

**COMMUNITY BOARD #14  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING  
APRIL 9, 2019**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS  
333 BEACH 90 STREET  
ROCKAWAY BEACH, NY 11693**

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**PRESENT**

Audrey Amsterdam-Handy, Khaleel Anderson, John Cori, Dr. Gerald David, Temina Feldman, Eugenia Gibson, D. Brian Heffernan, Felicia Johnson, Paul King, Betty Leon, Denise Lopestri-Neibel, Ife Maijeh, Desiree Maple, Nancy Martinez, Alicia Mazyck, John McCambridge, Sonia Moise, Al Moore, Ellen O'Reilly, Dolores Orr, Dr. Harold Paez, Isaac Parsee, Eugene Pasternak, Edward Pasture Sr., Linda Plummer, Dr. Eli Shapiro, Karen Sloan-Payne, Chris Tedesco, Michael Tubridy, Jose Velez, Wanda Warden, Edwin Williams, Tyrone Worsley

**ABSENT**

Louis Caucig, Stephen Cooper, Mordechai Dicker, Ahmad Edwards, Noreen Ellis, Yitzchok Goldstein, Tamara Jacobs, Annette Lord-Cohen, Rosalyn Mason, Helen Montero, Daniel Mundy

**GUESTS**

Dan Brown – Rep. Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Ciara Donley - Rep. City Councilman Eric Ulrich, Lisa George - Rep. State Senator James Sanders Jr., Democratic District Leader Lew Simon, Sandee Doremus – Rep. State Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr., David Hooks - Rep. U. S. Congressman Gregory Meeks, Michael Matteo – Rep. Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer-Amato

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15p.m. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chair informed all present that tonight's meeting would include the continuation of the agenda from March board meeting.

**MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 25, 2019**

Betty Leon made the motion to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by John McCambridge. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion. 5 Abstained.

**PUBLIC SPEAKING:** The Chair opened the floor for public speaking at 7:22pm. 14 people signed up to speak. They all were recognized and heard. The Chair closed public speaking 7:46pm.

**TRANSPORATION COMMITTEE** - Chris Tedesco Committee Chair reported that a meeting was held on January 16, 2019. The first agenda item was regarding DOT's street conversion options for Beach 60, Beach 61 Streets and Larkin Avenue. Mr. Andrew Arcese representing DOT

provided two options to the committee to alleviate speeding and traffic volume on the affected streets.

- Option 1 involves Beach 61 Street between Rockaway Beach Blvd and Larkin Avenue being changed to 1 way north bound.

- Option 2 involves changing **Beach 61 Street** between Rockaway Beach Blvd and Larkin Avenue being changed to one-way north bound and changing Beach 61 Street between Larkin Avenue and Beach Front to one-way south bound. **Beach 60<sup>th</sup> Street** between Larkin Avenue and Beach Front Road would be changed to one-way south bound. **Larkin Avenue** between Beach 59<sup>th</sup> Street and Beach 60 Street would be changed to one-way east bound.

In addition, Mr. Tedesco reported that the homeowners in the affected area have already attended several past board meetings and spoke during public speaking and have held their own community meeting to discuss the DOT options.

The Chair gave a representative of the area homeowners the opportunity to inform the board of their issues and support of DOT's options. It was stated that the homeowners support Option 2 because it would calm the speeding and heavy traffic day and night.

Chris Tedesco made the motion for the board to support DOT's proposed Option#2 in addition to signage for: 1) No commercial vehicles except for local deliveries and 2) Beach Front Road going east bound No Outlet/ No Through Traffic because there is no outlet. Additionally that DOT lift the Rockaway Moratorium of "No Street Construction during the summer" to complete this work before the summer. Felicia Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a hand vote in favor of the motion, 1 No and 7 Abstained.

The second agenda item the committee discussed was regarding an update on the Beach 108 Street reconstruction project. Mr. Tedesco reported that Casey Gorrell, representing DOT explained that revisions and changes were made based on previous requests from the community some of which are the following:

- Restore parking on Shore Front Park at Beach 108 Street by rerouting the bike path.

- Add new sidewalk and crossing across median at Shore Front Parkway and continue to the boardwalk.
- Widen the west sidewalk 20 inches while maintaining the tree lawn at Beach 108 Street north of Shore Front Parkway.

Design for the project should be completed by June 2019 and construction will start in the summer/spring of 2020 and will take 2 years to complete. DOT will come and do a full presentation to the board before the project starts.

The third and fourth agenda items the committee discussed were regarding the Joseph Addabbo Crossbay Bridge capital project and parking signs/markings on Beach 116 Street and Rockaway Beach Blvd. have already been addressed by the board sending a letter of support to DOT to enhance the connection and create a direct continuous path between the Rockaway Peninsula to Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Additionally DOT will replace signs and markings after resurfacing is completed and the board has already sent a letter to TBTA.

### **MINUTES FROM MARCH 12, 2019**

John McCambridge made the motion for the board to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Karen Sloan-Payne. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Letters dated March 14, 2019 to Hon. Scott Stringer and Hon. Bill De Blasio opposing the shelter at 226 Beach 101 Street and requesting a forensic audit including the relationship, budgeting/rental agreements between the NYC Dept. of Homeless Services, Black Veterans for Social Justice(the proposed Provider) and the cozy relationship with Liberty One. Copies of these letters were also sent to the local news.

**REPORT OF THE CHAIR** – The Chair welcomed the following new board members: Eugenia Gibson, Yitzchok Goldstein, Paul King, Alicia Mazyck, Wanda Warden and Nancy Martinez. In addition the Chair reminded them and all reappointed board members to attend the swearing in and orientation on April 30, 2019 at Queens Borough Hall.

The beach replenishment starting at Beach 90 Street to Beach 103 Street would start soon and should be completed by Memorial Day. The beach

The Chair advised she attended a meeting at QBH regarding land acquisition in which the city will be taking possession of 25 parcels of land within Community Board #14 that is deemed unusable due to flooding. These parcels will be: 1) used as public space; 2) acquired by adjacent property owner as yard space prohibiting any structure to be built, and 3) 8 parcels the city will release an RFP for a developer to construct one or two family homes. The list of properties will be distributed when it is finalized. Jonathan will send the board members the list when the office receives it. Community Board# 10 is going through the same process.

### **REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER**

District Manager, Jonathan Gaska reported that City Planning will be sending the ULURP for the old Peninsula Hospital site to the Board's Land Use Committee for review sometime in May and most likely the board will be voting on the ULURP in June 2019. Additionally, the Land Use Committee will be meeting to discuss the variance applications for the O'Connell Funeral Home and a proposed 17 story apartment building to be constructed at Beach 9 Street by the ocean.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **PARKS & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Jose Velez Co-Chair of the committee reported that a meeting was held on March 18, 2019. The first agenda item was the Redfern Playground Capital Project that involves a 2 Acre site funded by Neighborhood Development Fund. The cost of the project is \$9.3 million and is expected to be completed by 2021.

The park is located near the Nassau County line. The current play equipment is from 1991 and not very interesting or exciting. The new design includes lowering of 8 foot fences, resurfacing, shifting of baseball field and basketball court, eliminating one handball court, creating large seating plaza with game tables and shade, adding adult and youth fitness area, larger playground and spray park area. New benches, new planting beds are being added and one tree is being removed to enhance park entrance.

Standard flushing meadows type park lighting, no lighting for ballfield or basketball court as NYC parks close at dusk.

A scope meeting was held with Redfern Tenants Association and the idea for a fitness area came from the youth leadership council and the design logo for the basketball court. Lower fences make parks more welcoming and increase site lines, also parks that have lower fences have not seen an increase in incidents. Fences dividing ball field from playground area will be 16 feet.

The park will be graded to handling flooding and the new planting areas will help to drain off water. Existing trees will provide sufficient shade along with new tree plantings. Comfort station is being renovated under different funding and should be completed before park renovation.

Jose Velez made the motion for the board to approve the capital design for the new Redfern Playground. The motion was seconded by Paul King. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 29 Yes, 0 No and 1 Abstained.

The second agenda item was the Rockaway Performance Space at Beach 94 St and Shore Front Parkway, which involves a new design change for the performance space covering. The committee voted and unanimous approved the new design.

Jose Velez made the motion for the board to approve the new covering design for the performance space at Beach 94 Street. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

The third agenda item was an update on the 2019 beach season from Joe Mauro, NYC Parks Operations Manager for Community Board #14.

- 1) Last year a pilot program was started in the Rockaway Beach section. It involved moving trash cans from the middle of the beach and placed closer to boardwalk at entrances making trash removal easier. Complaints were down and the beaches were cleaner. This will now be implemented on the entire length of the beach. A request was made to have a few trash cans on beach/boardwalk during winter season as residents still use the beach.
- 2) Mobi-mats will once again be used, no new request have come in for additional mat locations. A handrail will be installed at the Beach 10th street staircase going down to beach.

The committee also unanimously agreed to request the board to send a letter to Queens Parks Commissioner Mike Docket requesting that mobi mats be placed at newly identified locations

3) PEP - There will be year round 4 officers and 2 sergeants, for the summer there will be a captain, 4 beach sergeants and 33 - 34 seasonal CSA. Only sergeants and officers can make arrests and issue summons. A request was made for an additional 20 - 40 POP workers in addition to the amount (40 - 50) he normally gets for the summer, most are Rockaway residents. There will be 4 shifts.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

John Cori Co-Chair reported that a committee meeting was held on March 26, 2019. The first agenda item was the status of the renovation and development of the old Court House at Beach Channel drive and Beach 90th Street. Uri Kaufman of Harmony group, the owner/developer of the property, gave the following update:

- All remediation completed/signed off on by the city since 2018.
- Demolition is complete and construction is underway, including helical piles and flood mitigation footings for the building to be flood resistant. An extension of the building will be added onto the rear of the building with steel.
- Acknowledgment of the closing of a loan with M & T Bank for development of the property and hopes to see construction of the core and shell by 2020.
- Work on the facade is also underway with a plan to restore the building to its original design and beauty. Additionally, letters of intent have been obtained from a Psychologist, a Chiropractor, a Pharmacist and an Urgent care. After the conclusion of Mr. Kaufman's presentation he answered questions.

The second agenda item was the presentation by The Rockaway Business Alliance (RBA). The Alliance helps local businesses in the focus area with tactical support assistance, business growth and development.

Sean Ansanelli of the RBA, presented the results of the Avenue NYC Program, Community districts need assessment and explained that the RBA's focus area is the businesses from Beach 40 streets to Beach 116 Street. Mr. Ansanelli explained that he himself conducted the assessment over a 6 month period by walking into over 135 businesses throughout the focus area.

He did a needs assessment of physical conditions, interviewed business owners, assessed street scape and tree pit conditions. Cracked sidewalks and ponding issues were also observed.

The assessment revealed there are 423 commercially zone buildings in the area. 390 people responded to and completed the survey both online and in person. The survey showed an 18% vacancy rate, with higher vacancy in the eastern part of the focus area.

Majority of the businesses are restaurants and/or fast food with a large concentration of Chinese takeout and pizza places. The focus area also had good amount of business that are unique to Rockaway such as pop up shops and boardwalk concessions.

### **YOUTH SERVICE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Harold Paez Co-Chair of the committee reported that a meeting was held on March 6, 2019. The first agenda item was the committee's attendance at the St John's Boys Home Community Advisory Committee meeting on April 1, 2019. The Advisory Committee was revived due to recent complaints involving the young men at the facility. Representatives from local civics, the 100<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct and others attended the meeting and agreed to work together moving forward.

The second agenda item was a youth job fair that could be Co-Sponsored along with State Senator James Sanders Jr's Office 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Job Fair to be held at the Rockaway YMCA. For more information contact Lisa George, Community Liaison at 718-523-3069 or 718-327-7017.

Updates were given on status of improvements to/needs of some of our local schools and details available in the Committee's written report.

The Committee requested Jonathan Gaska, District Manager follow up on the status of the Gifted and Talented program promised by the Mayor at his last Town Hall meeting held at PS/MS42 with Councilman Donovan Richards.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted By: M. Dunning