



Donovan Richards
Queens Borough President

Community Board No. 2

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Anatole Ashraf

Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert

District Manager

October 10, 2024

Community Board 2 Meeting Minutes

This meeting was held in person and teleconferenced on Zoom

Community Board 2 Board Members – Present

Amparo Abel-Bey, Nellie Afshar, Anatole Ashraf, Ann Marie Baranowski, Karesia Batan, Kat Bloomfield (PV), Danielle Brecker, Carlos Castell Croke, Lisa Charles, Osman Chowdhury, Stephen Cooper, Lisa Deller, Dr. Rosamond Gianutsos, Alexandra Gonzalez (PV), Kenneth Greenberg, Mohammad Hossen, Christine Hunter, Diana Kichler, James Kim, Sheila Lewandowski, Benjamin Lucas (PV), Patrick Martinez, Thomas Mituzas, Eric Narburgh, Zeeshan Ott Reilly Owens, Oumaya Saab, Laura Shepard, Ryan Smith, Lauren Springer, Akello Thomas (PV), Leticia Vasquez, Michael Zoorob

Community Board 2 Board Members – Absent

Unexcused:

John Bahia, Nicholas Berkowitz, Chhemang Lama, Mary Torres, Mai Tran

Excused:

Tannia Chavez, Warren Davis, Morry Galonoy, Somnath Ghimire, Camille Gray, Lelin Kandel, Badrun Khan, Prameet Kumar, Andie Olivares, Jolly Patel, Norberto Saldana, Caroline Spitzer

Community Board 2 Staff: *Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager, MaryAnn Gurrado*

Elected Officials/Representatives

Honorable Julie Won, New York City Council Member
Tiffany Echevarria, Representing Congresswoman Nydia Velaquez
Evelyn Li, Representing Congresswoman Grace Meng
Mercedes Jennings, Representing NY State Senator Michael Gianaris
Janey Battle, Representing NY State Assembly Member Steven Raga
Shauna Morlock, Representing NY State Senator Kristen Gonzalez

Michael Cartier, Representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

Department of City Planning

Katherine Crawford, Hye-Kyung Yang, Lara Merida

Sunnyside Community Services

Chris Cardone

Guests

Damian Corbett, Lincoln Auto Group

Sandy Anagnostou, Caliendo Architects

Raymond Levin

Public Comment

Barry Druss, Nora Dantchev, Stephen Weiner, Bill Kregler, Frank Wu

Note: Reference to the You Tube Video and the associate time-in-meeting stamps are offered here as a service to community members who wish to review the meeting. The video and Block Party transcript are not considered part of these minutes.

Link to You Tube Video of this meeting <https://www.youtube.com/@queenscb2>
(Approximate elapsed time stamps provided in these minutes refer to this video)

Link to <https://blockparty.studio/Archive> where you can navigate to a transcript of this meeting.

Time: (Approximate from YouTube Video)

0:00:30 Anatole Ashraf welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided housekeeping rules and reminded everyone their vote is their opinion. He requested everyone follow the WAIT Rule, (Why Am I Talking).

0:00:40 Pledge of Allegiance

0:01:58 Tiffany Echevarria, Representing Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez provided the following update:

- Announced that there is a pamphlet of all of the legislation that has been introduced in the 118th Congress.
- Announced the FinCen recording was sent out to the Anatole Ashraf, CB2 Chair and Morry Galonoy.

- Announced the Blissville DEP walking tour is definitely happening and they are still trying to finalize the dates.
- Announced that Newtown Creek comment period closes on the 20th.
- Congresswoman Velazquez introduced a federal version of Mel's law, this law is a bill that requires colleges receiving federal funding, to create a policy to award degrees to students who passed away before they had the chance to complete their coursework.

0:05:09 Evelyn Li, Representing Congresswoman Grace Meng provided the following update:

- On Friday October 18, 2024, their office will be hosting a mobile office hour in Elmhurst at 93-15 Corona Avenue.
- On October 27, 2024, their office will be hosting a Passport event at the US Post Office in Forest Hills from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.
- Announced the Department of State has already launched a pilot program that will allow travelers to renew their passport online.
- Announced that the Congresswoman has secured a \$3.8 million grant for Local Three Electrical Union which is for clean energy Workforce Development in Queens. This will allow local three to open a job training facility and they expect to create 490 jobs and retain an additional 2,870 jobs.
- Announced the Water Resources Development Act of 2024 has passed in the House. This bill has now been moved to the Senate for approval.
- Announced a VA intake day on October 15, 2024, at VFW Post 551 at 61-55 69th Street, Maspeth.
- Q&A

0:07:55 Mercedes Jennings, Representing NY State Senator Michael Gianaris provided the following update:

- Announced on October 7, 2024, the Senator announced that he was able to secure \$6 million to Mount Sinai, located on 30th Avenue in Astoria, Queens, to build a more efficient and bigger ICU unit.
- The Senator has been conducting very successful ID events.
- Q & A

0:10:03 Shauna Morlock, Representing NY State Senator Kristen Gonzalez provided the following update:

- Announced their office is having their monthly office hours event at the Astoria Houses Community Center on October 28, 2024, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.
- Announced that as Thanksgiving approaches, they will be reaching out to Community Partners for culturally appropriate food items to distribute.

- Announced they are collecting budget requests. A legislative session is coming up, and that means that their budget letter goes out in January and between now and Mid-December if anyone has any requests to submit them.
- Discussed the Midtown Tunnel flooding was really horrific and the idea that they allowed an MTA worker to taste the water in order to figure out if it was salinated was not great, so they are working on a letter trying to find out what happened and to try to get some best practices going forward.
- Announced their office is working with Assembly Member Mamdani's office on trying to get student Omni cards available to all students.
- Announced their office is collaborating with Parks and Council Member Won's office on the rat situation in Gantry Park.
- Q & A

0:15:56 Janey Battle, Representing Assembly Member Steven Ragas office provided the following update:

- Announced on November 2, 2024, there will be a community clean-up in Mapeth.
- Announced on October 8, 2024, a CCRB info session.
- Their office will be holding a community clean-up November 3, 2024, in Woodside.
- Their office will be holding an intake session with the Department of buildings at their district office on November 7, 2024.
- Announced a non-profit training session in partnership with the Astoria worker project and QEDC from 10:00 am to 1 pm at Elmhurst Hospital on November 23, 2024.
- Announced they are holding mobile office hours on the following dates:
 - October 11, 2024, at Woodside Northern Boulevard train station.
 - October 14, 2024, in Woodside at Roosevelt Avenue and 61st Street.
 - October 17, 2024, in Maspeth at the Starbucks right off Grand Avenue.
 - October 23, 2024, in Elmhurst, Grand Avenue between 45th Avenue and Whitney
- Q & A

0:19:17 Michael Carlier, Representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards provided the following update:

- Announced he is the new Director of Community Boards for Queensboro President Donovan Richards.
- Announced we are approaching the new community board appointment cycle and reminded everyone to be diligent with their attendance and in reapplying. Applications will go live around January/February 2025. The exact date is still to be determined.
- Acknowledged the Community Board and local Civics for their assistance in helping to ID overgrown medians in need of maintenance and sanitation services back in August. The Borough President held a press conference to urge the Parks Department,

Transportation and Sanitation to get together and address these issues of overgrowth on the medians across in the Borough.

- Announced the following events:
 - October 13, 2024, they will be hosting a Women's Health Fair from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm St. Alban's.
 - October 15, 2024, they will be hosting a Virtual Parent Advisory board meeting at 6:00 pm via Zoom.
 - October 19, 2024, they will be hosting an LGBTQ Resource Fair and Expo at Queensboro Hall at 120-55, Queens Boulevard.
 - October 21, 2024, they will be hosting a College and Opportunity Fair again at Borough Hall, from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.
 - October 23, 2024, they will be hosting a Halloween Family Film Night again at Borough Hall.
- RSVP to these events at our Borough Hall website at: www.queensbp.nyc.gov.

0:25:06 Honorable Kristen Gonzalez, New York State Senator provided the following update:

- Announced her office spent a lot of the summer and the fall focusing on community event.
- Her office distributed about 1,200 backpacks throughout the district.
- Announced her office is continuing to do mobile office hours at Astoria Houses and the next one is coming up on October 28, 2024.
- Her office held some shredding events.
- Announced a couple of bills were signed including one to rename a subway station.
- Her office is currently taking recommendations for next year's priorities both legislatively, but also in terms of budget requests.
- Announced a major win recently with McGuinness Boulevard.
- Discussed street safety is a concern in Long Island City.
- Discussed another issue they are focusing on is the Midtown Tunnel. They are following up with the city to see what happened, how they can prevent it in the future, and is incredibly concerned about the recent reports of the way that they found out the leak was coming from the river which was having an employee drink the water.
- Her office is fighting for hospital access. They focused a lot this summer on maximizing the amount of healthcare access knowing that Queens will also be affected, including Elmhurst Hospital.
- Discussed the issue of housing and the rent guidelines board increases which kicked in on October 1, 2024.
- If anyone is struggling with the increases or they have questions about what it means, please reach out to their office.
- Q & A

0:32:30 Chris Cardone, Sunnyside Community Services provided the following update:

- Announced the Sunnyside Postmile Run Walk event. The event will be held on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at 9:30 am. It begins at Skillman Avenue and 43rd Street.
- Sunnyside Community Services is celebrating 50 years of service to the community this year. They will be holding a Gala on Monday, October 28, 2024, in Long Island City. To celebrate this anniversary, there will be a cocktail reception at their offices in Long Island City at 52-41 Center Boulevard, followed by a dinner at American Brass.
- Announced they welcomed back students for the ESOL programs.
- Gave a special thanks to Council Member Julie Won for helping to secure funding and bringing these programs back to Sunnyside.
- Q & A

0:34:58 General Public Comments

0:35:26 Barry Druss spoke about the following:

The Transportation system is under a lot of stress, and he proposes setting up a bond to create bus Rapid Transit and fund it for neighborhoods

0:38:05 Nora Dantcev spoke about the following:

Discussed a mural, which is on the wall outside her office on 40th Street. It was brilliantly executed, because every letter stands for everything that is essential for Sunnyside. A Go Fund Me has been established to help restore the mural.

0:40:35 Steven Winer spoke about the following:

Works as a Wills attorney. Spoke about wills, civil unions and inheritance rights.

He also discussed the ballot on November 5th, and an item for a race called surrogate which is referring to a surrogate judge, that's a judge who has offices in Jamaica at Sutphin Boulevard and has a 14-year term.

0:44:41 Bill Kregler spoke about the following:

He stated he believes we are a city that's deteriorating tremendously, our quality of life. Our state and our country is not doing that well. Spoke about our borders, homelessness, violence in general, gun violence in particular whether we'll have Social Security in 10 years or not.

0:46:07 Frank Wu, President of the Courts Civic spoke about the following:

2018 rezoning that occurred, which promised the neighborhood several things, including the creation of a privately maintained public space, an increasingly dense part of LIC. Developers have been working pretty closely with the community and good faith, presenting publicly coming to the events. Urging the government agency to basically work in good faith to close the final legal agreements.

0:48:15 Presentation- LIC Underline

0:48:16 Deputy Director of Urban Design, New York City Department of Transportation introduced the team to present the open space project.

0:49:00 Ed Wallace, Attorney, representing the project team provided the history of the project.

0:50:39 Jay Valgora, Partner, Studio V Design and Planning Architecture and Design firm provided the Dutch Kills Open Space Presentation located in Long, Island City at Jackson Avenue and Dutch Kills. He discussed the following process:

- Community Board Review
- License Agreement with DOT
- PDC Final Approval
- DOT to Cap Site
- DOB Permitting

1:22:55 Honorable Julie Won, New York City Council Member provided the following update:

- Announced three pieces of legislation were passed to curb corruption in the contracting process. They are Intro 801, Intro 803 and Intro 802.
- Council Member Won reported more bills will be coming out from the Contract Committee and is drafting bills with her General Council to make sure they have compliance modernization.
- Discussed early childhood education, able to gain momentum to get funding to clear the back log and open school seats in our district.
- Recognized that we had a loss in our community concerning an unhoused man who lost their life due to natural causes, but also substance abuse at Noonan Park.
- There are hotlines that you can call to make sure that if you know someone who's struggling with substance abuse that they are receiving the help that they need. 311 is how the Department of Homeless Services sends out their Outreach workers. When someone is sent out, they will do Outreach and offer them shelter, because this is a right to-shelter City. We cannot force people to take that shelter because it goes into our civil liberties.
- If you see someone who has mental illness or someone who is struggling with substance abuse or they are a danger to themselves or others, please call 988 and that way or 911.
- Q & A

1:37:06 BSA Application for 58-02 Northern Boulevard

Sandy Anagnostou, Caliendo Architects representing the applicant provided the following update:

- Introduced Damian Corbett, General Sales Manager, Lincoln Auto Group.
- This is a variance application pursuant to §72-21ZR – NYC Zoning Resolution.
- The proposed variance which would permit the development of a new two-story automobile showroom with accessory offices (use group 9) at the subject site.
- It is located in R5 residential zoning district where commercial use is not permitted as of right.
- It has frontage on three streets, Northern Boulevard, 58th Street and 60th Street, formerly an eating and drinking establishment that has been empty for decades.
- It is on the south side of Northern Boulevard.
- They are proposing a two-story and cellar commercial automobile dealership that will be Lincoln Motor Group and the cellar will be for accessory storage.
- The first floor will be an automobile showroom. The upper floor will be for accessory sales offices.
- Met with the Land Use Committee of Community Board 2 and they made some recommendations such as two publicly accessible charging stations (58th and 60th Street) as well as landscaping in planters.
- There is no used car, auto sales and there's no repair work done on the premises.
- No maintenance of the automobiles is done at the premises. It's a boutique retail type of automobile showroom.
- This is a minority owned business and one of the partners in the business is a retired, NBA player, John Starks, and they would be hiring locally. If approved it would create approximately 15 jobs, union jobs.
- Q & A

2:05:19 ULURP Application – 49-39 Van Dam Street - Demapping

2:05:58 Raymond Levin, Attorney representing the applicant provided the following update:

- The applicant is JPB Realty Co.
- Applicant is seeking to purchase the adjoining property, which is city-owned.
- The application is to demap the property and then to purchase it from the city.
- It is zoned M2-1, a manufacturing district and also is within an IBZ.
- Proposing the elimination discontinuance and closing of a mapped but not utilized area adjacent to the Queens Midtown Expressway on-ramp.
- Proposed development: an outdoor eating, drinking and seating area.
- The first floor is 10,000 square feet plus or minus warehousing food preparation and delivery. On the second floor, it's 4,000 square feet. It's used for offices, jpbs offices and on the southern part of the site, there's a one-story building, one-story Warehouse, which also currently is used with food for food, prep and delivery.
- The property they are looking to acquire from the city is not going to be built upon.
- It will be an open area and would be an outdoor eating and drinking space, as in conjunction with that, they would convert part of their property.
- Q & A

2:29:07 Transition to Board Business

2:29:10 Attendance (Ryan Smith)

Board Members Present:	29	Board Members Absent:	17
Present Virtual:	4	Excused:	13
		Quorum:	Yes

2:32:15 Anatole Ashraf made a motion to table the September meeting minutes as it said we voted for the draft scope of work, we voted on our comments on the draft scope of work. He announced the September 2024 meeting minutes will be voted on at the November meeting. All were in favor with none (0) opposed and one (1) abstention.

2:33:26 Chairperson's Report (Anatole Ashraf) provided the following update:

- Wished all who celebrate a belated Happy Rosh Hashanah.
- Wished all a Happy Italian Heritage Day and Indigenous People's Day on Monday.
- Reported it was great to attend the LIC Summit and thanked Charles Yu and the team.
- Announced Kat Bloomfield has been doing a wonderful job as Treasurer.
- Announced we will discuss and vote next month on the Capital and Expense Budget.
- Reminded everyone they must attend their committee meetings.
- Reminded Committee Chairs, please send your agendas to Debbie no later than seven business days in advance.
- Announced CB 2 will reach out to public members this month to the individuals we've appointed. The term will be from November 2024 through April 2026.
- Announced we will have a digital processes document ready.
- Announced that hopefully these are like addendums to the bylaws that we can make and then vote that.

0:36:49 District Manager's Report (Debra Markell Kleinert) provided the following update:

- Announced committee attendance records are important, and they are submitted to Borough Hall. Everyone must participate in and attend at least one committee meeting a month as required. If you cannot attend a CB2 meeting or a committee meeting, please call or email the CB 2 office.
- Reminded everyone if you have community complaints, and quality of life issues please submit them to the CB 2 Board office for follow-up send CB2 an email.
- CB2 thanks Harisch Studios, Mark and his team for their live streaming services.
- Attended budget consultation meetings in September.
- The budget committee is working hard on capital and expense, and we will be voting on this at the November Board meeting.

- Anyone who has changed their information to submit their new contact information home address, email, phone to the CB 2 office. Current board members please submit any changes to your contact information so we can have up to the minute information.
- CB 2 has had approximately 16 complaints since September
 - The top complaints were:
 - DOS – illegal dumping/garbage
 - DEP – catch basin issues
 - PD – illegally parked vehicles
- PARKS
 - Blissville Flagpole – Spring 2025
- SCHOOLS
 - Parcel C – 1-50 54th Avenue scheduled opening – Spring 2027.
 - Northern Boulevard School – scheduled opening on September 2025.
 - Court square elementary school – delayed one year to due legal agreements. Scheduled opening is tentatively scheduled for 2028.
- CB2 continues to post more information on our facebook, and website.
- Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Halloween and an easy fast for Yom Kippur.
- The next Community Board 2 meeting will be held on November 7, 2024.
- Please check the website for updated information.
 - WEBSITE WWW.NYC.GOV/QUEENSCB2

2:41:57 Department of City Planning (Katie Crawford) provided the following update:

- 50-02 Queens Boulevard by PC Richards.
- 21-31 46 Avenue across from MoMA PS1.
- Currently reviewing their applications which is in the very earliest stages. Certification will be spring or possibly beyond.
- Upcoming milestones for the OneLIC plan. DCP has agreed with the Land Use Committee that they will be coming to every committee each month and spending about 30 minutes on each agenda to cover various topics from month to month.
- This month's topic is Waterfront zoning.
- Announced October 20, 2024, Walk Shop. All are invited to register on Eventbrite. Will be meeting at Queensbridge Park at 12: PM.
- Announced another Waterfront related event will be held on October 29, 2024.
- Stay tuned for more details outside of Engagement Milestones. The next planned Milestone will be the release of the final scope of work and the draft environmental impact statement or DEIS. At this time, they don't have a set date for the release, but it will be released 10 days before the project is certified. These Milestones are tied together and tied to the certification date, which is not finalized. Anticipating this will be in Spring of 2025.
- Announced staffing announcements from the Queen's office are as follows:

Lin Zeng, Director, Queens Office
Feigele Lechtiner, Borough Planner, CB 2 Co-Liaison

2:47:30 Lara Merida, Department of City Planning introduced herself and provided a brief update.

2:51:36 Christine Hunter, Land Use & Housing Committee reported the Land Use and Housing Committee voted to recommend that the BSA disapprove the application.

(**Motion** made by Laura Shepard and seconded by Roz Gianutsos) to support the Land Use and Housing Committee's recommendation and reject the BSA application for 58-02 Northern Boulevard.

Motion carried: The motion carried with (32) thirty-two in favor, (0) none opposed and (0) no abstentions.

ULURP Application -49-39 Van Dam Street, Demapping – C220305MMQ

Christine Hunter reported that the Land Use and Housing Committee expressed concerns about the isolated nature of the area and whether an outdoor dining establishment was realistic and wondered about the applicant's true intentions about the site. Given the lack of publicly owned land as well as the lack of green space in the surrounding area, there was concern that future disposition of the lot after demapping would not be in the public interest. The Land Use and Housing Committee voted to disapprove the application.

(**Motion** made by Danielle Brecker and seconded by Diana Kichler) to disapprove the application.

Motion carried: The motion carried with (26) twenty-six in favor of the motion (6) six opposed and (0) no abstentions.

3:31:05 Reilly Owens, Transportation Committee provided the following update:

- Announced we passed a resolution, supporting \$5 CitiBike for high school and CUNY student students, age 16 and over.
- The next Transportation committee meeting falls on Election Day, so we're moving it back one week to the 12th of November.

3:31:43 A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:
MA Gurrado

Reviewed/Revised and approved for distribution by:

X Anatole Ashraf, Chairperson, CB 2

X Ryan Smith, Secretary, CB 2

X Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager, CB 2

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