreens where there will be no parking from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 2. seven designated 15-minute parking spaces. Ms. Silletti stated the businesses most affected, regarding deliveries, lie between 39 and 41 Avenues. Mrs. Garippa said signage is critical. Mr. Popa asked if moving the 15-minute parking spaces on the LIRR overpass to the side streets was considered to facilitate with bus service. Ms. Silletti said keeping the current bus service and easing their movement was one of the reasons for this proposal.

Mrs. Haider made a motion to write a letter of support to NYC DOT for the proposed curb management pilot program on Bell Blvd. Mr. Popa seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. There were no objections or abstentions. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Dadras advised everyone that he had intended to update everyone on various school safety projects. However, no one he reached out to responded to his calls. He stated that the projects that have been on the backburner need to be in place when school starts again in September.

Mr. Dadras gave the floor to Ms. Burke who addressed the issue of getting a farmer's market in the Bayside area. Mr. Burke explained that a farmer's market cannot operate in a New York City park unless the farmer is there selling their own produce. Therefore, a market would have to operate on the sidewalk. They could possibly take Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits as well. If demand is shown, it is possible another type of organization could sell inside the park in the future. She suggested that the sidewalk near PS 41 on 35 Avenue be used. Mr. Dadras stated this item will be put on the agenda for May. He asked that Ms. Burke send information that can be shared with the Committee. Mr. Popa posed two questions; what the operating hours will be and what advertising will be done. Mr. Budabin thanked Ms. Burke and stated that he wants to keep this request in line with the work that has already been done regarding this by the CB11 Parks Committee and added that they should be invited to the next Transportation Committee meeting. He also stated it would be difficult to operate during school hours. Mr. Dadras will reach out to Mr. DiBenedetto, the Chair of the CB11 Parks Committee. Mr. Bravo feels this is a great idea. He said there is a need for access to good nutrition. He also said we need to be cognizant of pricing. It should not be unattainable for those who can't afford it. Mr. Bravo also stated that there is a very wide sidewalk around PS 94 in Little Neck where a market could also operate. Ms. Burke said she would share the

information she has with Mr. Bravo. Mr. Budabin asked that she send everything to himself, Mr. Marziliano and Mr. Dadras to keep dissemination centralized.

Next, Mr. Dadras stated that he wanted to update everyone regarding Greenway projects, workshops and Northern Blvd. Vision Zero. However, he again did not receive any returned calls after reaching out. He also mentioned past committee discussions regarding continued street safety improvements.

At this point in the meeting, requested traffic signal and markings were discussed. Mr. Dadras advised that a letter was received from DOT denying a request for a left-turn signal on southbound Douglaston Parkway onto eastbound Northern Blvd.

Mr. Marziliano introduced a request from the Westmoreland Association for traffic mitigation on southbound Little Neck Parkway at Bates Road. Presently, southbound, there is a combination left turn and through lane. Due to this, many motorists use the empty parking lane to proceed straight when vehicles are waiting to turn left onto Bates Road. Mr. Kelly stated that the matter should be referred to DOT for their determination of the best way to improve the intersection. Mr. Bravo added that many motorists accelerate up this hill. Mrs. Garippa said a left-turn only lane is needed to slow traffic. Mr. Marziliano stated that lane-narrowing slows traffic down. He suggested that parking be removed allowing through traffic and the installation of a dedicated left-turn lane. Mrs. Haider averred she is not in favor of removing parking from in front of anyone's property and feels DOT should study the intersection. Mr. Popa said bollards should be installed with a left-turn only lane. Mrs. Garippa agreed with Mrs. Haider regarding removal of any parking.

Mr. Kelly made a motion that NYC DOT study this intersection for improvements to decrease speed and make it safe for pedestrians. Mr. Galatan seconded the motion. Mr. Dadras asked if the letter from Westmoreland Association should be referenced in the motion. Mr. Kelly does not think so; however, a copy of the correspondence could be sent to them. Mr. Budabin asked if the letter referenced speeding or pedestrians. Mr. Marziliano read the letter which addressed the configuration of the lanes. Mr. Budabin feels that it is reasonable to ask DOT to determine the safest action that should be implemented. There were no objections or abstentions to the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed unanimously. A letter will be written.

The second item discussed was a request for a speed bump (or stop sign) on 43 Avenue between Bell Blvd. and 212 Street. Ms. Gillespie asked if there was any available accident data. Mr. Kelly agreed that motorists speed in this vicinity. He suggested asking DOT to look at other possibilities such as installing sidewalk extensions. Mr. Budabin stated we should respond to the complainant and point out that there is already an existing stop sign at 213 Street at 43 Avenue and mention that speed bumps can be challenging to get installed. Also, ask the complainant to advise CB11 of any further hazardous situation that may arise in this area.

The last traffic-related item discussed was a request to convert the existing two-way stop sign intersection to an All-Way Stop at 213 Street and 39 Avenue. Mr. Budabin attested that motorists speed here trying to "beat" the green light at the next intersection. This is near the LIRR station; there are many vehicles and pedestrians. This creates a very dangerous condition. Mr. Kelly made a motion to request that the intersection of 213 Street and 39 Avenue

be converted to an All-Way Stop and crosswalks be installed in all directions. Mrs. Haider seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. There were no objections or abstentions. The motion passed unanimously. A letter will be written.

Mr. Dadras gave the floor to Ben Turner who discussed the proposal for an air train at LaGuardia Airport. Mr. Turner said that although this is outside of the CB11 area, it is a major, regional issue. Traffic near LaGuardia Airport is reaching crisis level. However, there are several potential problems with this proposal; the cost will be at least \$2B, the train will not operate in conjunction with NYC's transit network further burdening the LIRR and the #7 subway line; it is more like an add-on service. Most people would have to travel east to the LIRR or #7 train Willet's Point stations to only then travel west to the airport. Outreach to affected communities has been insufficient. The proposed air train would run through parkland along the Flushing promenade. There are other options such as a potential extension of the N/W subway line, ferry service and improved bus service. Mr. Turner made a motion for CB11 to write a letter to New York State to ensure that all other options are investigated before this project moves forward. Mr. Kelly seconded the motion. Mrs. Haider requested that documentation regarding this issue be provided to all. Mr. Budabin added that this committee vote would be taken to the full Board for consideration. Therefore, he requested that Mr. Turner prepare materials to be considered at the next committee meeting and, subsequently, the June Board Meeting or the issue can go directly to the full Board in June. Mr. Dadras inquired as to the timing of this project. Mr. Turner stated that the Federal Aviation Commission has given it the green light, however, it could wait a month. Mr. Turner withdrew this motion.

Lastly, Mr. Dadras asked members if they had any new business. Mr. Euler stated today a tractor trailer turning northbound onto the Clearview Expressway service road from westbound Northern Blvd. hit the light pole exposing the wires in the base. This is an ongoing problem. The firebox at 207 Street has also been hit. Mr. Dadras stated the issue will be discussed at the next committee meeting. Mr. Galatan stated that the streets in the district are very dirty. Mr. Dadras added that he received a similar comment from a resident of Little Neck. Mr. Budabin stated that Mr. Marziliano will follow-up with the Department of Sanitation (DSNY). Mr. Kelly spoke about Mr. Euler's issue. He said that there is a 53' limit on the length of a truck unless it has an indivisible load. He requested that NYPD be contacting regarding enforcement. He stated these trucks are not only dangerous to light poles but to pedestrians as well. Mr. Dadras agreed, and the Committee will investigate this issue as well. Mr. Popa said fines for trucks are often issued in bulk or in advance, as trucking companies know they will be incurring them. Mr. Liatto stated that this would be a moving violation to the driver not the trucking company. Mr. Liatto also spoke about the proliferation of trucks parking for long periods of time on residential streets. They are only supposed to park for three hours.

Mr. Marziliano said CB11 did not have litter basket collection removed as other districts did at the start of the pandemic because CM Vallone used his discretionary funds to pay for it. However, since DSNY street-sweeping funds were cut by at least half, many districts are sharing the mechanical brooms. CB11 has never had a dedicated broom. So, we are getting less street cleaning than we did in the past. Mr. Marziliano also addressed the issue of tractor trailer parking. He stated there are not many tow trucks that are big enough to tow the tractor trailers that continue to park illegally. Towing these vehicles has been scheduled a couple of months in advance. In addition, Queens does not have a dedicated lot for these towed vehicles; it is in

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Manhattan. This is a capital/expense budget issue. Mr. Dadras said this issue should be brought to the attention of our local elected officials.

Mr. Dadras stated the next Transportation Committee meeting will be scheduled for mid-May.

*Respectfully submitted 4/28/2021*