

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2016
UNION PLAZA CARE CENTER
33-23 UNION STREET
FLUSHING, NEW YORK

PRESENT

Chuck Apelian
John Byas
Tyler Cassell
James Cervino
Kim Cody
Nicholas Corrado
Arlene Fleishman
Rose Forkan
Fred Fu

Vincent Gianelli
Pablo Hernandez
Eugene Kelty
Phil Konigsberg
Peter Kwiath
Esther Lee
Frank Macchio
Barbara McHugh
Millicent O'Meally
Terence Park

Kris Ram
Belal Salim
Warren Schreiber
Kevin Shields
Matt Silverstein
Joseph Sweeney
Arnold Wagner
Harpreet Wahan
Linna Yu
Jie Zhu

ABSENT

Chin-Hsiang Chiang
Timothy Chuang
Joseph Femenia
Jeff Huang
Kevin Kang
Rev. R. McEachern

Selma Moses
Devon O'Connor
Kim Ohanian
Vana Partridge
Andrew Rocco
Marc Schiffman
Joshua Sussman

Peter Sutich
Carlos Talisaysay
Alison Tan
John Tsavalos
Peter Tu
Clarissa Wong

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

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

GUESTS

Don Capalbi, Congresswoman Meng's office
Tim Thomas, Assemblyman Simanowitz's office

GUESTS

Erin Rogers, Assemblywoman Rozic's office
Chae No, Councilman Koo's office
Vito Tautonica, Councilman Vallone's office
Elaine Fan, NYC Comptroller's office
Adam Chen, NYC Public Advocate's office
Nick Gulotta, Mayor's office
Susie Tanenbaum, Queens Borough President Katz's office

Chair Eugene Kelty opened the meeting at 7:15 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in honor of our soldiers here and abroad who keep us safe, as well as those who died for us and our country. Let us also remember the recent victims who died in Taiwan during this Lunar New Year. He asked that we remember them all in our prayers tonight. Since he was unable to be at our hearing last month because of his obligation to the Fire Department, he thanked the Board for their support for his re-election bid and will do his best always. **Chair Kelty** then read the announcements which will be available at the end of the meeting and also tomorrow at the office.

The attendance roll call was taken with **(29) Present, (10) Absent, (9) Excused**

Speaker, **Elaine Fan**, from NYC City Comptroller's office, announced the City is holding a Lunar Year Celebration February 17, 2016 from 6 to 8 p.m. at 31 Chambers Street, NYC. If you have any questions, you can contact her at efan@comptroller.nyc.gov

Speaker **Joe Mauro**, from Parks, giving an update on P.S. 20 Community Park Initiative approved by Public Design Commission, stated they are currently in the procurement phase which will take 7 to 10 months for construction. Thus far they have exceeded the ADA compliance on all the play equipment components, and Parks will continue with updates as they happen. **Chair Kelty** said **Joanne Amagrande**, who was to give this presentation, sadly just lost her mom recently, and naturally is still grieving. Also, recently **Don Capalbi's** mom passed at 104 years of age and a week ago we lost **Jan Malone** of East Flushing Civic. Our prayers are with their families. He also announced, after years of waiting, the Little Bay Park bathroom is finally completed, officially christened, and open to the public.

Speaker **Nicholas Gullota** of the Mayor's Community Affairs unit in Queens wished the Community a Happy Lunar Year, which the City now recognizes as an official school holiday. Some updates from the Mayor include a minimum wage increase to \$15.00 per hour for over 50,000 City employees effective 2018, and a few weeks ago signed an executive order for 6 weeks paid maternity leave to over 20,000 City employee families. **Mayor DeBlasio** and DOT Commissioner **Polly Trottenberg**, together observed the notable occasion of 2015 being the safest year since 1910 with 66 fewer car fatalities on Queens Boulevard than ever before.

Chair Kelty was at the Borough Board Budget Hearings today, and said we have been short-changed on Education, Seats, Senior Centers, and in Cultural Affairs the lowest of all five boroughs, so you will be hearing from our Borough Pres. Melinda Katz, our Elected Officials and the other 14 Community Chairs.

ITEM #6 - COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE – Ricky Wong of New York City Health Dept. gave an in-depth health profile of our community district, Flushing & Whitestone, together with the best performing

community districts in all of NYC, and the overall profiles of Queens and NYC. Our total population is 255,707 with ethnicity presently being 52% Asian, 28% White and 17% Hispanic, 2% Black and 2% Other. Where we live determines the quality of air we breathe, the homes we live in, how safe we feel, and what kind of food we can easily access, the education levels we attain, our social and economic conditions, our overall health and health care availability and prevention, including leading causes of death, and life expectancy by district. The data and information in each district's profile can assist in improvements to the area, to think outside of the box for solutions, and to share successes and failures with other communities to help raise the bar. The Health Dept. presents this data and information in the hope each community will use it to advocate for their neighborhood. We will help wherever possible.

- Q. We have two airports in Queens, one in our immediate area of Flushing, and the constant pollution of hazardous particulate matter and hydrocarbons from airplanes, confirmed by our Environmental Chair, Dr. Cervino, has never been addressed. Shouldn't it be part of air pollution studies?
- A. I will suggest a follow-up on this problem. The average life expectancy in Flushing is 83 years, better than other areas, with the worst being Harlem at 75 years.
- Q. You mentioned Harlem. What is the reason for being the worst?
- A. It could be attributed to limited access to health care or different health disparities, such as Diabetes, environmental problems, etc, There is no one actual X-factor.
- Q. Would you or your office give us your prescription for improvement?
- A. We will provide you guidance from our staff of health experts, but do not wish to impose on the process. You know your neighborhood better than anyone, and once you reach a solution to a particular problem, we may be able to help put it in place.

ITEM #7 – CIVILIAN COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARD – Civilian & Police Officer Mediation – The Civilian Complaint Review Board is a City Agency, independent of the NYC Police, responsible for investigating and mediating police misconduct administratively. Representative **Esha Mahadeo** spoke about the 13 member board appointed by the Mayor, City Council and Police Commissioner who then appointed a Second Director, a former prosecutor, to run the agency. A Police Officer's job under the NYC Control Guide is to uphold the Laws of the Community, protect our citizens, and maintain order. Officers are allowed to use force, but not excessive force or inappropriate use of authority, be discourteous or use offensive language. The Review Board is located at 100 Church Street, 10th Floor and open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday if you wish to file any actions.

ITEM #8 – POPPENHUSEN LIBRARY – Diane Janoff, from the Poppenhusen branch of the Queens Library (no connection with the Poppenhusen Institute) said all 63 branches in Queens are now open on Saturdays. With a library card you can borrow books, magazines, cd's, audio books for your car, etc. and renew up to three times, unless someone else is on the waiting list. Also, if you are 21 years or younger and owe money to the Library, you can take \$1.00 off for every half hour you read or read to a child in the Library. If a book is not available in our small Library, we can request it from another branch. Our monthly calendar shows all the different programs we have for adults and children, and would welcome your input for adult programs. We have free job help services, free resume help and free Wi-Fi services by using a 4 digit pin number and card. We have five computers each for adults and children. Our e-mail address is queens.library.org or call 718/359-1102. So come on over!

- Q. Do you have a buy-a-book program?

A. Yes, we do have a Buy-a-Book program, and I believe there is a \$25.00 minimum, and you can designate where you want it to go.

Q. Do you take book donations?

A. Yes, but because we don't have much space, we can only accept one box or bag a day.

Chair Kelty added his mother was an avid reader, and when she passed, several people made donations. Somewhere in the Library system, there are book plates with her name on it.

Ms. Janoff added if you are homebound, there is a mail-a-book service at the Queens Village branch. You can call her and she'll refer you to them.

ITEM #9 – 10-24 154TH STREET, WHITESTONE – Calendar #139-15-BZ – Committee Chair Joseph

Sweeney gave the floor to the owner's Attorney, Michael Nacmias, who explained they are asking for a special 10 year permit from BSA for a physical culture establishment operating as a gym.. They have been operating since 2015 since the owner, Sophocles Tsouros, signed a lease, instead of paying rent, which is allowed by the Building Dept. as long as you file for the permit and legalize the space with BSA. The building is a two-story and cellar with the gym occupying all three levels and 20 employees overall with 7 at any given time. On the first floor there are 2 exercise rooms with treadmills, bicycles, the main lobby, reception and refreshment area. The second floor has weight lift equipment, storage and bathrooms. The cellar has the men and women locker rooms, showers, another adult fitness and kids fitness room, the steam room and storage. Of the 1000 members, 85% live in the area. The C of O requires 26 parking spaces, and their application showed 28 parking spaces with one being ADA compliant. The issue at the land use committee meetings was insufficient parking. At this juncture the applicant compromised with valet parking, paid for by owner, at certain peak hours of the day which would allow an increase to 40 spaces. After operating already for 7 months, it was determined that peak hours were 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Machines will be limited to 100. Snow removal will be immediate. Present hours of operation are 4:30 a.m. to 12 a.m. Monday through Friday, and 7:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Check-ins average 100-125 daily, but machines will be limited to 100. Classes are available to children, adults and seniors.

Q. How long does an individual stay in the facility?

A. On average 45 minutes.

Q. Where is the parking lot in relation to the gym?

A. Parking is in the rear.

Q. What makes you believe people will not stay longer?

A. We do not limit a person's stay, but the average is 30 to 45 minutes. However, there are some physically active people who can work for a longer duration.

Q. What is the public assembly capacity?

A. At any give time there is not more than 70 people in the facility, but the maximum capacity for each level. First floor capacity 348, second floor 309 and cellar 289 occupants.

Q. Do you have steam rooms?

A. Yes, we have.

Q. How many people can you fit in the exercise studios?

A. On the first floor the two exercise studios can fit 20 to 25 people each using the treadmills, elliptical and stationary bikes. . Also there are 37 pieces of cardiovascular equipment. .The top floor has the functional and strength training areas.

Chair Kelty added he understood where the questioning was going because if you use all the available facilities, 45 minutes wouldn't be enough and may impact the parking, which is the reason of the.

Board member's questions.

The owner, Sophocles Tsouros added they are looking into every avenue to work with the community. There is on-street parking available, and valet parking will be a plus during peak hours. Also most of the members walk to our facility, carpool, or bike. We understand some of you feel having a steam room and showers will lead to added time, but to be honest, the showers are used primarily in the morning before leaving to go to work and the steam room at night before retiring.

Q. What is the cost to join?

A. There are several options. Seniors can take advantage of the program their insurance will pay for. Basic costs are \$59-\$69 per month. You can contact us anytime for more information.

Chair Kelty advised we should not go into pricing, which is between the owner and his members.

Q. How many parking spaces does the building have?

A. There are 26, but we're adding 2 more for 28.

Q. How many spaces are available for Dunkin Donuts?

A. Dunkin Donuts occupies one of the buildings on the lot so they have use of 4 parking spaces, which leaves us with 24 spaces, and a reason to consider valet service now and not later, if membership should increase in the future.

Q. Isn't there a reasonable amount of street parking in the area?

A. Yes there is, and that's because it's not a congested area to begin with. We've had no parking issues since we started.

Q. How are you going to park more than 26 cars in the lot if 4 of those spaces are for Dunkin?

A. Thus far it's never been a problem. In fact we've allowed mothers to use our parking facility to drop off or pick up their children, which has helped the school's double parking problem. We want to be part of the community.

Q. Do you have another operation elsewhere? If so, any parking problems there? We want to be part of the community.

A. Yes, a 2500 member facility in a high density area in Astoria with no problems since most come by train or walk.

Q. Is the valet parking free?

A. Yes.

Q. What if I want to park in Dunkin Donuts during peak and don't want valet parking?

A. You don't have to use it.

Q. How are you getting around the insurance requirements if they damage your car?

Chair Kelty said it's a valid point we can bring up when we make recommendations. They can put signs up that they are not responsible, but I think they are.

Committee Chair **Joseph Sweeney** said he and his committee held an on-site meeting, and their main concern was the parking. Even though the City said 26 spaces is sufficient, the committee wanted more assurances and suggested they try leasing parking spaces from Waldbaum's. However Waldbaum's is currently in bankruptcy, so a deal couldn't be made. He added he's been into the gym several times to check, and although they have 50 machines on each floor, he never found it full. In perspective, if five offices and five stores were there instead of the gym, you might be dealing with 100-200 people daily. Our allegiance to the community required we ask for more, which led to the use of valet parking. At this juncture, he would like to hear from some members of the community.

Speaker, **Daniel Arinoff**, a member of the gym who lives two doors away, recommended the following suggestions. 1) The permit should have the current hours of operation included and never allowed as a 24 hour facility. 2) The City hasn't kept up with the litter so can the owner of the gym assist in periodic cleaning and sweeping, it would be appreciated. 3) Winter snow removal from the parking lot by the building owner should not be dumped onto cars parked in the street. 4) The building owner should direct the parking lot lights downward since they shine directly into a neighbor's window. 5) A side lot has a "no parking" area painted in front of it, but it has no curb cut. **The gym owner said the hours are on the permit, and agreed the City is sometimes remiss in cleaning the sewer drains and the area, so he's cleaned it many times.**

Chair Kelty said he would look into the side lot with no curb cut.

Speaker, **Jody Ertrachten**, a member of the gym, is very happy the gym is in the neighborhood. Parking has never been an issue for her or her daughter. Speaker, **David Pandic**, appreciates the gym being in the area since it's one facility instead of ten, but parking is an issue. Dunkin Donuts is a total trash can and a disaster with coffee cups up and down the street. The one-way street was reversed after the facility was designed. It doesn't allow people from 154 St. to enter into the lot unless they go completely around the block, so people in a hurry just u-turn to find a space on the block. By doing so they block my driveway and my neighbor's, leaving the parking lot mostly empty. Reversing the one-way is the answer. **Chair Kelty said unfortunately the DOT calls the shots on one-ways when it involves a school.**

Speaker **Jimmy Konstantinidis**, remarked it's a classy non-commercial gym and a definite asset to the area. The school in the area is more of a problem than the gym with double parking by mothers when dropping and picking up their children. Some moms even use the gym parking lot where possible, which helps. Prior to the gym, there was talk of a catering hall which would have been a bigger problem. He's happy with the gym.

Committee Chair **Sweeney** gave his committee report stating they looked into the application on site very thoroughly. He reiterated the hours of operation and a limit of 100 machines for a period of 10 years (50 on each floor with 7 people on duty at any given time), and since we felt 26 parking spaces were not adequate, our recommendation for valet parking was accepted with signs posted in front and rear of the building with valet parking times. Chair **Sweeney** checked the valet company's other sites and found they were reliable, and the applicant gave us a signed copy of the one year valet contract for our files. He found out they have approximately 1000 members, most of whom live in the area. When school is closed at 3 p.m. there are plenty of parking spaces and expect the same when school is closed in the summer. Our office has never received telephone complaints since they opened. We felt they would be a good fit for the community, and the committee voted 5 to 3 to approve.

The motion on the floor now is to approve the applicant's special permit to operate for 10 years a Physical Culture & Life Health Fitness establishment in a two-story building in a R3-1 zoning district within a C2-2 commercial overlay, seconded by Tyler Cassell.

Discussion followed:

Board Member, **Tyler Cassell**, a member of another gym, verified that 5 pm and after is when people mostly start using a gym. Don't get distracted by the membership amount, since they all don't attend at the same time. Some don't attend at all and some eventually drop out. Back in 2005 the zoning was changed and it was to become a catering hall for big weddings. So be thankful it's a gym, it's not overcrowded, the place is immaculate, the equipment is good and it's a better fit for the neighborhood.

The City said only 26 parking spaces are required, and there will be valet parking as well as neighborhood parking. He will vote yes!

Q. What total occupancy was allowed when it was The White House?

A. The total occupancy was 600 people.

Chair **Kelty** will vote No because he doesn't feel there is enough parking spaces! When the White House came before the Board, we rezoned it and the stipulation was there would be 90 plus parking spaces. to protect the neighborhood.

Board Member, **Nicholas Corrado**, a member of Chair **Sweeney's** committee said they did their due diligence. They were concerned with congestion and parking in the area, and the applicant was very forthcoming with all their requests including the valet parking. Driving down that block daily, he never once saw the parking lot full, and cannot penalize the new owner with past issues...and will vote Yes. Vice-Chair **Apelian** said he will also vote No. It goes back to rezoning, which does not stipulate the final use, only what can be built. The prior owner said it was going to be a restaurant, built around with setbacks and a promised underground parking facility with 90 spaces. In time as other area properties develop, including the Waldbaum site, and becomes overbuilt, phone calls will start coming in about the rising parking problems. He is going on record as having voted against it. He spoke to the new owner and the facility is drop dead gorgeous. The committee did a great job. However, by leaving one partial wall up on the past alteration permit, they counted the existing White House Restaurant as a pre-existing structure which didn't require parking because it was built before 1961, so 30 spaces just disappeared. It wasn't what was promised! Board Member **Kim Cody** is voting No because recently he observed most gym members leave the premises for their cars parked on the street, because of the one-way direction change. Obviously the gym members have never complained. Chair **Sweeney** respects the decisions made by the Chair and Vice-Chair, but the board members must decide whether they want one facility or deal with 7 or 8 stores and seventy to ninety more cars. Either way, the choice is yours to make. If the majority vote No, BSA may approve it anyway, but the community may lose the stipulations we are asking for. Second Vice-Chair **Frank Macchio** added this application is about operational use and is not related to the zoning issues of the past by the last owner. However, under a point of order, Chair **Kelty** reiterated it's a special permit with rules that allow a comment period and **Mr. Macchio** agreed. Committee member **Cassell** said there was a lot of discussion on this but we are not voting on what was promised years ago. With enough parking spaces for the building, and the inclusion of valet parking, he is confident it will work.

With no further discussion:

The vote taken was (19) Approve (9) Disapprove (1) Abstain/Conflict

ITEM #10A – EDUCATION COMMITTEE PROPOSAL – Committee Chair **Arlene Fleishman** gave her committee report of 2/3/16 regarding the statement we must make to **Chancellor Farina**, who will be present at the Town Hall meeting on February 11, 2016 at Jr. High School 185. She asks for permission from the Board to speak on behalf of District 25 at this meeting. First Vice-Chair **Apelian** asked what is the next step. Chair **Fleishman** would ask the Chancellor and the School Construction Authority to meet **regularly** with our community board and the Borough President in partnership with the needs and priorities of the children. **Education with representation from the community, the educators, administrators, and the parents together is paramount.** The system is too large to be run centrally and should be more localized, and not controlled by politicians and non-educators. Presently we have no

representation at all. We need to be involved in every aspect and our voices must be heard. Vice-Chair **Apelian** asked Arlene to add in her statement to the Chancellor an invitation for a meeting with everyone. Board member **Harpreet Wahan**, a member of Community Education Consul also had the opportunity to meet Chancellor Farina, and said she would welcome having her representative present at Consul and Community board meetings. Chair **Kelty** added we will bring this up at the next Borough Board meeting with the Chairs and District Managers.

The motion on the floor is to give Committee Chair Arlene Fleishman the Board's approval to send an Education statement to the Chancellor, seconded by Vincent Gianelli.

The vote taken was unanimous (28) For (0) Against (1) Left the room

ITEM #11 - AVIATION ROUNDTABLE - Committee Chair Warren Schreiber - The newly formed Aviation Committee by Community Board #7 had their first meeting on February 4, 2016 to focus on health hazards associated with airplane noise and pollution. Unfortunately, the NYC Health Dept. does not monitor the particulate matter from planes, and Charter helicopters that fly over Queens from LGA to the Hamptons are not allowed to fly over Nassau or Suffolk County, and must use a water route. So why Queens? We'll be looking into both. **Len Schaier**, who is currently aviation advisor to the Town of North Hempstead and **Marilyn Chapateau**, who advises Community Board #14, have agreed to serve as technical advisors for CB #7. The perimeter rule at LGA limiting flights to 1500 miles, the exception being Denver which was grandfathered in, will be lifted after they complete rebuilding Delta Airlines. However, flying to the coast will require heavier planes, and greater acceleration at takeoff with a negative impact on our community. Also, changing the metric noise measurement from 65 DNL to the globally accepted 55 DNL was discussed. The committee made the following recommendations: 1) Due to the large number of people impacted by LGA Airport operations, it is suggested the Aviation Committee be expanded by appointing additional members. 2) **Mr. Schaier** and **Ms. Chapateau** be invited to make a committee presentation on health hazards associated with airplane noise and pollution. 3) The chair will try to arrange a tour for the committee of the LGA Airport Tower. 3) CB #7 should officially request additional community representation on the Part 150 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). As of now it only is represented by the government and airline industry, including the pilots, etc. 4) CB #7 should issue a statement of support for an Aviation Roundtable and urge all roundtable members to agree upon and ratify the bylaws without any further delay. This statement would be sent to the NYCAR Coordinating Committee and read at the next NYCAR meeting. The next Roundtable meeting will be held on March 10, 2016 at Borough Hall at 7 p.m. An added note, CB #7 has never taken an official position on the issue of one roundtable versus two roundtables, which Governor Cuomo called for in his press release. **Chair Kelty** said that one roundtable for Queens should be sufficient, but will send a letter, however, to the Borough President to decide the position for Queens.

ITEM #11A – LETTER OF COMMENT - Committee Chair Kim Ohanian – In Kim Ohanian's absence, District Manager Marilyn Bitterman, who worked with her on the preliminary budget, said the Letter of Comment is based on the budget we submitted in October 2015, and at the beginning of the year 2016, we start receiving responses from the various agencies on the selections we included, and their take on it. The input we included for DOT was questioned as not being part of transportation, particularly Willets Point, which was moved to the top 5 items. The agency said the project is underway by EDC,

which is not true and not happening. Also where is the funding for 20th Avenue which was scheduled, as well as Ulmer & 28th Avenue in the 10 year Capital plan, where the roads are collapsing, and requires additional funding in order to move forward. We answered all the negative questions that came up and will be sent to the Mayor for his comments. Chair Kelty added we asked for expansion and/or creation of more senior centers; an increase in inspectors to monitor new construction to stop the increase in illegal conversions and SROs; support funding of cultural affairs institutions; support the economic development of Flushing Airport site for soft recreational uses instead of uses requiring heavy trucking; the development of a public safety education center at Fort Totten with other agencies instead of just the Fire Dept., to include fire, transportation safety, first aid, police protection, drug activity, peer pressure, coast guard safety, sanitation recycling, with accessibility by everyone. As far as Parks Dept. the communities shouldn't have to wait 20-30 years for capital items or wait 7 years to prune a tree. Our precinct has recently been allotted 90 additional policemen, which we are happy about, but that requires 90 parking spaces with nowhere but the street to park. Our request last year for a precinct within Flushing Meadow Corona Park was denied. With downtown Flushing being an intermodal transportation hub with tremendous pedestrian movement, we've asked for more basket pick-ups, especially in the commercial areas, and the need for additional personnel. Also after the last snow storm, we used the snow melter near the Police Academy, which has one of the sewer lines that can handle it, but were told by someone at the Academy we can't do it anymore. We'll address that. Also, somehow we lost sanitation personnel, but will continue with our requests. As far as the Transit Authority and the Dept. of Transportation respectively, our request for expansion of the #7 line, which has been in our budget for 14 years, and the capital budget submissions to DOT for roadwork reconstruction, the responses have been "more information is needed before a funding decision is made" and "we should contact the Borough Commissioner's office to discuss. Chair Kelty said we will continue to fight for our community.

The motion is now on the floor to approve the Preliminary Budget Letter of Comment to be mailed to The Mayor of the City of New York, seconded by Third Vice-Chair Warren Schreiber.

The vote taken was (24) For (0) Against (2) Abstain/Conflict (3) Left before vote

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Speaker **Brian Wills**, a Natural Resource Management Biologist, and Vice President of Queens Quiet Skies, ever since Janet McEaney first brought up the idea of an aviation roundtable for New York. The aviation by-laws being pushed forward tonight without adequate debate and input from qualified dissenters, is disappointing. The by-laws are so deplorable the Port Authority could have written it themselves. They do not resemble any of the successful roundtables in the country. At CB #7's recent committee meeting on aviation, he could not speak, but listened quietly. He spoke to the Chair after the meeting to express the need for one roundtable, as two could divide the issues and negate any chance to a successful conclusion on noise and air pollution. Speaker **Pat Lowenhaus** announced the opening of the 6th Annual World Film Festival at four different locations in Queens. You can go on line at queensworldfilmfestival.com or on facebook or twitter and check out the 144 films chosen to be in the festival. She is one of the mentors of the Queens World Young Filmmakers program for elementary

school students to make and show their films. Tell your friends, your children, grandchildren and neighbors to check it out and buy tickets. These films will be shown in Astoria, Long Island, Jackson Heights and Sunnyside.

Speaker **Carlton Glasser**, Independent Consulting Arborist and also Vice Pres. of Kissena Park Civic Association, spoke about the Green Infrastructure Projects presentation which is scheduled for our next Public Hearing in March regarding the City's \$2 billion budget to divert storm water to other places other than catch basins, and other water treatment facilities. There are 5 places for diversion such as Bioswales, roof top gardens, storm water retention tanks, conversions of impermeable to permeable surfaces, and of course, our large existing trees. Apparently DEP is looking at only one aspect of storm water control as it applies to flood control. He urges us to question DEP on elements with other agencies, including DOB on green space instead of pavement only, and the destruction of trees by building contractors which leads to the loss of hundreds of thousands of gallons of water annually. He will attend our hearing on March 14th.

Board member, **Millicent O'Meally**, referred to the recent Times articles on immigrants which First Vice-Chair **Apelian** feels doesn't apply to Board #7 since our board has never been divisive on gender, Cultural, ethnic or racial divides. We have two vacancies now and we are not preventing people from joining. The people proposing new legislation are the council members, who already have the power to appoint. Instead, they are asking for new legislation calling for unrealistic demographics, age, sex, etc. when they've always had the power to appoint who they think are the best. Let them do their job!

Chair **Kelty** reminded everyone this Saturday is the Lunar Parade at 11 a.m. in front of the 109 Precinct. He ended the meeting wishing everyone a Happy Valentine's Day.

The meeting ended at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zuliani