



Melinda Katz
Queens Borough President

Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

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Eugene T. Kelty Jr.

Chairperson

Marilyn McAndrews

District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 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

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

Selma Moses

Kim Ohanian

John Park

Terence Park

Kris Ram

Paul Rifino

Belal Salim

Marc Schiffman

Warren Schreiber

Kevin Shields

Matthew Silverstein

Joshua Sussman

Peter Sutich

Joseph Sweeney

John Tsavalos

Peter Tu

Clarissa Wong

Dian Yu

Linna Yu

Lei Zhao

ABSENT

John Choe

Barbara McHugh

Jie Zhu

Christine Colligan

Millicent O'Meally

Jeff Huang

Alison Tan

Rev. McEachern

Harpreet Wahan Singh

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager

Mary Zuliani, Community Assistant

Mary O'Neill, Community Assistant

GUESTS

Lynn Koester – Assemblyman Daniel Rosenthal's office

Brian Lam – Assemblywoman Nily Rozic's Office

Tony Cao – Assemblyman Ron Kim's office

Tim Hopper – Congresswoman Meng's Office

Vito Tautonico – Councilman Vallone's office

Joyce Choi – Councilman Peter Koo's office

Chair Eugene Kelty opened the meeting at 7:12 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silence to honor our soldiers stationed all over the world. Roll call attendance was then taken showing:

(40) Present (4) Absent (5) Excused ***

Before beginning the meeting Chair Kelty announced our Board Member, John Choe,* recently had a heart attack and excused him from this evenings' meeting. Also, Board Member, Barbara McHugh, who is ill this evening, is stepping down as Fourth Vice-Chair of the Board. The position will be left open until January 2019 for a vote rather than appoint someone in the interim. He happily announced Board Member Alison Tan* gave birth to her third child, a girl, and excused her also. Chair Kelty followed with various MTA job openings including Machinists, Maintenance, Procurement Specialist, Customer Communications, Sheet Metal worker, equipment Manager, Construction Engineer, Inspection Manager and more. Openings will probably close by mid-November.

Chair Kelty asked for the review of the September minutes. Board member Kim Ohanian made the motion to approve it, seconded by Selma Moses. The vote to approve was unanimous by all present.

John Byas called the office and thanked everyone for their good wishes. He left his telephone and address number, if anyone wishes to call him. Also Arthur Barrigan, who resides in an Assisted Living Home left his address and telephone number should anyone want to call him.

Upcoming events listed were the 109th Precinct's "Build the Block" new initiative meeting for business and residents on October 24th at 7:00 pm to be held at Bowne Community Church, 134-11 Roosevelt Avenue; Meet the Candidates at Bayside Historical Society on October 25th at 7 pm at 208 Totten Avenue in Fort Totten Park. First Vice Chair Apelian was invited to speak in opposition to term limits for community board members; Councilman Peter Koo and Parks Dept. will present Fall Fiesta on October 27th at Kissena Corridor Park; Light the Night Walk on Blood Cancer, USTA/NTC, on October 28th at Billie Jean King Tennis Center; Halloween at the Queens Botanical Garden October 28th between 12 pm and 4 pm with a magic show, costumes, trick or treating, and on the same day as well the NY Audobon Society Bird walk; Whitestone's Truck or Treat on October 29th where kids can go car to car for candy; Louis Latimer House Museum on October 28th for Tinker Lab Halloween; Free Flu vaccines at Assemblyman Rosenthal's office at 179-06 73rd Avenue on November 29th between 10 am to 4 pm.

ITEM#6a – The Old Towne Flushing Burial Ground-Committee Chair Kim Ohanian- Presentation of Design Plans for upcoming project to construct a memorial plaza. Ms. Ohanian introduced Diane Dryer of the parks Department, together with her 3 colleagues who would be giving their presentation of the Design Plans for the construction of a Memorial Plaza. The location of the project is on 46th Avenue and 164th Street. Their budget of \$1.629 million given them by the Borough President and the City will cover the reconstruction of 1.6 acres of the 3.5 acres of the property with a plan to reduce plantings to increase security and thereby reduce maintenance, have working drainage, and retain all the entrances. Changes will include a Butterfly Garden and a central contemplative space with a commemorative wall with the name of all the 318 individuals confirmed as being buried there.

The wall will be angled to make it easily readable for those in wheelchairs and will be added to as more people are found and identified in the future. Paths will be rerouted to take you to the central space or around it.

Q. Frank Macchio asked the following questions. Isn't there a playground there?

A. Yes, but it's in the northern corner of the property.

Q. Has this property always been in the hands of the parks Department?

A. Yes, for a long time. One of the issues was the Design Commission kept arguing about minutiae.

Chair Kelty agreed there has been discussion on the burial ground for a long time and it has taken years to get this proposal through. Frank Macchio hoped those already interred there won't be disturbed.

Q. Vincent Gianelli asked will the mature trees remain?

A. Yes

Q. Peter Sutich asked how long will this plan take?

A. The design phase will take until April 2019. The procurement phase seven to nine months. The contractor will have one year to build with completion in 2020.

Q. Tyler Cassell asked how tall will the new pink flowering trees shown on the diagram grow to?

A. The flowering trees will grow to 20 feet and the shade trees to 50 feet.

Q. Frank Macchio asked what's the earliest date of burials there?

A. The earliest documented burial is 1840. Prior to this there was no paperwork available. Professor Thayer and students at Queens College assisted in this research as well as Robert Moses, who turned this into a playground which was later removed and replaced with what is there now. Originally we wanted some headstones, but later nobody wanted it to be a cemetery.

Frank Macchio applauded their commitment and persistence in getting this done! Kim Ohanian read her committee report of 9/12/18 and again on 10/22/18 held just before the Public Hearing and the proposed changes were approved unanimously by the committee.

The motion now on the floor of this Public Hearing is to approve the Parks Department's proposal, seconded by Board Member Arlene Fleischman. With no further discussion taken, the vote on the motion was approved unanimously.

ITEM# 6 – 150-19 11TH Avenue-BSA #149-97-BZ-Committee Chair Frank Macchio- Spoke of the Martin Gleason's Funeral Home's request for an extension of a previously granted 20 year variance for an adjacent parking lot in a residential area where it was not permitted. Thereafter they split part of the original adjacent lot and sold it, leaving the smaller portion as their parking lot with 29 parking spaces including two handicap spaces. They now are applying for a 10 year extension.

Q. They just want the extension?

A. Yes

Q. The original lot had a house on it? Is that part of the variance?

A. The accessory parking was never on the lot that was eventually sold off and was never part of this variance.

Q. The extension includes the 29 parking spots with no spots being removed?

A. Yes

Chair Kelty asked the original variance had 34 parking spaces and now it 29?

A. They never built the full 34 spaces because of the changes they had to make before construction.

Q. The original variance was for 20 years. Why only 10 years now?

A. The BSA only gives 10 year extensions now.

Frank Macchio added the committee members voted unanimously to approve this proposal.

The motion now by First Vice Chair Apelian is to approve the extension of the variance for ten year's, seconded by Board Member Lei Zhao.

Discussion followed:-

Board member Terence Park made a following friendly amendment to the motion. Gleason's is a good member of the community, but I think they could add one more handicapped space. Frank Macchio added the lot is never full. Chair Kelty said we will call John Golden at Gleason's and suggest this.

With no further discussion taken, the vote on the motion was approved unanimously.

ITEM# 7 – Vote on Capital & Expense Budget Submissions for 2020-Committee Chair Peter Sutich replaces prior Chair Kim Ohanian because of conflict. Also, our four Council people have at their disposal discretionary/participatory budgets of \$35,000 each to give out. At Chair Peter Sutich's budget meeting him and committee members went through each line item with details and background information and the most current answer from the relevant City agency. Board members this evening were given the latest Capital & Expense budget listing showing the current priority assignment to be reviewed line by line, and assess whether each item should stay at the same priority or be moved. Chair Peter Sutich opened the dialog for questions and discussion on the Capital Budget:-

Q. Chuck Apelian asked if item #4, Willets Point Phase II, is the area that isn't being built now?

A. Yes...it states "this area has been neglected by the City of New York and needs a total capital reconstruction of sidewalks, sewers, roadbeds, street lights, etc."

Chuck Apelian suggested we give a little more explanation to this item so it doesn't get lost in what we mean.

Q. Warren Schreiber stated item #8 is becoming more and more of a priority because of heavy storms, flooding, and the need for more reconstruction of storm drains. Time to move item #8 up closer to the top.

A. Chair Sutich spoke to the DEP and they need more information as to where the flooding is occurring.

Arlene Fleishman gave a list of areas where flooding occurred to the office. Two more members, in addition, suggested all clogged drains should be cleaned out.

A. That's a good suggestion, but it would come under Expense.

Q. What about item 23? I thought these don't even exist.

A. Gene Kelty answered we relegated the repair of fire boxes down to the bottom of the list since the fire department is reluctant to fix them. Those that still work will be maintained since they come in handy when cell phones in certain areas don't work.

Q. Terence park asked about item #14, Muni Parking Lot #1

A. Gene Kelty responded that the lot is heavily utilized even though there is express bus service to Flushing. The board asked for this lot to be decked years ago, but the DOT kept saying no, and now is looking to get out of the parking lot business. Dian Yu said this lot is the first place they look for parking when they come to Downtown Flushing. If the lot is full, they then circulate in the neighborhood and add to the congestion causing traffic problems. Small businesses really need this space.

Q. Pablo Hernandez asked why not build parking below.

A. Chair Kelty said there may be a problem with the water level, and it's more expensive to do.

Q. Pablo Hernandez asked what could they do to reconstruct it.

A. Gene Kelty said they can deck it and add more levels above. If the DOT does it, they'll move it to be a private operation.

Joe Sweeney added the City wanted to take this lot years ago for the Flushing West Development. Chair Peter Sutich suggested we reach out to Councilman Koo, DOT and even Borough President Katz.

Questions and Discussion on the Expense Budget:

Q. Belal Salim brought up Item#3 saying why not drop this item or edit it since the DOB has hired a lot of inspectors in the last year. What we need is more personnel in the department itself.

A. Chair Kelty didn't think this item was intended to include the DOB. The description is "enhancement, or expanding noise, pollution, abatement and enforcement programs," which is in the DEP's jurisdiction and will require the need for more inspectors and personnel.

The motion on the floor is to approve both the Capital and Expense Budget for 2020 with the proposed edits. The vote taken was unanimous with the exception of two abstentions for conflict of interest.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Edi Silvena, CSR Department of Santander Bank is inviting everyone to the Grand Opening of the new Santander Bank branch on Roosevelt Avenue on November 5, 2018. Any organizations working with low and moderate income communities with financial literacy, should contact them. Chair Kelty asked if Santander Bank has a community investment program to put money back into the community, as other banks do? Her response was yes.

Richard Fabrizi said Parks Department's capital project scheduled for 2016 to develop a new football field in College Point near the soccer field by Ulmer Street seems to be on hold. Can CB#7 help move it?

District Manager McAndrews had tracked the project and found the design was completed in 2016. She reached out to Parks Department who told her the design wasn't to be set until next month, and part of the delay was the request for lights. **Kim Ohanian** stated if you have a design phase without lights, we could ask them to move it forward by implementing lights as a second phase to the project. **Chair Kelty** said it has been a long term issue. Call Councilman Vallone's office since he has better contact with Parks. First **Vice Chair Apelian** said \$5 million was to come from Vallone's office, and \$10 million from Borough President's office. **Alfredo Centola** added we can get temporary permits for generator powered lights.

Dr. Vidya Sharma, MPH candidate at CUNY School of Public Health asked for CB#7's support of City Council Bill #0802, sponsored by Council person Williams requiring DOE to donate meals not used to Food Banks. Schools are valuable contributors to food banks and would involve students and staff in volunteerism. This is already being done in other school districts in the country.

Mark Schiffman also works at Board of Elections and said the upcoming ballot will be problematic since it will be 2 pages double sided. The second page is optional but still has to be scanned. Be prepared for longer wait times.

Phil Konigsberg announced the Bayside Historical Society will host the 17th Annual Totten Trot and Kids Run at the Historical Society Castle on October 27th, 2018 along the water at Fort Totten. Come down early. Also, adding to Mark's remarks, on October 25th, 2018 the Society will have a discussion on proposal #3 regarding term limits for Community board executives and board members.

The meeting ended at 8:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zuliani