



# 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

30-50 Whitestone Expressway, Flushing, NY 11354 Ste. 205

Ph: (718) 359-2800

Fax: (718) 463-3891

Email: [qn07@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:qn07@cb.nyc.gov)

<https://www1.nyc.gov/queenscb7>

Donovan Richards, Jr.

*Queens Borough President*

Eugene T. Kelty Jr.

*Chairperson*

Marilyn McAndrews

*District Manager*

### COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, November 14, 2022

AUDIO AND VIDEO TELECONFERENCE

#### PRESENT

Charles Apelian

James Cervino

Kaily Cheng

Michael Cheng

Kim Cody

Nicholas Corrado

Arlene Fleishman

Richard Forman

Fred Fu

Jeff Huang

Doreen Gatanas

Pablo Hernandez

Cody Herrmann

Lawrence Hughes

Eugene Kelty

Phil Konigsberg

Esther Lee

Wensong Li

Frank Macchio

Betsy Mak

Rev. Richard McEachern

Barbara McHugh

Selma Moses

Sergio Nicolich

Terence Park

John Park

Yacov Pshtissky

Frank Quatela

Kris Ram

Paul Rifino

Warren Schreiber

Kevin Shields

Matthew Silverstein

Josh Sussman

Joseph Sweeney

Saleem Syed

John Tsavalos

Harpreet Wahan

Clarissa Wong

Maggie Wong

Dian Yu

Linna Yu

Lei Zhao

Jie Zhu

#### ABSENT

Derick Fang

\* Vincent Gianelli

\* Wendy Louie

Michelle Miao

\* Millicent O'Meally

\* Peter Tu

#### \* Excused

---

#### COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager

Mary O'Neill, Community Coordinator

Anne Krzyzanowski, Community Assistant

#### GUESTS

Susan Liu - Congresswoman Meng's office

Angela Sherpa - Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez's office

Soo Jin - NY State Senator Liu's office

Howard Wong - NYS Assemblywoman Rozic's office

Amber Yoon - Assemblyman Braunstein's office

Xin Wu - Councilwoman Ung's office

**Chairman Eugene Kelty** opened the Public Hearing at 7 pm via audio and video teleconference. Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag in honor of all who fought for our freedom and our country and never forget those who gave their lives for freedom.

Announcements from Elected Officials, Mayor’s Office, and Queens Borough Hall

Attendance was taken with (44) Present (2) Absent (4) Excused

Announcements from Chairman Kelty.

Approval of the October 2022 meeting minutes

### **Public Hearing**

- 1. 157-30 Willets Point Boulevard – BSA Calendar #339-04-BZ: Gasoline service station, south side of the intersection of Willets Point Blvd and Clintonville Street, request to extend the term of variance, which expired June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022, for a period of 10 years for existing gasoline service station.**

**Chaired by Kim Cody, Land Use Committee, Attorney Diwaker Gupta, representing applicant.**

**Kim Cody:** The Land Use Committee met on November 10th to discuss this property.

**Diwaker Gupta:** This was originally approved in 1929 and the repair shop was approved in 1958. The last variance was extended in 2012 and expired in June. The owner wants to obtain a new C of O, install a new handicap access ramp, new landscaping, a new parking lot, legalize the new convenience store layout, legalize the illuminated signage legalize a self-service carwash, legalize U-Haul® truck rentals and legalize, relocate air pump and vacuum.

This location has an auto-repair shop which includes a convenience store, two gas dispensers on two islands, three underground storage tanks, a canopy over the dispensary area, seven parking spaces are in the back. The convenience store area has been enlarged. The want to install a handicap access ramp to the store. They want to install new landscaping along the sides. They want to add parking spaces on both sides, having a total of 12 parking spaces. Three spots for the convenience store, including one handicapped spot. Two parking spots for the car wash. Three spots for the repair shop, two in front & one in the back. Four spaces for the U-Haul® rental. There are two car wash stations. They want to relocate the vacuums and air pumps next to the car wash stations. They want to legalize the illuminated sign in front and the sign above the repair shop and convenience store.

**Frank Macchio:** Can they guarantee that there will not be more trucks parked here and no overnight truck parked?

**Diwaker Gupta:** The vans will be parked in the rear.

**Warren Schreiber:** How long have the air pump, car wash and the list of other changes been in operation?

**Diwaker Gupta:** The convenience store layout changed 2 years ago. I have to check with the owner for the other items.

**Warren Schreiber:** I am concerned as to why the owner installed the items before without getting them legalized.

**Phil Konigsberg:** It doesn’t look as if the new ramp is facing the re-located handicapped spots. What are the hours of operation for the vacuum and car wash?

**Diwaker Gupta:** There are no hours. We could impose hours, so these are not in operation after 6 or 7pm.

**Lei Zhao:** What is on the other side of the vacuum? If there is a residential property, then that will influence the hours of operation of the vacuum

**Diwaker Gupta:** There is a residence next to where the vacuum is currently located. It will be moved to the other side where there is a 20-foot-wide lot between the gas station and a house.

**Lei Zhao:** What about the hours of operation for the U-Haul®?

**Diwaker Gupta:** It will probably be the same as the hours of operation for the repair shop. Which might be 7am-6pm weekdays and closes at 2pm on Saturdays.

**Kim Cody:** The 24-hour convenience store was never approved. The gas pumps are operating 24-hours. I have seen people washing their cars as late as 9pm.

**Chairman Kelty:** In the past, the gas station closed at 11pm.

**Frank Quatela:** I see complaints on the DOB website again this property which need to be addressed. A neighboring resident complained about the lights at the rear of the property.

**Diwaker Gupta:** They will install plants which will grow 6-feet high and will keep the 6-foot fence. They will take light measurements to see how much light is reaching the neighbors.

**Frank Quatela:** The light needs to face into the sight not out. This should be indicated on the plan.

**Pablo Hernandez:** Will the hours for the U-Haul® rentals and pick-up be the same as the hours for the convenience store? Where will the U-Haul® trucks be parked if the convenience store is closed?

**Diwaker Gupta:** We can limit the hours of operation to business hours. If we are concerned where the trucks are going to be parked after hours, then we can ask the owners to have this opened 24/7. We can do whatever will make the most sense. We don't know how many people will be retuning the trucks late at night.

**Pablo Hernandez:** How will the parked vehicles in the back be able to turn around to get out?

**Diwaker Gupta:** We did not prepare that plan, we will prepare and send it to the community board. Right now, we will keep the same layout as previously approved by the BSA. We will create a parking plan that shows how the cars will turn.

**Chairman Kelty:** Just to understand this, the way the vans are parked now, they have to back out past the convenience store to turn around.

**Phil Konigsberg:** If someone rents a U-Haul® far away, would they be able to return it here?

**Diwaker Gupta:** I would have to confirm that. We can impose that there can only be a certain number of trucks here.

**Chairman Kelty:** They said there can only be vans parked here not trucks. If someone comes to return a box truck, they shouldn't be allowed to go into there.

**Kevin Shields:** Are they planning to park trucks that are there? How many parking spots will be here for people to park?

**Diwaker Gupta:** Only U-Haul® vans will be allowed. We will ask the operator to remove trucks that parked here now. We will have (4) spaces designated for vans, (3) for convenience store, (3) for the repair shop, (2) for car wash & air pump.

**Kevin Shields:** My concern is that the parking spots should not be where the car wash is located. They should not have two car washes operating 24/7.

**Frank Quatela:** Where will the cars that are waiting to be repaired be parked?

**Diwaker Gupta:** Three - two spots on the side (near the air pumps & vacuums) and one in the back. The owner will tell the people who have their cars parked here to move them.

**Frank Quatela:** I don't see enough parking spots for the cars waiting to be repaired and for the U-Haul trucks®.

**Chairman Kelty:** Other stations have a limit of how many cars they have for servicing, so cars aren't parked on the street.

**Kim Cody:** At the Committee meeting we discussed five activities which they were operating illegally and are asking to be legalized. The plans they submitted do not match what I have seen at the site.

**Chairman Kelty:** Any questions from the public? No questions from public.

**Kim Cody:** The committee voted unanimously to **deny** their application.

**Seconded by Kevin Shields.**

**Chuck Apelian:** The owner of this gas station was there for many years. He operated it cleanly and was an asset to the neighborhood. The new lessee is trying to run too many businesses here. As was mentioned before, there is no way that the trucks can get in and out of there. This will cause more traffic here, more noise, more exhaust fumes, the site layout

does not work. I am disappointed that we asked very specific questions at the committee meeting, and we were told that we would have answers. The only way we would have answers is to take some of the items off the site. I completely support denying this, and I urge the Board to turn this down.

**Lei Zhao:** An alternative is to put stipulations that strip much of the issues of concern. We can vote to approve this gas station without everything else.

**Chuck Apelian:** Lei brings up a good point. I would never approve the U-Haul®. I don't want to approve this without the U-Haul® and then they would need a new site plan. The egregious use on this site is truck rental. They can come back with a new site plan without the truck rentals.

**Pablo Hernandez:** I agree with Chuck and Lei. Why couldn't the owner bring a presenter who could answer our questions. This gas station used to be a friendly neighborhood site and has become an area does not fit here.

**Chairman Kelty:** This is our third meeting about this gas station. We warned them at the last committee meeting. There have been many cars parked at the wall. The operator did not care and stop doing the illegal business until it was approved. He has waited until the last minute of the end of the variance to try to make this legal. He is not a good business operator. My answer is to disapprove this for all the illegality.

Motion to approve by Selma Moses.

**Chairman Kelty:** The motion is to deny. Seconded by Kim Cody.

40 - In favor

0 - Against

0 - Abstention

0 - No vote

10 - Absent

**Chairman Kelty:** The motion carries.

**2. 134-16 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue – BSA Calendar #2021-55-BZ: Applicant seeks a special permit to allow the construction for a 12-story mixed use building that is located within the flight obstruction area.**

**Chaired by Lei Zhao, Land Use Committee, Elyse Foladare, Eric Palatnik's, office**

**Lei Zhao:** We had a Land Use Committee meeting about this property. This applicant originally came to the committee back in May.

**Chuck Apelian:** This was voted on by the BSA. It was determined that they would come back to us to let us know of the decision. We are not voting on this. This is only a clarification for us.

**Elyse Foladare:** The BSA decided in favor of this application. Lei Zhao & I provided them with the question this board has asked. [She read the BSA determination].

**Chairman Kelty:** I would like to congratulate Kissena Park Civic on their 85 years of service.

Resident Billy Joe Cruz made a complaint about the construction truck traffic on Underhill Avenue.

**Public Participation**

Meeting ended: 08:58 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Anne Krzyzanowski,

Community Assistant