

**COMMUNITY BOARD #14  
VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING  
JUNE 19, 2020**

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**PRESENT**

Audrey Amsterdam-Handy, Khaleel Anderson, Andrea Colon, John Cori Dr. Gerald David, Ahmad Edwards, Noreen Ellis, Jack Epter, Joanne Fogarty, D. Brian Heffernan, Tamara Jacobs, Felicia Johnson, Paul King, Betty Leon, Denise Lopetri-Neibel, Annette Lord-Cohen, Ife Maijeh, John McCambridge, Sonia Moise, Helen Montero, Daniel Mundy, Dolores Orr, Dr. Harold Paez, Isaac Parsee, Eugene Pasternak, Edward Pastore Sr., Linda Plummer, Karen Sloan-Payne, Chris Tedesco, Michael Tubridy, Jose Velez, Wanda Warden

**ABSENT**

Louis Caucig, Temina Feldman, Eugenia Gibson, Yitzchok Goldstein, Nancy Martinez, Rosalyn Mason, Alicia Mazyck, Al Moore, Kevin Morgan, Dr. Eli Shapiro, Sheneca Sharpe, Edwin Williams, Gordon Williams

**GUESTS**

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer – Amato, Dan Brown – Rep. Queens Borough President, Robby Schwach - Rep. City Councilman Eric Ulrich, Ms. Kirlyn Josephs – Rep. Queens Defenders, Elizabeth Masella- Rep. NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation

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The Chair called the virtual meeting to order at 7: 20 pm.

**MINUTES FROM MAY 19, 2020**

May 2020 minutes will be reviewed and approved at the September 2020 meeting.

**REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Dolores Orr welcome New Board members: Andrea Colon, Jack Epter, Joanne Fogarty and Gordon Williams.

All Members were reminded to spread the word for all residents to complete the 2020 Census.

**REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER**

**Board gave out over 5,000 masks !!**

**ELECTED OFFICIAL CALL-IN**

**ASSEMBLYWOMAN STACEY PHEFFER-AMATO**

Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato welcomed the new Board members. She advised that her office has masks and hand sanitizer for community residents and gallon bottle with pump of sanitizer for organizations. Those that need

can contact her office. Additionally her staff will also be happy to mail masks to the most vulnerable community residents (Note: staff wears gloves when handling masks that are being mailed). Refill events will be setup at building locations and residents can show up with empty bottles to refill their hand sanitizer bottles.

Assemblywoman Pheffer -Amato reported before NYS Assembly session ended the Jamaica Bay borrow Pits Bill passed in the Assembly and Senate. In addition, the package of Police Reform Bills also passed in the Assembly and Senate.

### **QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENTS OFFICE**

Dan Brown, representing QBP informed all that QBH has been active and working along with their Census Director. Mr. Brown explain that he just called the director and the answer to Felicia Johnson question is that residents in a homeless shelter do not fill out a census form, the City reports the homeless resident information to the Census Bureau and credited as a resident of the community where the shelter is located.

### **GUEST SPEAKER**

#### **Melinda Katz, Queens District Attorney**

DA Katz thanked everyone for supporting her as Borough President and committed to be accessible as Queens DA.

### **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

#### **1. Queens Defenders**

Ms. Josephs informed everyone that Queens Defenders has already been serving the community by operating under Queens Law Associates which has been serving the Rockaway community for more than 10 years. The Queens Defenders and the Queens Law Associates offices are located on Mott Avenue.

Ms. Josephs explained that they are a public defender office which has been in existence since 1996. They serve residents of Queens that get arrested and charged with a criminal offense. Queens Defenders started working with local high schools which lead to the need to open an outreach center at 1857 Mott Avenue. The goal is to offer a safe space and a place to go for workshops and various events that would build relationships with the local precincts. In addition to learning their civil rights, doing community service and learning how to participate in government.

Currently Queens Defenders for the past five years have been working on the idea of developing a community court at 1847 Mott Avenue with the hope of intervene in the lives of young people in Far Rockaway with the hope to prevent them from getting a criminal record or even entering the criminal penial system at all. Domestic Violence services would also be provided.

## **2. NYC Parks & Recreation-Re: Temporary Art Installation-Shore Front Parkway**

Elizabeth Masella, Senior Public Art Coordinator for the Parks Dept. explained that the office give permits for Temporary Public Art in all 5 boroughs for up to one year. At two other public art projects were permitted on the Peninsula about 2/3 year ago.

Ms. Masella informed everyone that sculptor Kris Perry approached them for support to do a large sculpture called “Mother Earth”. An exact location has not been decided yet but it could be placed along Shore Front Parkway because it would be visible even when you are driving by. There has not been a meeting because of Covid-19.Perhaps meetings will resume in August.

The sculpture is steel welded, 24,000 pounds, very heavy at about and 35 feet tall and 16 inches wide. The sculpture will arrive in 3 parts and bolted together at the designated location. The artist is responsible for all of the costs and restoring the location as it was before the placement of the sculpture.

Kris Perry, the artist expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to display his sculpture on the Rockaway Peninsula. The design comes from a lot of influences such as Mosks, Stone Hinge and Gothic Churches that are architecturally in places that are important throughout history and is a monument to the environment.

Kris hopes that the sculpture could be by beach or grass for people to walk or sit underneath the sculpture to interact with it.

## **3. JFK AIRPORT REDEVELOPMENT: Update**

Ms. Selvena Brooks-Powers expressed that the JFK Community Outreach office has been closed since March to the public but continue to work in virtual space and can still be reached by phone & email:

[jfkdevelopment@panymj.gov](mailto:jfkdevelopment@panymj.gov). The office contact number is 718 -244-3844.

## COMMITTEE REPORT

### HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Sonia Moise, Co-Chair of the committee reported that a meeting was held on June 29, 2020 with City Councilman Donovan Richards regarding the recent placement of a free COVID 19 testing site.

The Mayor created this site without any input or notification to the elected official or the community board. It was only after the construction began on the site and after numerous phone calls did the CM learn of this testing site. Andrea Bender advised that multiple site were considered but this site (belongs to SCA) was chosen because it is close to bus, subway and NYCHA housing

CM Richard explained he requested of the Mayor a HHC testing site in Rockaway but a location was never identified during that meeting with the Mayor.

CM Richards further advised that:

- \*Wild Cat can assist with cleaning up along with the Sanitation dept.
- Manny from CM Richard's staff will follow up on this.
- \*for any structural damages to the homes, homeowners must fill out a claim with the Comptroller's office within 60 days of damage (link sent out and dispersed). Urged all to take photos.
- \*will have a follow-up call with HHC
- \*will follow-up with the Captain of the 101 Pct. for traffic concerns

**Paul Ochoa** : First Deputy Director of City Legislative Affairs

- \*T3: Testing, Tracing and Taking Care: taking care means either isolate at home (where they will also be given free services) or stay at a hotel free up to 2 or more weeks along with free meals, free laundry, free deliveries, free meds, and free check-ins
- \*Denying that drones are being used
- \*Hours of operations: 9-7pm, Sun-Sat
- \*NYC picks the site based on ease of accessibility
- \*walk-in, no appointment necessary
- \*site is only temporary but no date is set for length of time
- \*hasn't had any issues with sanitation practices with other sites
- \*are hiring tracers (\$50k) and service navigators, will send link to CM
- \*testing is completely free

**Andrea Bender**: Chief of Staff, School Construction Authority

- \*will be a testing/diagnostic center
- \*HHC (Health & Hospitals Corp.) will run the site

\*sent f/u email with amount of trailers: sent an email that evening stating that there are 28 trailers in total as per the attachment she sent

\*tents vs. trailers, depends on size of site. Architects felt site was more suitable for trailers

\*doesn't have the testing capacity: set up to test more than 1k/day

\*offered homeowners her email for structural damages to their homes: [ABender@NYSCA.org](mailto:ABender@NYSCA.org)

. Stadium lights. No environmental study was performed. Structure of homes are concerning. No work permit posted. Tents vs. trailers? Traffic control: entrance & exit. Sanitary practices. Sanitation? How will the community benefit? Job opportunities? Point of contact from HHC.

**Questions posed:** is there a possibility of getting sanitation to put garbage can at the entrance/exit? As per Paul & Andrea they will take a look into it and provide the cans. Where's the entrance? Capacity of number of tests per day? As per

The testing site at B 39/ B40 Streets @ RBB was created based on request from Donovan Richards to the Mayor to create a stand- alone testing center in Far Rockaway. That St John's and Addabbo (Central Avenue) should not be doing the testing. The medical needs of the community are overwhelming and testing should be done elsewhere.

According to Paul Ochoa - Mayor's Office and Andrea Bender - SCA, construction is complete with only punch list items to be completed and SCA expects to hand site over to HHC in a few days. The community **issues regarding the construction were:**

1. that it started at before 7am and continued until 1am
2. There was no EIS - with this lot being empty for decades who knows what contaminates are in the soil. CM Richards advised that since there is a State of Emergency an EIS is not required.
3. Intrusion of drowns at night (SCA stated not associated with construction - must have been someone in the area)

**Ongoing community concerns:**

1. Damage to homes around this site: cracks in foundations and interior walls - NOTE: residents were advised to take pictures and file a claim with Comptroller's Office within 60 days and CM Richards offered his staff's assistance with the filing.
2. newly paved Beach 39 Street has been damaged with the truck
3. Noise from generator - will the generator be replaced with electrical utility connection?
4. Lights on site shining into neighbors homes - making it impossible to sleep. - SCA/Mayor's Office will talk to contractor of either; turning lights off or adjusting angle

**Operational questions:**

A call will be arranged with HHC for next week to address questions since HHC will be running the site.

- Testing procedures (Capacity of daily testing)
- Testing is FREE - they will not be asking for any insurance information
- Tracing ( HHC looking to hire tracers - salary \$50,000)
- If positive a) isolate @ home with services: meals, meds, medical care or b) if cannot isolate will be removed from home and placed in hotel with same services as @ home.
- There will be 40 trailers - how many trailers for testing, how many testers per trailer?
- Hours/Days of Operations 9am - 6 or 7pm Monday - Saturday (HHC will confirm on next week's call)
- how long will the site be operational
- Site will be a walk up site - no appointment necessary and expect, if a waiting line forms, the line will be contained within the site and not spill out on to the street.

Quality of life concerns:

- Sufficient sanitation of surrounding community - need street garbage cans and garbage cans at entrance & exit gates - CM Richards directed Manny to contact Wild Cats to schedule ongoing cleaning of the area
- Increased traffic- HHC expects site will service local residents and increase in traffic not expected. Once we can confirm opening date and hours of operation - Jonathan Gaska will contact 101st Precinct.

**Dr. Edward Williams:** concerned with Covid 19 testing and the hurricane season. Mentioned Columbia study stating that The Rockaways & Staten Island will be the hardest hit with the second wave.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

-Chris Tedesco expressed that he has observed the Parks Dept. vehicles mostly on the boardwalk and speeding.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn meeting at 8:25p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By: M. Dunning