



# 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 13, 2019

UNION PLAZA CARE CENTER

33-23 UNION STREET, FLUSHING, NEW YORK

#### PRESENT

Charles Apelian  
James Cervino  
Kaily Cheng  
Michael Cheng  
Chin-Hsiang Chiang  
John Choe  
Kim Cody  
Nicholas Corrado  
Arlene Fleishman  
Richard Forman  
Pablo Hernandez  
Lawrence Hughes  
Eugene Kelty

Phil Konigsberg  
Esther Lee  
Wensong Li  
Wendy Louie  
Frank Macchio  
Barbara McHugh  
Selma Moses  
Sergio Nicolich  
John Park  
Terence Park  
Kris Ram  
Paul Rifino  
Belal Salim

Marc Schiffman  
Warren Schreiber  
Kevin Shields  
Matthew Silverstein  
Joseph Sweeney  
John Tsavalos  
Peter Tu  
Harpreet Wahan  
Clarissa Wong  
Maggie Wong  
Linna Yu  
Lei Zhao  
Jie Zhu

#### ABSENT

Fred Fu  
Vincent Gianelli  
Jeff Huang

Rev. McEachern  
Kim Ohanian  
Millicent O'Meally

Joshua Sussman  
Peter Sutich  
Dian Yu

#### COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager  
Mary Zuliani, Community Assistant  
Mary O'Neill, Community Associate

#### GUESTS

Joyce Choi-Councilman Koo's office  
Destany Batista-Assemblyman Rosenthal's office  
Sandra Ung-Congresswomen Meng's office  
Josimel Delacruz-Councilman Cabrera's office

Brian Lam-Assemblywoman Rozic's office  
Tony Cao-Assemblyman Kim's office  
Barbara Baruch-State Senator Liu's office  
Vito Tautonico-Councilman Vallone's office

Councilman Cabrera, 14th District in the New York City Council  
Jason Antonopoulos-Assemblyman Braunstein's office

Naureen Akhter, Congresswomen Ocasio-Cortez

**Chair Eugene Kelty** opened the meeting at 7:10 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag followed by a moment of silence honoring our fallen military heroes who died to keep us free and those still keeping us safe around the world and here at home.

**Roll call attendance was then taken with (39) Present/with 2 late arrivals (3) Absent (6) Excused for valid reasons.**

Board Member **Marc Schiffman** asked that the March and April minutes be individually approved. With no corrections, deletions or rejections listed on each and then seconded individually by Board Member Linna Yu, the minutes were officially approved. Before the Chair read the announcements of the past month, he introduced guest speaker **Fernando Cabrera**, who is the Chair & Councilman of Governmental Operations. The community boards, he stated clearly, have been neglected by the Mayor's Office for years with no allocated funding necessary to do their jobs. Some community board territories are even larger than council districts. Last year Speaker Cabrera helped push through funding increases for CB's without the Mayor's approval, though these funds cannot be used for salaries. They are going back to the administration to baseline the amount (\$42,000) in funding increases. He is asking CB's to vote in a resolution supporting this effort to send a message to this administration.

Q. **Warren Schreiber** asked if baseline means this would be for every year?

A. Yes, it would be included in your yearly budget, and wants it included in the Mayor's budget so it can be used for your staffing.

**Chair Kelty** said he was unhappy with the Council Charter review process of last year and would encourage Council to have dialog with the Boards and become more aware of what we are doing on the ground.

A. **Councilman Cabrera** stated he believes in institutional knowledge and said there will be another Charter Review Commission as well.

Announcements as follows:-

- \* **Annual Memorial Day Observance Ceremony** – Wednesday, May 22, 2019 @ 11 AM hosted by Qns. Borough Pres. Melinda Katz at Veterans Memorial Garden at Qns. Borough Hall.
- \* **E-Waste Recycling Event** – Saturday, May 18, 2019 10 am to 4 pm at Kissena Pk., 164<sup>th</sup> St. between Oak Avenue & Underhill Avenue, Fresh Meadow.
- \* **Job Opening -Queens Botanical Garden** – Director of Finance & Administration.
- \* **Free Security Guard Training**-Register by May 15th-Must be 21 yrs. old, ready to start May 20<sup>th</sup> to May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 9 to 5. Free 8 & 16 hour training with Certification on completion, [workforce@camba.org](mailto:workforce@camba.org).
- \* **Work in NYC**, minimum wage, paid sick leave, overtime after 40 hours, discrimination free work place, even if an undocumented immigrant.
- \* **Touro Graduate School**-Become a NYC Public School teacher, 320 W. 31<sup>st</sup> Street, NYC Room 143, May 23, 2019 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm.
- \* **MTA Bus Redesign** - Feedback. Call **Assemblywoman Nily Rozic** with your comments at 159-16 Union Turnpike Monday to Friday 11 am to 3 pm or to [rozicn@nyassembly.gov](mailto:rozicn@nyassembly.gov).
- \* **Council Speaker Corey Johnson** –Fifth Annual West Side Summit – May 19, 2019, 1 to 3 pm at The Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum, Lutnick Theater.
- \* **Health & Wellness Expo**, May 19, 2019, 1-4 pm at Weeping Beech Park.
- \* **Rain Barrel Giveaway**-May 19, 2019, 10 am to 1 pm at Poppenhusen Institute hosted by Assemblyman **Daniel Rosenthal and Senator John Liu**.
- \* **Student Loan Debt Clinic**-June 8, 2019, 10 am -4 pm @ Margert Community Corp., 325 Beach 37<sup>th</sup> Street, Far Rockaway, NY.
- \* **Fifth Annual Fort Totten Park** Independence Day Celebration, June 26, 2019 sponsored by **NYC Council Member Paul Vallone**.
- \* **MTA Reduced Fare MetroCard** Mobile Sales Bus Event, courtesy of Assemblyman Rosenthal

on May 29, 2019 at 1 pm to 3 pm, 158-11 Jewel Avenue, Fresh Meadows.

- \* **DOT Project** update- Some funding available we could push the City to use for resurfacing the Iron Triangle.
- \* **Tyler Cassel's** sale of his home is about to close in early June. Then he and his wife will be moving to Florida. We wish them both the very best.
- \* **Chuck Apelian** has been appointed to the Civic Engagement Commission.

**ITEM # 6 - P. S. 22 & Playground Redevelopment - Education Department & Parks Department-  
Committee Chairs Arlene Fleishman for Education & Kim Ohanian for Parks - Committee**

**Chair Fleishman** presented some background information. Both Chairs were invited to a meeting on the area adjoining the school to hear the School Construction Authority's idea to remove the handball court and replace it with a full legal size basketball court. No one present had any objections and all were in favor of anything that would encourage more children to attend the park. An additional nighttime light will be added to the roof so police patrolling the area could see the yard and playground. The handball wall that sits in the middle of the school yard must be removed and needs the Board's approval. A vote by our full board is expected to be in favor of the process.

Q. Mark Schiffman- What are they going to do here?

A. The school doesn't have a playground, and currently uses the adjacent playground next door that's Parks Dept. property, and want to make it an official playground, with a basketball court, new seating areas, and removal of the handball court.

Q. Barbara McHugh- Why a basketball court?

A. The community doesn't use the handball court.

The Committee Report of March 15, 2019 was read by Arlene Fleishman and was unanimously approved.

**The motion now on the floor is to approve the playground redevelopment by removing the handball Court and replacing it with a full legal size basketball court and redoing the entire playground, seconded by Lei Zhao.**

With no further discussion on the motion,

**The vote taken on the motion was unanimous with (37) Approve (0) Disapprove (2) not in room**

**ITEM #7 - ONE-WAY – 127<sup>TH</sup> STREET BETW. 23<sup>RD</sup> AVENUE AND 25<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE** – The site met with DOT approval by meeting the criteria for a one-way going NORTH and because of the narrowness of the street. A petition signed by 36 residents living on 127<sup>th</sup> Street as well as the replies from residents living

between 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue were in agreement of the one-way change. Also surveys mailed out to residents of the area showed 50 residents in favor with none opposing. Committee Chair

Nicholas Corrado held a meeting on April 29, 2019 reviewing the benefits of the conversion with the Committee voting in favor minus one dissent.

With no questions from board members, the following public speakers who live in the area did speak. **Joseph Johan** raised his concern about the traffic and congestion making it almost impossible to live on the block with the constant accidents, people yelling at each other, speeding, cars getting sideswiped and T-boned coming down their block. **Bill Johan** stated the visibility with parking or pulling out of your driveway is zero. Traffic coming down the block to get out of College Point is so bad you have to be extremely careful to avoid accidents. There were two other speakers who were in agreement with the Johan brothers, but wouldn't come up to the dais. All of them hoped the Board would vote in favor of a one-way. .

**The motion on the floor this evening is to approve the one-way going North on 127<sup>th</sup> Street between 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue, seconded by Barbara McHugh.**

DISCUSSION ON THE MOTION

**Frank Macchio** said 127<sup>th</sup> Street is wide, but once it passes 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue it appears it was never meant to be a two-way. In that location of 127<sup>th</sup> Street, a two way street makes no sense. **Andrew Arcese, DOT Planner** said the area was studied by traffic engineers who analyzed the surrounding street network to see if the request makes sense based on traffic volume, narrowness, etc. They found this one block stretch was feasible as a one-way going North, and did not need a southbound pair, as is usually required.

**The vote on the motion was passed unanimously (37) Approved (0) Disapproved (2) Not in Room**

**ITEM #8 - A.K.A. – JOSEPH FEMENIA WAY** - Requested by College Point Civic & Taxpayers Association and approved by Councilman Paul Vallone for the Southeast corner of 130<sup>th</sup> Street & 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue next to the College Point Sports Field. Committee Chair Nicholas Corrado held his committee meeting on April 29, 2019 which was approved unanimously, and this evening presented some background information. Joseph Femenia was born in College Point in 1956, graduated from Flushing High School in 1972, attended Queens College for several years, started to work at a Mobil gas station, and married Laura in October 1992. He worked with the MTA in 1993 and was Chair of the Transportation Committee for CB Board #7 for nine years and restarted the College Point Civic & Taxpayers Association in 2008, and always was a community activist. **Laura Femenia** bravely spoke about the love of her life who passed away four months ago, saying he was a Mason since 1980, a member of CB #7, President of College Point Civic, attended hundreds of meetings and thousands of hours communicating with elected officials and different agencies to make College Point a better place to work and live in. He also was a photographer and animal lover. She is very proud of her husband's accomplishments and tonight's vote to honor her husband is a great remembrance to his persistent dedication to improving his community, and thanked everyone involved.

**Committee Chair Corrado placed the motion on the floor to approve the A.K.A. JOSEPH FEMENIA WAY for the Southeast corner of 130<sup>th</sup> Street and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue next to the College Point Sports Field, seconded by Mark Schiffman.**

**The vote taken was unanimous (39) Approved (0) Disapproved**

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**PETER TU** - Spoke about his becoming a Board member of CB #7 thirteen (13) years ago, the same year his wife passed way from breast cancer. He never remarried and was content to raise his daughter, who was eleven years old at the time, and who remains the most important person in his life. Also two organizations have been a stable part of his life and guided his way, Community Board #7 and FBCA. To express how much it's meant to him to be a part of CB #7, he has invited **everyone** at Board #7 to his daughter's NYC wedding. Her wedding was held on the West Coast to a wonderful young Indian man and now they will celebrate their union here in Flushing on June 8, 2019. **NO GIFTS ARE ALLOWED OR WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Peter just wants to celebrate their union with all of us. It would make him very happy for us to be a part of it. There will be fun, good food and wine.

**ROBERT LoSCALZO** –Mr. LoScalzo is a Whitestone resident producing a documentary video since 2007 on Willets Point, located across 126<sup>th</sup> Street from City Field Stadium. With more than 50 businesses clustered around Willets Pt. Blvd. and 127<sup>th</sup> Street, south of 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue, these streets are severely in need of repair and have been deliberately neglected and ignored for years by the City. CB #7 for years has been putting the repair of these roadbeds as part of its Capital Budget priorities. Also in **2013** CB #7 approved a ULURP for Willets Point special permits, with the condition road wear & tear rehabilitation must be implemented **NOW!** That was 6 years ago. Within the last 3 weeks, however, DOT paved 126<sup>th</sup> St. from Roosevelt Ave. to Northern Blvd., outside the area of primary need and resurfaced 126 Place & 127<sup>th</sup> Street, but these streets provide barely any benefit to anyone, and does little to address the needs of the business owners in Willets Point. The 50 business owners are signing a petition to resurface all streets that front their businesses. **First Vice Chair Apelian** advised they send the petition to DOT soon, and mentioned \$17 million funding has been allocated to DOT recently, but we don't know what it's for as yet, but will find out in the weeks ahead.

**CAROL LaGRASSE - President of Property Rights Foundation of America based in Warren Cty, NY**– She’s been involved in advocating for fair treatment of Willets Point industrial businesses since **2012** with business owners speaking up at their annual conferences. In 2012 they filed an Amicus brief in support of their fight against eminent domain with international lawyers from Washington, DC and Mt. Kisco and recently won, with the City of New York dropping their action. Ms. LaGrasse grew up in College Point and the street conditions have not improved in 50 years. This fact was corroborated by her deceased father who said it was as bad 49 years ago as it is now. As a Civil Engineer, she finds these policies astounding. The businesses are blocked from view and access, and work under conditions that are a disgrace. Paving these streets should be the most pressing matter and asks CB #7 to continue to support these businesses. People from all over NY know the conditions at Willets Point and is the shame of the City.

**STEPHANIE LIZA – New Manager of Community Affairs at New York Presbyterian Queens – Upcoming** Event at Queens Botanical Garden on June 9, 2019, Twist & Sprout. Ms. Liza is your liaison to the hospital. Reach out to her in you have any question or think New York Presbyterian can be of assistance.

**BEVERLY McDERMOT –Kissena Park Civic Association -** Stated they still have the same problem at Kissena Park that she brought up at our last Public Hearing. **Chair Kelty** again advised her to stay on top of Councilman Koo’s office to get funds for the Park. Today she brought up the problem of the Gold City site development on Kissena Blvd causing massive traffic overflow. Commercial traffic, large diesel trucks and emergency vehicles are inundating Kissena Blvd and our off-streets as well. The diesel trucks are noisy, come in day and night, and ignore our stop signs. We need certain streets to become one- way. The worst problem is at Poplar Avenue between Parsons and Kissena Blvd and it needs to be made one-way immediately or we’ll have another death like we did at Rose Ave. and Parsons. We will be sending a petition to the Council and the Board and hope it’s approved quickly.

**MARY IOVINO –** On 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, between Murray & 150<sup>th</sup> Street (150-35 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue) there are at least 15 people living in this one family home. They may be running a business there. Beside calling 311 with no results, they leave garbage all over, finding parking is impossible, most of the single family homes on the block have been converted to two-family, so our taxes went up, the street is not even paved and there is no drainage, so there is flooding. **Chair Kelty** said he will check it out.

**FRANK MACCHIO – 30 Yr. Member of Flushing Rotary Club –** Over the years the Rotary Club has donated an ambulance for Booth Memorial Hospital, outfitted all the Volunteer Ambulance Corps in the neighborhood and just bought Ronald McDonald House a new van. This year at the Douglaston/Little Neck Parade they will be honoring the Flushing Rotary Club. I invite you all to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zuliani