



Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale
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Vincent Arcuri, Jr.
Chairperson

Gary Giordano
District Manager

Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting December 13, 2017

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Peter Comber; Deborah Cox; Patricia Crowley; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Sarah Feldman; Steven Fiedler; Patricia Grayson; Mohan Gyawali-Chhetri ; Fred T. Haller, III; Fred Hoeffler; Robert Holden; Paul A. Kerzner; John J. Killcommons; Maryann Lattanzio; Michael LoCascio; John Maier; Katherine Masi; Lydia Martinez; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Theodore M. Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; David Sands; Connie Santos; Christopher Sperrazza; Barbara Toscano; Patrick J. Trinchese

Board Members Absent

Henry Cross; Brian Dooley; Angela Giovannello; Kathleen Knight; Edward Lettau; Michael O’Kane; Kelvin Rodriguez; Carmen Santana; Catherine Sumsky; Maryanna Zero

Elected Officials

NYS Assembly Member Brian Barnwell, 30th AD
NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, 30th CD
NYC Council Member Antonio Reynoso, 34th CD and Staff Boris Santos
Dolores Capace – NYS Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli
Neil Giannelli - NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr, 15th SD
Don Capalbi – US Representative Grace Meng, 6th C.D.
Julio Salazar – US Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7th C.D.
Angel Diaz – NYS Senator Michael Gianaris, 18th SD
Alexa Arrechi – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
Alison Cummings – NYS Assembly Member Catherine T. Nolan, 37 AD
Carmela Isabella - NYS Assembly Member Michael Miller, 38th AD
Krystyna Pereyra – NYC Community Affairs Unit -Thrive NYC

Staff Present

Gary Giordano, District Manager, CB5 Queens
Laura Mulvihill and Catherine O’Leary, Community Associates - CB5Q Staff
Joseph Nocerino – Queens Borough President Melinda Katz
P.O. Charles Sadler -104th Precinct Community Affairs Unit, and P.O. Taisha Perez - Queens Borough Patrol North

GUESTS

Michael Nacmias, of Rothkrug, Rothkrug & Spector, LLP, 55 Watermill Lane, Great Neck, NY 11021
Victor Villos and Robert Dense – restaurant at 46-63 Metropolitan Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

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Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:15pm, following the Salute to the Flag. He announced the first item on the Board Agenda as:

**PUBLIC HEARING RE: BSA Cal No. 2017-294 BZ for 55-27 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood
(formerly Ridgewood Theatre)**

IN THE MATTER OF an Application to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals by Rothkrug, Rothkrug & Spector LLP, Attorneys at Law, on behalf of Theatre Building Enterprises LLC, the owner of record, for a Special Permit, pursuant to Sections 73-36 and 32-10 of the NYC Zoning Resolution, to allow a physical culture establishment/gym in portions of the first floor and Cellar at **55-27 Myrtle Avenue**, BLOCK: 3451; LOT: 7, in Ridgewood, Queens, in a C4-3A Zoning District.

On behalf of the owner of record, Michael Nacmias, of Rothkrug, Rothkrug & Spector LLP, Attorneys at Law, explained that his client is seeking a Special Permit to allow a new gym, Blink Myrtle Avenue Inc., to operate on a portion of the 1st Floor and Cellar space of this multiple story mixed-use building that is currently under development at 55-27 Myrtle Avenue, in Ridgewood. He said that this building is located on the north side of Myrtle Avenue, between Madison Street and Putnam Avenue, along the shopping corridor in Ridgewood that includes a C4-3A Zoning District.

Mr. Nacmias explained that this mixed-use development consists of a 5-story portion that fronts onto Cypress Avenue at Madison Street, and a 3-story portion that fronts onto Myrtle Avenue. An illustration of the proposed facility was on display as he spoke. He said that the approved building plans permit the construction of 50 apartments in the residential portion of this building.

Mr. Nacmias said that the new gym, Blink Myrtle Avenue Inc., would occupy a total of 14,138 sq. ft. of the interior space at this site. He said that on the first floor, the new facility will consist of an entry lobby fronting on Myrtle Avenue, the front desk, strength and equipment areas, and office areas. He said that the total number of staff at this location is estimated at 30, including management, sales personnel and front desk personnel. He explained that the staff would work in shifts, so that there would be 15 staff members on site at one time. He estimated that the gym would have approximately 5500 regular members, with patron visits of 550 to 650 per day. He said that their proposed hours of operation would be from 5:30AM to 11:00PM on Monday to Saturday, and from 7:00AM to 9:00PM on Sundays.

The Board Chairman opened the floor to questions and comments. He said that the front façade and lobby of this building were landmarked by the Landmarks Preservation Commission years ago, and should be restored in connection with the building's mixed-use development. For example, he said, the ticket booth of the former Ridgewood Theatre was removed and should be replaced. Mr. Nacmias said that he would inform the property owner.

The Board Chairman referred the matter to the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee for further consideration and review.

PUBLIC FORUM

Cecibel Montalban, Wanderers' Safety Program Assistant for Caring Kind, informed everyone about their agency's programs and services. She said the agency's mission is to create, deliver and promote comprehensive and compassionate care and support services for individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research. She said that all

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of their programs and services are provided free of charge to all of their clients. She said that they offer support groups and seminars for caregivers and provide them with information and assistance on the legal and financial aspects of caring for their family members. She also pointed out that their agency is registered with the media alert program of the NYPD, in the event that one of their clients is either lost or missing. She welcomed calls to their 24-hour helpline at (646) 744-2900. Their offices are located at 370 Lexington Avenue in Manhattan. Information packets were distributed.

Arpad Szabo, homeowner of 73-40 71 Place in Glendale, said that his next-door has been harassing his wife and children by calling them names when they're out in front of their house, and that she has repeatedly reported complaints to the City by stating that he is painting and repairing cars in his residential garage. He asked the Community Board's assistance in resolving this matter. The Board Chairman directed to speak with P.O. Charles Sadler in the back of the room about this situation.

Krystyna Pereyra, an outreach worker on the staff of Thrive NYC, announced that beginning this month, they're planning to offer an 8-hour free course in Mental Health First Aid. She said that their goal is to raise awareness about mental health issues, remove the stigma that is related to mental illness, and improve access to care. For more information, she welcomed those interested in participating in this course, or in becoming a volunteer in this effort, to go to: www.nyc.gov/ThriveNYC, or by calling their office at 1-888-NYC-WELL. Flyers were distributed.

Robert Perez, manager of a Mexican restaurant that plans to open soon at 46-63 Metropolitan Avenue in Ridgewood, said that their proposed hours of operation would be from 6AM to 4AM seven days a week. He said that they plan to occupy 1,300 square feet of space at this site, and operate a Hooter-style bar and restaurant, but only one day per week. Victor Villos and Robert Dense, partners in Mr. Pancho Corp, were also present to answer questions. The Board Chairman pointed out that Community Board 5 requests that restaurants and bars in our district close by 2AM on most nights of the week. Mr. Perez said that he would sign a stipulation agreement. He said that he has been successfully operating a bar in Corona for the past 8 years.

Peggy O'Kane requested clothing donations of underwear and blue jeans to be distributed to homeless people through St. Matthias Church's Food Panty and Soup Kitchen program. She suggested men's sizes: 32, 34 and 36, would be the best fit. She thanked everyone for their generous donations over the years that they've been in operation.

Fabrice Armand, a staff member from the Strategic Partnership Program of the NYC Dept. of Corrections, announced that the Dept. of Corrections is interested in hiring to fill lots of positions in their department in the coming year. He said that the starting salary of new uniformed personnel begins at \$44,000 and increases to \$94,000 in the next 5 years. He said that many non-uniformed positions are also available. Flyers and hand outs were distributed.

Crystal Wolfe invited everyone to attend an official book-signing ceremony for her book, **Our Invisible Neighbors**, about the crisis in homelessness in NYC, on Friday night, December 15th in St. Sebastian's Parish Center, located at 39-60 57 Street, in Woodside. She said that copies of her book are available on Amazon.com for \$20. She also announced that volunteers will assemble for Christmas caroling at the Holiday Inn Express on 55 Drive in Maspeth on Saturday, December 23rd, from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. She thanked everyone for their support and said that she is still collecting donations of toiletries to distribute to homeless people in western Queens.

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Ernie Searle, president of the Friends of the Ridgewood Library, informed everyone that this past year, their Friends group raised \$6,000 in donations for the Ridgewood branch library and received an additional matching grant of \$10,000 for their branch library. He said that, at present, there are no other Friends of the Library groups in our Board area. He said he would be happy to work with anyone interested in starting up a Friends of the Library group in their local branch library, in Glendale, Middle Village, or Maspeth. For more information, he welcomed those interested to speak with him after tonight's Board Meeting, or to attend the next meeting of the Library Services Committee.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.

The Board Chairman requested a Moment of Silence in honor of the late Board Member Lorraine Sciulli, who passed away after an extended illness this month.

Chairman Arcuri introduced the District Manager Gary Giordano, and staff members Catherine O'Leary and Laura Mulvihill. He welcomed everyone to stay after the Board Meeting is adjourned tonight to enjoy some light refreshments. He also thanked everyone for their contributions to this year's Toy Drive.

The Board Chairman pointed out that the regularly scheduled Board Meeting date in February of 2018 falls on Valentine's Day. He suggested changing the date of the Board Meeting to either the first or third week in February, which would be either February 7th or February 21st, in 2018, and asked the pleasure of the Board.

The Board Chairman invited local elected officials and their staff to address the Board.

NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley said that she was honored to have served the communities in the 30th Council District since 2009, when she was first elected to public office. She announced that Mayor Bill de Blasio is scheduled to hold a Town Hall Meeting in PS/IS 113 on 78 Avenue at 87 Street, in Glendale, starting at 7PM on Monday night, December 18th, 2017. She advised that pre-registration is required, and asked that anyone interested in attending this Town Hall Meeting to register at: QueensTownHall@cityhall.nyc.gov, or by calling (212) 788-4282. Flyers were distributed.

The Council Member reviewed a list of capital projects in her district which have either been completed, or fully funded, since she took office: a total of 6,000 new seats in public schools, including 2 new high schools, 1 new elementary school, and several school additions in her district. In addition, she was able to secure funding to rehabilitate several local parks and playgrounds, including Frank Principe Park in Maspeth, Juniper Valley Park in Middle Village, and Evergreen Park in Glendale. She pointed out that the pedestrian plaza on Myrtle Avenue at Cooper Avenue was completed earlier this year, and a second plaza is nearing completion on Myrtle Avenue at 71 Avenue, in Ridgewood. Regarding local community programs, she said that she allocated discretionary funds to support the work of Maspeth Town Hall, the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council, and local senior centers. In closing, she thanked everyone for working with her to improve the quality of life for local residents in the Board 5 area.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Joe Nocerino announced that Community Board membership applications are available on-line at www.queensbp.org. He pointed out that all Board members are required to reapply every 2 years. He reminded everyone that the application deadline is January 12, 2018. He wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season.

On behalf of U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, Julio Salazar reported that the Congresswoman introduced two new Veterans bills in the House this month, commonly known as the Heroes Act of 2017. For more information, he welcomed calls to their office at 266 Broadway, in Brooklyn, (718) 599-3651. He wished everyone Happy Holidays.

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On behalf of U.S. Representative Grace Meng, Don Capalbi announced that the bi-partisan Conference Committee in Congress has agreed today to a compromise measure on the proposed tax bill. He said that the Congresswoman worked to reduce the negative impact of the proposed tax bill on New Yorkers, by retaining \$10,000 in state and local tax deductions, in combination with mortgage interest deductions.

On behalf of State Senator Addabbo, Niel Giannelli wished every a Happy Holiday season, and a Happy New Year.

NYC Council Member Antonio Reynoso announced that the new pedestrian plaza on Wyckoff Avenue, between Myrtle Avenue and Gates Avenue, has been a welcome addition to the area, where the incidence of traffic accidents and injuries has been significantly reduced. In addition, he announced that funding has been allocated for the rehabilitation of Starr Playground, on Onderdonk Avenue in Ridgewood, where construction is slated to begin next year.

He said that over the past year, he and his staff have been working closely with local neighborhood organizations to form the Ridgewood Matters Housing Task Force. In the process, he established safeguards for tenants who are being harassed by their landlords attempting to vacate their properties. He said that he also looks to support the efforts of good landlords, who may qualify for low-interest loans to make building-wide improvements.

The Council Member also reported that he was able to secure funding this year for programs at both the Peter Cardella Senior Center and the Ridgewood Older Adult Center. In closing, he wished everyone Happy Holidays, and all the best in the New Year, and he gave a special Shout Out to Board Member Jerry Drake, for being hisMusic teacher in P.S. 58, the public school that he had attended in Brooklyn.

State Assemblyman Brian Barnwell wished everyone Happy Holidays, and said that their Toys for Tots Drive will continue until Thursday, December 21st, this year. He thanked everyone for their generosity in donating to the Coat Drive and Turkey Drive last month. He said that his district office is located at 55-19 69 Street in Maspeth. Flyers and Newsletters were distributed.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Mike Miller, Carmela Isabella wished everyone a Happy Holiday season and announced that their office will be accepting donations for their Toys for Tots Drive until Friday, December 22nd, 2017. She welcomed constituents to contact their office at 83-91 Woodhaven Blvd by calling (718) 805-0950.

On behalf of State Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Alison Cummings wished everyone a Happy Holiday season. Newsletters were distributed.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, Alexa Arrechi extended Holiday Greetings to everyone, and announced that their office will be collecting donations for their Holiday Toy Drive until Monday, December 18th. She said that their district office is located at 70-50 Austin Street, in Forest Hills.

On behalf of NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, Dolores Capace wished everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year. She announced her recent promotion to Queens Regional Director in his office, and reported that their office has been working to inform local residents and businesses that they may be eligible for surplus funds in the State's Unclaimed Funds account, which currently totals \$15.5 Billion. For more information, she welcomed everyone to go to their website at: www.osc.state.ny.us.

The Board Chairman recognized Council Member-Elect and long-time Board Member Robert Holden and invited him to speak.

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Former president of Juniper Park Civic Association Bob Holden said that it has been a pleasure to serve as a member of Queens Community Board 5 for the past 30 years, and thanked Chairman Arcuri and Gary, the District Manager, for their leadership efforts, and Board 5 for all their community accomplishments. He announced that Tony Nunziato will serve as the new president of JPC A. He said that their association plans to create a Memorial Award in honor of Lorraine Sciulli, who volunteered to improve the quality of life in her community for most of her life. He said that he plans to use the same phone number (718) 366-3900 as Council Member Crowley, and his office will be at the same location in Atlas Park, at least until he's able to find a more accessible site. He encouraged anyone interested in seeking a position on his staff to send him their resume at bobholden@me.com.

The Board Chairman recognized members of the Press Corps who were present at the meeting: Benjamin Fang of the Queens Ledger, Jon Cronin of the Queens Chronicle, and Ryan Kelly of the Queens Courier.

MINUTES

The Board Chairman asked Board members to review the minutes of the November 8, 2017 Board Meeting. The minutes were approved by acclamation, on a motion to accept them, as written, by Walter Clayton and seconded by Jerome Drake.

LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

The Board Chairman read aloud the list of establishments in the Community Board 5 area that are in the process of applying for liquor, wine and beer licenses since the last monthly Board Meeting on November 8, 2017. Each Board member received a copy of the list.

New Liquor Licenses

- 1) 1 New Farm Deli Inc. d/b/a **Las Margaritas Bar & Rest.** 67-17 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) * **Mr. Pancho Corp.** 46-63 Metropolitan Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) * **Mama's Corner Pizzeria Corp.** d/b/a **Mama's** 675 Onderdonk Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 4) **La Gringa Food Corp.** 63-34 and 63-36 Woodhaven Blvd. in Rego Park, NY 11374

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) Cream Restaurant Corp. d/b/a **Cream** 59-09 71 Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) ***Rogner LLC** 63-59 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) Maspeth Public House LLC d/b/a **The Gibbons Home** 54-12 69 Street, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 4) **London Lennie's Inc.** 63-88 to 63-96 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park, NY 11374
- 5) 5103 Building Corp d/b/a **Knights of Columbus Hall** 79-03 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385

New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

None Reported

Wine and/or Beer License Renewals

- 1) Pomodoro Inc. d/b/a **Joe & John's Pizza** 59-10 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **El Fogon Rest Inc.** 63-59 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) 71-08 Restaurant Corp. d/b/a **Glendale Diner** 71-08 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385

*Indicates Outdoor Area

Proposed Change of Class

Palace of Zuly, Inc. at 913 Wyckoff Avenue, in Ridgewood, proposes to change the class of their existing Restaurant Wine License to a full Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider License.

Demolition and Construction Notices

The Board Chairman reported that the Board received the following demolition notice since last month's Board Meeting: demolition of residential garage at **52-60 66 Street, in Maspeth**, and partial demolition of a 1-fmly house, in connection with construction of a horizontal addition on 1st Floor at **71-09 Penelope Avenue, in**

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Middle Village. The Board Chairman asked Board members to remain vigilant and to advise the Board 5 staff about any questionable construction work in the Board area, so they can investigate further.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

Gary Giordano

District Manager Gary Giordano wished everyone Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year. He congratulated Board Member Barbara Toscano, the Executive Director of the Peter Cardella Senior Center, located at 68-52 Fresh Pond Road in Ridgewood, on the special citation that they received from the NYC Office of Emergency Management this month.

Regarding the Calamus Avenue water and sewer main project, the District Manager reported that C.A.C. Industries has completed installation of the new sewer and water mains on Calamus Avenue between 69 Street and 74 Street, in Maspeth. In response to his request that the contractor resurface the roadway as soon as possible, he was informed that the work is slated to be performed tomorrow.

Regarding the sewer and water main project in the vicinity of Penelope Avenue and 74 Street in Middle Village, he said that the same contractor, C.A.C. Industries, is currently working to install a new sewer chamber on 74 Street between Penelope Avenue and Pleasantview Street. He said that the new sewer trench in the middle of the street is about 24 feet deep and that this new sewer system will have a much greater capacity to handle storm water run-off during heavy rainstorms.

Regarding the Emergency Bridge Deck Replacement project on Fresh Pond Road at Metropolitan Avenue, he said that the contractor has not been seen working above ground at this site for months. The project is not expected to be finished on or before their completion date in January of 2018.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that the committee met in the Board 5 office on Tuesday, November 14th to review the design plans for the Forest Park Entrance in the area of Myrtle Avenue at Forest Park Drive with representatives of the NYC Parks Department. He said that committee members viewed a power point presentation at their meeting. He gave their power-point presentation for the full Board's review at tonight's meeting. He pointed out areas where the lighting along the proposed walkway and bike lanes should be improved, and expressed concerns from committee members about the width of the shared bike lanes and path of the walkway.

The Board Chairman said that the committee should consider the need for security cameras to be installed along the walkway, as well as locations where blue light stations could be installed. Kathy Masi asked if decorative lighting could be installed along the walkway, similar to the fixtures that have been installed in Eastern Glendale this year. She also requested stations for dog walkers inside the Park.

Fred Haller pointed out the fencing between the Forest Park Golf Course and the path of the walkway should be raised to 16 feet, in order to protect pedestrians from being struck by errant golf balls.

Don Passantino suggested that wooden barricades be installed between the path and the roadway.

Mr. Fiedler said that the committee would review all of their suggestions at the next committee meeting.

Regarding the rehabilitation of Frank Principe Park on Maurice Avenue in Maspeth, he said that this project is fully funded at \$6.7 Million, and work is scheduled to begin soon.

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Regarding the Ridgewood Reservoir, he said that on December 7th, he travelled to Albany to request that the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation list the entire site of the Ridgewood Reservoir on the New York State Register of Historic Places and nominate it to the National Register of Historic Places. He said that his request received a very favorable reception in Albany.

Library Services Committee

Sarah Feldman

Sarah Feldman reported that the committee met with a representative from the Queens Borough Central Library in the Board 5 office on Monday, November 27th, to review a number of needed improvements in local branch libraries in the Board 5 area.

She said that regarding the Maspeth Library, the committee prefers installation of a new flat roof, instead of a green roof, as the green roof is projected to cost at least three times the cost of a flat roof. She said that a new book-drop is scheduled to be installed at this library this year.

Regarding the Glendale Library, she said that a new capital improvement project has been funded, but the contract has not been awarded yet.

Regarding the Ridgewood Library, she said students from IS 93 who visit the library after school on weekdays have often been very loud and disruptive. Kathy Masi said that she would contact the school principal to advise him of the problem.

In closing, Ms. Feldman thanked Ernie Searle, president of the Friends of the Ridgewood Library, for volunteering to work with community residents to form local Friends of the Library groups in every branch library in our Board area.

Transportation & Public Transit Services Committee

Toby Bloch

Toby Bloch, Committee Co-chair, reported that the committee met in the Board 5 office to discuss numerous transportation issues. He said that the committee reviewed a request to extend the Q39 Bus route in Ridgewood up to the Ridgewood Reservoir.

In addition, he said that the committee discussed ways to improve the initiation of Select Bus Service along the Woodhaven Blvd. corridor.

He said that the committee also reviewed the proposed capital improvement plans for the Van Wyck Expressway Project in Queens, extending from the Grand Central Parkway Interchange to JFK Airport.

He reported that the Department of Transportation recently installed additional lane markings and flexible bollards in the roadway, in order to curtail illegal parking and speeding along the Westbound Service Road of the LIE, just east of the Grand Avenue/69 Street exit, in Maspeth.

Regarding the recent traffic safety requests for 88 Street between Myrtle Avenue and Cooper Avenue, in Glendale, he reported that the committee recommended several traffic safety measures in that vicinity and directed the District Manager to reach out to the Queens Borough Commissioner of the Department of Transportation.

Kathy Masi said that the Select Bus Service is not needed on a 24x7 basis. She said that the restrictions on these bus lanes should be limited to morning and evening rush hours. Mr. Bloch said that the committee will continue to monitor this situation and make recommendations accordingly.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Board Chairman Arcuri adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 9:10pm.