



Melinda Katz
Queens Borough President

Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

Bay Terrace, College Point, Beechurst, Flushing
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Eugene T. Kelty Jr.

Chairperson

Marilyn McAndrews

District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 14TH, 2018

UNION PLAZA CARE CENTER

33-23 UNION STREET

FLUSHING, NEW YORK

PRESENT

Charles Apelian

Tyler Cassell

Alfredo Centola

James Cervino

Michael Cheng

Chin-Hsiang Chiang

John Choe

Kim Cody

Nicholas Corrado

Arlene Fleishman

Richard Forman

Fred Fu

Vincent Gianelli

Pablo Hernandez

Lawrence Hughes

Eugene Kelty

Phil Konigsberg

Peter Kwiath

Esther Lee

Li Mei Li

Frank Macchio

Rev. McEachern

Barbara McHugh

Selma Moses

Millicent O'Meally

John Park

Paul Rifino

Belal Salim

Warren Schreiber

Kevin Scheilds

Matthew Silverstein

Joshua Sussman

Joseph Sweeney

Alison Tan

John Tsavalos

Peter Tu

Harpreet Wahan Singh

Clarissa Wong

Linna Yu

Lei Zhao

Jie Zhu

ABSENT

Christine Colligan

Kris Ram

Dian Yu

Jeff Huang

Marc Schiffman

Kim Ohanian

Peter Sutich

Terence Park

Carlos Talisaysay

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager

Mary Zuliani, Community Assistant

Mary O'Neill, Community Assistant

GUESTS

Jason Antonopoulos - Assemblyman Edward Braunstein's office

Joyce Choi - Councilman Peter Koo's office

Eric Mayer - Assemblyman Ron Kim's office

Larry Gallegos - Congresswoman Crowley's office

Justin J. Connor - Congressman Thomas Suozzi's office

Tim Thomas - Assemblyman Daniel Rosenthal's office

Chair Eugene Kelty opened the meeting at 7:10 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silent prayer for our military forces around the world and at home. We must never forget them.

Roll call attendance was taken with **(41) Present (3) Absent (6) Excused**

Chair Kelty congratulated the following new Community Board #7 members as follows: John Park, who owns a small business in medical uniform rentals and is also a member of Borough President Melinda Katz's General Assembly and Alfred Centola of the Board of Education and works together with our board member, Nicholas Corrado. Our First Vice Chair, Chuck Apelian extended his appreciation to those members who attended his father's funeral. Chair Kelty congratulated board member, Harpreet Wahan, who recently graduated with an MPA from Columbia University. Chair Kelty announced the following job opportunities: MTA Metro North Inspection Manager with a starting salary of \$73,000 and MTA Metro North Assistant Inspection Manager with a starting salary of \$64,000. The Flushing Town Hall gala will be held on June 7th. Chair Kelty is recovering from having surgery May 1st on his shoulder and will be retiring from the FDNY on July 11, 2018^h after 39 years of service.

ITEM #4 - GIRL SCOUT 'S COUNCIL - Hannah Fertig - Ms. Fertig is looking for Girl Scout recruits ages K-12, as well as Troupe Leaders. The organization will provide the programs and materials. Interesting facts noted were that 95% of the female astronauts, 80% of the female CEO's and 100% of female Secretaries of State were Girl Scouts!

Q. Will Girl Scouts take in boys now that Boy Scouts of America are doing so?

A. No, GSA will still maintain girls only!

Q. Has GSA been reaching out to high schools for students interested in community service?

A. We work with Junior & Senior Girl Scouts to provide this service.

Q. If a young girl asks about joining the BSA, what would you tell them?

A. My understanding is that BSA keep the boys and girls separate anyway.

ITEM #5 - NY Presbyterian Hospital, Queens Peri-Natal Safety – Sandra Asanjarani, Peri-Natal Safety Officer - Two years ago NYPQ sought to achieve the WHO/UN Baby Friendly Designation which awards Institutions that excel in maternity care and equip new mothers to feed safely and successfully. First it is essential to understand the importance of breastfeeding which promotes their healthy development, protects against infections/diseases, reduces obesity, and decreases diarrhea and aids recovery of illness, all of which benefits the child, especially premature newborns. It benefits the nursing mother by reducing hospital admissions, the risk of breast and ovarian cancer and it's more economical. The goal of NYPQ is to increase breastfeeding from 12% to 24% and educate the parents and community. A survey was distributed to the Board Members to help NYPQ gather info from organizations in the community interested in helping them with this outreach.

Q. Why are breastfeeding rates so low here?

A. Patients have been falsely informed that formula is better for infants. We are committed to reversing the trend.

Q. Do you do any advocacy work promoting paid maternity leave because this is a big reason many mothers feed formula?

A. We make sure people are aware of their rights to breastfeed their babies.

Q. Can you explain why for some time doctors were informing mothers that breastfeeding wasn't as beneficial for newborns?

A. The marketing of formula was aggressive and the convenience of formula was a powerful tool, even though we knew breastfeeding was better. As a collective society we lost our way in terms of feeding our newborns.

Q. Some mothers may be using drugs, cigarettes, alcoholic drinks, etc. What are the limitations?

A. You would be surprised; most drugs, substances, do not prevent you from breast feeding.

ITEM #5A - NYC Department of City Planning re Hotel Special Permits in M1 zones - Hye-Kyung Yang, City Planner, spoke on the proposed text amendment requiring developers wanting to build in an M1 zone now needing Hotel Special Permits. Currently developers can build as-of-right hotels in M1 zones without special permits. With Hotel growth and tourism steadily rising, 30% of new hotel development

slated for M1 zones is happening outside of Manhattan. Land use regulations in M1 zones have not changed and can conflict with hotels. DCP is proposing a text amendment for a CPC Special Permit for new hotels, motels, tourist cabins and boatels in M1 districts. It will be reviewed case-by-case to ensure hotels are built on appropriate sites, minimizing conflicts in industrial area to achieve a balanced mix of uses. It will, however exclude airport-adjacent properties, existing mixed- use zones, existing hotels, transient hotels, or any expansion to existing hotels. Each case would require full ULURP process of approximately 2 years.

Q. If the economics aren't working well for a hotel, can they become homeless shelters?

A. The City can technically issue RFP's where hotel owners can bid some of their rooms for this use.

Q. What is a boatel?

A. Group of buildings with hotel use in close proximity to water.

Q. What is a tourist cabin?

A. A small bungalow available for rental. This is a relic of old codes, but we wanted to make sure it Didn't become a loophole.

First Vice Chair Chuck Apelian stated the driving force behind this is the Hotel Trade Council. It's a tool for the Council to unionize the hotels. The City can bypass this special permit process though. First Vice Chair Apelian does not support the amendment.

Board Member Nick Corrado commented while he sees Chuck's point, he strongly approves the proposed special permit, as it could be a means to help restrain development.

Board Member Rev. McEachern appreciates the information forthcoming from these special permits as it would allow us to be more effective advocates for the community.

Board Member Pablo Hernandez asked for further information on how homeless shelters might affect neighborhoods.

Board Member Selma Moses agreed that there's been far too much development in Flushing.

Q. Board Member Alfred Centola asked if the text amendment can be changed?

A. This will get discussed, amended, etc., but ultimately only City Council can make this a law!

Q. Board Member Allison Tan asked what would the impact of this be on the hotel market?

A. There's been a huge increase in hotel developments in the City, and our studies show the capacity to absorb more rooms over the next few years will be limited.

Q. Nick Corrado asked how will the Borough Board know if CB #7 favors or disfavors this proposal?

Chair Kelty responded we may need to convene a Buildings/Land Use committee meeting to discuss it.

Nothing is being voted on this evening.

Q. Board Member Millicent O'Meally asked does the City currently build hotels specifically for the homeless?

A. No, they generally operate through a non-profit, which will either build a hotel or other building.

Q. Board Member Belal Salim asked if the proposed special permits have an expiration date?

A. Yes, four (4) years. However, if you don't complete the project, you can get a 3 year extension.

Q. Board Member Tyler Cassell asked if it's beneficial for a hotel developer to look at M1 zones as opposed to higher density R zones?

A. It depends what your business model is.

ITEM #6 - 133-11 20TH Avenue, College Point - Application submitted by College Point Management Inc. for modification of previously approved special permit (#C850785ZSQ) and updating to now reflect a proposed as-of-right one-story building and changing the reconfiguration and redesign of the accessory parking lot on the property.

The owner's counsel and architect for the project spoke on this proposal for a Use Group 6 on the empty Staples property and building a 9000 sq. ft. one story retail beauty makeup parlor with five chairs and a range of accessories, make up, etc. The site in this M1 zone includes a ShopRite store (originally Waldbaum's) with an as-of-right use and FAR was approved in

1989. Changes to the site now only require modification, but not a ULURP process. Improvements will be to the entire parking lot with better laid parking islands, more striping, employee parking, differentiation between loading zones and parking spaces. Also, windows will be on all sides with the entrance on the NE corner of the building and a loading dock on the south side of the building

Q. What's the current situation with parking?

A. We're required to have 436 parking spots.

Q. How many square feet are built now?

A. The square footage allows for 400,000 square feet, but there will only be 113,000 square feet available for the new building. It wasn't obvious during the groundbreaking that the building required a special permit.

Q. Wouldn't it be better for Ulta to use the existing Staples building instead of building a new one?

A. Ulta prefers its own space.

Q. What is the term of the lease for the building?

A. The retailer has a 10 year lease with a 5 year option. Also, this is an approval for a Use Group 6 so it could be anything in this Use group, which is for general retail.

Q. Since the whole site is on fill, is there going to be a problem with it?

A. No, the building is on pilings.

Community Board #7 committee made the following recommendations to the proposal.

- 1) Replace failing subsoils
- 2) Add 32 parking spaces for this building
- 3) Improve the parking lot
- 4) Improve curb cuts
- 5) Improve the lot internal circulation
- 6) Add a right turn on red indicator westbound on 20th Ave.

Discussion followed:-

Q. There is persistent flash flooding in this area during heavy rain events so who will be responsible?

A. Chair Kelty responded that the City has to maintain the area, and the Board will need to follow up with them about it.

The motion now on the floor is to approve the modification of the original special permit plan with the proposed new one-story as-of-right building and changing the configuration and design of the parking lot and taking note of our recommendations listed above, seconded by Tyler Cassell.

The motion carried unanimously by all board members present!

ITEM # 7 – 17-10 WHITESTONE EXPRESSWAY – Calendar #2017-288-BZ - Application for a special permit to allow rooftop parking on a proposed parking deck of a new office building at location. The owner of the building, Jetro Group, had his representatives as well as the engineering firm present to speak. Jetro outgrew the original site, but wanted to stay in College Point so they chose to build a new facility for their corporate offices. The proposed office building 4 stories and the proposed rooftop parking is an additional 4 stories since they've outgrown existing parking. Trees will be planted to help screen the parking structure from the residential zone to the north.

Q. Is the garage going to be attached to the building?

A. Yes, at-grade with a covered walkway.

Q. Why have the rooftop parking at all? Just put the offices on top of the parking facility!

A. Because we've exceeded parking ratios. It would become more uneconomical.

Q. Why not add a roof on top of the structure above the parking?

A. They are adding 123 parking spots over the requirement.

- Q. Did you think about covering the roof with solar panels?
- A. One of our warehouse has the biggest solar installation in the city on its roof.
- Q. How will you handle snow removal from the rooftop?
- A. Snow removal and treatment will all be done on site. Snow removal equipment can be moved in and out of the parking deck.
- Q. What hours would this lot be in operation?
- A. Business hours from 9 am to 6 pm. Most late leavers will have spots on the lower levels. The facility will be closed on weekends.

The committee made the following recommendations.

- 1) Concerns were raised regarding the narrow access from the Whitestone Expressway service road.
- 2) Petracca Place is the only other entrance/egress. Though privately owned, it is a public road, and can be used for this facility.

The motion on the floor was to approve the special permit to allow rooftop parking on a proposed parking deck of a new office building at the location, seconded by Warren Schreiber.

The vote taken was unanimous to approve the motion!

ITEM #8 – CB #7’S SCHOOL SAFETY RESOLUTION – Arlene Fleishman & Nicholas Corrado – The CB #7 resolution commitment to provide a safe school environment free from gun violence was read aloud to all board members.

Board Member Tyler Cassell was at the meeting where Councilman Vallone introduced some possible legislation, and said there is some work already in progress. The recommendation then was to create a School Safety Task Force that would review all possible avenues. However, tonight we should go ahead and approve our resolution as is

The motion put forth on the floor was to approve Community Board #7’s Resolution Commitment to provide a safe school environment free from gun violence.

A copy of Board #7’s resolution is available at the office.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ben Pelt, Bike New York – Bike education centers are located near Flushing and classes are FREE with one is at the Flushing YMCA and one behind the Aquatics Center. Learn to ride classes are for all ages. There are higher level classes to help you navigate the City by bike and bike maintenance, etc. They are looking for volunteers. **Nicky Siabno, Queens College, Journalism** - Spoke about the 2020 Census which is used to apportion Representatives in Congress. It’s also used for determining disbursement of funds from Federal to State level. Mr. Siabno is looking for CB 7 members’ comments /concerns regarding the White House’s push to add questions on citizenship status on the upcoming census.

James Cervino, board member regarding Community Cash Flow on the following:-

1. Plan to create a Flushing Dollar.
2. Based on cryptocurrency.
3. This is currency manipulation.
4. Would create a taxation nightmare.
5. Cannot be allowed to happen.

Cindy from Bodhi Meditation Center located on College Point Blvd. behind Western Beef. She spoke about the benefits of meditation and gave their address at 131-27 Fowler Avenue and phone number 718/886-1122. **Rosalinda Martinez** also invited everyone to attend meditation retreats at the center every Saturday in June (3rd, 10th, and 24th). Bring comfortable clothes and blanket.

Chair Kelty spoke on Community Board protocols as follows:

1. Refraining from use of cell phones for any non-board purpose.
2. Not leaving the meeting hall for side discussions during the session.
3. Please pay attention to the information being presented to you.
4. Committees are incredibly important to our work and you are required to attend your committee Meetings.

Meeting ended at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
MARY ZULIANI