

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2014
UNION PLAZA CARE CENTER
33-23 UNION STREET
FLUSHING, N.Y. 11354

PRESENT

John Byas	Kevin Kang	Vana Partridge
Tyler Cassell	Eugene Kelty	Kris Ram
James Cervino	Donald Kirchhofer	Andrew Rocco
Chin-Hsiang Chiang	Phil Konigsberg	Kevin Shields
Timothy Chuang	Peter Kwiath	Marc Schiffman
Kim Cody	Esther Lee	Warren Schreiber
Nicholas Corrado	Myungsuk Lee	Lynda Spielman
Arlene Fleishman	Frank Macchio	Joshua Sussman
Rose Forkan	Barbara McHugh	Peter Sutich
Fred Fu	Selma Moses	Joseph Sweeney
Pablo Hernandez	Kim Ohanian	Arnold Wagner
	Millicent O'Meally	Linna Yu

ABSENT

Chuck Apelian	Frank Keppel	Carlos Talisaysay
Dilip Chauhan	Rev. R. McEachern	Jean Ren
Joseph Femenia	Nicholas Miglino	Peter Tu
Jeff Huang	Terence Park	

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn Bitterman, District Manager
Marilyn McAndrews, Community Assistant
Mary Zuliani, Community Assistant

GUESTS:

Don Capalbi, Congresswoman Grace Meng's office

Volodymyr Bakhnal, Senator Tony Avella's office
Scott Stringer, Comptroller
Munir Avery , Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz's office
Mitchell Metcalf, Assemblyman Ron Kim's office
Courtney Cariello, Assemblywoman Nily Rozic's office
Allen Hsu, Councilman Peter Koo's office
Daniel Rosenthal, Councilman Rory Lancman's office
Vito Tautonico, Councilman Paul Vallone's office
Susie Tanenbaum, Queens Borough President's office
Jeong-Ah Choi, Queens Borough President's office

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm. by 3rd Vice Chair Kim Ohanian who asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance and to remain standing for one minute in honor of our Military around the world and in memory of those who perished for our country.

The roll call attendance was taken by Chairman Eugene Kelty with (36) member's present, (5) absent and (7) excused. A reminder, whether you are absent with an excuse or not, you are considered absent. When the report to the Borough President is sent in, however, it will display the absences due to emergencies or conflicts, as well as the no shows. Also, when voting if you choose to abstain, it must be because of conflict, otherwise it's considered a No vote.

The motion to approve the November 25, 2013 minutes was made with one correction by Board Member, Millicent O'Meally, the misspelling of the Benenson's facility, seconded by Arlene Fleishman and unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Chairman Eugene Kelty followed with the public service announcements and indicated they would be available to anyone at the board office the next day.

The Chair gave the floor to **Warren Schreiber** who attended an FAA meeting for our Board regarding Legislation P150 passed by the State Legislature & Assembly to conduct noise studies by the PA at our local airports. The Governor vetoed the legislation and issued an Executive order requiring the PA to put into effect the P150 noise studies and to form an Aviation Roundtable, all of which is long term. Congressman Crowley, on the other hand, pressed the FAA for Silent Technology, also long term, which will require retrofittings and/or new aircraft. A formation committee for a roundtable met on December 12, 2013 in Senator Avella's office and included CB11, Floral Park Mayor, Queens Civic Congress, Queens Quiet Skies, Eastern Queens Alliance and representatives via conference calls from Connecticut, with CB7 represented by Mr. Schreiber. This is one of many committee meetings that will be held to form one Roundtable for Nassau and Suffolk Counties, the five NYC boroughs, New Jersey and Connecticut, all of which are impacted by the airports in the area. When completed there will be other participants covering tourism, labor interests, real estate developers and the hotel trade union, all of whom will be backing Global Gateway Alliance pushing for expanded runways at JFK and LaGuardia leading to even more air traffic and a greater strain on traveling in or out of New York. No committee group will have a mandate to create an aviation roundtable, and the Port Authority is under no obligation to accept the recommendations of a roundtable, but we can make our voices heard and

work to get as much as we can through it. The FAA has announced they will perform a noise survey, but we have no particulars on how it will be done.

Chair Kelty introduced our newly elected Comptroller, **Scott Stringer**, who was appointed to a community board, and knows their importance in representing the entire community. As Comptroller, and a past Manhattan Borough President, he will work with the communities as well as pay attention to the fiscal issues, rule out waste and fraud and continue senior and children services, etc. He strongly feels the future economic development of the City lies in our boroughs and attention must be given to the wellbeing of the entire City. He asked us to welcome the new Queens Director of his office, Jason Hilliard.

Q. Our former Comptroller sent us notes telling us how our pensions were doing, etc. Will you do the same every three months?

A. Absolutely!

Q. The recent 5-year capital plan on school construction left the schools in our district with no funding, and electric wiring which cannot accommodate the school equipment. Why?

A. Over the next few months, we are investigating outside technology contracts for software with coding that is NOT transferable, which insures a consultant to be with the City forever. This new scam leaves millions of dollars unavailable for the classroom and capital construction. We need to have more transparency and better answers, and we will not accept less!

Chair Kelty's commented on two problems; i.e. a blank check for cost overruns and non-charted agencies, like EDC. A case in point, the Yankee Stadium deal which will not show a profit until 2050. We hope your agency will look into the Mayoral Agencies.

A. We are going to be involved in the contract process at the very beginning, during the RFP and pre-conference days, when we can track the cost overruns midway, and not at the end when it's too late. We are going to be part of the community and a place to come to.

Q. As a city worker, we have been working without a contract. How much input will you have in labor contracts?

A. We have presently 152 labor contracts that have expired. We have union workers without a contract for 3 to 5 years already, teachers, police, fire. I plan to be constructive in the debate, as this is serious. This is not political and I would never disrespect the labor union that fought to save the City in the past. Pattern bargaining has been in the system for the past 40 years and we should continue it.

Q. Why doesn't the City pay more attention to the contractors who are not responsible and do not pay their sub-contractors properly; and at what point does the City of NY say we longer want your services?

A. The Comptroller has the authority to place bad contractors on a no bid list, as well as look for prevailing wage violations. I intend to forcefully enforce the rules. After Sandy, we received \$15 billion in Federal monies sifted through City agencies to rebuild homes and infrastructure. As Comptroller I am setting up a special Sandy audit bureau to track the monies, and make sure it is used properly to rebuild homes and our infrastructure.

Q. Are you planning additional funding for the infrastructure technology needed?

A. To John Liu's credit, he put in place real technological audit advances. We would like to take it

to the next level. Also, we must make a change in the workplace for future entrepreneurs. We are not training our kids for these high tech jobs that lead to a career. We have forgotten to teach to a job that leads to a career. As Comptroller, when our economists critique the State and City budget, it will be through the lens of job creation. Entrepreneurs now must go beyond New York City to get qualified young people to do the work. We must take advantage of this new economy by starting with the new technology and concluding with a robust education.

Comptroller Stringer thanked everyone for allowing him speaking time, and that he or Jason can be reached at the office anytime at 212-669-3500

Chair Kelty acknowledged longtime board member and friend of Community Board #7, **Michael Chiew**, and welcomed him to our meeting this evening. He then gave the floor to **Jim & Hedy Debonet**, Assist. District Commissioner/Founders District Queens/Boy Scouts of America, who cover a wide area from College Point, Flushing, Bayside, down to Jamaica and Laurelton. From Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, Venture crews and Sea Scouts on a vessel, the GNYC, BSofA values develop character; citizenship; fitness (physical, mental & moral); leadership and team building skills. Scouting, which started here in Flushing by Dan Beard, is definitely alive and evolving while remaining a positive influence benefiting our community, state and nation for the past 103 years. The Debonets, who can be reached at foundersmembership@gmail.com or hdebonet@gmail.com, left a list of Boy Scout Units in our area with addresses and telephone numbers.

Q. Do you also have camps?

A. Yes, one in Staten Island, Alpine Scout Camp (cub world) in NJ and 10 Mile River (Boy Scouts) in Narrowsburg, NY. If you have time on your hands we could always use adult volunteers.

Q. What about Crews?

A. It's our co-ed group from ages 14 to 21. They operate differently than Boy Scouts in that they vote in their own president, vice president and treasurer, and plan their own activities and trips.

Q. Age of cub scouts?

A. They start at age 5 from first to fifth grade as cubs, and into Boy Scouts at age 11 to 18, at which time they can earn as many as 142 merit badges, some of which are necessary to become an Eagle Scout, the highest honor. Becoming an Eagle can lead to scholarships and open doors to great opportunities.

Chair Kelty and District Manager Bitterman will give the BSofA flyer to the Board's Youth Committee as well as all the other youth organizations in our area.

AGENDA # 6 - 11-11 131st Street, College Point - Calendar #298-13-BZ - Application to permit voluntary accessory parking on the rear portion of a yet to be created rooftop above existing upper level area of existing 3-story and cellar physical culture establishment in an M1-1 zoning district contrary to ZR-44-11, which would provide additional 36 voluntary parking spaces for Spa Castle customers.

Committee Chair **Andrew Rocco** gave his report on the additional 36 voluntary parking provision above the current level without using additional land, which will lessen street parking now in front of businesses and residential homes. The only issue brought up by local businesses and residents was

that garbage removal be done from 132nd Street, a dead end with no residents or businesses, instead of 131st Street. The committee approved the permit for additional parking with the friendly motion to change the garbage pickup site. He then gave the floor to **Eric Palatnik**, Attorney for the applicant. The Spa Castle, which was first approved by Community Board #7 seven years ago and subsequently built, is now their flagship Spa for a chain of spas around the country. The current application for the building, which was built into the hillside, is for a rear parking deck over the two parking decks already in existence. Mr. Palatnik and the applicant are happy to go along with the friendly motion to change the garbage removal site. Unfortunately, what's causing the garbage problem is that 11th Avenue is closed for a new water main, with no street access for cartage or truck deliveries, etc. When completed there will no longer be a problem.

Q. Chair Kelty asked for the name of the private company doing the removal?

A. I believe it's Gema!

Q. When will the rear parking construction be completed?

A. We believe in the next few months

Q. In photo view #8, is the new parking lot to be on top of the elevated parking visible in the photo and will it be enclosed?

A. Yes, the new parking lot will be built on top, and it will be a semi open air parking lot with valet parking.

Q. Are the trucks parked to the left, adjacent to the elevated parking, part of the Spa?

A. No, that's a landscape contractor's yard where construction trucks are parked.

Q. Will there be a barrier erected around the new parking lot?

A. Yes, there will be barrier of sorts for the cars and the headlights, but for the record there are no residents living in the area.

Q. Is this parking lot on the South face?

A. Yes, it's on the South/Southwest. This application is a voluntary request. They need it now, and don't want to wait until they have to renew their term in a couple of years.

Q. Where will the entrance to the parking lot be?

A. Where it already is. Everything remains the same.

Speaker Steve Sinacori representing Frank Mirando Landscaping Company, located on 131st Street directly across from the Spa, has been having problems with garbage left carelessly behind by private sanitation causing many pedestrians to slip and fall for the last two years. While they do not oppose the application for additional parking, they are asking the Board to approve the collection of garbage at 132nd Street instead, since it's a very short dead end block, with no businesses or residents.

Committee Chair Rocco said his committee met on December 10, 2013 and approved the application to provide additional accessory parking.

The motion now on the floor is to approve the application for a permit to provide 36 voluntary accessory parking spaces on the rear portion of a to be created rooftop above the existing parking with the recommendation that henceforth all garbage will be picked up permanently from 132nd Street instead of 131st Street. The motion to approve was seconded by Arlene Fleishman

The vote taken was (34) Approved (0) Against (2) Absent during the vote

AGENDA #7 - 30-50 Whitestone Expressway, College Point – Calendar #305-13-BZ – Application for a special variance permit under NYC Zoning Resolution Section 73-36 for legalization of a physical culture establishment at the premises.

Committee Chair **Arnold Wagner** made note of his meeting of December 11, 2013 with committee members and Steve Sinacori, attorney for the applicant. He described the applicant's facility as a gym occupying 6000 square feet on the first floor and 9000 square feet on the second floor of the existing office building since 2002. He gave the floor to Mr. Sinacori to answer any questions by the board.

Q. Is the facility currently working as a physical culture establishment?

A. Yes, it is a regular gym, much like the New York Sports Club and not a spa, operating since 2002. When they occupied the building in 2002 they considered it as commercial use. They were not aware it required a special permit from the BSA. They called us immediately to prepare an application when they found out. The building has 350 parking spaces and is next door to DMV.

Q. When did they find out a permit was required, and was there a fine issued?

A. If it's strictly a gymnasium or is an accessory to a building, it does not require a permit.

Q. Is there adequate parking for the building?

A. Yes, more than necessary.

With no speakers to comment on this item, Committee Chair Wagner ended his December 11th meeting report with a vote of approval by all committee members.

The motion now on the floor is to approve the special variance permit for the legalization of the physical culture establishment at the premises.

The vote taken was (33) For (0) Against (1) Abstain/conflict (2) left before vote

AGENDA #8 – Parks Dept. Update on MacNeil Sea Wall – Tabled because Parks Department was not available. Will be scheduled to a future date.

AGENDA #9 – Executive Committee Elections for 2014 - The ballots were given to the thirty-five (35) Board members present at the meeting. Committee Chair Arnold Wagner opened the elections with Nominees for each of the following positions, i.e., Chairperson Eugene Kelty, First Vice-Chair Charles Apelian and Second Vice Chair Frank Macchio. As there were no nominations from the floor, a motion followed to close these three nominations seconded by Lynda Spielman

The nominee for Third Vice-Chair are Kim Ohanian and Warren Schreiber. With no further nominees for Third Vice-Chair from the floor, the nomination was closed and seconded by Marc Schiffman. Both nominees were given the opportunity to speak on their own behalf. Warren Schreiber spoke a few words in his favor and asked for member support whereas Kim Ohanian chose to let her record stand.

Chair Kelty announced that Joseph Femenia has regrettably stepped down from his position as Fourth Vice-Chair due to resuming the helm of his civic association, leaving the vice-chair position open.

Committee Chair Wagner continued the election with the new nominee for Fourth Vice-Chair Barbara McHugh. Nomination from the floor of Joshua Sussman was made by Phil Konigsberg. With no further nominees for Fourth Vice-Chair from the floor, the nomination was closed and seconded by Marc

Schiffman. Both nominees were given the opportunity to speak about their commitments to their community, and desire to do more.

After tabulation of the votes, the **NEW** Executive Committee for Community Board #7 for **2014** is:-

CHAIRPERSON

FIRST VICE-CHAIRPERSON

SECOND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

THIRD VICE-CHAIRPERSON

FOURTH VICE-CHAIRPERSON

EUGENE KELTY

CHARLES APELIAN

FRANK MACCHIO

WARREN SCHREIBER

BARBARA McHUGH

Chairperson Kelty introduced **Vito Tautonico**, Director of Constituents Services for Councilman Paul Vallone's office who said their office is up and running from 8:30 am to 6 pm Monday through Friday at 42-40 Bell Boulevard, telephone #718-619-8611, e-mail district19@council.nyc.gov. In the future they plan on opening once a month on Saturday.

Chairperson Kelty then introduced **Daniel Rosenthal** from Councilman Lancman's office at 164th & Union Turnpike. In the event you need assistance, their telephone number is 718/820-0241.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Irene Prestigiacomio spoke again about the ongoing deception about properly notifying Willets Point property owners and businesses from the Redevelopment beginning. EDC's response to Chair Kelty's letter regarding this situation, which showed copy to her, said she was contacted seven times by Cornerstone. Ms. Prestigiacomio said Cornerstone and EDC are lying, did not copy her their response to CB #7, nor did EDC keep their promise to get in touch with her. Her certified letter to EDC asking for proof, has not elicited a reply.

Matthew Silva, co-founding member of People for the Pavilion, is trying to organize a coalition to preserve the NYS Pavilion, which has been in decay for years. He invites everyone to attend the informational meeting on Saturday, January 25, 2014 at the Queens Theatre in the Park at 2 p.m.

John Aversano, homeowner in the area around St. Mary's Cemetery, Long Island Expressway and Francis Lewis Lewis H.S. complained about the tractor-trailers and auto trailers who park in the area for days as well as someone who has been living in a Camper for quite a few years. One wonders what they do with their waste and garbage. They should, at least, be paying parking fees or receiving summonses from the Police.

There being no further business on the agenda, the meeting closed at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Zuliani

