



Donovan Richards  
Queens Borough President

## Community Board No. 2

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Lisa Deller

Chairperson

Debra Markell Kleinert

District Manager

**March 4, 2021**

### **Community Board 2 Meeting Minutes**

**This meeting was teleconferenced on Zoom**

#### **Board Members – Present**

Amparo Abel-Bey  
Czarinna Andres  
Anatole Ashraf  
Diane Ballek  
Thalia (Karesia) Batan  
Nicholas Berkowitz  
Sandra Bigitschke  
Tannia Chavez  
Osman Chowdhury  
Stephen Cooper  
Warren Davis  
Jake DeGroot  
Lisa Deller  
Sally Frank  
Morry Galonoy  
William Garrett  
Dr. Rosamond Gianutsos  
Kenneth Greenberg  
Benjamin Guttman

Christine Hunter  
Sheila Lewandowski  
Kristen McGowan  
Taina McShane  
Thomas Mituzas  
Patrick O'Brien  
Clara Oza  
Bianca Ozeri  
Elliot Park  
Stephen Raga  
Norberto Saldana  
Lauren Springer  
Mary Torres  
Rebecca Trent  
John Vaichunas  
Adrienne Verrilli  
Julie Won  
Frank Wu

#### **Board Members – Absent**

Bessie Cassaro  
Mohammed Choudhury Jewel  
Badrun Khan  
Jordan Levine  
Dominic Lippolis

Dorothy Morehead  
Patrick Murray  
Regina Shanley  
Anthony Tudela

*"Serving the Communities of Long Island City, Sunnyside, Woodside, and Maspeth"*

### **Community Board 2 Staff**

Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager  
MaryAnn Gurrado

### **Department of City Planning**

Teal Delys

### **108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct**

Captain Levonda Wise, Commanding Officer, 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct  
Detective Louis Diaz, 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct

### **Elected Officials/Representatives**

Honorable Carolyn Maloney, US Congresswoman  
Honorable Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, NY State Assembly Member  
Jack Bernatovicz, Representing Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer  
Ben Geremia, Representing Council Member Robert Holden  
Joe Nocerino, Representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards  
Daniel Bonthius, Representing Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Victoria Leahy, Representing NY State Assembly Member Brian Barnwell  
Elaine Fan, Representing NY City Comptroller Scott Stringer  
Jessica Schabowski, Representing the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit

### **Guests**

Kenneth Adams, President, LaGuardia Community College  
Claudia Chan, LaGuardia Community College  
Judy Zangwill, Executive Director, Sunnyside Community Services  
Gloria Lopez, Sunnyside Community Services Member

Ms. Deller welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced the meeting was being teleconferenced.

Ms. Deller recognized Women's History Month.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Deller welcomed the following individuals:

### **Daniel Bonthius, Representing Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**

Mr. Bonthius provided the following update:

- Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez held a virtual town hall meeting on February 9, 2021 and was joined by reps from the City and the State to discuss COVID-19 vaccines and their roll outs.

- Anyone interested in viewing the recording and previous town calls can visit their You Tube page @repaoc.
- The next Town Hall will be held the last week of March. Notifications go out through their mailing list and Mr. Bonthius encourage everyone to sign up for these notifications.
- Provided an update on President Biden's America Recovery Plan which the House passed. This legislation extends much of the existing COVID-19 Relief as well as including \$1,400 stimulus checks and \$15.00 minimum wage phased in over 5 years. This now heads to the Senate for their consideration, though there is a high likelihood that the \$15.00 minimum wage will be stripped out due to the parliamentarian recommendation. The expectation is that the final plan will be passed in the next week or so.
- The House is expected to pass the Justice and Policing Act, a bill to fundamentally transform policing in America as it addresses systemic racism to curb police brutality and save lives.
- Provided an update on the HR1 For the People Act, which will expand Americans' access to the ballot box. Reduce the influence of big money in politics, strengthen ethics rules for public servants and implement other anti-corruption measures.
- On February 18, 2021, the Congresswoman participated in the House Financial Services Committee Hearing on the January Game Stop trading frenzy when retail investors clashed with short sellers to drive up the price of Game Stop stock. The video can be found on their you tube page.
- The Congresswoman's office continues to assist constituents with federal case work and the staff continue to work from home.
- They are accepting cases on their website at [www.ocado-cortez.house.gov](http://www.ocado-cortez.house.gov) or over the phone at (718) 662-5970.
- Announced there is a two-week window open exclusively for businesses with 20 or fewer employees to apply for a PPP loan. Business owners can search for Small Business Administration approved lenders and find directions for applying for loans at the SBS website.
- Additionally, SBA is working expeditiously to open applications for the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant. This is an emergency assistance grant for eligible venues affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Announced their office is going to hire a Wounded Warrior Fellow, a fellowship program that will fund a Veteran for a two-year period with their team. The position pays \$52,000 with benefits and will be based in their district office in Queens and the Bronx. The fellow will join their team as a case worker and field representative. There is a list of eligibility requirements and if anyone knows of any Veterans who may be interested to contact their office.
- Announced the Congressional Art Competition, a nationwide art competition hosted by the Congressional Art Institute. This is open to high schoolers. Winners will be displayed in the Hall of the Capital Building.

Mr. Bonthius entertained questions.

#### **Honorable Carolyn Maloney, US Congresswoman**

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney provided the following update:

- Thanked Lisa Deller and all of CB 2 for the invitation to speak at the meeting.

- Congresswoman Maloney stated she looks forward to the presentation by the new President, LaGuardia Community College Kenneth Adams and the 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct.
- She was reading that there has been a 75% spike in shootings across the city.
- Announced that it is Women's History Month and this year they passed the National Woman's History Museum, which is part of the Smithsonian. She worked on this Bill for many years. It has been approved with a not a solid appropriation but a recommendation of \$250 million from the federal government to be matched with private funds.
- Congresswoman Maloney stated her number one priority is getting vaccines produced and distributed. Announced that she joined Mayor de Blasio for the opening of Citi Field which is open 24 hours a day 7 days a week, however there are not enough doses.
- Announced that President Biden has brought it into a more centralized way and that they are administering nearly 2 million doses per day. It was announced that the Pharmaceutical company Merck will be manufacturing Johnson and Johnson's single dose vaccine along with Moderna and the Pfizer vaccine.
- Congresswoman Maloney announced that she and Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have joined hands and are reaching out to the Mayor's Office to designate some of our Senior Center Facility sites as vaccine sites bringing it into the community.
- Provided an update on the American Rescue Plan which passed the House and now it is in the Senate.
- Congresswoman Maloney reported that this week they passed the HR1 Bill, For the People Act.
- Discussed the Mail Tracking Act.
- Provided an update and stated they passed the George Floyd Justice and Policing Act.
- Provided an update on the dilapidated Western Queens Sea Wall.
- Congresswoman Maloney is putting a request in for a subway stop on the Queens connector.
- Anyone with any questions or concerns may contact her office at (212) 860-0606 or email [ny12urgent@mail.house.gov](mailto:ny12urgent@mail.house.gov).
- Discussed the need for senior housing and is working with Hanac to build another affordable senior housing on 31<sup>st</sup> Street.
- She stated Public Land should serve public purposes.

Sheila Lewandowski thanked Congresswoman Maloney for championing the stop and stands with her on the public land for public use and many other things. She recognized that Congresswoman Maloney n is in attendance for Women's History Month as well as the first woman Captain of the 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct.

Ms. Lewandowski asked about Dawn Act and WPA Program as part of the nation's recovery and asked if this is something that has passed by the Congresswoman's desk and asked if this is something the Congresswoman would stand behind and support.

In response, Congresswoman Maloney discussed Gig workers who are often musicians and artists. They are working by themselves and were not covered under unemployment insurance and now they have them covered, as well as the Stages as part of the COVID package. Nothing has been like COVID and we all have to wear our masks and be doubly careful as the numbers are going up in New York and have jumped about 24%. There are still COVID problems. We are in a race against the virus and the virus is

winning and is now mutating into dangerous forms. We have to get the vaccine in front of the mutations and out in front. Our number one job is to get people vaccinated.

Dr. Gianutsos discussed the Long Island Railroad station in Queens and that it is critical to have the fair on the LIRR be the same as the subway fare with free transfers from the LIRR local stops to buses and subways. She stated that people have expressed how overburdened the #7 line is. For people that are in Woodside, if they could take one hop on the LIRR as the same fair as they pay on the subway, we could create more capacity on the #7 line. She asked if there is anything her office can do.

Carolyn Maloney stated she would like to look at this and study it and that there have been some major improvements between 63<sup>rd</sup> Street and Queensbridge as they did not have a connection there and that subway was built.

Ms. Deller stated that Judy Zangwill is in attendance along with one of the members of the Senior Center. The issue of not being able to get vaccinations into our neighborhoods directly to seniors and people who really need the vaccine has been mismanaged and is a problem and requested the Congresswoman stay and hear the concerns of these individuals. Congresswoman Maloney stated that she and Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have teamed up to go to the senior centers, where and vaccinate them where they are. However, she reported that we do not have the doses and we have to get the production and infrastructure. She discussed the possibility of a van.

Morry Galonoy discussed the following:

- Thanked the Congresswoman for her work on HR1.
- Requested consideration for LGBTQ friendly senior housing and that it is important to get this in Queens.
- Discussed the anti-Asian hate that is going on and hopes this can be addressed.
- Discussed the issue of data rights and surveillance capitalism, as it is an important issue.

Congresswoman Maloney discussed the issue of data rights. She reported that she passed the Equality Bill for LGBTQ to ban discrimination in employment and housing. Congresswoman Maloney stated that they passed three landmark bills this week.

#### **Honorable Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, NY State Assembly Member**

Assembly Member Gonzalez-Rojas provided the following update:

- Announced Tiffany Hurtado is on the meeting who would be sharing information.
- Hardship Forms for Housing are still available and can still be filled out and submitted before May 1, 2021.
- Announced the Queens Small Business Grant from the New York City Economic Development Corporation in partnership with the Queens Chamber of Commerce.
- Announced that she held her first virtual town hall on COVID.
- Announced that she worked with Assembly Member Rosenthal to send a letter to Governor Cuomo with 30 plus of their colleagues to urge that food pantry workers, food bank workers and grab and go sites and volunteers are included in Phase 1 B of the Vaccine.

- Sponsored a Bill that all schools K thru 12 have a fulltime social worker and psychologist on staff as mental health is very critical.
- Announced that she has co-sponsored 64 bills ranging from health care to criminal justice to nursing home protections.
- Currently working on the repealing the Governor's Emergency Powers, extended powers are being removed so the legislature can act as a co-equal branch.
- Discussed a Bill that relates to suspending rent payments on certain tenants due to the state of State of Emergency Declaration.
- Announced they have PPE and hand sanitizer in her office. They are not taking walk-ins but if anyone has any issues, to contact their office and they will come outside to bring them the PPE and hand sanitizer.
- Conducted a Paper Shredding event in the community and that she will be planning more throughout the year.

Assemblywoman Gonzalez-Rojas entertained questions.

**Victoria Leahy, Representing Assembly Member Brian Barnwell**

Ms. Leahy provided the following update:

- Applications for Property Tax Exemptions are coming up and will be available through March 15, 2021.
- Legislation is going to Budget Negotiations.
- Call their office for any assistance or concerns.

In response to a question by Jake DeGroot, Ms. Leahy stated that the Assembly Member is in full support of the independent investigation and revoking the Governors powers during COVID. He has not made a call or demand for the Governor to resign, however if he does sign onto the letter, he will make a public statement.

Sheila Lewandowski discussed a bill that just passed and was put forth by Senator Ramos and Senator Gianaris to put a fix on the shared work benefits. She stated that it is a tweak and oversight that affects thousands of employees and we will need assistance from the assembly side.

**Jack Bernatovicz, Representing Council Member Van Bramer**

Mr. Bernatovicz provided the following update:

- Like Congresswoman Maloney mentioned, Neighborhoods in CB2 are still seeing high COVID-19 positivity rates, with rates of 7.3% in Woodside. Remember to keep social distancing, wear your masks, get tested, and get vaccinated when eligible.
- Monday, March 1st, marked the official beginning of Open Culture, with the application for now live! Cultural venues, arts organizations, and artists can apply for permits for free, donation based, and/or ticketed arts & cultural programs, events, and rehearsals in more than 100 streets across the City. Although culture never truly closed, this community has been without space to perform and put on ticketed events for a year, and now through Open Culture our streets will host dance, comedy, music, circus arts, song, and performance. I will add a link in the chat to learn more about the program and to apply.



- Last week the Council Member toured the construction of the new community spaces at Hunters Point South along with the Hunters Point Park Conservancy and the Newtown Creek Alliance, to check out the new community boathouse and Flux Factory's new gallery space.
- This week CM Van Bramer wrote a letter to the Mayor calling for a stronger vaccine distribution program that works closely with the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that understand the needs of their neighbors so well. The letter highlights the need to prioritize our most vulnerable, specifically black, and brown communities, that have seen lower vaccination rates. This is an effort to increase the number of vaccine sites across the City and creating more access to the vaccine in CB2.
- Also, last week Council Member Van Bramer recognized black leaders across District 26 with our 11th annual Black History Month Celebration. Honoring Miles "Hollyhood" Casso from Queensbridge, Woodside based arts advocate Kat Bloomfield, Sunnyside author Lavelle Porter, and LIC business owner Kafia Saxe. Also, we would like to thank the students and staff of PS111 for performing & helping us celebrate.
- Wished all a Happy Women's History Month.

Mr. Bernatovicz entertained questions.

**Ben Geremia, Representing Council Member Robert Holden**

Mr. Geremia provided the following update:

- Council Member Holden wishes everyone well during these difficult times.
- Council Member Holden is working hard during the pandemic working on behalf of the constituents of the 30<sup>th</sup> Council District.
- Call their office at (718) 366-3900 or email: [district30@council.nyc.gov](mailto:district30@council.nyc.gov).
- Council Member Holden thanked all for their volunteerism and service to the community.
- Recently Council Member Holden introduced a bill together with Council Speaker Corey Johnson and Council Members Mark Gjonaj and Vanessa Gibson which would require to offer small businesses a warning and opportunity to cure a violation instead of issuing a fine. This comes because of several businesses throughout the City receiving thousands of dollars of fines for minor violations. Especially during these difficult times for all including our small businesses, Council Member Holden believes government should be helpful and not automatically issue thousands of dollars in fines. Our many elected officials like to talk about helping small businesses, however bills like this provide real tangible relief that local merchants will feel in their wallets.
- Recently, Council Member Holden's Bill Intro 2044 passed in the City Council and is now on the Mayor's desk to sign. It would extend the Awnings Act of 2019 otherwise known as Local Law 28 which would extend the moratorium on awning enforcement for two years. It would also extend DOB's temporary Assistance Program which assists small businesses in navigating the bureaucratic process of legalizing the store awnings for two years. It discounts the permit fees for installation of awnings 100%, meaning business owners would not have to pay anything for

permits to legalize their signage. Council Member Holden believes small businesses are the life blood of our community and our local economy and city government should be nurturing not be adversarial towards them.

- With the Johnson and Johnson single dose vaccine, the city is using it along with the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. As Chair of the Technology Committee in the City Council, Council Member Holden oversees the NYC Department of Information and Technology, (DOITT). He held two hearings in the Council on the subject of vaccines and speaks regularly with DOITT Commissioner Jessica Tish on the vaccine portal. Commissioner Tish recently unveiled an update on the vaccine portal, [vaccinefinder.nyc.gov](https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov) based on Council Member Holden's feedback. More needs to be done on testing and for ADA website accessibility for those who need it. They will continue to work on this effort as more vaccine supply comes in and we begin vaccinating the general population.
- The Council Member's Office is still partnering with Wildcat and the greater Ridgewood Restoration Corporation to remove graffiti. Please reach out to their office if anyone needs assistance with any locations.
- Mr. Geremia thanked all for their service to the community.

**Ms. Deller welcomed Captain Lavonda Wise, 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct**

- Captain Wise introduced herself and announced that Detective Diaz, Community Affairs was in attendance with her.
- Captain Wise stated that it is an honor to be designated the Commanding Officer of the 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct. The designation came about on December 9, 2020 and that she took over for Deputy Inspector Gibbs.
- She discussed the crime stats in the 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct and reported that we ended 2020 with 3.2% up in major categories (robbery, burglaries grand larceny and GLA incidents). However, due to the hard work of the men and women of the 108<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct and having a close partnership with the community, there has been a steady decline. For the 28-day period, major crimes have decreased by 27% in all categories. Shooting incidents are down by 33%, while they are up citywide, we are not seeing this increase in Patrol Borough Queens North.
- Captain Wise has been on the job for approximately 18 years and has been a Captain for over 6 years. Captain Wise provided information about the locations she has worked in.
- Captain Wise stated she looks forward to working with everyone and wished all a happy new year.

Captain Wise entertained questions.

Stephen Cooper asked if they have seen any clearance of the cases after they have gone to the courthouse. Captain Wise stated that cases have been getting cleared in the court.

Ms. Deller thanked Captain Wise and asked if she would come back to provide periodic updates.

**Judy Zangwill, Executive Director, Sunnyside Community Services**

Ms. Zangwill provided the following update:

- Announced Sunnyside Community Services will be hosting a blood drive on March 18, 2021 from 9 am to 3 pm.



- Announced that Sunnyside Community Services has requested to be a vaccination hub. They have been advocating and there is very little traction. There is increased frustration in accessing appointments for their seniors.
- Ms. Zangwill introduced Gloria Lopez, Sunnyside Community Services member who discussed the importance of having a vaccine site at the Senior Center.

Ms. Deller stated this is a critical problem and asked for assistance from the elected officials.

**Joe Nocerino, Representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards**

Mr. Nocerino provided the following update:

- Thanked Congresswoman Maloney.
- Mr. Nocerino brings regards from the Queens Borough President.
- Mr. Nocerino encouraged everyone to listen to the State of the Borough Address by Queens Borough President Donovan Richards.

**Elaine Fan, Representing NYC Comptroller, Scott Stringer**

Ms. Fan provided the following update:

- Reported that on March 2, 2021, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer testified before the NYC Council Committee on the Finance Fiscal Year 2022 Preliminary Budget Hearing. Comptroller Stringer released a report on the Mayor's FY 2022 Budget and Financial Plan from FY 2021 to 2025.

**Jessica Schabowski, Representing the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs**

Ms. Schabowski provided the following update:

- Reported that last week was the best week with 338,00 vaccinations administered and they do have the capacity to do one half million vaccinations per week. We have the infrastructure, there are plenty of people who want the vaccine and staffing, except we do not have the supply.
- Announced the Johnson and Johnson has been approved for administration.
- They continue to advocate for people to take any of the vaccines as soon as they can.
- They Mayor has been advocating for the Federal government to use the Federal Defense Production Act to get all the pharmaceutical companies in the US involved with vaccine production. Merck will be cooperating with Johnson and Johnson to expand their production capacity so we can get more vaccines.
- Announced they are very concerned on how they can get the Javitz Site which is serving a lot of people that don't come from NYC. They keep asking the state government to provide us with our fair share of the vaccine. We have about 45% of the state's vaccine sent to NYC and we are performing 53% of the vaccinations and if we got our fair share from the state allotment, we would be administering at least 25,000 more vaccinations per week.
- Announced they are encouraging folks to go on NYC.gov vaccine finder to find their sites or call 1-877 VAX for NYC to make appointments.
- They continue to monitor for variants, testing for more variants and tracking the spread and for new ones that may emerge in the future.

- Announced they are reaching homebound constituents with the approval of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine which has less of a barrier to administration. They are identifying homebound constituents through home care agencies, home delivered meal programs and senior adult providers. They are working with the FDNY to administer vaccines to those who are homebound.

Ms. Schabowski entertained questions.

In response to information Ms. Lewandowski reported on, Ms. Schabowski provided information about the Test and Trace Take Care Program. If individuals want to isolate in a hotel, if they don't have the space to do so, this program will help them with car service, medical and food services. If they want to stay home, they will be sent a box with supplies such as face masks and thermometers that will help them to monitor their symptoms and they will be checked in on.

Stephen Cooper asked about vaccine prioritization for teachers. Ms. Schabowski stated they were prioritizing teachers before school reopened. They have not announced when high schools will reopen but it has been a priority group in NYC.

Ms. Deller requested that she take back our request that Sunnyside Community Services be designated as a vaccine site. Ms. Schabowski reported they do have the request, however right now the sites they are building out are prioritized by indoor buildings of at least 5,000 square feet, ADA accessible and are easily accessed by public transportation and available for the next 4 to 6 months. They are rolling out pop up sites with houses of worship and this is a work in progress as we get more supplies.

Ms. Deller welcomed Kenneth Adams, President of LaGuardia Community College along with Claudia Chan, LaGuardia Community College.

#### **Kenneth Adams, President, LaGuardia Community College**

Mr. Adams provided the following update:

- Thanked Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney for her report and for her work.
- Just celebrated his 6-month anniversary.
- Was at CUNY before LaGuardia as a Dean at Bronx Community College,
- Saturday will be the first day of classes for the Spring 2021 semester. There are 11,000 students enrolling for this semester, this number is down, actually enrollment across CUNY is down for the spring and community colleges in particular which is not what they expect. Often in an economic downturn, community colleges are the places people turn to go back to school to earn a degree or earn credentials to get back into the workspace. Because of the economic consequences of COVID, we have seen this across the country, nationally community college enrollment is down.
- The 11,000 students enrolling are mostly students that are continuing, and their retention rate and the students are enduring this and doing well.
- Discussed a LaGuardia students survey taken in December which rated their faculty high. The Faculty have stepped up in an unbelievable way and they have done very well at running their 62 degree programs, supporting students through COVID, doing this on line and, helping their students to continue to advance their associate degrees and transfers to schools in the CUNY system.

- Enrollment is down but their faculty and staff are doing very well. Students continue to do well.
- There are about 2,000 in Adult and Continuing Education program. There is a tuition and fee to pay because there is no financial aid unless you are in a degree program.
- LaGuardia has a Foundation and Mr. Adams asked them why they don't set up a fund for non-college workforce students that want to go to continuing education programs. They agreed to do this and set a fundraising target of a half million dollars, and they have 390,000 raised already.
- Mr. Adams asked everyone to put the word out about this program. Anyone who is interested can visit their website at <https://www.laguardia.edu> to get more information.
- Discussed the planning for the Fall semester. Students prefer in person and hybrid classes. Many programs require in person instruction and many want to get back to face to face instruction.
- Mr. Adams reported that many great things happening at LaGuardia thanks to the wonderful faculty and staff and volunteers on their foundation who continue to raise money to provide support for their students.
- Will plan to come back to bring updates about initiatives that will be taking place.

Mr. Adams entertained questions.

Ms. Deller asked about opportunities for workforce development programs and collaboration with local businesses and asked about the relationships that LaGuardia has and what they are doing around union programs.

Mr. Adams stated LaGuardia has several business assistance programs that are funded by other entities, not CUNY. Small Business Assistance Center, P-Tech, federally funding technical assistance center, and several other programs that are part of ACE, small business owners in Queens come for training, etc. They need to do a better job promoting these services across the borough and City and that they have a good set of programs. Mr. Adams stated that he is on the Board of the LIC Partnership and has been involved with Lis Lusskin, LIC Partnership on the push to bring Life Sciences businesses to LIC. He is also active on the Queens Chamber of Commerce. Wants to see LaGuardia do it in collaboration with Queens organizations that are serving the small business community.

LaGuardia was founded 50 years ago, and it is their anniversary. Mr. Adams discussed the mission for LaGuardia It had an educational mission and it had a community service mission founded to serve the LIC area.

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney stated she will take these ideas back to Congress and thanked Mr. Adams for his presentation and congratulated him on his appointment and looks forward to working with him and she hopes to have some concrete answers to some of the ideas he discussed on career education and its funding.

Nick Berkowitz asked about what he is doing to protect the vulnerable adjuncts professors that work at the institution.

Mr. Adams stated they are doing everything they can and discussed the solution they are working on. Discussed the state's aid and reduction from the funding from the city, which has been cut due to the crisis and the loss of enrollment.

Antole Ashraf stated we have thought of enlisting interns from LaGuardia Community College.

Mr. Adams thanked everyone for the opportunity to introduce himself and forward to coming back to future meetings, keeping in touch, and building on the strong relationship between LaGuardia and the Community Board.

A discussion took place about how to save comments in the chat. In response to a question, by Stephen Cooper, Jake DeGroot stated that as a user in Zoom, if you want to save it yourself, at the bottom where you would type a message in the chat, tap on the three dots and hit save chat. You may want to do it toward the end of the meeting as it will save everything from that given moment. It is also possible for the meeting host to download the chat which can be included with the minutes. Mr. DeGroot stated he would prefer to have the chat included in the meeting minutes in the future.

Mr. Deller stated transition to remote meetings has been a challenge but we have done a lot of work and we have a tremendous Tech Committee and if we could get an intern to work with our Tech Committee, they are a brilliant group. We are trying to improve our meeting platform and our website development and social media presence, we are evolving.

#### **Attendance**

Board Members Present – 37

Board Members Absent – 9

Quorum – Yes

#### **Approval of the February 4, 2021 CB 2 Meeting Minutes**

Sheila Lewandowski made a motion and it was seconded by Tom Mituzas to approve the February 4, 2021 Community Board 2 Meeting Minutes. All were in favor of the motion with none opposed and no abstentions.

Steven Raga requested the public comments be included in the minutes.

Ms. Lewandowski reported she remembers when we used to have hundreds of speakers and we were looking for a way to summarize and it may be something we never followed up on.

#### **Chairperson's Report**

Ms. Deller provided the following update:

- Announced it was Woman's History Month and congratulated everyone on the board and the women who serve on this community board who sacrifice their volunteer time for serving our community. It is the most local and grass roots of community engagement and for everyone who walks down the street who reports a complaint, this is the work that we do on the community board. For all the men and women on the board, she wishes to acknowledge all the work we do together.
- Announced that Jay Valgora, Studio V was selected as the architectural firm for the project adjacent to the ramps, near Sculpture Center, the off ramp from the Bridge. There has been a plan to build a park there. Ms. Deller stated she has participated in two visioning sessions, along with Frank Wu.
- CB 2 attended Borough President Donovan Richards Court Square Tour with Transportation Committee Co-Chair Tom Mituzas and Frank Wu, and DOT. Ms. Deller thanked them for participating on the tour.

- CB 2 attended Queens Borough President Donovan Richards State of the Borough Address on March 3, 2021. She encouraged everyone to listen to it as there was a conversation about Community Board's and the BP's goals to increase diversity, member conduct and updating by-laws.
- Ms. Deller announced that the Queens Borough President's Office will be offering model by-laws and that we have been talking a very long time. Sheila Lewandowski was going to chair the by-laws amendment committee, however as we were about to take off and do this, we will be getting instructions from the BP's Office on what we will be advised to do.
- Provided an update on the meeting with the Council Member on the Blissville flagpole. Ms. Deller recognized the efforts of Tom Mituzas and Warren Davis who are very active on this.
- Provided an update on the work the Tech Committee and CB 2 Staff concerning the progress with the Calendar on the CB 2 Website. Ms. Deller thanked Anatole Ashraf and Jake DeGroot for the tutorial with the CB 2 Staff on how to use the google calendars and how this will be integrated into the website.
- Announced that City Harvest will be planning to move to WB Mason site on 43<sup>rd</sup> Street, near Lou Lodati playground. Ms. Deller reported that she has a call planned with them.
- The next Land Use Committee will take place on March 17, 2021 at 6:30 pm. Annie Levers, Office of Strategic Initiative will do a presentation on the Comprehensive Planning Proposed Legislation.
- Announced 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue has been put off and will be certified in April.
- Ms. Deller reminded everyone to change their smoke alarm batteries and to move the clock ahead one hour on March 14, 2021.
- Ms. Deller wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day.
- Ms. Deller reported that Morry Galanoy provided information about NY City Mesh. It is Network of Internet Service Provider dishes on buildings around a geographic area that connect with each other. NYC Mesh will be invited to attend the next CB 2 Meeting to discuss this program.
- The next Community Board 2 meeting, originally scheduled for April 1, 2021 has been changed to take place on April 8, 2021 as the first Thursday of the month is Holy Thursday.

#### **District Manager's Report**

Ms. Markell Kleinert provided the following update:

- Attended Queens Borough President Donovan Richards tour of Court Square with Tom Mituzas and Frank Wu, and DOT.
- Ms. Markell Kleinert thanked the Tech Committee for the training they provided.
- Working to get our newsletter live on the website.

Morry Galanoy provided an update on the St. Pat's for All Virtual Event which will take place on Sunday, March 7, 2021 at 2:00 pm. For more information at: [www.stpatsforall.org](http://www.stpatsforall.org).

#### **Teal, Delys, Department of City Planning Report**

Ms. Delys provided the following update:

Upcoming ULURP Projects:



- 13 story mixed use building at 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue.
- Teamsters Building enlargement at 48-18 Van Dam Street
- Both to Certify on April 5, 2021.
- Provided notice on two zoning text amendments:
  - Zoning for Accessibility this would have developers be required to work with MTA to identify needed space for accessibility improvements and these would be around new buildings that are next to a station.
  - The other part of the amendment is that in the highest density area of the City near subways and railroad stations there would be a zoning bonus for developers who provide improvements to subway stations.
  - Zoning Text Amendment for the Citywide Hotel Special Permit. This would require the City Planning Commission approval for new and enlarged hotels in commercial mixed use and paired manufacturing and residential districts.
  - They will be providing more information on these in the future and will be referred to the Community Boards in the coming months.

Sheila Lewandowski asked about the Teamsters building and the parking based on the expectation of the classrooms and the workers and asked if it was kept the same. Ms. Delys said she will follow up Scott who is the manager on this project.

Sheila Lewandowski asked about the giveback for subways station improvements since we do not want to have a repeat of what we had on the Skyline building. A concern we brought up was there was no community input on where the station would be located and accessibility to the public space and where the entrances would be. We should have some participation in the planning and greater oversight. We want to make sure that community input is a part of this. Ms. Delys stated she will let the team know once they have more information.

Christine Hunter asked about what the rationale is for text amendment for hotels and why this is a priority when hotels are drastically underutilized in certain areas and why this is a priority. Ms. Delys stated it is more about the regulation of hotels and how appropriate they are for the districts they may be coming into. It is similar to the special permit that is already required except that the area where the special permit is being utilized is citywide instead of just in manufacturing districts. It is to further analyze where hotels are being located and how they could benefit or not benefit the community

Tom Mituzas stated that in the 2018 zoning text amendment that was introduced, it did not include hotels in LIC and those in manufacturing district. He asked do we know if in this one, are there going to be areas exempt from the text amendment. The response was there will not be any areas that will be exempt from the text amendment. It will be specifically utilized for areas where hotels could be located based on the existing zoning regulations. They are not allowed everywhere, are only allowed in certain districts, this expands the special permit that was already being utilized for manufacturing districts to cover a broader area.

Ms. Delys stated they will present in April.

Ms. Deller asked if she would go back to figure out how to stage these as it would be difficult to host all of them at one time.

## **Arts & Cultural Committee Meeting**

Kenny Greenberg provided the following update:

- Nat Row from Flux Factory attended and there is detailed information in the minutes. They are purchasing their present Dutch Kills space with city funding, but they are also taking on a space in Hunters Point South which they hope to open this summer. Went through a lot of detail about involvement with the community and what their vision is. Not a large space and will not be used the same as the way Dutch Kills space and will be used as an exhibition space and want to have a cultural component and see how it takes on a Hunters Point flavor.
- Open Culture Applications are now open, and Jack Bernatovicz will be joining the Arts and Cultural Committee on Tuesday to walk through the application process.

Karesia Batan provided the following update:

- Percent for Art and the Department of Consumer Affairs will be doing a presentation.
- Requested they come so there can be direct and easy access on how to navigate the application process and strengthen their relationship with city agencies like the DCA and Percent for Art, so we can get more artists more public work in our shared spaces.
- Reported that she is working with Junk Lovers and Materials for the Arts to continue to pursue the little libraries project and it is still ongoing.
- Ms. Batan asked if anyone has any metal or wooden boxes to let the committee know, they would be happy to turn them into a free library.
- Announced the CB 2 Arts and Events Calendar will be up soon and there will be a slew of diverse cultural and holiday celebrations so we can have more inclusive representations that are celebrated in the district and in Queens.
- Reported that she met with Mare Norstrom Elements about the 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue project. They have a concrete and affordable and trying to connect them with organizations based in the district, especially those that lost their space during COVID and it is an ongoing conversation.

Stephen Cooper requested the Arts & Cultural Agenda be sent to as many artists as possible.

## **Land Use Committee**

Ms. Deller provided the following update:

- Ms. Deller reported that Churches United for Fair Housing attended the Land Use Committee Meeting. Max Caballo provided a presentation about his organization. He discussed legislation Bill 1572 which is being championed by the Public Advocate. The bill would require a racial disparity report for certain Land Use Applications with a minimum amount of adjacent blocks and floor area. The report must include an analysis of demographic, social, economic, housing conditions, trends and identifications of potential measures that may identify any disparity or displacement risk. It is legislation that would overlay and integrate a racial equity lens around ULURP ad approval going through this process as it is important to keep an eye on and track.

Christine Hunter stated that to understand the proposed legislation, this analysis of the racial disparity or racial impact of a given zoning change, would not be in the environmental analysis that is required

under the ULURP Process, it would be a separate report. She guesses it would be on the applicant to come up with someone with credentials to provide this type of analysis. She stated that we were told that Council Member Van Bramer is in support of this legislation. In the case of 62-04 Roosevelt Avenue it would give a different lens into the effects of the development

- Ms. Deller reported the City Planning Commission voted in favor of the Phipps project and it will go to the City Council.
- Ms. Deller reported there was supposed to be a Tenant's Association Meeting on February 19, 2021 which was cancelled. They are working on rescheduling this meeting. They have been providing updates on the Improvement Plan.

#### **City Services & Public Safety Committee**

Patrick O'Brien provided the following update:

- Announced the next meeting of the City Services & Public Safety Committee will take place on March 10, 2021.
- Mr. O'Brien announced that he will not be reapplying for another term for Board Membership of CB 2 and read a statement recounting his reasons for stepping down at this time.

Ms. Deller thanked Mr. O'Brien and stated we joined the Board the same year and were Land Use members and Committee Chairs and we know the community board work. Ms. Deller urged Mr. O'Brien to hang in there with all of us to continue to share what he believes the work of the board is.

Stephen Cooper thanked Pat O'Brien for his service and urged the Board Members to hear what Mr. O'Brien is trying to say without getting offended, as he does not mean to offend anyone and new blood must continue to take over as it would get stale. We are here for one reason alone and that is to serve the community. We should not be here for political stepping-stones. He thanked Mr. O'Brien for many years of service to CB 2. Mr. Cooper stated we will have a big vacuum that will have to be filled.

Ms. Deller announced the following individuals will be leaving the Board:

- Diane Ballek
- Dorothy Morehead
- Pat Murray
- Bessie Cassaro

Ms. Deller stated part of the discussion was part of the transition to the virtual platform. These changes are dramatic and it's a change and we want to hold dear what is important about the Community Board and allow it to change at the same time.

Ms. Deller thanked everyone for their service.

Sheila Lewandowski thanked Mr. O'Brien for his service.

#### **Transportation Committee**

Tom Mituzas provided the following update:

- DOT provided a DOT Enhancements proposed to the Court Square area.

- Attended several workshops by DOT that were very well done.
- Attended a tour with Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Frank Wu, and Debbie Markell Kleinert.
- The Committee stopped short of providing a letter of support at this time as some of the items that were important to the community were not incorporated in the presentation to the Transportation Committee including crosswalks, Thomson Avenue being left out. The Committee asked DOT to return once they have a complete project for them to review. They felt providing a Letter of support at this time would not honor the requests by the community at the workshop and during the tour.
- Planned area includes a very large luxury residential tower that is an entire block with commercial business at the base on both sides of the street. DOT proposes keeping one small loading dock at the rear of the luxury residential tower and adding a loading zone up. The Committee wants to see what loading is being made available to commercial businesses since all metered parking is proposed to be taken away. We suggested converting some of the metered parking to loading zones for the local businesses. DOT did indicate that they were working on other plans and the Committee looks forward to reviewing these plans as part of the proposal
- Veterans Memorial in Blissville – this has existed for 100 years and was erected following World War 1 and whose flagpole was destroyed during Hurricane Sandy. We have been pursuing its restoration ever since and have not been successful in getting it restored. DOT offers they will not restore the Veterans Memorial and that DOT does not do flagpoles. Blissville residents have been overlooked and forsaken by NYC these last 8 years while other areas in our district have received millions to renovate Parks and Memorials. Our residents only see disrespect of our Blissville LIC Veterans.
- Mr. Mituzas reported that a simple solution was offered, which is to have DOT transfer the land to the Department of Parks.
- Mr. Mituzas stated just this week that the Mayor announced \$17 billion dollars to be released for construction projects including projects in New York City Parks. Transferring this land from DOT to Parks seems like a simple splendid answer to get the flagpole restored in this memorial. Mr. Mituzas is begging for assistance to restore the flagpole in the Veterans Memorial in Blissville LIC. Why the honor of Blissville Veterans is not held with the same regard as other Veteran Memorials in Queens.

### **Health Committee**

Taina McShane provided the following update:

- Thanked Mr. O'Brien for his service.
- Reported Denise Williams attended the Committee Meeting and provided an update on the largest female and family shelter in NYC. She discussed a program where you can go onto Target and throw some things into the cart and contribute.
- Announced that at the April 8, 2021 Health Committee, a group that offers SHSHT Prep for underserved kids.

Ms. Deller announced that Frank Wu is the Chairperson of the Environment Committee.

### **Environment Committee**

Frank Wu provided the following update:

- Announced that he has not had a meeting yet, however he is excited to add some energy to the Environment Committee.
- The topics will be around air quality as western Queens has seen some of the worst air quality in NYC and wants to make sure it is an open committee to see what folks want to talk about.

### **Tech Committee**

Anatol Ashraf provided the following update:

- Thanked the entire Tech Committee for being engaged.
- The Committee want to support digital and tech needs of the district.
- A meeting was held with DOITT to help improve the website and we now have a clickable zoom link on the home page.
- Working on having a live Google calendar on the page so you can go to the page and see the live calendar and see upcoming events including holidays that Karesia Batan has been working on.
- This will help us get more visibility into the community.
- Special thanks to Jake DeGroot for helping with the technical front.

Morry Galanoy provided an update on NYC Mesh, in which they build a mesh network, which is a newer technology. It competes with fiber, cable, and other internet service provider technologies. It is a 501c3 not for profit organization they have a suggested donation per month which they don't enforce. It is an affordable safe, secure, and private network. It is staffed by volunteers throughout the city. It bridges the digital divide.

NYC Mesh will attend the CB 2 Meeting in April.

### **Public Comment**

#### **Danielle Brecker**

Danielle provided information about Invest in our NY and stated that it is time to pass the Progressive Income Tax so New Yorkers pay a higher tax rate if they earn significantly more money. She urged everyone to call their state senator and assembly member to let them know you are in favor of this much needed reimagining of our tax system and you expect them to include the Invest In Our New York Act in their budget proposals.

#### **Evan O'Neil**

Mr. O'Neil, former CB 2 Member reported that he is working on advocacy and outreach for the NY City Skateboard Coalition and spoke about the lack of a skate park in western Queens. Welcomes ideas for sites and support for skate parks.

Sheila Lewandowski spoke about a site at that has become a de facto skateboard park down by the Fed Ex Building.



**Ian Clarke, NYC Skateboard Coalition**

Discussed the need for a skateboard park especially at Baby Park and that he attended visioning sessions for Baby Park as it is a skate park dessert. There are skateparks that are very successful, and this area of Queens would benefit from skate park. They have a petition with 677 signatures. Mr. Clarke provided information about what a skateboard would bring to the community. He is requesting CB 2 get behind and support a skate park at Baby Park.

**David Burgoa, Neighborhood Housing Services of Queens**

- They are located in Woodside and are operating virtually.
- Provided information about some of the services they provide, such as workforce development partnership with LaGuardia Airport as they are still hiring.
- First Time Home buying orientations.
- Having an affordable housing webinar that will help people apply through Housing Connect.
- Provide Homeowner services.

Sheila Lewandowski made a motion and it was seconded by Benjamin Guttman to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

MA Gurrado

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