



COMMUNITY BOARD 6, QUEENS

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Whitepot Settled 1653

CB 6 MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 12, 2020

SHARON LEE
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ALEXA WEITZMAN
CHAIR

FRANK P. GULLUSCIO
DISTRICT MANAGER

GAIL M. GORDON
1ST VICE-CHAIR

PETER BEADLE
2ND VICE-CHAIR

SOUMALY KING
VICE-CHAIR · SECRETARY

NAOMI ALTMAN
VICE-CHAIR · FINANCE

PRAMEET KUMAR
VICE-CHAIR · LAND USE

DAVID SCHNEIER
VICE-CHAIR · SCOPING

PRESENT

A. WEITZMAN, CHAIR
P. BEADLE, 2ND VC
N. ALTMAN, VC FINANCE
D. SCHNEIER, VC SCOPING

G. GORDON, 1ST VC
S. KING, VC SECRETARY
P. KUMAR, VC LAND USE

A. AYON
H. CHAIN
S. CHU
A. COHEN
J. DERESZEWSKI
A. DIAZ-HOUSTON
H. DIMITRIADIS
E. FELDER
G. FERRERAS
B. GRIFFITH
B. GROSSBERG
M. HECHT

O. HORODNICEANU
M. JACOBSON
E. KALENDAREV
J. KEVELSON
M. LASTER
N. LEIBOWITZ
J. LI
K. LY
J. MAKIN
J. MEDINA
R. MEHRRA
S. METZ

P. MORGAN
E. MURRAY
K. NEUMANN
E. NEWTON
T. PADGETT
S. ROLNICK
H. SCHONHAUT
J. SILVA
R. SILVER
S. WANDERMAN
J. WESTON
E. WONG

ABSENT

M. BERFAS
J. GOLANT
R. LEONART

R. NEKTALOV
M. SILVERSTEIN

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

FRANK GULLUSCIO
J. NOCERINO
J. SCHABOWSKI
H. KHAN
M. COHEN

CB 6 DISTRICT MANAGER
OFFICE OF BOROUGH PRESIDENT LEE
MAYOR'S COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNIT
OFFICE OF NYC COMPTROLLER STRINGER
OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ

This meeting was held virtually via Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

PUBLIC FORUM

1) Judith Berman

- My disability card expired. I got a new one but need to transfer the balance from old reduced fare card to new. They don't do it at token booth or machine, and I can't find van. Balance in expired card was \$30
- Because of street closure the Q23 is sometimes rerouted away from 108 St but there are no markings for which stops are closed and where to get bus alternate route bus stop

2) Ozzie Araujo

I am a resident of Forest Hills, a lifelong resident for 36 years. I just want to say that I really appreciate this board and just the inclusivity and accessibility that has come of it. Monday's town hall that our Comptroller hosted, I think the board did such an incredible job doing outreach. I know we had over 300 people. So, kudos to CB6. And during this incredibly difficult time I do want to say thank you to you all because again, going remote and offering this online has really offered much more accessibility for folks that otherwise would not be able to join this meeting. I think civics are so important for us and for us improving being community driven and finding solutions and working together. I do want to also thank our board and chair Alexa for, I think, really for allowing for some very nuance discussion and honest conversation which I think is really critical to our growth. I also wanted to say thank you to 112 Pct. Captain. I know he came on at the last meeting and there was an incident that had occurred. And I am here to share some thoughts about that and I know there was another incident Friday night that was really concerning to me. Going back to the incident that was discussed at the last community board meeting, there was a young black man who is apparently being harassed by police on his way home from work. It has happened on more than one occasion, so I am really interested of what came of it and even the board, any positions on it or what the board is able to do? Because it's something that is very concerning to me. I have experienced a lot of harassment from the police at the 112 Pct. I'm not here representing an organization but I do work at Queens Community House. I've worked with young people all my life. I'm the Director of Beacon program. So, we have a program at Russell Sage JHS. You know, I was a young man in this neighborhood. Coming home from the movies, I had a policeman jump the curb and hop out of his car, curse at me and I was 14 years old. I was a child and so when I hear stories like this today they resonate with me and they are very concerning. I understand the police have a job to do. I understand that they're here for public safety and so it is concerning because I don't think what was happening is appropriate. Last, there was a Muslim incident. I would love to hear what the board thinks of it. Seems like a hate crime.

3) Natalie Dauphin

Hello, my name is Natalie Dauphin. At the last meeting I and several community members submitted letters regarding an incident that occurred between my Godson and members of the 112th precinct. I left the meeting feeling very uneasy and disappointed. Since then, my family and I were able to speak with the Captain privately. It was a lengthy conversation that not only covered what happened to Elijah, but topics related to the culture of policing, training and the overall racial temperament of this community. What happened to my family is an ongoing investigation and I want to thank those who have listened and supported, and we look forward to continuing this conversation with the Captain and the community. Today I wanted to say two things. Firstly, when it comes to issues of policing and conflict with Black and Brown members of the community, I would encourage everyone to shift their language from "we know there are some bad apples" to "how do we address the overall culture of policing and training". This isn't about singling out bad officers, this is and has always been about the system of policing and how Black and Brown bodies are viewed as threats. Chalking things up to a few bad police

officers is just allowing space for them to do so. But if we look at the overall system and how it should be held accountable, we remove the space for those "bad apples" to operate. Secondly a Muslim family was recently attacked in Rego Park in what is being described as a hate crime. We are all members of this community. And I hope we can all stand together in supporting them and holding the 112th precinct accountable in that investigation as well. Thank you.

4) **Titilayo Yasukawa** (This comment was read by Chair Alexa Weitzman)

My question is what outreach activities does CB6 do to engage the community and let people know what you do, how you can help them, when meetings are, etc.? I only heard about the Community Board as I got more involved in the political process over the last year or so. Prior to that, I had never heard about it, never saw any advertising about it, was never reached out to, etc.

Chair Weitzman reminded everyone that the deadline to sign up for Public Comment to be made at the meeting is 3:00pm the day of the meeting. If Public Comment is submitted by Friday at 5:00pm, it will be included in the minutes.

NEW YORK CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT – 112TH PRECINCT

Chair Alexa Weitzman read the following statement from Captain Joseph Cappelmann regarding an incident that happened in Rego Park:

On Friday, November 6, 2020 at approximately 11:20 PM, members of the 112th Precinct responded to a brutal assault in the vicinity of Woodhaven Boulevard and 62nd Avenue. A male victim was removed to Elmhurst General Hospital with serious injuries to his face. The alleged perpetrators fled the location in an unknown direction. A Complaint Report was prepared for Assault-2 (Felony) and referred to the 112 Precinct Detective Squad for further investigation. At the time of the incident, there was no indication of or suggestion that this may be a hate crime communicated to responding Officers. On Tuesday, November 10, the 112 Precinct Detective Squad was conducting a follow-up investigation when it was determined that this incident may have been motivated by the victim's religious beliefs. The NYPD's Hate Crime Task Force was immediately notified and participated in the early stages of the investigation. Based on the facts of the case, it was ultimately determined that the investigation would be conducted by the 112 Precinct Detective Squad. Recently, additional information has come to light and the 112 Precinct Detective Squad and the Hate Crime Task Force along with the Queens County District Attorney's Office will be seeking to charge this incident as a Hate Crime. We take this incident very seriously and are investigating it with all available resources. One individual believed to be responsible for the assault has been identified and taken into custody. We are working very hard to identify the second perpetrator. The investigation is on-going

ACCESSIBLE DISPATCH PROGRAM

Steven Williams spoke briefly about the Accessible Dispatch program which connects New Yorkers with wheelchair accessible taxis. This program is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and no enrollment is necessary. Even though the vehicle is larger than a typical taxi and the driver is trained to help customers in and out of the vehicle, the fare is the same as a regular taxi. You can get service on demand or book trips in advance. This program can be reached by calling 646-599-9999, by visiting www.accessibledispatch.com or by downloading the app "Accessible Dispatch NYC".

MINUTES

There were 2 comments about the minutes from October 14, 2020

- 1) Board Member Jean Silva felt that the section about the 112th Precinct should have been more specific in naming individuals from the Community Board that took part in the conversation with Captain Cappelmann.
- 2) There was a public comment made by Stella Xu that indicated that there was a Zoom Bombing incident that included racial biases and the 112th Precinct told the complainant that he couldn't make a complaint because he wasn't a minority. Board Member Heidi Chain asked to clarify that the 112th Precinct did offer to take a report and followed up. This individual may have contacted another precinct.

These 2 items will not be changed in the original minutes. The minutes of October 14, 2020 were accepted as written.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Alexa Weitzman spoke about the Capital and Expense Budget requests. Starting last year, Ms. Weitzman wanted the committees to meet and discuss items that pertain to their committees. However, with COVID, this plan didn't go as smoothly. It is often difficult to sort through the capital and expense items during the community board meeting because there are a lot of different ideas. Therefore, for FY2023, Chair Weitzman would like to start these requests earlier. The committee chairs should be meeting with their committee for suggestions on budget priorities. Naomi Altman, Chair of the Finance Committee, wanted to bring to everyone's attention that the CB doesn't fund organizations or projects. These are priorities that the CB would like to see funded. She also added that when the committee selections were made, people may not have known that this was part of the scope of the committees. Chair Weitzman said that if anyone wants to change their committees, they can contact her.

Chair Weitzman mentioned that the COVID numbers are rising. Please take it seriously and follow the regulations that are being released: Private gatherings are limited to 10 people and restaurants, bars and gyms must close at 10:00PM. Text COVID to 692692 for updated information from New York City. Also, representatives from NYC Agencies are visiting businesses to ensure that they are following regulations such as: signage, safety plan, disinfecting logs, employer health screening review documentation.

Last, Chair Weitzman recognizes that yesterday was Veterans Day and thanked all the members of the board and community that are veterans including our past chair, the late Joseph Hennessy.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager Frank Gulluscio reported that early voting was a success in our area as well as most parts of the city.

Mr. Gulluscio announced that the CB Office is very busy with complaints. The office is staffed with the staff alternating days in the office and working remotely.

There is a sewer project starting on 108th Street and pedestrian ramp reconstruction throughout our district.

With respect to the uptick in COVID numbers, we are watching it closely, especially the schools.

Last, Mr. Gulluscio announced that all 59 community boards are being audited. CB 6 is ready to submit all requested documents.

LAND USE AND HOUSING COMMITTEE REPORT

Prameet Kumar, Chair, reported that the Community Board received an application that was submitted to the NYC Department of City Planning for ULURP.

A) 91-32 63rd DRIVE REZONING

63-68 RWKOP LLC (the "Applicant"), the owner of 91-32 63rd Drive (Block 3104, Lot 16) (the "Development Site"), proposes the following actions: 1) a zoning map amendment changing from an R4/C2-2 zoning district to an R7A/C2-3 district property bounded by 63rd Drive, Austin Street, a line 100 feet from and parallel to 63rd Drive, and the north side of the Long Island Rail Road Main Line (comprising Block 3104, p/o Lot 14 and Lot 16) (the "Project Area") in Queens Community District 6; and 2) a zoning text amendment of Zoning Resolution ("ZR") Appendix F: Inclusionary Housing Designated Areas and Mandatory Inclusionary Housing ("MIH") Areas for Queens Community District 6 to establish the Project Area as an MIH Area. The proposed actions would facilitate the development of a new nine-story Quality Housing residential building with approximately 74 dwelling units, of which 25-30 percent of the residential floor area (19 to 24 units) would be permanently income-restricted pursuant to the MIH program. The Applicant intends to reserve the MIH units for Affordable Independent Residences for Seniors ("AIRS").

Frank St. Jacques, Ackerman LLC and Lauren George, Constantinople and Vallone gave the following additional information:

- 9 story mixed use (residential and commercial) development
- 74 units
- 68,656 Sq Ft of total floor area
- 58,338 Sq Ft of residential floor area
- 10,318 Sq Ft for local retail
- Attended cellar parking garage with 45 spaces (via Austin Street)
- 24 permanently income restricted MIH units (30%)
- Proposed unit distribution: 21 Studios, 30 – 1 Bedroom, 23 – 2 Bedroom

The following public comments were made during the Public Hearing regarding this application:

Jane Brown

Please do not approve the building on the Shalimar Diner site. It will either sit empty for years and years, or it will be used by the city as a homeless shelter, or for very low income housing.

We already know that Manhattan/Brooklyn developers are actively trying to start a middle class flight out of Queens. For the past 2 summers, hoards of low-income people - not in our community - walk continuously through upscale areas. And lines of young people blasting loud music - with car windows rolled down - file through, or park. Forest Hills crime has soared because of the Kew Gardens homeless shelter. We no longer allow our children to visit here because the subways are dangerous now. A huge empty building will do nothing for this area.

Toby Usenheimer

I live in Rego Park five months a year. As a matter of fact I grew up there, on Saunders St. Through the years I have noticed many changes in the neighborhood, some better than others. One thing that I have noticed is the overbuilding going on. New 20+ floor housing is going up on Queens Blvd. not so far from the newly proposed housing on 63 drive. How many more riders can the buses and subway absorb? Small businesses are being forced out to make room for these new high rises. At what point does this become over development? What was so lovely about my neighborhood was In part the local feel. This community board has not taken that into consideration and in my opinion is destroying the area. Please feel free to contact me regarding this by either my email or phone. Thank you

Steven Goldberg

Mr. District Manager, Madam Chairwoman, members of Community Board 6,
In reviewing an application for a zoning change on 63rd Drive in Rego Park submitted by 63-68 RWKOP I cannot find any justification for such a request for a zoning change of this magnitude. There is no reason given why the developer cannot develop the site under the current zoning. There are three ways by which a developer/owner can make a request to build more than the zoning text allows. The first is a special permit which is filed with City Planning. This limits the developer to a height and bulk limitation as specified in the application and as adopted. No more no no less can be built. In a sense, the request is "cast in stone." The second is through a request for a variance filed with Standard and Appeals and must meet a set of requirements to be granted. Again, what is proposed is what is going to be built. With either of these what you have approved is what is going to be built. The third is through a zoning change and this is what this request is about. With a vote for a zoning change you open the door for whatever the new zoning designation allows with respect to height and bulk. You will have created a situation that will allow an "as of right" development. Nothing about the composition of the project is specified beforehand. With lack of a better set of words, with a zoning change it's almost "the sky is the limit". As long as height and bulk regulations are followed, a developer does not have to build what has been presented as an example. I appreciate you time in considering these comments.

The following comments were submitted after the deadline for the meeting. They weren't read at the meeting but will be part of the public record.

Sheryl Fetik

My name is Sheryl Fetik. I am a lifelong resident and homeowner in Rego Park. My home is located 3 blocks west of the site for the proposed zoning changes, for the lot at Austin Street and 63rd Drive. Whatever is built at this location, it will have an impact on how I and my neighbors will be able to live and function in our neighborhood. I believe that the vote and hearing on this proposal should be delayed to a later date. There has not been enough time or notice for local residents and businesses to be able to respond properly. This hearing and vote are unnecessarily being rushed through. I attended the Zoom meeting of the CB6 Zoning and Housing two days ago, on Tuesday, Nov. 10, and listened to the presentation about this development. There are many open questions about how this new building will function on the site. I am very familiar with the history of the usage of this location. During the 1960's, this was the location of a beloved old library, and then after a devastating fire, the much appreciated Shalimar Diner was located there.

I am not necessarily opposed to this project, but have many obvious questions and concerns. The proposal for a 9 story mixed usage building would create a much greater population density, and

more traffic congestion, than the prior uses of the property. Are we addressing the safety concerns and the other pressures on our community? The following are some of my thoughts.

1. The plan includes exiting from a garage, onto Austin Street. This might create a safety hazard.
2. The corner of Austin St. and 63rd Drive is a busy intersection, and Austin St. is a one-way street. The Shalimar Diner had parking around the store, with cars entering from 63rd Drive, a two way, wide street.
3. The plan's description includes three numbers of apartments for the building, 91, 92 and 74. This was clarified by the developer, as 74, but then how many of each type of apartment are planned? The answer would affect the population of the neighborhood school, a block away.
4. I recognize that real costs of real estate are escalating, as are rentals. Rego Park has been a working class to middle class neighborhood, from its inception. How are the costs of the rental units being determined? May I and others review financial statements for the proposed building? Will this building remain a rental, or are there any plans to convert it to a co-op?
5. Sustainability and climate change: What decisions and steps are being made to make this building energy efficient, in the materials to be used, in the energy sources, etc.?
6. The proposed 9 story structure would be at least 3 stories higher than neighboring buildings. The single family homes in the area are mostly two stories high, including my own. How will the light be affected, for the surrounding structures and neighborhood? Will some of us lose part of the Eastern Sun? Please postpone any decision on this project. Clearly, we don't yet have enough information.

Latrice Davis

Greetings. I'm a Rego Park resident who wants to be a part of the solution (as opposed to part of the problem) when it comes to navigating the many issues we face as a community. I believe in affordable housing (especially in these difficult times), but I have some concerns about this project. As a native New Yorker who was born and raised in Brooklyn, I'm all-too-familiar with the unintended consequences of gentrification. The development that has been proposed sounds like another eyesore on the city skyline, like dumping a LeFrak City complex on the corner with no thought to the aesthetics of the surrounding area. I have no problem with a three-story building (or an additional floor or two), and I have no issue with the developer catering to elderly and disabled tenants, but nine stories seems like overkill.

Ravi Chandran

I attended tonight's board meeting. I wish I knew about this project earlier because I live around the corner and the traffic issue is real. But, I hope this housing will go to people who really need it. I want to know how do find out about the viability of a SB Q60 bus service. I know COVID has created issues in terms of people being packed into a small space but I have always thought this would have alleviated crowding on the subways when it was a problem. Since the bike lane has taken up space on the local Queens Blvd lanes, is it possible to create a dedicated bus lane on the express lanes of Queens Blvd for the SB Q60?

The applicant attended a Land Use Committee Meeting on 11/10/20. Some of the issues that were raised at the committee meeting were: traffic concerns, the affordability of the MIH units, and the impact on nearby buildings. The committee voted to approve this application. After hearing concerns from the committee, the applicant agreed to providing 20% of the 30% MIH set aside at 60% AMI. This results in 16 of the 24 permanently income-restricted MIH units at 60% AMI."

Michael Cohen, representative for Council Member Karen Koslowitz, stated that CM Koslowitz supports this project. However, as this project goes through the ULURP process, things can change about the project. He said that this development is important for the affordable housing aspect. We need affordable housing, especially affordable senior housing.

There was some discussion amongst the board raising the following issues:

- Traffic Congestion on 63rd Drive
- Affordability of the units
- Marketing of the affordable units
- Not family oriented
- Accessibility for people with disabilities

The Board voted to approve this application on a roll call vote (36 Yes, 5 No).

CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Elizabeth Newton, Chair of Consumer Affairs Committee reported that the Board received 4 new liquor license applications.

1. Austin Street Pizza, 71-63 Austin Street, FH
2. MFC Forest Hills, 71-37 Austin Street, FH
3. Don Pollo Son's II Corp, 100-05 Metropolitan Avenue, FH
4. Loncheria del Bosque, LLC, 71-22 Austin Street, FH

CB 6 received the following liquor license renewals:

1. Chzoorz Japanese Cuisine, 97-09 64th Avenue, RP
2. La Vigna Restaurant and Bar, 100-11 Metropolitan Avenue, FH
3. Bamboo Ya Sushi Inc, 69-12 Austin Street, FH
4. My Kitchen, 106-17 Metropolitan Avenue, FH
5. New Pinang Cuisine, 111-10 Queens Boulevard, FH

The 112th Precinct was contacted and there were no major issues / complaints about these establishments. The Committee had no objections to these new and renewal applications, and a motion to approve the new and renewal applications passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Ms. Newton also announced that she sent an email to all CB Members regarding guidelines for establishments with respect to outdoor dining / indoor dining.

AGING / SOCIAL SERVICES / DISABILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Mark Laster, Co-Chair, reported that the committee met on October 19. They discussed COVID-19. The committee came up with some recommendations for how to encourage people to be safe during the pandemic and comply with regulations:

- Encourage people not to be afraid to go to the hospital if they are sick
- Table in the community to give out information
- Provide local businesses with flyers related to COVID-19

The next meeting will be Monday November 16, 2020. All CB Members are welcome to attend.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION / TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Peter Beadle, Co-Chair, reported that the committee met on October 29, 2020.

They discussed Transportation related budget items for FY2023 and would like to communicate with other boards regarding how they list their priorities.

In addition, they asked for updates from CB 6 Planner John O'Neill at DOT for studies that were ongoing. Many of these studies are still in progress but he will update us on them.

Additional items the committee would like to bring to DOT's attention:

- Follow up study on Austin Street and Yellowstone Boulevard
- Traffic controls at Alderton Street and Fleet Street

GOOD & WELFARE

Jean Silva announced a Planning Meeting for the Greenway from Coney Island to Fort Totten on November 19, 2020. To sign up for this event, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/destination-greenwaysqueens-tickets-126321891177>. Also, don't forget to utilize your local parks.

Heidi Chain reported that the 112th Precinct Community Council Meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday November 18, 2020. If you would like to attend or if you have any questions for the Captain, please email council112@yahoo.com.

MAYOR'S COMMUNITY AFFAIRS UNIT

Jessica Schabowski announced the following:

- Opt in period to go from remote learning to blended learning will be open until November 15. Families can go to www.schools.nyc.gov/returntoschool2020
- Open storefronts program began on October 30 and will run through December 31 . This allows businesses to use a portion of their sidewalk to display merchandise, sell goods, complete transactions and provide queuing areas.
- 5th Annual Dusk and Darkness Campaign – reminding motorists how dangerous fall evenings are for pedestrians and cyclists.
- COVID rates are increasing. NYC is reminding everyone to wear a mask, social distance, keep indoor gatherings at a minimum and get tested.

QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT SHARON LEE

Joe Nocerino, announced the following events:

- o BP Lee's 10th Recruitment Fair on November 18, 2020 at 2:00pm.
- o Tree Lighting at Queens Borough Hall – December 3, 2020

Mr. Nocerino also stated that he can assist with the MTA issues brought up by Judith Berman during the Public Forum.

NYC COMPTROLLER SCOTT STRINGER

Haris Khan announced that the Comptroller's Town Hall Event was a success. He thanked all those that participated and attended. If anyone submitted a question, they should have received a response. You can also watch the town hall on the Comptrollers Facebook page.

Comptroller Stringer disagrees with the Opt in Period to go from Remote Learning to Blended Learning.

Last, The Comptroller is doing a work and family survey to see how work habits, families have changed since COVID pandemic has started.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Nolan
Community Coordinator