



Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

Bay Terrace, College Point, Beechhurst, Flushing
Malba, Queensborough Hill, Whitestone and Willets Point

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Melinda Katz

Queens Borough President

Eugene T. Kelty Jr.

Chairperson

Marilyn McAndrews

District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 8TH, 2017

UNION PLAZA CARE CENTER

33-23 UNION STREET

FLUSHING, NEW YORK

PRESENT

Charles Apelian

Kevin Shields

Chin-Hsiang Chiang

Arthur Barragan

Nicholas Corrado

Kim Ohanian

Barbara McHugh

Vana Partridge

Millicent O'Meally

Tyler Cassell

Peter Kwiath

Michael Cheng

Terence Park

Richard Forman

Warren Schreiber

Matthew Silverstein

Kris Ram

Kim Cody

Selma Moses

Fred Fu

Arnold Wagner

Lawrence Hughes

Marc Schiffman

Belal Salim

James Cervino

Vincent Gianelli

Clarissa Wong

Lin Li Mei

Alison Tan

Joshua Sussman

Rev. R. McEachern

Joseph Sweeney

Arlene Fleishman

Pablo Hernandez

Harpreet Wahan

Eugene Kelty

Linna Yu

John Tsavalos

Peter Tu

Phil Konigsberg

John Choe

Lei Zhao

ABSENT

John Byas

Jeff Huang

Jie Zhu

Frank Macchio

Esther Lee

Peter Sutich

Carlos Talisaysay

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager

Mary Zuliani, Community Assistant

Mary O'Neill, Community Assistant

Sherine Perez, Community Service Aid

GUESTS

Amber Yoon - Assemblyman Braunstein's office

Don Capalbi - Congressman Meng's office

Marco Guzman - Councilman Peter Koo's office

Chair Eugene Kelty opened the meeting at 7:10 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer for our armed forces serving around the world that they come back to us safely.

Roll call attendance was then taken by the Vice Chair Apelian with: (42) - Present (3) - Absent (4) - Excused

Chair Kelty wished all mothers a Happy Mother's Day and then followed with announcements and job openings received during the month. Among them is the Fire Department's acceptance of applications for firefighter's ages 17 yrs. to 29 years of age. He mentioned lane closures the week of May 8th on the Van Wyck Expressway for the reconfiguration of protective shields underneath the Roosevelt Bridge. The Stennis Open will hold the 2017 anthem auditions of America the Beautiful without music. Although the auditions rightly should be held in Queens, they are holding it again in Manhattan at 520 Eighth Avenue. Age must be 14 yrs. or younger. You may review all the announcements at the end of the meeting or at the Board Office tomorrow.

ITEM #5 - JASA (Jewish Association Serving the Aging) – Joshua Rotkin, Program Director of Queens Elder Abuse Program described JASA as is the largest senior social service organization throughout the five boroughs, Nassau and Suffolk Counties. One in ten over the age of 60 are victims of elder abuse with only one in twenty-four getting help. JASA provides adult protective services and community guardians as well as home care and personal care to allow seniors and disabled individuals stay in the comfort of their own homes whenever possible. Day in and day out, they provide life sustaining social services for seniors and peace of mind for their families and friends. Descriptive brochures and JASA locations were available for those interested.

ITEM #6 – NYC Campaign Finances Board – Katrina Shakarian, Public Affairs – Ms. Shakarian described their work that started in 1988 as a nonpartisan, independent city agency that administers the city's public matching funds program and makes campaign finance data available to the public. They register voters and assist city agencies and community organizations with registration and voting information, and push for early voting and ensure every eligible citizen is registered to vote. Their financing program reduces corruption, amplifies the voices of our residents by matching our small contributions with public money, increases involvement and encourages more choices at the polls. Flyers are available to all board members.

Q. How much tax dollars were spent on last year's election?

A. The one fact that I can share with you is that \$38.2 million was distributed in the last citywide election of 2013. In retrospect, the budget is about \$77 billion so it's a small amount by comparison. If you want further information, I can get back to you with it.

Q. What is the maximum contribution that can be given to be matched?

A. The ratio is 6 to 1. A \$10 donation has a potential to become \$70. The maximum donation is \$175 or less.

Q. How many people currently work in your agency?

A. We are a small NY City agency with a staff of 100 on the city payroll.

Q. At the last city election, what percentage of people participated in the program and what percentage chose not to?

A. I believe it was 90%, Republican and Democrat combined, but I will follow up on this and e-mail you.

Q. Are you involved in the I Voted Campaign contest?

A. Yes, "I Voted" stickers were distributed by the Board of Elections. The voting contest is taking place right now until 9 pm this evening. Of the 700 submissions, it narrowed down to 10.

Q. Is there a limited dollar amount given a candidate per capita?

A. Yes, there are limits depending on the category (mayor, city council, etc.). Also there is spending and contribution limits and a cap on matching funds, all of which can be found on our web site at press@nyccfb.info.

Q. You said you engage in political advocacy. If so, is this advocacy taxpayer supported?

A. As a city agency it's an advocacy on the state level and under the umbrella of NYC vote.

Q. Is this advocacy under the mayor?

A. No, this is an independent and nonpartisan agency not appointed by the mayor. The mayor only selects the president and their board members.

Chair Kelty asked to have this looked into because there appears to be a conflict of interest if the mayor selects the board and president. Also, he is concerned why have Campaign Finance with 100 people on the payroll doing the job the Board of Election should be doing.

ITEM #6A - City Comptroller's Office – Elaine announced on May 23, 2017 the Comptroller is going to hold an Asian American celebration at the Flushing Library, lower level from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and this year will serve food to take away with you and is open to everyone.

ITEM #6B -150 St. betw. 12^h Ave. & Cross Island Pkwy and 14th Ave.betw. Clintonville St. & 149th St. - Chair Kelty spoke about the committee meeting held about six months ago on the mechanical sweeper in Whitestone. We met again with Sanitation, the Greater Whitestone Taxpayers, We Love Whitestone and Greater Whitestone Business Association, to see if Sanitation would lessen the pickup time to an hour and a half. However, nothing could be changed so the hours will remain between 3 a.m. and 6 a.m. every Monday and Friday for the next two years. There will be advance warning and signs but there will be problems parking in the area. Chair Kelty also mentioned other problems in our neighborhood that the DOT is not taking into consideration and is frustrated

ITEM #7 – Update on Edgestone - 151-45 6th Avenue, Whitestone -Committee Chair Joseph Sweeney read his May 2, 2017 committee meeting report on this waterfront land consisting of 12 acres of land and an additional 6 acres under water purchased by The Edgestone Group in 2013. They originally requested a permit to build 107 mostly 2-family homes, but had to revert their plan to 52 homes because of public outcry. The site is currently under the NYS Brownsfield Clean Up Program with the DEC staff on site each day to oversee the proper removal of the contaminated soil. Each home will have an E designation, which gives notice of an environmental requirement because of the potential hazard. Toxic levels of soil vapor evaporating from the ground water can expose families and will require air monitor alarm systems installed in every home. The homeowners association will be required to inspect these systems each year with a report filed with the NYS DEC. Should the property be sold to another

developer, the new owner could build 107 two-family homes. Therefore the committee requested a deed restriction in 2015 on the property limiting the construction to 52 homes for the current and future owners, and again on May 2, 2017. We have yet to receive it. If they continue to ignore our request, our next step is to request the Borough President to downzone the property from R32 to R2 in order to protect the community from any large scale developments. **Committee Chair Sweeney** believes we will never get the signed deed restriction for only 52 homes because if the owner wants to sell before he even builds, he stands to lose money with the deed on record.

Q. If I buy one of the 52 one-family homes in the R32 zone, where you can build 107 2-family, what's to stop me from expanding it to a 2 family?

A. The R32 does allow the building of 107 homes, but the community fought against it, so the owner agreed to build only 52, but to make sure a future developer would not take advantage of the R32 zoning, we asked for a deed restriction to prevent it.

Vice Chair Chuck Apelian explained further that this was rezoned as a large scale development plan which was approved by the Board and City Council in 2008, but stipulated later as 52 homes only because of public outcry. The Board suggested rezoning the property to R2, but because of administrative technicalities, it couldn't be done at that time. The promise was that the plan and rezoning would go forward together, but we were lied to. We will give them one more chance to come up with the deed restriction, otherwise we will ask the Borough President and other officials to downzone the property. What is important now is the deed restriction and the clean-up. Anything else will be dealt with at future committee meetings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Speaker Isha Mahadia from the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB), an independent and impartial board who investigates and mediates complaints from the public about misconduct by NYPD officers. The four types of complaints they review are 1) Excessive or Unnecessary Force 2) Abuse of Authority 3) Discourtesy and 4) Offensive Language. A quick update, the 109 Precinct did very well with only 35 complaints in 2016 and since the beginning of 2017 only 3 complaints thus far. The highest complaints were from the 103 Pct. followed by the 113 Pct., the 105 Pct., the 101 Pct. and the 114 Pct. in that order. The CCRB web site is nyc.gov/ccrb for information. This summer they are looking to hire 2 or 3 high school students and 2 college students for a paid internship for 6 to 8 weeks.

Speaker Nicholas Bacikouris complained about Parsons Blvd between the highway and the park.

Q. Where exactly? Is that 143rd Street between 15th Avenue and 20th Avenue? Did you call 311?

A. Yes, many times and nothing was done. The trees in the Park are all dead. They cut them down and left everything. Clean it up please!

Board Member, **Allison Tan**, wife of Ron Kim, announced she is running for City Council. She reached this decision because she feels strongly about righting the wrongs in the community, so she is stepping up to the plate to make a difference for the future and change the overcrowding of schools, the overdevelopment of our community by special interest people with no regard for the people who live here, the traffic and pedestrian congestion, the overflow of garbage, our crumbling infrastructure, and the daily pollution our children are subjected to. Our quality of life has diminished, not improved, and we have to change it.

Vice Chair closed the meeting at 8:30 pm and wished everyone a HAPPY MOTHERS DAY!!

Respectfully
Mary Zuliani