



# COMMUNITY BOARD 6, QUEENS

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HEATHER BEERS-DIMITRIADIS  
CHAIR

DONOVAN RICHARDS  
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

## CB 6 MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 10, 2024

### PRESENT

H. BEERS-DIMITRIADIS, CHAIR	P. BEADLE, 1 <sup>ST</sup> VICE CHAIR
K. ENGEL, 2 <sup>ND</sup> VICE CHAIR	M. LASTER, 3 <sup>RD</sup> VICE CHAIR
S. BAIDA, SECRETARY OF ADMINISTRATION	L.T. CIACCIO, SECRETARY OF FINANCE
J. DERESZEWSKI, PARLIAMENTARIAN	

M. ARCATI	M. LASHLEY-KABORE	E. ZAKRY
D. ARONOV	B. LEONG	K. ZAPATA
A. AYON	K. LY	
K. BATRA	R. MEHARRA	
D. BOWENS	P. MORGAN	
H. CHAIN	D. RACHNAEV	
G. CHEN	S. ROLNICK	
K. CLARK	M. SALTON	
L. DAVIS	G. SANDOVAL	
B. GROSSBERG	D. SCHANTZ	
K. IMAS	M. TUCKER	
S. JAIN	B. WINSTEAD	

### ABSENT

H. BIRNBAUM*	J. SILVA*
M. FERNANDEZ-KONIGSBERG*	T. YASUKAWA
P. SCHNEIDERMAN	E. WONG
H. SCHONHAUT*	

\*EXCUSED ABSENCE

### OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

CHRISTINE NOLAN	COMMUNITY COORDINATOR
AMPARITO ROSERO	OFFICE OF THE QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT
KEVIN McALEER	OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER LYNN SCHULMAN
JORDAN GOLDES	OFFICE OF CONGRESS MEMBER GRACE MENG
GIANNA VALENTE	OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER ANDREW HEVESI
CHANTE LEE	NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
SEAN McCABE	OFFICE OF SENATOR JOSEPH ADDABBO
THOMAS AURINGER	OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER CATALINA CRUZ
JAVIER FIGARO	OFFICE OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ

This meeting was held in-person with a limited virtual option via WebEx for individuals with extraordinary circumstances. The following CB 6 Members joined the meeting via WebEx: Dr. Renee Mehrra, Shari Rolnick, Heidi Chain and Pat Morgan. The meeting will be recorded and posted on YouTube. Community Board meetings are posted on YouTube.com for transparency to the public ([www.tinyurl.com/cb6youtube](http://www.tinyurl.com/cb6youtube)).

Chair Heather Beers-Dimitriadis made an announcement to the board members if anyone sees the board members on WebEx with their hand raised to let her know, so she can call upon them. She would like to engage with the members on WebEx and check in with them throughout the meeting.

Chair Beers-Dimitriadis announced that per a vote taken on December 6, 2023, now the board member portion of the Good and Welfare has been moved to the beginning of the meeting, as part of the Public Forum. We will time the board members, allowing a maximum of 3 minutes each.

## **GOOD AND WELFARE**

### **CB 6 MEMBERS**

Mark Laster announced the following:

- Food scrap drop-off site at the Green Market and Common Point will continue to operate.
- Community Composting has been cut from the budget. Save Our Compost coalition will be doing a series of in person and virtual presentations.
- Breaking Bread Building Bonds will be ending. Funds will be restored in the next couple of months. The Central Queens Against Hate coalition is exploring alternative ways to fund this program and is having brunch on February 25, 2024.
- Central Queens Against Hate held a webinar last month teaching meditation techniques.
- Anyone interested in planning the next Breaking Bread Building Bonds Brunch, Central Queens Against Hate is meeting on January 11, 2024, at 6pm.

Bruce Grossberg announced the following:

- Tuesday, January 16, at 7pm Intergenerational webinar on healthcare/healthcare access. One of the seniors dropped out and they are looking to replace that senior. If anyone is interested, call the office or get in touch with Bruce.
- Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 7pm a webinar on nursing homes after COVID, Senator Joseph Addabbo will participate along with patients advocate for long term care community coalition. Bruce is looking for a nursing home advocate.

Peter Beadle announced the following:

- January 25, 2024, Transportation Committee Briefing with the MTA regarding Queens bus redesign, MTA has their final plan. Google queens bus redesign scroll to the end and click on the link: propose final plan route profile. The public can email Peter through [qn06@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:qn06@cb.nyc.gov) regarding queen's bus redesign for comment and will relate the message to the MTA.

Heidi Chain announced the following:

- Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm on zoom 112Pct Council meeting. Anyone who would like to attend email, [council112@yahoo.com](mailto:council112@yahoo.com).

Keith Engel announced the following:

- January 23, 2024, from 10pm to 4am HOPE 2024 city wide initiative (homeless outreach population estimate) volunteers go around and tally up the homeless people sleeping in the streets and subways. For more information go to 311.

## PUBLIC FORUM

All requests for public comment must be submitted via email to [QN06@CB.NYC.GOV](mailto:QN06@CB.NYC.GOV) by 3pm on the day of the meeting. Public comments submitted by Friday at 5pm will be included in the minutes. Chair Beer-Dimitriadis made an announcement that anyone who submitted a written public comment to be read by the Chair will not be read but will be included in January's minutes.

Chair Beers-Dimitriadis asked the residents for their cooperation, that there be no interruptions or defamatory comments when public speakers are speaking.

### ***Irina Vovsha***

*I represent 408 people who signed a petition to stop the concerts, they are illegal. They violate our rights in a residential area and the noise code is violated too. I would like to debunk some things: 1) citizens of Forest Hills want the concerts, I have 408 people who signed the petition to stop the concerts. We cannot sleep, children cannot do homework. 2) These concerts improve the economy, who's economy my pocket or someone else's pocket? But my pocket and all the citizens of Forest Hills are empty, why? The damage done to their house is because of the vibrations from the music of the concerts, we must pay for gardeners to eliminate the urine from the garden from the 7,000 people invading our area and the garbage that must be cleaned up. Some people must go to the beach and leave their home when concerts are on. They can't be in their own home. I went to Austin Street to all the business and one business benefits from the concerts. The one that sells alcohol. The other stores don't benefit and have signed the petition. The only people who benefit 1) sell drugs and alcohol in the neighborhood; 2) people sell and rent our houses; 3) those who sold their sole for the money. They make people suffer in our area.*

### ***Claudia Valentino***

*My name is Claudia Valentino, and I am president of the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association. Most particularly, tonight, because you will vote on the economic portion of the City of Yes plan. I want to address the provisions tied to housing – the provision allowing businesses to be run using 49% of a family home and allowing three employees; and the provision allowing use of corner homes for retail and other business uses. I ask you to carve out and vote NO on both provisions without qualification. I bring your attention to the area bounded by Union Turnpike, Ascan, Booth and Selfridge, which is nearly entirely residential, except for two business strips Metropolitan Avenue and the short one on 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Here's why I urge you to reject these two provisions: first it amounts to a de facto conversion by fiat or residential areas to mixed use zones. My community states an emphatic no to that. Second, let's run through what this would look like. It is important to realize that a business in the middle of a residential block would mean endless drop-offs and pickups from FedEx, UPS, and other suppliers. What about storage of materials and supplies? What exactly are they? Do they have the high potential for fire? Are they subject to the same fire codes as businesses sitting as they do among homes? Without OEM or Environmental Protection review, what protections do we have? We see nothing in the plan to restrict hours of operation, noise, limits on the numbers of people who might meet etc. Businesses operating in business areas impact only their other business neighbors. Take those same activities and stick them in the middle of a block where the properties are no more than a driveway apart and you will understand that we live check-by-jowl and have long had to master the art of being good and considerate neighbors. Homeowners do that. Businesses cannot be expected to accomplish that given their function and activities. The same considerations apply to the concept of converting a corner home on a residential block to a retail or office use at the corner or 100 feet in. The example that the Department of City Planning offered in each of its two presentations to the board was a convenience store or bodega. Now envision the myriad of products that they carry: there's a delivery truck for each one, there is commercial grade food preparation equipment, stoves, ovens and possibly a cash machine. There's also commercial garbage that must go out and sit on the curb. That is, until a commercial garbage hauler shows up at about 3am not to mention an increase in foot, bike, and car traffic. What changes to the electrical supply to these houses will be required? What machinery will they run? I assure you we know from experience that the electrical grid where we live is already over-taxed. What kind of security and overnight alarm systems will they need? How exactly are the neighbors on all three sides of either of these business types notified that they now will be living next to a commercial concern when they in no way intended to do so when they originally purchased their homes? What of the fabric of cooperation and trust that makes neighborhoods livable places? Our properties are not multi-acre plots. I hope this is all I have to say to have you realize that these mixed-use business functions have no place in a residential area, on a residential block. It has been said that these businesses won't materialize because the cost of doing so is prohibitive. I say prohibit them in the first place with a no vote. Since knowledge is power, I extend an invitation to the members of the board individually or all at once to walk our neighborhood so you can see for yourselves just how tight it is and how much unimpeded green space it offers as a*

commercial-free area for residents and neighbors to stroll unimpeded by business traffic. Please come visit and if you choose to have coffee at McDonald's on Metropolitan Avenue will be on me. The DCP plan is unfortunately only theoretical. Zoning, infrastructure, and neighborhood quality of life issues are nuts and bolts matters that have real consequences for real people. I urge you to vote no tonight. The CB6 office knows where to find me. Thank you.

### **Martin Levinson**

I am Martin Levinson; I am a member of Concerned Citizens of Forest Hills. Here is the question why am I here? I am here to express my displeasure with the disruptive concerts that are occurring at the Forest Hills Stadium. They have a very negative effect on my family, on my neighbors and their children. Most of us do not live in the private community of Forest Hills Gardens but in the apartment buildings and multi family houses, which are near the Stadium. I lived on Exeter Street for over 56 years. On concert nights, from my house I can often hear the deafening sounds coming from the stadium. Next question? Am I here to ask that the concert program be scrapped? Not exactly, I'm here to plead for moderation. Moderation is our motto. Next question: Is the West Side Tennis Club have the legal right to sponsor concerts and other programs in the stadium? Answer: that is an important question and will hopefully soon be decided in the New York State Supreme Court. Question: would you like me to list the reasons why the club should not be permitted to continue their programs? Answer: relax, I'm not going to do that now. If you read a list of reasons why concerts could be banned. I have cases that you can connect to though google link. Concerned Citizens of Forest Hills Inc., Christopher Jaray, Douglas Gilbert and Emory Anderson, plaintiffs against the West Side Tennis Club, defendant. (Filed 12/11/23 Supreme Court of the State of New York County of Queens). If you look at the complaint it lists 71 different reasons why they shouldn't be allowed to have concerts. Many of our members do not live in the private community of Forest Hills Gardens but in the apartment buildings as I said. What are our major concerns. The legal decibel levels are exceeding the NYC noise code. There is no regular follow up by the Department of Environmental Protection. There is no firm guarantee that there will be a 10pm curfew. This is the rule in New York City Parks which should be observed. There appears to be no limit on the number of concerts. A few summers ago, there were a dozen. This past summer 2023 there were at least twenty-eight. The crowds, the traffic congestion, think of it as an invasion of 13,000 people invading your neighborhood. Here's what happened several years ago when the West Side Tennis Club was in danger of financially going under. A program of a limited number of concerts was proposed. Even though we are not members of the club, we thought it was a good idea. We thought the West Side Tennis Club was an asset to the community. They are hardly an asset as far as we're concerned. Final question: elected officials will you help us keep the peace?

### **Clair Quaintance**

I am a resident of Forest Hills, thank you for having us here tonight. I would like to voice my opposition to some of the City of Yes items being proposed. The ones that would allow business on what historically been residential blocks. Those that would turn garages into habitable dwellings and increase density in a place that's already dense. Single family homes don't mean big. Our homes are 25 feet wide, when I sneeze in my living room my neighbor say "God Bless You" in her house. Further development on these streets is ill-founded as an idea. Our streets are narrow, and parking is limited. Basements and road flood during heavy rain and our sewers are over a hundred years old. During Ida, our car was literally washed away in flood waters two blocks from our home. The infrastructure to support more people simply doesn't exist there. For commercial development, the infrastructure doesn't exist to accommodate deliveries, customers or trash storage and pick up. I understand the housing crisis in New York is real, and I wholeheartedly support well researched efforts to address it. Bringing landlords to task for warehousing tens of thousands of rent-stabilized apartments. Taxing open storefronts that sit vacant for years to encourage landlords to rent to businesses that would serve the community. Actual affordable housing rather than lottery apartments in the many new market rate high-rises that serve a rich clientele that uses these apartments as tax shelters and write-offs. Expanding availability for city rental vouchers. These proposals don't do that. They're not a solution to the very real problem of the rent is too high and we don't have enough places for people to live comfortably. Instead, they're a red herring being thrown in front of communities to distract us from real action. I urge you not to fall for it. Thank you.

### **Odette Wilkens**

I'm Odette Wilkens, President and General Counsel of Wired Broadband, Inc., I have been here before, and I have been here to talk about the 5G Towers. There are 2,000 towers that are being proposed on the city streets of New York which includes Forest Hills. There is a tower that is proposed in front of P.S. 144 on 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue. These are huge monolithic towers, three stories high and contain a large amount of radiation. 5G has not been tested for safety neither has 4G. I am one of the consulting parties for this district. City Bridge is the site developer for these 5G towers, required by the television communication division to conduct and restore preservation review. City Bridge failed to do that for the towers constructed, and the towers that are proposed. Since I am a consulting party, I provided a historical preservation review

as to why the towers shouldn't be located at P.S. 144. P.S. 144 is eligible for registration on the national register of historic places. Therefore, the tower should not be there based on the historic preservation review. I'm happy to report that the tower by the historic preservation office is to be moved and not located in front of the school. I consider that a huge success for the children because radiation is very dangerous. People have been seriously and fatally injured by this radiation. If you are interested in finding out more information about this, I can be reached at [owilkens@wirebroadband.org](mailto:owilkens@wirebroadband.org). Thank you.

**Steven Zhang, speaking on behalf of Wendy Li**

I am Steven, I am currently a Junior at Columbia, I'm here as a proxy of Wendy Li. Wendy is a civil court judge in New York and has been a judge for five years. She has noticed some of the issues in civil service court and wants to make a change, for example to extend operating court hours into night court, increase the accessibility to people in queens to the court by hiring more translators, to have education in the surrogate court to help people better understand the judicial process with assets to trust funds, money over \$50,000 and real estate related to court. She really wants to make a change with this. Would like to give young people opportunities. As a resident of Forest Hills, she cares about this community. When she was elected to judge, Wendy was the first Asian female.

**Ronnie Jarama**

I am writing to you to let it be known that I do not approve of a male shelter development that may take place in Rego Park. This is not safe for so many of us and unfair that we don't have a say in this development. Crime is already so high, and it will only continue to soar with this shelter. With elementary schools close by and so many children in the area, this would be extremely unsafe. There are also so many young kids in the area walking by because of the mall. It would just create so many potential hazards. We love our neighborhood and want to do everything possible to keep it safe. Please do not let this shelter happen.

Chair Heather Beers-Dimitriadis closed the public comments and stated that a public forum to address the single male shelter is further along in the agenda. The Chair made it clear to the public this is a board meeting not a town hall and will not take questions from the public.

**MINUTES**

CB6 Minutes from the December 6, 2023, meeting was approved as written with two changes that will be made to the minutes. Brently Winstead should be marked as an excused absence and Matt Salton was left off the attendance section of the minutes, which will be corrected. Mark Laster made a motion to approve the minutes as written and it was seconded by Matt Salton. All were in favor.

**CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Heather Beers-Dimitriadis reported that the Chair worked with the vice chairs and executive board members to define a timetable for interviewing and hiring a new district manager. Chair Dimitriadis supplied all the requested data and is now waiting to get a response from human resources. Once this all has been determined, we will begin the hiring process. In the meantime, Chistine Nolan is taking on some additional responsibilities in the interim.

The Chair met with the LIRR/MTA on December 15, 2023, to discuss the elevator project at the Forest Hills LIRR at Station Square. Prior to that meeting she met with Forest Hills Gardens Corporation, and all had agreed that the elevators were a necessity and proposed a site for the elevators on the east side bound portion of the platform. The west bound is not the Forest Hills Garden Corporation property. At the meeting on December 15<sup>th</sup>, the LIRR told them the elevators are out of the question. The LIRR will provide a heating element on the ramp to ensure that the ramps are clear of ice and snow. It is not feasible to provide a canopy over the ramp to protect from snow and rain. There isn't enough money from the federal government to include elevators, corrected ramps, and platform extensions. Even if more funding was procured by Congress Member the funds still would be allocated to another project as opposed to using it for the Forest Hills Station. Sound abatement isn't a consideration to the MTA for the Forest Hills Station. On December 20<sup>th</sup>, the MTA full board approved the project as is. The Chair asked the LIRR/MTA to present this current project to our full board at our March 13, 2024, meeting and will keep our Congress Woman and Borough President's office informed of the situation. Chair Beers-Dimitriadis spoke with the Borough President's office on Monday, and they shared our concerns with how the LIRR/MTA is funding this project and how it is being handled by the agency.

## **DISTRICT MANAGER’S REPORT**

Christine Nolan Community Coordinator reported that the office is open, and you can email or call us with any complaints. She attended a meeting online with the Borough President’s office this morning regarding yesterday’s storm, there weren’t many issues in Queens. Most community boards had minor flooding and we had two small power outages in Rego Park which were restored by 3pm today. If anyone has any outstanding issues regarding the storm, call the office.

Ms. Nolan also attended the Queens Borough Cabinet meeting this week. A presentation from the Parks Department called Let’s Green NYC is asking for more volunteers to help in the parks. A new website [nyc.gov/parks/volunteer](http://nyc.gov/parks/volunteer) about volunteering in the parks and if you’re a volunteer group and want to be added to their volunteer directory email them. The information about Let’s Green NYC is in the office.

Community Board applications are open, the deadline is February 16<sup>th</sup> for renewal or new applications.

## **DANIEL JEONG – CON EDISON QUEENS CUSTOMER OUTREACH**

Daniel spoke about customer service and energy efficiency programs. Our electric and gas bill delivery rate will be rising from 2023-2025. Con Edison is increasing the delivery rate for electric and gas due to redoing the entire infrastructure which will cost \$15 billion. New York State is mandating Con Edison to lower their emissions by 2030 or pay a fine and go for zero emissions by 2050. Daniel spoke about different ways customers can be more efficient by rebates, programs, and initiatives the lower the consumer usage, the closer ConEd gets to meeting their lower emissions requirements.

- Weatherization ([www.conEd.com/weatherization](http://www.conEd.com/weatherization)) - insulating and air sealing rooms that are drafty. ConEd will minus \$4,000 off your bill automatically.
- Energy Affordability Program/HEAP – help you get discounts on your bill, no rebates, or forms.
- Mini splits help remove the cold in your house during winter or remove heat in the summer.

For people who live in apartments there is light bulb replacement and refrigerator fan replacement programs. Go to [conEd.com/energyefficiency](http://conEd.com/energyefficiency).

Board Member Keith Engel told the board members that these programs are also good for condos and co-ops use the link for [www.coned.com/multifamily](http://www.coned.com/multifamily).

## **ELECTIONS FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Board Member Peter Beadle, 1<sup>ST</sup> Vice Chair reported that all the positions at the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting were open to the board. At that time, all but one position was unopposed. The position for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair is contested and an election tonight will be held between Mark Laster and Michael Arcati. Board Members Mark Laster and Michael Arcati introduced themselves to the board members. Ballots were handed out and board members that were on WebEx will email their vote to Christine Nolan to vote for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair. Mark Laster won the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair election. The votes were 22 Mark Laster and 11 Michael Arcati.

Secretary of Administration Salua Baida will cast a confirming vote for:

Heather Beers-Dimitriadis for Chairperson

Peter Beadle for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

Keith Engel for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair

Chair Beers-Dimitriadis cast a confirming vote for Salua Baida for Secretary of Administration

L.T. Ciaccio for Secretary of Finance

John Dereszewski for Parliamentarian

## **CONSUMER AFFAIRS/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **Adult Use Cannabis Retail Dispensary Licenses**

Gladys Sandoval Co-Chair reported that on January 4, 2024, the Consumer Affairs/Economic Development/Small Business Committee met with five businesses applying for cannabis applications.

Regarding Premium Leaf LLC, 71-41 Austin Street, Forest Hills, committee recommendation was to oppose this application. Board Member Peter Beadle made a motion to vote on this application. Board Member Latrice Davis seconded. Community Board Members voted 10 yes and 22 no on approval of the application.

Regarding Vital Green LLC, 97-17 64<sup>th</sup> Road, Rego Park, the committee had concerns that they were close to Valence College Prep., a Charter School that doesn't occupy the whole building. The cannabis store is still within the distance they are to keep away from schools. Vital Green sent a letter stating that they will change their hours of operation and not be open during school hours. Vital Green told the board members that they will not sell any products that can be confusing to children i.e. gummy bears, lollipops, or candy. Board Member Mark Laster made a motion to recommend approval and was second by Peter Beadle. The board approved the cannabis license for Vital Green with 30 yes and 2 no.

Regarding Comfort Care Services. INC, 99-00 Metropolitan Avenue, Forest Hills, the committee took a straw vote five yes and one no. Board Member Peter Beadle made a motion to approve and was second by Mark Laster. The board approved the cannabis license for Comfort Care with 33 yes and 2 no.

Regarding DBA TBD, 65-55 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park. Chair Beers-Dimitriadis reported that this applicant isn't here tonight and asked if the board wants to take a vote based on the straw vote recommendation from the committee or not vote? Board Member John Dereszewski asked Chair Gladys Sandoval if she could elaborate on why the committee voted unanimously. Chair Gladys Sandoval answered that the applicant answered all questions in the questionnaire, understood the business, community and is willing to change hours if necessary. They have experience in the medical background and Marina grew up and lives in the community. Board Member Bruce Grossberg made a motion to table the applicant's cannabis license and was second by Kevin Ly. A voice vote was taken, all were in favor.

Bazzjat, 95-38 Queens Boulevard, Rego Park. Board Member John Dereszewski made a motion to approve Bazzjat for a cannabis license and was second by Brently Winstead. The vote unanimously passed.

Chair Beers-Dimitriadis will send a letter to the Office of Cannabis Management stating how the community board voted.

### **New Liquor License Applications**

Co-Chair Gladys Sandoval reported that CB6 received the following new applications.

- 1. SUSHI YA INC 97-11 QUEENS BOULEVARD, RP**  
*Sushi Ya had a change in ownership within the family. This was already approved by CB6 in March of 2023 but there was a delay with their lease agreement transfer so they had to reapply.*
- 2. QUEENS DELI EXPRESS 101-19B QUEENS BOULEVARD, FH \*CLASS CHANGE\***  
*This is a deli that currently sells beer and cider, and they are applying for an on premises license so their patrons can consume the beer and cider on site.*

### **RENEWAL LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATIONS**

1. MY KITCHEN NY 106-15/106-17 METROPOLITAN AVENUE, FH
2. MIGHTY QUINN'S BARBEQUE 108-22 QUEENS BLVD, FH
3. KEUKA KAFE INC. 112-04 QUEENS BLVD, FH

The 112<sup>th</sup> Precinct didn't have any issues/complaints with these establishments. A voice vote for the new liquor licenses was approved with the contingent that the Queens Deli Express have a seating section, and all were in favor. A voice vote for the renewal of liquor licenses was approved. All were in favor.

## **CONSUMER AFFAIRS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & SMALL BUSINESS AND LAND USE/HOUSING/LANDMARK COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **CITY OF YES FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

Chair Keith Engel reported that the committee held a meeting following last month's presentation to the board and the public hearing. The committee met on January 3, 2024, to discuss the proposals. Board members received in advance the committee recommendations.

<b>Proposal #</b>	<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Requested Modification</b>
1	Reactivate Storefronts	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
2	Simplify District Types	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
3	Small-Scale Production	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
4	Loading Docks	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. Permit approval process to include limitations on hours of operation and a traffic study to confirm no adverse effects.
5	Upper Floor Commercial	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. Ensure that proper separation and noise attenuation requirements are rigidly enforced by the DOB.
6	Use Terms	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
7	Urban Agriculture	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. Agricultural uses shall specifically exclude cannabis production.
8	Life Sciences	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
9	Nightlife	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. Adult entertainment would continue to be strictly banned. Ensure that proper separation and noise attenuation requirements are rigidly enforced by the DOB.
10	Amusement	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
11	Home Occupations	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
12	Streetscape	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. The requirements under this proposal to be extended to DOB Alteration Type 1 and 2 applications.
13	Auto Repair	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. BSA review shall be explicitly required.
14	Micro distribution	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
15	Campus Commercial	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
16	Corner Stores	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations. Designate corners as priority corners for the implementation of physical daylighting measures as called for in QCB6's resolution on daylighting.
17	Better Waiver Process	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.
18	New Loft-Style District	X	Provide proper enforcement of all applicable City and State regulations.

Chair Beers-Dimitriadis reported that two votes need to be taken. The overall vote for proposals 1-17 and separate vote for proposal number 18. Chair Dimitriadis made a voice vote and was seconded by Board Member Mark Laster for all in favor of proposals 1-17 with the amendment to proposal 16 and other exceptions as written. Board Member Karen Imas made a motion to accept the proposals with the adoption of a stipulator for safety around daylighting corners protecting with barriers across the community. A voice vote was taken for proposals 1-17 with the amendment to proposal 16, all were in favor. A voice vote was taken for proposal 18, all were in favor.

**PRESENTATION FROM DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:  
PLANNED OPENING OF SINGLE ADULT MALE SHELTER AT 61-18 93<sup>RD</sup> STREET, REGO PARK**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

*Michael Dunne*

*Good evening, Madam Chair, members and office staff of Community Board 6, and friends and neighbors sitting in the*



back, I am Michael Dunne, lifelong resident of Rego Park and Forest Hills and public member of the Veterans Committee, and I wish everyone a Happy New Year. Tonight, I intend to express concerns on behalf of all the people living and working in the homes and businesses marked with green circles. In March 2024, the Wyndham Garden Hotel is slated to be converted into a 50-room homeless shelter for up to 100 single male adults, and later this year when construction is completed, a new building at 92-60 Queens Blvd. will open as a homeless shelter for families and children. These two shelters literally face each other across Queens Boulevard. We are NOT against homeless people - we acknowledge they are undergoing something traumatic and deserve a roof over their heads. As long-time residents, we know that Rego Park and Forest Hills are great neighborhoods, so we hope that their stay at a local shelter here will help motivate them to rebuild their lives. We are NOT against a homeless shelter in our neighborhood, even one that is steps from where we live. We do NOT endorse nor want a reoccurrence of the ugly NIMBY protests that happened when homeless people started moving into the former Pan American Hotel on Queens Boulevard in Elmhurst years ago. However, we are extremely concerned that the City of New York plans to open not one, BUT TWO, shelters within the same time period, and within the same portion of the neighborhood. There has been absolutely no outreach to the people who already live here, to gather data about impacts to the community and the way it ticks. Alternative locations for a second shelter could have been proposed and discussed, had anyone approached us. Instead, agreements were quietly made, contracts have already been approved, and essentially this situation is being forced upon us. As taxpayers who fund this city agency, we demand to know exactly all the steps and criteria in DHS's decision-making process when sites are being considered for new homeless shelters. I therefore respectfully ask you, the members of Community Board 6, to kindly consider a motion to approve the following resolution.

*DRAFT RESOLUTION (for the consideration of Community Board 6 members)*

*WHEREAS, Within Queens Community District 6, there has never been a city-run homeless shelter,*

*In recent years, numerous city leaders have spoken about each and every community sharing the burden of housing the homeless,*

*The residents of Rego Park and Forest Hills recognize and acknowledge that their community should do its part, in terms of equity and fairness,*

*The New York City Department of Homeless Services has unilaterally decided to establish a homeless shelter for single male adults at 61-18 93rd Street, currently the Wyndham Garden Hotel, which happens to be the ONLY hotel within District 6 and is used by local residents to house excess guests,*

*The New York City Department of Homeless Services has unilaterally decided to establish a homeless shelter for families with children at 92-60 Queens Boulevard, in a new building nearing completion,*

*The New York City Department of Homeless Services has already made presumptuous contractual arrangements with Community Housing Innovations and WestHab to operate these respective shelters, prior to any consultation, blessing, and/or approval from the community or its board, and with very little thought and consideration to the impact on the quality of life and day-to-day needs and activities of existing local residents,*

*The New York City Department of Homeless Services selected these two nearby sites, without gathering any community ideas and proposals for locating one of the two shelters in another part of Community District 6, and*

*The residents of western Rego Park, especially those living in direct proximity to these two imminent shelters, are accepting and tolerant of ONE, BUT NOT TWO, shelters that are so close to each other, and that are scheduled to come online within the same general timeframe.*

*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT*

*The New York City Department of Homeless Services describe in detail each and every step and criterion used in its decision-making process that resulted in the selection of two nearly-adjacent shelter sites in western Rego Park, in a public meeting or hearing, for residents of District 6 and its board members,*

*The New York City Department of Homeless Services open each shelter on a limited trial basis, at no more than 50% capacity for the first three months, at which time, a public roundtable meeting will be held between NYCDHS, Community Housing Innovations, WestHab, Community Board 6, 112<sup>th</sup> Precinct, and affected residents and business owners, to discuss any problems that may have occurred during those first three months. If everyone at the meeting can develop and agree on solutions and corrective measures to address most or all of the problems, then the shelter may proceed operations at 100% capacity. However, if certain issues or problems are so egregious and/or dangerous, Community Board 6 will request to the Queens Borough President and the Mayor of the City of New York that the shelter cease all operations immediately, and*

*Should a disaster or emergency situation, such as a fire or building collapse, ever occur within Community District 6, resulting in the evacuation and displacement of Rego Park or Forest Hills residents, those affected victims WILL be immediately placed in these two shelters if there are any vacant rooms, or will be placed at the very top of the waiting list, ahead of anyone else already on such a list, for the next available rooms. New York City Department of Homeless Services, Community Housing Innovations, and WestHab will cooperate with the American Red Cross and New York City*

*Emergency Management to ensure our displaced residents are afforded the opportunity to remain in their own neighborhood until they are able to return to their homes. It would simply be outrageous and insulting if we permit shelters to be opened up in our district, and then our own residents and neighbors cannot use them in their time of need.*

**Alexa Eliopoulos**

*Why put a men's shelter within close proximity of many schools and a recreational center? Why not a shelter for women & children? 100 single men with trauma and substance abuse? This is outrageous!  
I vote NO! Resident of Rego Park 40 years.*

**Donghui Zang**

*I oppose having a single male shelter in the high populated residential area in an area that might bring many potential security concerns. Thank you.*

**Sheryl Fetik**

*My name is Sheryl Fetik. I am a lifelong resident of Rego Park and am a homeowner of one of the original homes built about 100 years ago, in Rego Park. I attended the local public schools, including P.S. 139, Russell Sage JHS 190, and Forest Hills High School. Currently, I am an elected Democratic Judicial Delegate and elected Member of the Democratic County Committee, representing portions of Rego Park and Forest Hills. I am opposed to the current proposal for a homeless shelter for adult men, to be located at the Wyndham Hotel, located at 61-31 93 Street, in Rego Park. My understanding is that the current proposal calls for the housing of 100 adult homeless men, housed two to a room, as well as the provision for them of three meals per day. I believe that there are serious problems and questions concerning this proposal. It is suggested that this proposal will include a 5-year contract, which will be renewable. It seems that this means that this contract can effectively be made permanent, and that the number of the men housed can increase. I believe that we must help those in need in our society. But we must also consider the needs of our communities, and how they will be able to cope with programs or policies. This proposal includes bringing 100 or more troubled adult men into our residential community, within easy walking distance of several elementary and public schools, and of the Lost Battalion Hall, a community recreation facility. Some men may have mental or emotional issues, or be addicted to drugs, and/or be defendants charged with crimes, given the current state of our criminal laws. It seems that some defendants will be housed in homeless shelters, instead of the new jails being built. This would potentially create dangers for children, and families in our community. I believe that real affordable housing should be provided for people, especially for families with children, and for seniors. I believe that instead of homeless shelters, including for adult men, we should be providing small apartments, so that people can be treated as human beings, in their own spaces, where they can feel safe. I believe that this proposal will create dangers for our community, without meeting the needs of the populations that need our help. The proposal should be sent back to the drawing board, to start from scratch. Thank you for permitting me to submit my views.*

**Helen Reda**

*As a 23-year resident and constituent of Rego park queens and the mother of two young daughters I am deeply concerned about the proposed men's homeless shelter that is being discussed for the Wyndham hotel in Rego park. This shelter will be in close proximity to a children's playground, a recreational center, multiple shopping centers, & schools. To my knowledge recovery homes that house substance users usually have no more than 20 residents. Why are we placing 100 men that suffer from mental health issues and substance abuse in a community that is so densely populated with families and young children? Would they not be better off housed in areas that are not as densely populated where they can receive the help and treatment they need. Without knowing the criminal backgrounds or if these men have been vetted, we are taking a risk and allowing them to come into our community with so many questions and so few answers, among which are, will there be a curfew, how much security will there be to monitor the facility and surrounding areas and lastly what would disqualify them from being selected?*

**Elizabeth Gerds**

*I am writing to express my concerns about having a community shelter for men on 93rd Street in Rego Park. The street is very close to shopping malls in this area. Also, it is on an isolated Street. My concern is for the safety of the neighborhood. Will there be counseling services on site? Will there be an increased police presence in the area? Will there be job counseling services? Will the public be allowed to speak at the meeting tonight? Is this already done and accepted?*

**Pedro Rodriguez**

*I am writing to support the shelter on 93rd St. I know there will be some opposition and misinformation about unsheltered people from some residents, and I want to help counter this. We need more housing, and we needed it yesterday, but until we can get the housing crisis under control, we need shelters. I live under a mile from the site. Thank you.*

**Ronnie Jarama**

*I am writing to you to let it be known that I do not approve of a male shelter development that may take place in Rego Park. This is not safe for so many of us and unfair that we don't have a say in this development. Crime is already so high, and it will only continue to soar with this shelter. With elementary schools close by and so many children in the area, this would be extremely unsafe. There are also so many young kids in the area walking by because of the mall. It would just create so many potential hazards. We love our neighborhood and want to do everything possible to keep it safe. Please do not let this shelter happen.*

**Cheryl Wasserman**

*I am a long-time resident of Forest Hills. I also enjoy shopping in the many retail stores in Rego Park. I am against the Men's Shelter opening at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in Rego Park. The Wyndham Garden Hotel is in a quiet area of Rego Park with many small and large businesses as well as numerous residential apartment buildings nearby. This area of Rego Park has many schools as well. The hotel is in walking distance and near the Rego Center and the Queens Center Mall. I am very concerned that the homeless shelter with 100 single homeless men will ruin the quality of life for thousands of people in the neighborhood including residents of the community, employees and customers of the numerous nearby retail stores, businesses, and restaurants. I am especially concerned as this is supposed to be a shelter for 100 single men who are illegal drug and substance addicts and or have mental illness. I am very concerned as BOTH the single men's homeless shelters in the Umbrella Hotel in Kew Gardens as well as the homeless shelter in Glendale located by Cooper Avenue, have brought illegal drug use, drug dealers, prostitution, and violent crime to once quiet Queens neighborhoods. I certainly do not want the Rego Park, Forest Hills or Elmhurst neighborhoods to suffer from similar types of quality-of-life issues that ruin beautiful neighborhoods. I'm also very concerned as a homeless shelter for families with children is being built nearby across Queens Blvd at 92-54 Queens Blvd. It seems dangerous and inappropriate to have a men's homeless shelter at the Wyndham Garden Hotel which will be in close proximity to a shelter that houses families and children.*

**Michael Niamehr**

*I'd like to share my support for the shelter coming to Rego Park. Opposers should consider that their fear might be misplaced and not based on any real danger. Studies have shown a decrease in nearby crime rates after shelters are opened. (<https://dignitymoves.org/dispelling-the-myth-homeless-shelters-and-crime-rates>).*

**Li Kong**

*Please also note that this building is very close to day care, PS 139, JH 157, and Valence College Prep. Students of all ages going to schools may bypass the W Hotel. Also, this is very close to the playground and shopping center. I cannot imagine having to worry about my safety when walking nearby. This will put our community in danger. It is NOT acceptable to have an all-male shelter in Rego Park. This will put ourselves and our kids in potential danger. Please DO NOT DO THAT!*

**Diana Vaniani**

*The men's shelter in a residential area especially in extremely close proximity to an elementary school and right next to a playground is completely unsafe and unacceptable. Kids walk into the mall nearby and we are putting our children in danger. This needs to be addressed immediately.*

**Adelina Samardin**

*The potential of a men's shelter in a residential area, especially in extremely close proximity to an elementary school and right next to a playground, is completely unsafe and unacceptable. You are putting our children in danger. This needs to be addressed immediately.*

**Rosemarie Hernandez**

*With elementary schools close by and so many children in the area, this would be extremely inappropriate. There are also so many teens in the area walking by because of the mall. It would just create so many potential hazards.*

*I am writing to you to let you know that I do not approve of the potential male shelter that will be in place in Rego Park. This is unfair and not safe for so many of us. Crime is already so high, and it will only continue to soar with this shelter. With elementary schools close by and so many children in the area, this would be extremely inappropriate. There are also so many teens in the area walking by because of the mall. It would just create so many potential hazards. We love our neighborhood and want to do everything possible to keep it safe. Please do not let this shelter happen.*

**Betty Hernandez**

*We are against opening a shelter for men in this location. This is very dangerous as we have elementary schools and high crimes increasing in this area. We don't need additional men roaming around the streets in this area. It's very dangerous as it is right now.*

Chair Beers-Dimitriadis reported that some of the public speakers had some questions that could be answered if they listened to the committee meetings that are on YouTube for the public to review:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22IhLjMhUW4>.

A presentation by Community Housing Innovations, on the 61-18 93<sup>rd</sup> Street, housing for single homeless men. The shelter will consist of housing one hundred single men in this area. The population doesn't include men with mental health issues nor migrant men.

**Who We Are:**

- Community Housing Innovations (CHI), founded in 1991, is a not-for-profit housing and human services organization that serves Westchester, Long Island, Hudson Valley and New York City. CHI's mission is to provide housing and human services that support social and economic independence.

**Programs and Services:**

**Emergency Shelters**

- 311 Emergency Housing (EH) program in 8 NYS counties
  - 10 in NYC including Rego Park 93<sup>rd</sup>
  - Current EH population: 1,150 households (1,600+adults/975 children = 2,575 individuals)

**Transitional and Supportive Housing**

- 3 Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing programs servicing 30 families and 42 individuals. 3 new supportive housing programs in progress.

**Permanent Affordable Housing**

- 1 permanent housing program under the Master Lease models in the Bronx serving 81 families and individuals. 2<sup>nd</sup> project for 64 families opening in Summer 2024.
- Over 250 units of permanent affordable rental housing.

**Homeownership Program**

- Financial Literacy
- Homeownership Counseling, Education, and Grant Assistance Program
- Foreclosure Prevention Counseling

**About 93<sup>rd</sup> Street:**

Scheduled Opening – Spring 2024

Population – 100 Single Adult Men

**Case Management**

- Housing first approach
- Weekly sessions
- Onsite workshops and activities
- Crisis intervention and behavior management

**Food and Security**

- 3 meals a day
- 24/7 contracted security
- Guard posts at front door and other access points
- Security cameras

## Support Services

- Health, mental health, substance (ab)use
- Housing and independent living
- Employment, recreation, skills development
- Communication, conflict resolution and mediation

## Community Advisory Board

- Quarterly and as needed
- Stakeholders – CB members, DSS-DHS, Neighbors
- NYPD, FDNY

## Service Partnerships

- Health insurance
- Health and mental health
- Substance use management
- Employment and education support
- Financial literacy and credit counseling

Questions from the board members and were answered by the Department of Social Services. These include the following:

- How many shelters are there in Queens?
- How do you choose the men for the shelter?
- How do you look for a facility for each person? Do you start with Queens?
- What made you choose a location that is near a lot of schools?
- Is there a curfew for the men?
- Weekly sessions are they mandated?
- Do we have a different group of men every week?
- Does the City have any data where there is a family shelter across from a men's shelter?

## **GOOD AND WELFARE**

Dr. Christopher Calandrella, Long Island Jewish Forest Hills Hospital Education, Chairperson

I am a New York City native in Glendale and went to school in New York City. I have been in the Northwell system for ten years. We are part of Northwell, Queens, and have seen 59,000 patients, most patients are from Queens. Some of the services we offer at our site are: tele burn, behavioral health, a center for safe and sane examinations, and a case accredited emergency department. Which means that our emergency department went through a process to understand pain care and avoid certain medications that can lead to opioid addiction. We have an SBIRT (screening, breath, intervention, referral treatment) program which focuses on recognizing people's needs for intervention treatments. Northwell has opened a new office for medical specialties located at 95-25 Queens Boulevard for residents in Queens so that they don't have to travel to other Northwell areas.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS/AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES**

### **QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT DONOVAN RICHARDS**

Amparito Rosero announced the following:

- Applications are now being accepted to serve on the Community Board until Friday, February 16, 2024, at 5pm
- Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm Haitian Independence Celebration at Queens Borough Hall
- Saturday, January 27, 10am – 2pm Queens Tech and Job Fair located at Jamaica Performing Arts Center
- Saturday, January 27, 1pm Queens Mental Health Wellness Basketball Game located at St. Francis Prep.

To RSVP to any events, visit [queensbp.org/rsvp](https://queensbp.org/rsvp).

The office left some COVID tests on the table for board members to take home.

**CONGRESS MEMBER GRACE MENG**

Jordan Goldes reported:

- The Congresswoman at Commonpoint Queens presented one and half million dollars to a group called DOROT who works with Commonpoint to prevent senior loneliness.
- Working to combat flooding by seeking more federal funds this week to mitigate flooding.
- SNAP food assistance program – helped recipients who had their SNAP benefits stolen to get reimbursements.
- Sent a letter to the President of SNAP along with elected officials in trying to get SNAP to cover hot food. Will push legislation this year.

**ASSEMBLYMEMBER ANDREW HEVESI**

Gianna Valente announced that the Assemblyman has COVID supplies available at his office including N95 masks and Clorox wipes. You can get in touch with the office if you need any.

**ASSEMBLYMEMBER CATALINA CRUZ**

Thomas Auringer announced:

- Coat Drive in December at Commonpoint Queens gave out 500 coats, a couple hundred sweaters.
- Pop-up vaccinations for COVID and flu clinic in our district office in Corona, Queens.
- December 9<sup>th</sup>, Housing Fair with Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi in Rego Park.
- January 22<sup>nd</sup> will host a NYLAG van.
- Will be handing out free COVID kits at Assemblymember Catalina Cruz office.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Maria Concolino*  
*Community Service Aide*



<b>VOTING SHEET 1/10/24 CONT.</b>	<b>CANNABIS DISPENSARY 99-00 METROPOLITAN AVENUE</b>	<b>CANNABIS DISPENSARY 95-38 QUEENS BLVD</b>	<b>CITY OF YES ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY</b>	
MICHAEL ARCATI	Y	Y		
DAVID ARONOV	Y	Y		
ANISIA AYON	Y	Y		
SALUA BAIDA	Y	Y		
KAVISH BATRA	Y	Y		
PETER BEADLE	Y	Y		
HOWARD BIRNBAUM	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
DANNY BOWENS	Y	Y		A
HEIDI CHAIN	Y	Y		L
GINA CHEN	Y	Y		L
L.T. CIACCIO	Y	Y		
KANDRA CLARK	Y	Y		I
LATRICE DAVIS	Y	Y		N
JOHN DERESZEWSKI	Y	Y		
HEATHER DIMITRIADIS	Y	Y		F
KEITH ENGEL	Y	Y		A
BRUCE GROSSBERG	Y	Y		V
KAREN IMAS	Y	Y		O
SARINA JAIN	Y	Y		R
MATT FERNANDEZ KONIGSBERG	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
MARCELLE LASHLEY-KABORE	Y	Y		
MARK LASTER	Y	Y		
BEATRICE LEONG	Y	Y		
KEVIN LY	Y	Y		
DR. RENEE MEHRA	Y	Y		
PAT MORGAN	Y	Y		
DIANA RACHNAEV	Y	Y		
SHARI ROLNICK	Y	Y		
MATTHEW SALTON	Y	Y		
GLADYS SANDOVAL	Y	Y		
DAVID SCHANTZ	Y	Y		
PETRINA SCHNEIDERMAN	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
HERBERT SCHONHAUT	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
JEAN C. SILVA	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
MARTHA TUCKER	Y	Y		
BRENTLY WINSTEAD	Y	Y		
EDWIN WONG	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
TITILAYO YASUKAWA	ABSENT	ABSENT	ABSENT	
EPHRAIM ZAKRY	Y	Y		
KATHERINE ZAPATA	Y	Y		
<b>TOTALS:</b>	33 - YES	33 - YES	ALL IN FAVOR	