



Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

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

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Sharon Lee

Acting Queens Borough President

Eugene T. Kelty Jr.

Chairperson

Marilyn McAndrews

District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 2020

UNION PLAZA CARE CENTER

33-23 UNION STREET, FLUSHING, NEW YORK

PRESENT

Charles Apelian

Kaily Cheng

Michael Cheng

Chin-Hsiang Chiang

Kim Cody

Nicholas Corrado

Arlene Fleishman

Richard Forman

Fred Fu

Pablo Hernandez

Jeff Huang

Lawrence Hughes

Eugene Kelty

Phil Konigsberg

Wensong Li

Wendy Louie

Rev. McEachern

Barbara McHugh

Selma Moses

Kim Ohanian

Millicent O'Meally

John Park

Paul Rifino

Warren Schreiber

Kevin Shields

Matthew Silverstein

Joshua Sussman

Joseph Sweeney

John Tsavalos

Peter Tu

Harpreet Singh Wahan

Clarissa Wong

Maggie Wong

Dian Yu

Linna Yu

Lei Zhao

ABSENT

*James Cervino

*John Choe

*Kris Ram

*Peter Sutich

*Vincent Gianelli

*Frank Macchio

*Sergio Nicolich

**Esther Lee

**Terence Park

**Belal Salim

**Jie Zhu

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager

Mary O'Neill, Community Associate

Danielle Pennise, Community Associate

Mary Zuliani, Community Assistant

GUESTS

Melinda Katz-District Attorney of Queens

Sharon Lee-Acting Queens Borough President

Elizabeth Bian-Queens Borough President's Office

Susan Liu-Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office

Michelle Hernandez-Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-

Cortez's Office

Barbara Baruch-State Senator John Liu's Office

Kleanthis Plakas-Assemblyman Edward Braunstein's
Office

Tony Cao-Assemblyman Ron Kim's Office

Destany Batista-Assemblyman Daniel Rosenthal's Office

Vito Tautonico-Councilman Paul Vallone's Office

Joyce Choi-Councilman Peter Koo's Office

Justin Connor- Councilman Tom Suozzi's Office

***Excused/Absent; **Absent/No Excuse**

Chairman Gene Kelty attended a Borough Board Meeting and was detained at Borough Hall. In his absence, **First Vice Chair Charles Apelian** opened the public hearing at 7:02 P.M. with the **Pledge of Allegiance**. He requested all to take a moment of silence for our military service men and women and for them to remain safe.

Roll Call Attendance was taken by the First Vice Chair with (36) Present (7) *Excused (4) **Absent

*James Cervino (medical), *John Choe (prior commitment), *Vincent Gianelli (medical), *Frank Macchio (work conflict), *Sergio Nicolich (family medical), *Kris Ram (sick), *Peter Sutich (medical), **Esther Lee, **Terence Park, **Belal Salim, **Jie Zhu.

The following announcements were read by Chairman Kelty:

- **Board Member, Marc Schiffman** suddenly passed away on Christmas Eve. Services were attended by the Chairman, District Manager, Marilyn McAndrews and some of our board members. Marc Schiffman served on the board for 12 years and was part of the College Point Corporate Park Task Force, and Transit and Transportation Committee. He retired from Atlas Traffic Consultants, Corp. in College Point as Controller. The board appreciates his commitment and service to the community and Mr. Schiffman will be greatly missed.
- **Ann Juliano Jarwin, Founder & Chairwoman of the Center for The Women of New York in Queens**, passed away in December at the age of 97. She will always be remembered for her continuous dedication in equality for women and domestic violence.
- **Celebrate Lunar New Year** at the Sheraton LaGuardia East Hotel in Flushing on **January 25, 2020**. Parade begins at 11:00 A.M. and indoor festivities are from 1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.
- **24th Annual Valentines for Vets sponsored by Assemblyman Edward C. Braunstein and the Law Offices of Ann Margaret Carrozza**. Show your appreciation and give a card or gift to a vet. **Drop off donations by February 12, 2020** at Assemblyman Braunstein's office: 213-33 39th Ave., Suite 238, Flushing, Queens.
- **Enroll in a low or no cost health insurance for the New Year**. The City of New York's official health insurance outreach and enrollment program provides free in-person assistance. Visit nyc.gov/GetCoveredNYC or Call 311.
- **NYC Parks announces the opportunity to become a NYC lifeguard**. Visit nyc.gov/parks/lifeguards or call 311 to come to one of the training locations. Testing begins in **December and January**, 48 hr. work week/\$15 per hr.
- **Open enrollment begins for the 2020 Ladders for Leaders Program** offered by the NYC Department of Youth & Community Development. Applicants must be a high school or college student between the age 16-21; with a minimum GPA of 3.00, to participate in a paid summer internship with a leading corporation, non-profit organization or NYC agency. For questions contact, NYC Youth Connect at (800) 246-4646.
- Starting **March 1, 2020, plastic bags in NYC will be banned**. A free reusable bag can be obtained at NYC.gov/bags or call 311. **Businesses will begin collecting a five-cent fee** on paper carryout bags.
- A special **DSNY Waste Drop-Off in College Point** is available at 30th Avenue between 120th and 122nd Street; located at the northwest corner of the DSNY Queens District 7 garage. Hours are from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., every Saturday and the last Friday of every month. Visit nyc.gov/safedisposal for more information.

Approval of November 25, 2019 and December 3, 2019 Minutes

A motion to approve the Public Hearing minutes of November 25, 2019 was seconded by Selma Moses with 5 abstentions due to absence. **December 3, 2019 minutes were approved and seconded by Kim Ohanian** with 8 abstentions due to absence and an abstention for conflict from Matthew Silverstein who was absent on December 3rd. **The location** of the hearing was corrected to 149-58 Cross Island Pkwy, Whitestone, which was the location of our holiday dinner at Verdi's of Whitestone. The **attendance status** was corrected to present for Board members **Richard Forman, Wensong Li, and Wendy Louie**.

A Message from Our Elected Officials

District Attorney and former Borough President Melinda Katz attended the first public hearing of the New Year. She thanked everyone for their support and expressed gratitude for her service. The DA also introduced **Sharon Lee** as Acting Queens Borough President for the interim. The District Attorney addressed crime incidents and investigations that have occurred during her first thirteen days of Year 2020 since she has taken office. Discussed was the homicide of a 92-year-old woman, known as the "cat lady", who was sexually assaulted and killed on Liberty Ave. and 127th Street in Queens. An arraignment will be made this week and the assailant will be indicted on two charges for murder and sexual assault. Another incident mentioned was the slashing of a woman's face which resulted in 126 stiches and the death on January 10th of 2-month-old twins living in a New York City financed homeless shelter. District Attorney Katz emphasized the competency in her new staff comprised of 700 people of which half are attorneys and investigators, and the remaining are paralegals and administrative. She also emphasized that her job is to make sure the county of Queens remains a safe place. The office is in the process of opening up a bureau of housing protection which will include a hotline. A community outreach division will also be established which will have bureaus to work exclusively with the community boards, work force development, mental health, civic associations, and precinct community councils to lower the crime rate in the borough of Queens.

The District Attorney gave recognition to **Colleen D. Babb**, Queens Borough Chief of the Family Court Division who has been in practice for decades as a prosecutor. She will be an executor on the same par as major crimes, investigators and trials.

The Floor was Opened up for Questions.

Q. Public Safety Chairman **Joseph Sweeney** asked, "Would you please address the bail reform/cashless bail law?"

A. **Melinda Katz** responded, For a long time people of color were getting arrested more, with longer sentences and higher bail at low level crimes. As the system became more unfair, people began looking for better answers. What is occurring now, if someone is arrested for low-level crimes, non-violent crimes, and the person is released on recognizance? In NYS, we don't use dangerousness as a measure for bail. I believe in no-cash bail. For instance, if someone gets bail in the amount of \$50,000 and the person was part of a robbery. An assessment was made and if the person pays \$50,000 he/she will show up at court. However, this doesn't mean the person is safe. There are states all over the country doing things differently. Currently, we don't have a system set up and cash bail is used for more serious crimes. I think legislature will look at this and I am hoping they will review it and come up with a better solution.

Q. **Millicent O'Meally** asked, "Are we close to knowing what caused the death of the twins?"

A. **Melinda Katz** responded, "I am limited in what I can tell you about the incident because it is an open investigation."

Peter Tu commented, "We should give Melinda Katz time with the issues she has to deal with."

Chairman Kelty reconfirmed the District Attorney's term of 4 years.

A. **Melinda Katz** responded, "We are going to have a Justice Report every year, showing the amount of arrests, plea bargains and the amount of arrests that did not leave to charges so that we are transparent to the public."

Q. **Warren Schreiber** asked, "Are there any plans to assist crime victims?"

A. **Melinda Katz** responded, We do have a crime victim's unit for those in need of assistance and protection. It is very active. Sometimes the person is a victim of a crime because of the circumstances he/she is in. The office is creating a new division to help pre-charge diversion referrals which will include to have programs in place that will assist the victim after the crime. It is about making sure criminals getting out of state prison, who want to make a difference, can talk to children about a better path taken to make a difference in society.

Melinda Katz closed stating, "I am honored to have been the Borough President and honored to be the District Attorney of this great county of Queens." I will work every single day to make sure you can raise your children, your parents can age gracefully, and make sure this borough is exactly the greatness it is."

Gene Kelty thanked the District Attorney for coming and extended the Board's services to distribute literature to the community. He also thanked the DA's office for previous years under Judge Brown; especially Jesse Sligh, who has been at the DA's office for a long time and is a good friend of the Board. In addition, he announced, board member, **Peter Sutich's** wife will be working in the Economic Crime unit and is the only CPA at the District Attorney's office.

The meeting was interrupted by protestors who shouted, "Stop the Flushing Waterfront District." Protestors were escorted out of the hearing by 109 precinct officers. **Chair Kelty** apologized for the disturbance and commented, "We are here graciously to conduct our public hearings at the nursing home."

Q. **Lei Zhao** asked, "Do you know who those people are?"

A. **Chair Kelty** responded, "They did not sign up for public participation. We follow an agenda and they do not."

Michelle Hernandez, Representative from the Office of Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez provided some updates. The first Town Hall meeting for the New Year will be held on **January 23, 2020** at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx and will focus on health care. The discussion is sponsored by Students for a National Health Plan, Medical Students for Choice and Reproductive Justice and the Family and Social Medicine Interest Group. The office took action to ensure that the people of Puerto Rico receive the necessary resources following the devastating earthquake. Along

with colleagues, the congresswoman wrote to Secretary Carson urging the release of approved funds for Puerto Rico and asked the administration to issue a major disaster declaration. FEMA was also contacted to ensure that all tools and resources are available to restore power to the island. Lastly, the House passed legislation to protect our national security by reiterating that only Congress can declare war under the Constitution. In December, the office's newsletter was issued. Anyone interested can sign up on the website.

Q. Peter Tu asked, "Why does Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez only send you to attend?" I would like to see the congresswoman. The Board would know more about her if she attended Community Board 7 public hearing.

A. Michelle Hernandez responded, "I will inform the congresswoman of the request of her presence at the meeting."

Sharon Lee, Acting Queens Borough President will serve for the next 3 months. She commended her predecessor Melinda Katz, who made history as the first female DA of Queens County and looks forward to working more closely with Community Board 7.

ITEM# 5: 41-62 Bowne Street, BSA # 2019292- Applicant seeks special permit under ZR-73-66 to allow As-of-Right building, FAA height approved, mixed use, multi-story residential and retail development at above address within flight obstruction area of LaGuardia to exceed height restriction imposed by ZR-62-20/21. **Committee Chair** Rev. Richard McEachern.

Chair Kelty announced, the hearing is cancelled for tonight and will be rescheduled; since the architect is on vacation.

ITEM# 6: 18-26 to 18-50 Bay Lane, BSA# 2019-281 to #2019-291 A – Proposed site with 33, two-family townhouses, 10 of which are subject to instant appeals on existing lot 102, to be apportioned with development into new tax lots (to comprise a single zoning lot) and a proposed private road to be known as Bay Lane within the development site and conform to requirements of R5 zoning district with a FAR of 0.75. **Committee Chair** Paul Rifino.

Chair Kelty announced, the hearing is rescheduled for **January 23, 2020**.

ITEM #7: Executive Committee Elections for 2020- Lawrence Hughes

Gene Kelty instructed each board member to sign all 5 pages of the ballot whether a member cast a vote or not. He asked **Barbara Baruch**, Community Representative from State Senate John Liu's office to oversee the ballot count. **Lawrence Hughes** conducted the election; since **Legal Chair, Joshua Sussman** is running for election. Ballots were given to all board members present for each position on the Executive Committee.

For the **Chair** position, the only candidate formally running was **Gene Kelty**. No nominations were from the floor, the vote was **36 in Favor**.

For the **First Vice Chair** position, the only candidate formally running was **Charles Apelian**. No nominations were from the floor, the vote was **36 in Favor**.

For the **Second Vice Chair** position, the only candidate formally running was **Warren Schreiber**. No nominations were from the floor, the vote was **36 in Favor**.

For the **Third Vice Chair** position, the only candidate formally running was **Frank Macchio**.

Nominations from the Floor

- Barbara McHugh
- Lei Zhao
- Kim Ohanian

The Vote taken was:

19 Votes for Frank Macchio

12 Votes for Lei Zhao

3 Votes for Kim Ohanian

2 Votes for Barbara McHugh

For the **Fourth Vice Chair** position, the candidates formerly running were **Joshua Sussman** and **Phil Konigsberg** and nominated from the floor was **Lei Zhao** by Kaily Cheng. All candidates were given the opportunity to inform the public as to why they should be considered for the position.

Joshua Sussman has 25 years in the DA's office and has been on the board for 14 years. He would like to remain on the board and become more involve in reaching out to the community. In addition, to his background in legal, he worked as a teacher. He concluded stating, "I have the well-rounded ability to do the things that we all want to do."

Phil Konigsberg thanked everyone for their attention. He held this position several years ago. At that time, his parents were ill and he felt he did not have the time to commit to the board. He would like to resume to the position. If elected, he would to hear everyone's thoughts and select a venue for the holiday dinner in December.

Nominee **Lei Zaho** stated, "I did not expect to be nominated for this position, but if you support me, I will listen to your ideas and advocate for us to get to know the community better as it changes." He concluded, "I have been only on the Board for 3 years but learned a lot from each and everyone of you through the committees, which I have the privilege of serving on."

The Vote taken was:

2 No Votes

6 Votes for Joshua Sussman

10 Votes for Phil Konigsberg

18 Votes for Lei Zhao

Question from the Floor

Q. **Selma Mosses** asked, "Is this a secret ballot because we have to sign it."

A. **Lawrence Hughes** responded, “No this is public. It is an open ballot.”

Gene Kelty added, the voting process comes from corporate council/legal department. Although it makes people uncomfortable, the Community Board has to publish the votes.

Our Executive Committee for 2020 is as follows:

Eugene Kelty	Chair
Charles Apelian	First Vice Chair
Warren Schreiber	Second Vice Chair
Frank Macchio	Third Vice Chair
Lei Zhao	Fourth Vice Chair

Guests

Catherine Goode, Representative from the U.S. Census Bureau, announced this is a census year. Responses to the census will affect the community for the next 10 years. The population count will begin April 1, 2020. There is \$675 billion in funding that can be spent over the next 10 years on schools, teachers, training, technology, special education, hospitals and emergency services. There are resources available if translation is needed. The census can be completed in 12 different languages by phone, online, by paper or with an enumerator in person. There are translators available for 59 languages and can be completed in 12 languages. The census is only 10 questions. Flyers with additional information about the census was provided at the hearing’s information table. Also, the Census Bureau is hiring part-time and full time workers. Anyone of interest can apply online at [2020census.gov /jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs).

Chair Kelty introduced **Anthony Iuliano**, Queens Government Affairs Officer from the Department of Buildings. Iuliano said, “This is an active community board and the agency is making more rounds to board meetings.” He praised CB7’s participation with the community by stating, “We deal with many community boards but I will tell you in Queens County, you are the best.” The agency had a tough reputation and now we are transparent. The agency has been issuing enforcement actions to business owners. He advised the public if anyone sees anything they are not sure of, reach out to the District Manager and bring it to the attention of the office. The agency is cracking down on property owners who pave over their front yards, illegal conversions, and Airbnb rentals. There are many undercover operations handling this.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Elsa Paredes, Flushing resident explained she just came out of the hospital after a week and saw the sign about the meeting. She felt she had to come because she is a victim of housing harassment. Ms. Paredes further stated, “They want to set a fire to my apartment, they steal and cut my clothes and shoes.” It has been reported to the police and DA. She is asking for some help and does not know where to go.

First Vice Chair, Charles Apelian asked Elsa Paredes to provide us with information. He explained, normally the Community Board would reach out to the authorities which would be the police, housing authority and DA but it sounds confusing because if they are not helping her, we would be going back to them. However, the Community Board will make some phone calls to assist Ms. Paredes. The First Vice Chair directed Ms. Paredes to **District Manager, Marilyn McAndrews** who took down her contact information.

Joseph Sweeney commented, there is a person, **Mr. Nathan** who informed us that there is an owner of a company who is a billionaire and is buying up buildings in Flushing and in Elmhurst. As the Chair of Public Safety he explained he looked into this and found out superintendents were fired, heat was turned off and fires were lit. He asked the elected officials and DA for a public hearing; since this conduct is an outrage. The person is being fined. **District Manager, Marilyn McAndrews** spoke to Melinda Katz and the meeting is set up for **February 25, 2020**.

Cassandra Carrillo, Representative from 32 BJ of SEIU is here tonight to ask if the board would consider having language that would recommend prevailing wages for service workers. There is a large ULURP, the Special Flushing Waterfront District. We have worked with many Boards that have adopted this language into their ULURPS. 32 BJ represents 4,000 members who live and work in the district of Community Board 7. The prevailing wage is set by our standard and regulated by the Comptroller. It is a living wage that comes with significant health and retirement benefits which are embedded into the wage. Cassandra Carrillo provided examples of good job language that other community boards have used and asked if it can be distributed by her. Also, included were rates of prevailing wages for residential and commercial workers.

Chair Gene Kelty informed Cassandra Carrillo that the information cannot be distributed, but can be placed on the hearing's information table.

Garture Li, Operations Director of Glow Community Center, is here to connect with the community and share the cultural programs offered at Glow. The center recently opened six months ago in Flushing at 133-29 41st Ave. Mr. Li was born and raised in Flushing and is currently serving at the center. Glow's mission is to serve the community through educational, cultural and social programs. The center just finalized their program design for classes. The target audience includes school age youth, teenagers, young professionals and families. Mr. Li provided a flyer announcing 90 minute classes to enhance memory, self-confidence, and mathematics for children ages 4-10. For more information, visit www.GlowNYC.org or call (718) 359-1888.

Harpreet Singh Wahan, Representative of the Flushing Interfaith Council and Sikh Center, announced the meditation garden located at the intersection of Main Street and 56th Avenue is almost complete. He wants to make sure that the interfaith community comes together to meditate together.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Pennise