



COMMUNITY BOARD 6, QUEENS

104-01 METROPOLITAN AVENUE • FOREST HILLS, NY 11375-4136

TEL: (718) 263-9250 • FAX: (718) 263-2211

QN06@CB.NYC.GOV

WWW.NYC.GOV/CB6Q



Whitepot Settled 1653

SHARON LEE
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

CB 6 MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 12, 2020

ALEXA WEITZMAN
CHAIR

FRANK P. GULLUSCIO
DISTRICT MANAGER

GAIL M. GORDON
1ST VICE-CHAIR

PETER BEADLE
2ND VICE-CHAIR

MARK LASTER
VICE-CHAIR • SECRETARY

BRUCE GROSSBERG
VICE-CHAIR • FINANCE

PRAMEET KUMAR
VICE-CHAIR • LAND USE

SOUMALY KING
VICE-CHAIR • SCOPING

PRESENT

A. WEITZMAN, CHAIR

P. BEADLE, 2ND VC

B. GROSSBERG, VC FINANCE

S. KING, VC SCOPING

G. GORDON, 1ST VC

M. LASTER, VC SECRETARY

P. KUMAR, VC LAND USE

N. ALTMAN

A. AYON

M. BERFAS

H. CHAIN

S. CHU

A. COHEN

C. COLLETT

J. DERESZEWSKI

A. DIAZ-HOUSTON

H. DIMITRIADIS

E. FELDER

G. FERRERAS

J. GOLANT

B. GRIFFITH

M. JACOBSON

J. KEVELSON

N. LEIBOWITZ

J. MAKIN

R. MEHRRRA

Y. MEIROV

S. METZ

P. MORGAN

E. MURRAY

R. NEKTALOV

K. NEUMANN

E. NEWTON

H. SCHONHAUT

D. SCHNEIER

J. SILVA

R. SILVER

M. SILVERSTEIN

S. WANDERMAN

J. WESTON

E. WONG

ABSENT

G. CARLSON

J. HENNESSY

O. HORODNICEANU

E. KALENDAREV

J. MEDINA

S. ROLNICK

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

HON. KAREN KOSLOWITZ

FRANK GULLUSCIO

J. PERRICONE

J. GOLDES

J. D'ANGELO

M. CARLIER

R. MALONE

D. WHITE

J. SCHABOWSKI

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

CB 6 DISTRICT MANAGER

OFFICE OF ACTING BOROUGH PRESIDENT LEE

OFFICE OF CONGRESS MEMBER MENG

OFFICE OF SENATOR ADDABBO

OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER HEVESI

OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER ROSENTHAL

OFFICE OF THE NYS ATTORNEY GENERAL

NYC MAYORS COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNIT

Chair Alexa Weitzman asked Bob Silver to open the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM

Flora Ferng, East Asian Communities Liaison for the NYC Commission on Human Rights spoke about the recent discriminatory harassment against the Asian Community in light of the Coronavirus Outbreak. If anyone experiences any discriminatory harassment, they can contact the CCHR to report it at 718-722-3131 or 311.

Hal Christenson, Church in the Gardens, spoke about their Volunteer Fair on Sunday February 23, 2020 from Noon to 3pm at the Community House located at 15 Borage Place. The goal is to connect people that wish to volunteer with groups that are looking for volunteers.

Izzy Doughty spoke about a few issues. One being an increase of racism in New York City; Second was a concern about the 112th Precinct illegally parking vehicles near the precinct. This prevents the bus from easily turning onto Austin Street. Last, he requested that the Community Board hold regular monthly committee meetings.

MINUTES

The minutes of the January 8, 2020 meeting were accepted with one change. The word Billion was added in the following: "District Manager Gulluscio mentioned that the Governor reported that there is a \$6.5 Billion deficit in the NYS Budget".

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Weitzman spoke briefly about the following Committee Meetings that have taken place this past month:

- A) Transportation Committee Meeting with John O'Neill Queens Borough Planner to discuss issues in our community.
- B) By Law Committee Meeting: First time reviewing the by-laws since 1996. The next one will be on Wednesday February 26, 2020.
- C) Aging / Social Services / Disabilities Committee held a Forum on January 29, 2020 with guest speaker from QICA. The next one will be on 2/20/20 on "How to Access Benefits and Entitlements".
- D) Executive Committee Meeting, discussed budget responses from agencies and brainstormed about future projects.
- E) Parks Committee Meeting, will report at next months meeting.

Renee Mehrra has been working with local elected officials to obtain proclamations for Past Chair Joseph Hennessy for his years of dedication to this community.

Ms. Weitzman congratulated the Forest Hills Asian Association on their successful State of Forest Hills event. The community Board was there along with other local community groups.

Ms. Weitzman reminded all committee chairs that they should meet at least once before May. She said that our June meeting will be a State of the Community Board Meeting, where all committees can update the members / community on things they have done or are working on. In addition, it will be a good time to start discussing FY22 Budget Requests.

At last months meeting, a member of the public as well as a member of the Community Board spoke out about the substandard conditions at the Access A Ride Evaluation Center on Woodhaven Blvd. The Community Board sent a letter to the MTA and copied all our local elected officials and other city agencies. We received responses back from NYC Commission on Human Rights as well as State Senator Toby Stavisky and Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi that they would follow up on these issues.

Ms. Weitzman announced that CB 6 along with all other Queens Community Boards, are participating in Queens Borough President's Queens Week of Service. Community Board 6 is collecting socks to be distributed to homeless individuals in Queens. There is a Target Wish List that was created so people can order socks online and have them shipped directly to the CB 6 Office. Also, you can bring them to the office during normal business hours.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager Gulluscio reported that on January 29, the Queens Borough President's Office held their Budget Hearings. Mr. Gulluscio spoke about the Rego Park Library as our number one priority. Although the money to build the library is set aside, there is no money to fund a temporary space for services while the construction is taking place. Alexa made a motion that the Community Board's "Letter of Comment on Budget Requests" would focus on this request. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Mr. Gulluscio announced that the Carpenters Union (thanks to James Makin) has agreed to donate socks to our Week of Service Sock Drive.

PRESENTATION BY DAVID ARONOV, NYC CENSUS OFFICE

David Aronov gave some background information about the census:

- Counts every person living in the United States
- Conducted every 10 years
- Started in 1790
- Information that is on the census forms only becomes public after 72 years

What is at stake

- Resources (Billions of dollars of federal funding)
- Representation in Congress (In 2010 NY was undercounted and lost 2 seats in Congress)

- Rights
- Redistricting

Mr. Aronov explained that Title 13 does not allow the Census Bureau to share your information with any other agency. This is punishable by \$250,000 fine and up to 5 years in prison.

The main difference with this year's census is that this is the first time you can fill it out online or by phone. However, the mail option is also still available.

The following is a list of items that will be asked on the Census Form: Address, Number of people in home, Type of Home, Names, Ages, Ethnicity and race of people in house, how these people are related.

The first mailing goes out March 12, 2020. The card you receive in the mail will have a code to fill out online. You will receive several follow ups. If you don't fill out the form by May, the enumerators will start knocking on people's doors. If you fill it out, nobody will come to your home. The Census is 10 questions that will take under 10 minutes and will determine the next 10 years in your community.

What is New York City doing to help more people get counted?

- Complete Count Fund, city gave out \$19 Million to nonprofit organizations to do census work citywide.
- On the ground organizing team and NOCs (Neighborhood Organizing Committee)
- \$8 Million media campaign
- In depth interagency partnership with NYC Agencies

If you are interested in getting involved in the census, contact David at 347-873-3403 or daaronov@census.nyc.gov

CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Elizabeth Newton, Chair of Consumer Affairs Committee, reported that the Board received 3 new liquor license applications and 2 renewals with a corporate change.

1. Lowkey, 70-15B Austin Street, FH
2. Jade Eatery, 1 Station Square, Space A, FH
3. Bangkok Cuisine, 107-18 70th Road, Store 2, FH
4. Banter, 108-22 Queens Blvd, FH (Corporate Change)
5. Buffalo Wild Wings Grill & Bar, 107-16 71st Avenue, FH (Corporate Change)

Representatives from Low Key, Bangkok Cuisine and Banter were present. Buffalo Wild Wings representatives couldn't attend but assured the Community Board that there would be no changes with the restaurant operations. A representative from Jade Eatery failed to attend the meeting. The Committee motion was to approve all applications except Jade Eatery. This will be tabled until next month. The Committee motion passed unanimously on a roll call

vote.

CB 6 received the following liquor license renewals:

1. Shogun, 111-16 Queens Blvd, FH
2. Pampas Argentinas, 105-07 Metropolitan Avenue, FH
3. 718 Hookah & Lounge Inc., 72-13 Austin St., FH
4. Reef, 108-02 72nd Avenue, FH
5. Gabriels, 90-17 63rd Drive, RP
6. Painting with a Twist, 97-14 Metropolitan Ave., FH

The 112th Precinct reported no issues with these establishments. The Committee had no objections, and a motion to approve these applications passed unanimously on a voice vote.

CB 6 also received the following Street Activity Permit Applications.

1. **QUEENS BOULEVARD FOREST HILLS FAIR**
SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 2020 - QUEENS BLVD. BTW YELLOWSTONE BLVD. & 70 ROAD
2. **112TH EXPLORERS SPRING BLOCK PARTY**
SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2020 - QUEENS BLVD. BTW YELLOWSTONE BLVD. & 70 ROAD
3. **63rd Drive SPRING FESTIVAL**
SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2020 - 63RD DRIVE BTW QUEENS BLVD. & AUSTIN STREET
4. **FOREST HILLS FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**
SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 2020 – AUSTIN STREET BTW 69TH ROAD & 72ND ROAD
5. **112th EXPLORERS SUMMER BLOCK PARTY**
SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2020 - QUEENS BLVD BTW YELLOWSTONE BLVD. & 70th ROAD
6. **QUEENS BOULEVARD FESTIVAL**
SUNDAY, JULY 19, 2020 - QUEENS BLVD BTW YELLOWSTONE BLVD & 70th ROAD
7. **63RD DRIVE FESTIVAL**
SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 2020 - 63RD DRIVE BTW QUEENS BLVD. & AUSTIN STREET
8. **JAZZ THURSDAYS FREE OUTDOOR CONCERTS**
THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2020 - 70TH ROAD BTW QUEENS BLVD & AUSTIN STREET
9. **JUNCTION BOULEVARD REGO PARK FAIR**
SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 2020 – JUNCTION BLVD. BTW QUEENS BLVD & 62 DRIVE
10. **JAZZ THURSDAYS FREE OUTDOOR CONCERTS**
THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2020 - 70TH ROAD BTW QUEENS BLVD & AUSTIN ST
11. **FOREST HILLS FALL FESTIVAL**
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2020 - AUSTIN STREET BTW 69TH ROAD & 72ND ROAD
12. **CELEBRATE WINTER**
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2020 – 71st ROAD BTW QUEENS BLVD & AUSTIN STREET

Representatives from the sponsoring organizations as well as the producers of the events were present. There have been no issues with these events in the past. The committee motion to approve these applications passed on a voice vote (36 In Favor, 0 Opposed, 5 Abstentions).

PRESENTATION BY HOWARD LEVINE AND JULIAN BAUTISTA-ROJAS MTA BUS NETWORK REDESIGN DRAFT PLAN

Mr. Levine reported that Queens Bus Service is not working as well as it should for the residents of Queens. Therefore, after outreach to riders asking them what they like / don't like, MTA has put together a draft plan for a new bus design. This outreach began in May 2019. In response to this feedback, the existing conditions report was released in September 2019.

Shortly after, the draft plan was released. There will be many public hearings / meetings to hear what works and what doesn't work.

The new design will offer better connections / easier service for riders using the following techniques:

- Straighter lines, direct routes avoiding too many turns
- Bus stop balancing (faster travel)
- Improve connectivity (to other boroughs, hospitals, colleges, etc.)
- Increase frequency of service (more reliable infrastructure)

Challenges of the current bus system:

- Tangled and redundant routes
- Bus stops are too close together
- Declining ridership

During the redesign, the MTA worked with a blank slate approach and started from scratch. There is no implementation date since they are going to take the public comment into consideration and update the draft plan.

The following bus lines will affect CB 6 the most:

QT11 (108th Street, Queens Boulevard and Union Turnpike)

- o Northern part of Q23
- o Avoid some layover issues and Queens Boulevard and Union Turnpike
- o Combines Q23 and Q46
- o Will operate 8 minutes or better during the day and 30 min or better overnight
- o Working with DOT to make 108 Street a priority corridor

QT32 (Union Turnpike to Glen Oaks)

- o Replaces the Q46
- o Overlaps with QT11
- o Faster access to Kew Gardens subway station
- o Will operate 8 minutes or better during the peak hours

QT14 (Q10 and Q64)

- o Relieves some congestion on Queens Boulevard
- o Ends at Lefferts Boulevard Air Train Station
- o 24 hour route

QT60 (Queens Boulevard)

- o Will not cross into Manhattan
- o Will go to LIC connecting to Hunters Point Ferry, Court Square Subway
- o 24 hour span

- Working with DOT to have bus priority treatments on Queens Boulevard

QT82

- Northern part of route will be the old Q23 route
- Southern part is the Q29 (Penelope Avenue, 63 Drive up to Junction Boulevard to maintain connection with the subway)

QT86

- Yellowstone Boulevard and Cooper Avenue
- New connection to Main Street, Flushing from Queens Boulevard
- Connects to SBS routes on Woodhaven Blvd

QT87 (Metropolitan Avenue/Woodhaven Blvd)

- Replaces Q23 south of Queens Boulevard

More information can be found on the MTA Website newmta.info/queensbusredesign

- Route Profiles
- Interactive Map
- Conversion charts
- Comment on proposals

Once the proposed final plan is released, there will be additional public comment before the plan is brought to the MTA board.

Council Member Karen Koslowitz said that she is against this plan because it doesn't take the needs of her constituents into account. She spoke about the Q60 changes. Many people in this community use the Q60 to go into Manhattan. The LIC connections (ferry, trains) don't get people where they need to be in Manhattan. She also said that 1200ft is too far apart from one bus stop to another. She added that the Q23 bus takes people from one part of FH to the other. While she acknowledges that the Q23 has difficulty turning onto Austin Street, this can be avoided by turning onto Yellowstone Boulevard from Queens Boulevard and continuing from there.

The following is a summary of comments that were made by CB 6 Members about the plan:

- Didn't consider the people who ride the bus (seniors, disabled riders, parent with young children, students)
- Only addresses subway access, not riders that use buses as their only form of transportation
- Buses connect communities that subways don't
- Does not encourage the use of buses
- Stops are too far apart due to elimination of existing stops
- Many express bus routes were not included in plan / others were changed
- The new route maps should be shown in comparison to the old routes

- Q23 connects the entire Forest Hills neighborhood
- Proposed route runs through FH Gardens which is a private community with private streets (specifically Ascan Avenue)
- Blank slate doesn't work; the MTA should make changes in lines that already exist
- No direct access from Rego Park to the M Train to Downtown Manhattan
- Senior centers are not as accessible on the new plan
- Kosher soup kitchen in Rego Park not accessible
- Many stops are not ADA accessible
- Buses in our community work, why change them?
- Have you taken congestion pricing into consideration?
- Will there be a charge for a third transfer?
- You should speak to Senior Centers and get their feedback
- Re-Education will be needed for the public before these route changes go into effect
- What is the hurry to get this done so quickly?
- Visit some of the smaller groups, civic association, etc.

The following is a summary of comments that were made by members of the public:

- Tony Barsamian, Ascan Avenue is a private street and shouldn't be used as a bus street. FH Gardens Corporation maintains the streets.
- Steve Strauss, Ascan Avenue / Continental Avenue are good streets to get between Queens Blvd and Metropolitan Avenue; need better explanations about why the plan did certain things; Access to LaGuardia Airport is unclear
- Judith Berman, She feels that there are a lot of seniors use these buses; visit senior centers; come out into the community
- JP Freeley, Was Metrocard Data Used; Could the plan be redesigned after the 2020 census data is released; Concerns about the decrease in stops on the QT87 vs Q23; Not enough public outreach; ADA accessibility; Trip Planner could be used to compare plans
- Helen Gitleson, No outreach on her bus; Street infrastructure changes could help avoid a complete redesign; Transfers with LIRR; Any environmental impact studies; Do you need public approval?
- Claudia Valentino, FH Community & Civic Association, Q23 changes will impact schools, houses of worship, supermarkets; Unsafe to walk several blocks from subway; increase commutes
- Carol Blatt, There are no supermarkets near 108 Street and Queens Blvd. Suggesting a bus that transports shoppers between local shopping centers.

The following is a summary of comments that were read from comment cards. All comment cards were submitted to the MTA and copies were retained by the Community Board:

- Q60 is heavily used by seniors to get into Manhattan
- If the Q60 isn't going into Manhattan, is there another bus route that intersects that riders can transfer to?

- Were K-12 students considered for the plan?
- What are the plans for the Q88 from Rego Park?
- Concerns about the Q23 as stated above

Many of the questions were not answered but the MTA will be taking all comments / questions into consideration when they revise the draft plan.

GOOD & WELFARE

Heidi Chain announced that the 112th Precinct Community Council meeting will be on Wednesday February 26, 2020 at the Ridgewood Savings Bank.

NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER ANDREW HEVESI

Michael Carlier announced that the Assemblyman has been in contact with the MTA regarding the bus plan and its effect on seniors in the community, particularly access to senior centers.

NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER DANIEL ROSENTHAL

Rick Malone announced that Assemblyman Rosenthal and Assemblywoman Rozic will be hosting an MTA Bus Redesign workshop at Queens College on Wednesday February 19, 2020 from 6pm – 8pm.

Mr. Malone also announced there will be a DOB Workshop on February 20, 2020 at the Kew Gardens Hills Library.

NYS SENATOR JOSEPH ADDABBO

John D'Angelo announced that if anyone has concerns about the Bus Network Redesign, they should call the elected officials.

MAYORS OFFICE – COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNIT

Jessica Schabowski announced that Mayor De Blasio will be holding a Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday February 19, 2020 at Russell Sage Junior High School at 6:30pm. If you are interested in attending, please call 212-788-7418 to RSVP.

CONGRESS MEMBER GRACE MENG

Jordan Goldes announced that they will hold VA Office Hours will be on February 27, 2020. You can call the office to make an appointment.

Mr. Goldes also announced that the Congress Member held a security grant workshop on January 30. Many houses of worship and no profits attended.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Nolan
Community Coordinator

