



COMMUNITY BOARD #14

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City of New York
Borough of Queens

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COMMUNITY BOARD #14 REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016

PRESENT

Khaleel Anderson, Richard Altabe, Shalom Becker, Edward Benson, Louis Caucig, , John Cori, Silaka Cox, Dr. Gerald David, Mordechai Dicker, Ahmad Edwards, Noreen Ellis, D. Brian Heffernan, Martin Ingram, Henry Iori, Felicia Johnson, , Peter Larkin, Betty Leon, Thomas Long, Desiree Maple, John McCambridge, Darrell Mitchell, Sonia Moise, Aldean Moore, Daniel Mundy, Ellen O'Reilly, Dolores Orr, Isaac Parsee, Eugene Pasternak, Edward Pastore Sr., Karen Sloan-Payne, Dr. Eli Shapiro, Keith Sullivan, Milan Taylor, Chris Tesdesco, Carole Trachtenberg, Jose Velez, Michael Tubridy, Edwin Williams, Rachel Williams

ABSENT

Kelley Brooke, Annette Lord-Cohen, Stephen Cooper, Patricia Gillespie, Hazeron Mohammed, Joel Kaplan, Harvey Rudnick, Daniel Ruscillo Jr, Sender Schwartz, Thomas Tobin

GUESTS

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Sandee Doremus – Rep. Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr., Democratic District Leader Lew Simon Dan Brown – Rep. Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Jessica Luina – Rep. City Councilman Donovan Richards, Ciara Donley – Rep. City Councilman Eric Ulrich, Lisa George- Rep. State Senator James Sanders Jr., Eugene Shvartsman- Rep. Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder, Portia Dyrenforth – Parks Administrator for District #14, Roy Tellison – Parks Manager for District #14, Albert Silvestri – Rep. NYC Dept. of Transportation, Vicky Morales-Casella – Rep. Queens Borough Hall, Rebecca Lynch – Rep. NYC Housing Recovery Operations, Krytyna Pereyra – Rep. NYC Dept. of Design & Construction, Aryoh Gelfard –Rep. NYPIRG

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:20 p.m. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CORRESPONDENCE WAS READ AS FOLLOWS:

Letter dated April 4, 2016 was sent NYC DOT Queens Commissioner Nicole Garcia. Letter requested reconsideration for the placement of two traffic lights and a small narrow raised median from Beach 74 Street to Beach 81 Street, to be included in the reconstruction/improvement plan for Rockaway Beach Boulevard.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed new board members Desiree Maple, Edward Benson and Khaleel Anderson. New and reappointed members were informed of the mandatory training on May 9, 2016 @ the Hall of Science.

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER

Jonathan Gaska, District Manager stated that the office is working with the Mayor's Office DOITT Division to improve the office's website to include a community calendar and newsletter.

The office has already started getting calls regarding mosquitos. Residents can call the office or 311 to report vacant lots with high weeds and locations that have standing water.



MINUTES FROM MARCH 8, 2016

The Chair went to the Board for approval of the minutes. John McCambridge made the motion to accept the minutes written. The motion was seconded by Eddie Pastore Sr. The motion passed. There were (3) abstentions.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz – welcomed the new board members and reminded them and the reappointed members of the mandatory training that would be held on May 9, 2016 @ 5:30 pm @ the Hall of Science. The training is important because there could be changes in land-use and board of standards appeals issues; in addition to issues that community board deal with on a daily basis.

QBP Melinda Katz introduced Vicky Morales as the new Director of Community Boards at QBH. Anyone with CB questions and or need assistance can now contact Mrs. Morales

Borough President Melinda Katz discussed the following issues:

- The \$25 million Far Rockaway Library is in design and moving along.
- There will be an Office of Veteran Affairs at Queens Borough Hall. Thanks to efforts of City Councilman Eric Ulrich, Dan Brown and others that worked very hard to make it happen. The office would be open 10:00 am to 2:00 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- The Broad Channel Street Raising Task Force is still going on. Phase 1 of the project is being worked on at West 11th Road and 13th Street, Phase 2 would involve West 14 & 19 Street.
- \$3 million from her office has been allocated to assist with the expansion of the Joseph P. Addabbo Health Center located on Beach 62 Street and Beach Channel Drive.

NYC Build it Back-Housing Recovery Operations

Rebecca Lynch reported that Build It Back and Workforce1 are working together to provide high quality jobs and job training resources to sandy affected residents. Workforce1 is making cost free training available for eligible individuals to enroll in the NYC Union Pre-Apprenticeship programs in the construction industry. For more information call 1-347-926-4382 or go to nyc.gov/sandyrecoverywfl.

Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder -

Eugene Shvartsman stated that Assemblyman Goldfeder has gathered support for the Queens Rail Line. DOT has agreed to conduct the comprehensive study.

Assemblyman Goldfeder will be hosting a Rain Barrel Giveaway on April 17, 2016. Those that are interested in receiving a rain barrel can sign up on rainbarrel.com

PUBLIC SPEAKING – The Chair opened the floor for public speaking at 7:33 pm. (14) people signed in to speak. They all were recognized and heard. The Chair closed public speaking.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Transportation Committee

Martin Ingram Co-Chair of the Committee reported that a meeting was held on March 29, 2016. The agenda item for discussion was regarding the NYC Department of Transportation providing an update on transportation issues on the peninsula. Present at the meeting was

Albert Silvestri, Laura MacNeil, Randy Wade and Craig Chin. The following issues were addressed:

-Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority plan for Cashless Tolls at Marine Parkway and Cross Bay Bridges - The plan goes into effect this summer and will rely on EZ Pass payments. Those cars without EZ Pass would receive a bill to the registered owner of the vehicle. This has worked in other countries and could help during the heavy summer weekend traffic months. The implementation of this plan would be closely monitored to minimize the impact to residents and guests within Community Board #14.

-Beach Channel Drive closure between Beach 108 Street and Rockaway Freeway - DOT added flashing signals and signs that permit left and right turns at affected intersections which would simplify the traffic flow for the detour route of the Beach Channel Drive closure.

-Rockaway Ferry Update - The ferry is on schedule for spring of 2017. Discussions centered on the shuttle bus designed to pick up passengers in Rockaway and Broad Channel.

-Queens Rail Line - It was announced that NYS Assemblyman Phillip Goldfeder was successful in getting funding budgeted for a study to re-activate the White Pot Junction Right of Way. The segment has been abandoned since 1962 and has the potential to reduce the commute to Manhattan by 45 minutes. It would help reduce daily congestion in the middle of Queens along Woodhaven Boulevard and the Van Wyck Expressway.

-Far Rockaway Long Island Railroad - State Senator James Sanders Jr. has proposed legislation (56741) that would allow Rockaway residents to participate in weekend reduced rates for the railroad. For many years other parts of the city have used the discount but Far Rockaway was not considered because the train leaves Queens and goes into Nassau County and then enters Queens again. The Transportation Committee was represented at a recent rally to support Senator Sanders Jr. initiative.

-NYC DOT Update on short term safety plan for Rockaway Beach Blvd. and Beach 62 Street - NYC DOT is working to bring safety enhancements and accessibility improvements along Rockaway Beach Blvd. between Beach 59 Street and Beach 62 Street. It is intended to be a fast project and improvements are intended to be accomplished in advanced of the summer season. DOT will remove unnecessary concrete barriers, construct concrete pedestrian safety islands and activate a traffic signal at Beach 62 Street. It was noted that the area is prone to massive flooding but this project does not address the flooding issue. The need for LED and progressive lighting on traffic lights at Beach 62 Street and Rockaway Beach Blvd. was also discussed. Flex Delineator Posts were identified for the south side of the area between Beach 62 Street and Beach 61 Street.

Community Board members expressed to Albert Silvestri that traveling east on Rockaway Beach Blvd; drivers will not be able to make a left hand turn onto beach 62 Street. Mr. Silvestri acknowledged Board members concerns and stated that this is a short term solution and that issue would be looked into in the long term plan.

The Transportation Committee made the motion for the Board to support DOT's short term safety plan for Rockaway Beach Blvd. and Beach 62 Street. The Chair went to the Board for questions regarding the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

The Transportation Committee also made a motion for the Board to send a letter of request

to DOT for a comprehensive study of traffic lights on the peninsula to eliminate unnecessary lights, deactivate some lights on weekends and develop a plan to adapt progressive lighting. The Chair went to the Board for questions regarding the motion. The motion passed unanimously by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

2. Parks & Public Safety Committee

Jose Velez Co-Chair of the Committee reported that a meeting was held on March 30, 2016. There was an overview from Eddie Falcon, Parks Enforcement Patrol Deputy Inspector for NYC Parks Dept. Mr. Falcon stated that PEP officers are on closed sections of the beach where there are no lifeguards to ensure that there are no swimmers in the water. After the lifeguards leave the beach at 6:00 pm, PEP officers begin to patrol the shoreline until 9:00 pm. An additional Captain has been assigned to the Rockaway beaches to assist with operations and to correct issues from last season that involved staff. Currently there are 36/37 seasonal officers, 4 peace officers, 4 sergeants and 1 captain. PEP seasonal officers have first aid training.

Jose Velez reported that Committee members asked questions and made comments regarding why PEP officers are not giving out summons?, why are a lot of the officers at the same location? and why officers are not out on patrol before the lifeguards start?

The Committee requested drowning stats and to meet with NYPD, PEP and Parks Dept. to address quality of life and beach issues.

The Committee discussed and voted in favor of recommending that the Board send another letter to all concerned parties requesting additional PEP officers.

The Parks & Public Safety Committee made a motion for the Board to support sending another letter to Commissioner Silver of the Parks Dept. and elected officials requesting additional PEP officers. The Chair went to the Board for questions. The motion passed unanimously by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

There were questions regarding launching of Kayaks on city beaches - Parks Commissioner Dorothy Lewnsdowski stated that currently there is no designated beach location for kayak launching.

There were questions regarding biking on the boardwalk - The Parks Dept. is proposing the riding of bicycles on the boardwalk 7 days a week without time restrictions. The Chair pointed out that the signage/markings for the bike lanes on the boardwalk are still unclear and strongly feels that this issue needs to be addressed. The Committee discussed the proposal and voted to support the proposal there was 1 abstention.

The Parks & Public Safety Committee made a motion for the Board to support the Parks Dept.'s proposal to allow biking on the boardwalk (7) days a week without time restrictions. The Chair went to the Board for questions. The motion carried by a roll call vote of 34 YES, 0 NO and 1 ABSTAINED.

Rockaway Beach Shorefront Parkway Handball Court Reconstruction @ Beach 103rd Street to Beach 105th Street.

Jose Velez reported that Jim Martusi, Director of Queens Capital Parks Projects stated to the Committee that \$1.5 million was allocated to reconstruct the handball courts. Pre-Sandy there were 8 handball courts; the new design will continue with the double court design and the courts will be fenced in by a 16 foot fence with (3) separate entrances.

The new design cuts into the berm so a retaining seat wall is going to be built that would include cut outs for ADA seating and use of reclaimed boardwalk wood. Other features include an adult fitness area with a safety surface, 2 ping pong tables, pebble seating and greenery around the entire perimeter. Completion for the reconstruction would be the fall of 2018. The Committee discussed the new designs and voted in favor of the new designs.

The Parks & Public Safety Committee made a motion for the Board to support the new designs. The Chair went to the Board for questions. The motion carried by a roll call vote of 30 YES, 0 NO and 0 ABSTAINED.

Rockaway Beach Club Mobile Vendors

Jose Velez reported that Amy Tichenor stated to the Committee that the club has vending rights on the boardwalk from Beach 50 Street to Beach 150 Street. Requests for local vendors have been placed in the Rockaway Times.

There was a request for approval for a mobile Smoothie Haven truck location: locations in consideration are Beach 77 Street and Beach 81 Street. Beach 59 Street is seeking community input. The Beach 59 Street location had been approved previously for an ice cream truck vendor. Committee member Karen Slone Payne agreed to check with the co-op residents at Beach 77 Street and Beach 81 Streets. Also, committee member Ahmad Edwards agreed to reach out to the Beach 59 Street community for their input regarding the mobile vendor to make sure they have a garbage can in the area.

Committee members asked questions and expressed their concerns to Amy Tichenor regarding clear signage for alcohol and smoking consumption; in addition to mobile vending rights and zones for mobile vendors on the boardwalk near Beach 116 Street. The Committee decided that this issue required further public engagement and that it should be presented to the Economic Development Committee and the Beach 116 Street Partnership.

The motion was made and second to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 pm.

Submitted by: M. Dunning