



Community Board 7

Borough of Queens

Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Beechhurst, Clearview, College Point, Downtown Flushing, East Flushing, Flushing, Malba, Murray Hill, Queensborough Hill, Whitestone, Linden Hill, and Willets Point

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Donovan Richards, Jr.
Queens Borough President

Eugene T. Kelty Jr.
Chairperson
Marilyn McAndrews
District Manager

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022
AUDIO AND VIDEO TELECONFERENCE

PRESENT

Charles Apelian
James Cervino
Kaily Cheng
Michael Cheng
Kim Cody
Nicholas Corrado
Arlene Fleishman
Richard Forman
Fred Fu
Doreen Gatanas
Pablo Hernandez
Cody Herrmann
Jeff Huang
Lawrence Hughes
Eugene Kelty
Phil Konigsberg

Esther Lee
Dr. Wensong, Li
Wendy Louie
Frank Macchio
Betsy Mak
Rev. R. McEachern
Barbara McHugh
Michelle Miao
Selma Moses
Sergio Nicolich
Millicent O'Meally
John Park
Terence Park
Yacov Pshtisky
Frank Quatela
Kris Ram

Paul Rifino
Warren Schreiber
Kevin Shields
Matthew Silverstein
Joshua Sussman
Joseph Sweeney
John Tsavalos
Peter Tu
Harpreet Wahan
Clarissa Wong
Maggie Wong
Dian Yu
Linna Yu
Lei Zhao
Jie Zhu

ABSENT

* Vincent Gianelli

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager
Mary O'Neill, Community Associate
Anne Krzyzanowski, Community Aide

GUESTS

Susan Lui - Congresswoman Meng's office
Mabel Tso - Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez's office
Mei Ru - State Senator Liu's office
Min Young- State Senator Stavisky's office
Howard Wong - Assemblywoman Rozic's office
Amber Yoon - Assemblyman Braunstein's office

Fernando Acosta – Councilwoman Paladino's office
Sandra Ung - Councilwoman
Patrick Kwan, Mayor Adam's office
Elizabeth Bian - Queens District Attorney Katz's office
Max Weprin - Queens Borough President's office

***Excused**

Chair Gene Kelty opened the meeting at 7:00 pm via audio and video teleconference. A Pledge Allegiance to our Flag was in honor of those who fought for our freedom, especially those who gave their lives and those who came home seriously injured. He asked for a moment of silence for NYPD Officer Jason Rivera who was recently killed and his partner NYPD Officer Wilbert Mora who is fighting for his life.

The attendance was taken with (46) Present (0) Absent (1) EXCUSED

Announcement from Elected Officials:

Announcements from Chairman Kelty:

- CB7 Board Member Reverend McEachern sent us a Thank You Card for our well wishes for his son's recovery.
- Reminder to always ask for ID whenever someone rings your doorbell. Bad guys are pretending to be NYPD.
- NYC Parks & Recreation is hiring Lifeguards
- NYPD Academy is accepting applications for its Citizen Police Academy for 2022
- Pathways to College at SUNY has classes starting March
- Food Scraps can now be dropped off at College Point Park
- Bay Terrace Community Alliance will discuss Bay Terrace 2022 and beyond and the Bay Terrace Library renovations.
- Board Member Harpreet Singh Wuhan's father-in-law passed away.

Approval of the December 2021 minutes – Approved.

Presentation by NYC Department of Homeless Services update on new proposed shelter located at 39-03 College Point Boulevard aka 133-04 39 Avenue.

Joslyn Carter, Administrator of the Department of Homeless Services has been with DHS for almost 18 years. She has been working on making more shelters for families and making them better qualities where the clients will feel safer. They are trying to open shelters and transitional housing in the neighborhoods where they are needed so that children can continue going to the same schools and using the same doctors.

Amanda Nasser, Queens Borough Director Department of Homeless Services

Urban Resource Institute (URI) – A not-for-profit service provider, partnered with DHS to provide services at the site.

Asian America for Equality (AAFE) – Owner of the Site

Prior to October 2021, DHS used hotels and other buildings without services to residents and space was usually unsafe. DHS is committed to opening new high-quality facilities which will help people get back into housing. URI will provide comprehensive services on site. These will include case management, individual services, counseling, permanency planning, and housing assistance. This is temporary housing; the goal is to stabilize the families so that they can move into permanent housing where they will be assessed. There will not be any single adults at this location, only families who have children under 18 years old. This location is not scheduled to open until 2024.

URI representatives: **Nathaniel M. Fields**, Chief Executive Officer, **Dr. Carla Smith** Deputy Chief Executive Officer; **Dr Amanda Eckhardt** Chief Program Officer and **Dr. Natalie Richardson** Vice President of Programs for Homeless Families URI has partnered with the city for over 40 years providing housing services. They operated emergency homes, transitional homes, and hotels. They are planning on opening more transitional homes. They are partnered with Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) for the services at this location. This building will have 90 units. 76,391 square feet. 23 studio apartments. 62 one-bedrooms, 5-two bedrooms, a multipurpose community room. The staff will include fully experienced social workers and an operational team. They will only accept families with children, including a single parent and a child. The building will have a large community space will be used for the families. There will be an Advisory Board made up of people who live in the community to have conversations about what is happening at the transitional housing. URI will provide educational & career training, job placement, childcare & transportation assistance, a FAB lab (digital technology) for youth will be available to anyone outside of the housing. The transitional housing provides is beneficial to prevent homelessness. They will hire local people and use local businesses.

Chairman Kelty: Do you need approval form CB #7 Queens for the transitional housing?

Amanda Nasser: No.

Joslyn Carter: That is correct. Because of the right to shelter law. They are mandated by New York State to open shelters. We want to keep an ‘open door’ with the community.

Millicent O’Meally: Twenty-three studio apartments seem like a lot for families to move into.

Joslyn Carter: The average family is one adult with two small children or one adult and a small child. These is for the smaller families.

Cody Hermann: I was looking at the AAFE website about this and it mentions the clause where it has hotels that are currently acting as shelters now in the flushing community will these be like forever closed due to this project, so I just wanted to hear more about that.

Joslyn Carter: We have been committed to getting families out of hotels-as-shelter at the end of 2021. Hotels are not a place to have families living in since they do not provide any services needed. We started to use hotels because there were not enough shelters. We are committed to coming out of using hotels by 2023.

Dr. Wensong Li: I have been living in Flushing 30 years. The community is against the shelter. Has anything happened before with a project like this one which made the community against this project?

Chairman Kelty: There was a women’s shelter in College Point which got some complaints.

Chuck Apelian: We had some meetings about this, and there have been community concern on this project. There about half a dozen items I have concerns about and would like clarification on these issues. Many people have been asking for a time-out until we get clarification. You mentioned the quarterly CAB meetings. If this project goes forward it is very important that the CAB does legitimately become a regular operation and has input from the operator, from the City and, from the community. I am very passionate about this.

Joslyn Carter: Every time we open a shelter the CAB is established.

Chuck Apelian: I want the people who live in Community Board #7 Queens to get top priority to live at this facility. I have seen documentation that you will provide for Queens and the surrounding area. You mentioned an opportunity for local hiring. The “opportunity” for local hiring is not enough, they should be chosen. Local people must be hired for construction and for permanent jobs at the facility. I also do not like the apartment types. The studio apartments are nice for one parent and a young child or a pregnant lady. Years from now, if needs change, it will be too easy to place single people in the studio apts. I want you to re-visit the number of studio apartments and/or eliminate the studio apts. The shelter is in the Flushing BID. This shelter needs to coordinate, cooperate, and contribute directly to the BID for security and cleanliness of the area that surrounds this facility.

Zoning only allows this building to be 50% residential; however, your use is considered community facility use. If residents stay here longer than twelve months than it is no longer a transitory facility, or Community Facility - it will be residential use, which violates the zoning regulations.

Joslyn Carter: DHS is regulated by NYS. We must follow specific regulations for families with children and for single adults. Based on State regulations we cannot mix single adults with families. Those are two completely different regulatory codes. There will not be housing for anyone to stay over 12 months. Families from this community will get top priority and housing is priority for Queens residents. They will transfer someone if a resident asks to be transferred. If there are available units, we will fill them with people from other places. We do not want to have empty spaces.

Dr. Natalie Richardson: They will have a job fair so that people in the local community CB #7 Queens, can have the opportunity to apply for jobs. It would be great to have qualified people from the community running the programs. We are looking for qualified people to service the families.

Dr. Carla Smith: There were questions about mainlining the building & the surrounding area. We take great pride in. We take care of the building as if our own families lived here. We have a full-time staff.

Q: What is the time frame for the families to stay in this building?

Joslyn Carter: Average time for families is typically a year. DHS & URI will work with the families to help them find permanent housing. There is an exit strategy to get the families to move out and to not stay permanently. This is emergency housing for families who have had something happen in their lives such as an eviction or domestic violence.

Warren Schreiber: Having a job fair is not the same as giving job priority to local people and people impacted by this project. Will they use union labor to build the new facility? Do the residents sign an agreement when they move in?

Joslyn Carter: That is a question for the developers. After a family has an emergency, they go through the intake process. They go through assessment. They are placed in a shelter or in a transitional, housing. The case workers at that location will do an additional assessment. The case workers will check the family's psychological and social needs. The case workers will develop an individualized living plan for each family which include goals. These will give them a plan to get on track. Then, every two weeks each family and their case worker will meet. Social workers do in-depth assessments to make sure the family's needs are met. The families get an independent living plan and an exit plan to move to permanent residency.

Barbara McHugh: There were a lot of problems with the women's shelter in College Point. I have not heard of anyone in College Point who got a job at that Shelter. The homeless women in College Point did not qualify for the shelter, they are still living on the street. That location looks like a dump. The resident's living quarters look like dorms. The women are always outside in the park, drinking alcohol, doing drugs. We have not had a CAB meeting since COVID started. How come we have not had a CAB meeting?

Amanda Nasar: The next CAB meeting will be next week. The reason we have not had a CAB meeting just because the women were moved into hotels. The women recently returned to the shelter.

Arlene Fleischman: Considering the density of this community, has the DHS involved the Department of Education in the planning of this project? Are children relocated so that they can continue going to the same school? The schools in downtown Flushing are overcrowded. I am not happy about having a development coming here in an already dense area,

Joslyn Carter: DHS meets with the Department of Education. Families met with DOE staff when they go into intake.

Peter Tu: I am the Executive Director of the Flushing Chinese Business Association, not-for-profit organization. AAFE never consulted with our group about this project and did not consult with the community or anyone else.

Jennifer Sun (AAFE): We have been working closely with our partners at DHS. Under the previous administration DHS has a specific policy for community engagement that we were following.

Chairman Kelty: No. AAFE has been in my office several times whenever they needed help with anything. This Board went to bat for AFEE. Why didn't AFEE reach out to the local civic groups before going into the City to try to bring in an organization. We didn't know that Flushing needed this.

Jennifer Sun: We are working with the City process. This is the first time we are doing this project. We understand that community engagement is important. **We will put this project on pause** so that we can engage with the community. We have a strong desire for public meetings.

Peter Tu: No, your group always reached out to us. I have been with this organization for over 40 years. Why didn't you reach out to us or anyone this time? You didn't show respect to anyone.

Jennifer Sun: After our building was demolished, we wanted to build an office building. When that project was no longer feasible, we looked at affordable housing. After taking a hard look at maximizing the affordable housing at 30 percent AMI we found that was also not feasible because the construction costs were too high and the need for site remediation. Given all the constraints, the construction costs of this project, we found that was a \$50 million gap. We could not think of any other way to get a \$50 million grant from the city. During the pandemic there were many families with insecure housing. We found out that there was a need for transitional housing.

Pablo Hernandez: Which agency will provide management after the building is opened?

Joslyn Carter: URI is the provider.

Pablo Hernandez: How was this agency selected?

Joslyn Carter: The developer and provider submit a response to the to the City for an RFP and through the procurement process. We look at the site and the experience of the provider.

Pablo Hernandez: Who will maintain the property? Will there be parking for the staff?

Joslyn Carter: There will be a plan for maintenance & repairs for the building, and a procurement process for maintenance.

Jorge (George) Chang: I am principal at Urban Architectural Initiatives (UAI) architectural organization that helped to prepare the drawings for the proposed transitional housing project. This project is filed as a community facility with sleeping accommodations. Usually, would be parking but this less than a certain amount, parking is waved.

Chairman Kelty: I am not happy with that answer. You will definitely ask for signs to park your buses. This will take away parking from the local people, which is already difficult in that area.

Cody Herrmann: What designs were put into place? What types of laminate or paints will be used that might emit gases which will affect the indoor air quality?

Jorge Chang: This is an E-designated site, environmental designation. This requires two environmental processes. One is a remediation. Small ground contamination needs to be remediated, certain vapors and other contaminants have to be removed. Clean fill has to be put in place. A sub-slab de-pressurization system has to be installed. Perforated pipes will be installed below the slab. These will collect ground vapors and exhaust these above the building. The other E-designation is for sound & noise. The windows have to meet a certain acoustic value to block out sounds. All the finishes cannot off-gas & have no or low VOC. We are not designing or building cheap. This will be a quality building.

Joslyn Carter: Before we can open the building, we will be inspected for environmental assessment. We will be inspected and passed by every regulatory City & State agency.

Betsy Mak: Does DHS have an in-house accountant? There are many rent voucher programs such as Section 8 to help these families. The most is \$2,446 and the average voucher is \$725 per family per month. With the DHS budget for \$40 million, the rent vouchers would help only 90 families. With the same budget we could help out 1,686 families using rent vouchers. Why did you choose only 90 families when you could use other programs to expand services to 1,686 families?

Joslyn Carter: Not all families have a federal voucher. Many are in an emergency situation, and many would not be able to get vouchers. Our budget includes the cost of the mortgage, and payment to staff, case workers, maintenance, and repairs.

Barbara McHugh: Who makes sure that the services are provided to the families? What happens if there are problems, if the provider or DHS are not living up to their end of the agreement.

Dr. Carla Smith: We have a management infrastructure that insures accountability with Dr. Richardson. We are subject to regular inspections and site visits with DHS and NY State. We get grades & reports on how we are doing. This includes how many people are moved into permanent housing and the facility. Clients will also give us feedback. We also make sure that we are meeting their needs. We intend to engage the Community Board. We can have conversations about challenges they are experiencing.

Terence Park: This project was approved by the previous administration. Was this approved by Mayor Adams? Do you need approved from City Council?

Joslyn Carter: We briefed City Hall and we do not need legislature to approve our shelters.

Phil Konigsberg: What is the smoking policy for the transitional housing?

Joslyn Carter: We do not allow smoking in any of our families.

Kaily Cheng: \$40 million is a lot of money. Why isn't this used to educate people to train them get a job.

Chairman Kelty: There are lot of people in Flushing who are still concerned about this project. Please follow-up the zoning concerns, because residents cannot stay over a year, and make sure they get the services needed.

Joslyn Carter: We will get you some feedback on that. This is not considered residential.

Chairman Kelty: The Women’s Shelter that used to be in the Armory on Northern Boulevard was a nightmare. It took a long time to get them out. Many of the women slept on the center median during the day. That is why we have a lot of local opposition to have another shelter here. You are putting a large building with no parking and that upsets me. People will be coming by cars, by not-for-profit van that will appear from all different locations. I expect that if the transitional services building will be for everyone who is represented in Community Board #7. I want to see our area protected and I want something which will accommodate the people in our district. Thank you.

Lawrence Hughes – Elections for 2022 Community Board #7 Executive Members

Lawrence Hughes: We will start with the election for our Chairman. **Eugene Kelty** is the only nomination. I will open nominations from the floor. Not seeing nor hearing any responses from the floor, I am closing the nominations for the position for Chairman. I will allow the candidate for Chairman to say a few words.

Chairman Kelty: Thank you very much. I appreciate it, everyone. I will give the same service I have been giving for Thirty-eight years and will keep doing it until they throw me off or the Borough President does not re-appoint me. I thank you for giving me the courtesy and support you have been giving me. Thank you very much

Lawrence Hughes: We are going to hold off on the elections for Chairman. We will move on to the position for 1st Vice Chair. **Charles Apelian** is the only nomination. I will open nominations from the floor now. Not seeing nor hearing any responses from the floor, I am closing the nominations for the position for 1st Vice Chair. I will allow the candidate for 1st Vice Chair to say a few words.

Chuck Apelian: I want to thank everyone for their continued support and their confidence in me.

Lawrence Hughes: We are going to hold off on the elections for 1st Vice Chair. We will move on to the position for 2nd Vice Chair. **Warren Schreiber** is the only nomination. I will open nominations from the floor. Not seeing nor hearing any responses from the floor, I am closing the nominations for the position for 2nd Vice Chair. I will allow the candidate for 2nd Vice Chair to say a few words.

Warren Schreiber: I want to thank everyone for their support. I will continue to work hard as I always do. Whatever I do I am representing you, I am representing the Community Board.

Lawrence Hughes: We are going to hold off on the elections for 2nd Vice Chair. We will move on to the position for 3rd Vice Chair. **Frank Macchio** is the only nomination. I will open nominations from the floor now. Not seeing nor hearing any responses from the floor, I am closing the nominations for the position for 3rd Vice Chair. I will allow the candidate for 3rd Vice Chair to say a few words.

Frank Macchio: I would like to thank everyone for their continual support. This board is very active and very intelligent. It is a pleasure to serve, especially with the other co-chairs. Let’s look forward to the future.

Lawrence Hughes: We are going to hold off on the elections for 3rd Vice Chair. We will move on to the position for 4th Vice Chair. **Lei Zhao** is the only nomination. I will open nominations from the floor now. Not seeing nor hearing any responses from the floor, I am closing the nominations for the position for 4th Vice Chair. I will allow the candidate for 4th Vice Chair to say a few words.

Lei Zhao: Thank you everyone for your support. It has been a privilege serving all of you on the Executive Committee. I am looking forward to working this year and getting our social media set up. I am hoping we can meet soon in the real-world.

Lawrence Hughes: We are now going to conduct the vote for all five positions. This will be a voice vote roll call for each member of the Board you should indicate your vote as being in favor for all five nominees or you may withhold your vote from any one or more of the nominees or you may vote for none of the nominees.

Candidates for **Chair** - Gene Kelty

With no nominations from the floor, the vote count is

- 46 Votes for Gene Kelty
- 1 Absent
- 1 left early

Candidates for **First Vice-Chair** - Charles Apelian

With no nominations from the floor, the vote count is

- 46 Votes for Charles Apelian
- 1 Absent
- 1 left early

Candidates for **Second Vice-Chair** – Warren Schreiber

With no nominations from the floor, the vote count is

- 46 Votes for Warren Schreiber
- 1 Absent
- 1 left early

Candidate for **Third Vice-Chair** – Frank Macchio

With no nominations from the floor, the vote count is

- 46 Votes for Frank Macchio
- 1 Absent
- 1 left early

Candidates for **Fourth Vice-Chair & Secretary** – Lei Zhao

With no further nominations from the floor, the vote count is

- 46 Votes for Lei Zhao
- 1 Absent
- 1 left early

The CB7Q Executive Members for 2022 are:

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

Public Participation:

Chairman Kelty: Our new CB 7 Office is located at 30-50 Whitestone Expressway, Suite 205, Flushing, NY 11354

Meeting ended: 10:02 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Anne

**Anne Krzyzanowski,
Community Assistant**