



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, May 9, 2022

AUDIO AND VIDEO TELECONFERENCE

PRESENT

Charles Apelian
James Cervino
Kaily Cheng
Michael Cheng
Kim Cody
Nicholas Corrado
Derick Fang
Arlene Fleishman
Richard Forman
Fred Fu
Doreen Gatanas
Vincent Gianelli
Pablo Hernandez
Cody Herrmann
Lawrence Hughes
Eugene Kelty

Phil Konigsberg
Esther Lee
Dr. Wensong Li
Wendy Louie
Frank Macchio
Betsy Mak
Rev. Richard McEachern
Barbara McHugh
Selma Moses
Sergio Nicolich
Millicent O'Meally
John Park
Terrance Park
Yacov Pshtissky
Kris Ram
Paul Rifino

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

ABSENT

* Jeff Huang Michelle Miao Frank Quatela * Lei Zhao

*** 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
Mabel Tso - Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez’s office
Soojin Choi-Lee - State Senator Liu’s office
Nancy Escobar - State Senator Stavisky’s office
Sandro Navarro - State Senator Ramos’s office
Howard Wong - Assemblywoman Rozic’s office
Irene Cheung - Assemblyman Braunstein’s office

Allie Zirasc - Councilwoman Paladino’s office
Xin Wu - Councilwoman Sandra office
Elisabeth Bian – Queens District Attorney’s office
Max Weprin – Queens Borough President’s office
Vanessa Ordonez - Queens City Planning & Development

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 to never forget those who gave their lives for freedom.

Attendance was taken with (46) Present (2) Absent (2) Excused

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

Announcements from Chairman Kelty:

- NYC Department of Buildings has a No-Penalty Inspection program until May 31st for decks, porches, retaining walls and business signs.
- Con Edison is working to improve gas safety by installing natural gas detectors in buildings. The gas detectors will be installed by Recon Utility Service
- Residents can apply for SNAP benefits with the NYC Department of Social Services by phone or by mail.
- NYPD has a Community Youth Outreach program for youths ages 6-17
- YMCA is hiring
- DSNY special Waste Drop-off Sites for automotive products, electronics, household products & medical waste
- CUNY has a Music Industry Career program for High School students
- Construction at Bowne Park will continue for approximately 1-year
- Street co-naming for Ferrigno Place on 163rd Street and 33 Avenue will be held on May 21st by the Becce Family.
- FDNY will have a plaque unveiling ceremony May 21st to commemorate the 699 firefighters who battled the Telephone Company fire on February 27, 1975
- 109 Pct Council will have a meeting May 11th. Deputy Inspector Louron E. Hall is the new Commanding Officer
- Assemblyman Braunstein is sponsoring a Mother’s Day Essay & Poetry Contest for grades 2-5.
- May 9th meeting of the Borough Board votes on a proposed smoke-free apartment resolution
- Announcements from Councilwoman Sandra Ung:
 - o Flushing Family Day 5/14
 - o Memorial Day Celebration May 27th
 - o Free legal advice to immigrants

Approval of the April 2022 meeting minutes

Public Hearing

1. **20-65 Clintonville Street BSA # 167-55 BZII - proposal to waive the Board’s Rules of Practice and Procedure in accordance with section 1-07(b) (3) and extend the term of the zoning variance for a period of 10 years past October 7, 2015.**

Chaired by Kim Cody

Presentation by representative for applicant: Daniel Ashe. Owners also present: Michael & Joseph Brienza

Kim Cody: This was follow up to a previous meeting because of unanswered questions and the proposal was tabled.

Daniel Ashe: This is a service station known as ‘Delta’. It has been in operation since 1958. Family owned & operated. Sells gas, car repairs and provide parking spots to sell four used cars. There are two dispensers for gas. Their variance has to be extended every ten years because it is in a residential area.

Chairman Kelty: Kim Cody can you please explain the problems that caused the first meeting to be tabled.

Kim Cody: Not all the questions were answered at the previous presentation. (1) One issue brought up was why the owners failed to renew the Certificate of Occupancy after it expired. The original owner passed away. The current owners are working on renewing it. (2) There was an open violation. The owners showed that the violation has been closed. (3) The operating hours were different than what the owner told the committee. (4) There was also a question about what will be sold in the convenience store – automotive supplies. (5) Someone asked if a generator was needed – it was not. (6) The premises allowed overnight parking, this has been corrected. (7) They were parking their vehicles to be repaired on the sidewalk, this was also corrected.

James Cervino: What are the parking spots being used for? Are cars allowed to park there overnight?

Kim Cody: Only the vehicles being repaired can be parked on the premises. One problem was that the owners allowed commercial vehicles to park there overnight.

Charles Apelian: Commercial vehicles are not allowed to be parked in a residential area overnight whether or not they are being repaired.

Kim Cody: The members of the committee at the meeting brought up the issues of overnight parking, the convenience store, and selling automobiles. After a discussion, a vote was taken and it was approved unanimously.

Charles Apelian: Were there stipulations on approving the variance?

Kim Cody: One of the points brought up was that the application will expire in two years. We extended the application from a ten-year to a fifteen-year period because of the applicant’s expenses to re-apply. (1) They will apply for a new C.O. (2) The application will show the corrected hours of operation. (3) The owners will not allow commercial vehicles to park overnight.

Charles Apelian: The motion on the floor is to accept a fifteen-year term.
Seconded by Kevin Shields

Kevin Shields: Is the fifteen-year term retroactive?

Daniel Ashe: It starts in 2015 and expired 2030.

Philip Konigsberg: Was the C.O. applied for?

Daniel Ashe: First they have to apply for an Alteration One (Alt 1) application. After it is denied, they go through the Community Board process and through the Board of Standards and Appeals. Afterwards they plead the process, they then go back to the Department of Buildings and show the plan examiner that they completed the Board approval. DOB will give their approval. Next, is the inspection process. In the end they will get a new C.O. This usually takes a about 3-6 months after Board approval. Cannot get a C.O. until after this hearing.

Chairman Kelty: The motion is to approve with the stipulations and the friendly motion.

42 - In favor

0 - Against

0 – Abstentions

4 – Absent

4 – left early

- 2. 163-10 Pidgeon Meadow Road, Flushing BSA # 180-98-BZ - application requesting extension of term of the previously approved variance, a waiver of the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure and minor modification to the previously approved variance.**

Chaired by Kevin Shields

Presentation by representative for applicant Jay Goldstein

Kevin Shields: This was presented at a meeting in 2020. There were several issues with this location, and it was tabled. A committee meeting was held April of this year. I inspected this location, and it was greatly improved in the past two years.

Jay Goldstein: Requesting an extension of the variance for a term of 20 years. Located at 163 Place, Pidgeon Meadow Road & 164 Street. (Block 5494, Lots 8 & 9) On lot 8 is a one-story delicatessen which is 1,450 sq ft. Lot 7 is between the building and the residential house.

At the previous meeting the Board was concerned about the upkeep of the property. Commercial vehicles were parked overnight, trash enclosure must be clean & not attract rodents. Need to provide buffering, plantings and add lighting. They painted the building and brick wall and repaved the entire site. Storage container was removed, and the side lot was grassed over. The owner is proposing to plant trees at the buffer lot (7). [They showed on the diagram the specific locations of the trees]. The trees will be planted after approval. They added lighting on the front and side but not at the rear so it doesn't shine at the homes.

Kevin Shields: I inspected this site. All the issues were addressed, and the changes were made. The previous appearance was terrible. BSA is telling them what type of shrubbery must be planted.

Chairman Kelty: There was a question about the number of parking spots and where are the spaces.

Jay Goldstein: The original approval had eight spaces and we are proposing nine. By relocating the parking spots the owner was able to fit in nine spaces. This is to make sure there is no queuing on the street.

Chairman Kelty: Just to be clear, there are three parking spots in the front, a ramp and a fourth spot. On the side are three spots (5,6,7) before the dumpster and after it are two more spots (8 & 9).

Charles Apelian: What is the variance that we are asking for?

Jay Goldstein: This used to be a gas station since the 1950's and in 1998 it was changed to be deli. We are asking for continuation of the commercial use.

Charles Apelian: What are they asking for specifically? Is it for the commercial zoning? Is it asking for the deli? What is the current zoning?

Jay Goldstein: They are asking for the deli. It is an R2 zone.

Charles Apelian: To be clear, what if they decide that they don't want to be a deli and want to become an insurance agency?

Jay Goldstein: They would have to go back to BSA for a change. This site is bulk & use specific. They cannot change anything about the building's use without coming to the BSA and to the Board.

Phil Konigsberg: Can they put signs showing what hours they are open?

Jay Goldstein: Yes. They can do that. That might be a condition of BSA rules.

Yacov Pshtissky: What is done to prevent rodents around the dumpster area?

Jay Goldstein: They fixed the dumpsters as one of the concerns from the Board. And they have a continuous contract with a maintenance company which will pay to make sure there are no rodent problems.

Kevin Shields: Prior to 2020 the dumpster was not enclosed. It was in an open area which could have attracted rodents.

Saleen Syed: Will a car parked at spot #7 be blocked by a car in spot #8? It looks like it would be difficult to get out of #7 unless they park at an angle.

Jay Goldstein: This was designed by the architect. We have not had any problems with anyone parked there.

Charles Apelian: The issue is not with spot #7, it is with spots 8 & 9.

Jay Goldstein: Understood. I will check with architect, but to-date we have not had an issue with it.

Chairman Kelty: They were trying to get more parking to accommodate the customers. If this doesn't work the architect will take it out.

Doreen Gatanas: Is there a designated handicapped spot?

Jay Goldstein: One spot, #4

John Kelly, Kissena Park Civic: Some people in the community are concerned if there will be any changes to the height of the building. I want to be assured that there will not be any changes to the building.

Jay Goldstein: We are not proposing any changes to the building height. Any changes to this building will not be allowed without applying for a new variance.

John Kelly, Kissena Park Civic: I am very familiar with this location. I never use this store because it is shabby and dirty. The garbage in front is not picked up. I would recommend to the owners that they make it cleaner.

Chairman Kelty: The Committee Chair Kevin Shields went there three times. He has been saying that from the beginning. We put them on a warning to keep the place clean.

Chairman Kelty: If there are no more questions, Kevin Shields please read your report.

Kevin Shields: At the committee meeting we had a motion from Frank Macchio to reduce the term from 20 years to 15 years, seconded by Reverend McEachern. Approved unanimously.

Chairman Kelty: We have a motion on the floor for a 15-year, not a 20-year variance. The motion is to approve, with the corrections and changes they made, for 15 years.

Kim Cody: I second this motion.

Chairman Kelty: Discussion on the motion.

Chuck Apelian: A friendly motion on what was said before. I am recommending that space #7 be removed.

Kevin Shields: I accept the motion.

Chairman Kelty: Any other comments from Board Members? If not, Kevin Shields can make other comments.

Kevin Shields: When this property variance first came up to the Board they wanted to add another building where people could eat outdoors. This was removed from the application to provide for additional parking spaces.

Chairman Kelty: The motion is to approve and with friendly motion to remove spot #7.

42 - In favor 0 - Against 0 – Abstentions 4 – Absent 4 – left early

Chairman Kelty: The motion carries.

Public Participation

Kim Cody: The Whitestone Memorial Day Parade will kick-off May 30th at 11am, on 149 Street at 15 Drive at the Whitestone Veterans Memorial Park. This will be two years since they had a Memorial Day parade, and we should pay honor to those who gave for our freedom.

Cody Herrmann: This weekend, with Korea Public Art Forum, I am helping to coordinate a free public art event in Maple Playground. We are translating everything into many languages. We are trying to create public access to people who don't necessarily speak English or have limited English proficiency. The event is called Shared Dialogue Shared Space. This event was held in Flushing for the past three years. I will be there from 12-4.

Kat Cervino: Riverkeeper Sweep Beach Cleanup will be at MacNeill Park from 10-12noon. Forty-pound bags of composte will be given away. The composte is made from food scraps collected by the city. Send email to Jim Cervino to register.

John Kelly, Kissena Park Civic Association: There are new trails in the park. NYC Parks Department has a training session which teaches how to clean and maintain the trails. We are always looking for more volunteers. June 11th will be out next general membership meeting it will be in Kissena Park by the Boat House.

Kevin Shields: A street was co-named in honor of my late relative Corporal John McHugh. I am donating a copy of the street sign to a local VFW to memorialize the neighborhood's World War II combat hero. Thank you to all the Board Members who made the street co-naming possible.

Phil Konigsberg: Channel 2 did a story about Jim & Kat Cervino's Coastal Preservation Network Big Rock Beach cleanup <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/video/bettertogether-cleaning-up-big-rock-beach/>

Harpreet Wahan: I would like to thank the Community Board & Parks Department for the Kissena Corridor Park Lighting Project.

Chairman Kelty: Please come visit our new office. We have 2 different jackets for all the Board Members with the CB #7 logo. We also have baseball caps, t-shirts and bags with the CB #7 logo and some other things with the CB #7 logo.

Chuck Apelian: Whenever we walk around with the jacket or shirt with the CB #7 logo, we get a lot of recognition. People are appreciative of it, and they ask about what is a Community Board. Chairman Kelty has been giving out the CB #7 pins to local elected officials and people in the district. These are always well received and makes the receipt feel that they belong to the community. We have a lot of tote bags in the office, since the plastic bag ban went into effect, people are looking for a free reusable bag to take to stores. I always have some in the car. The bags are also a great way for the public to get involved. People in the district can carry these with them. We have t-shirts, jackets, pins, bags, and bottled water with the CB #7 logo. These are great to bring for summer events.

Barbara McHugh: A Better College Point Civic Association will have a Health Fair on June 12th from 10-4. This will be held at the College Point Volunteer Ambulance Corps. I will give out CB #7 bags.

Karen Lin: I want to introduce myself I am a candidate for the Civil Court. It is a pleasure to be here and listen to the level of care and attention that is put into what happens in the community and I hope to do the same at the Civil Court bench.

Chairman Kelty: Reminder that Memorial Day is at the end of the month. If you can please attend Memorial Day events. Board Members please visit the office and get your jackets and bags. Thank you to everyone promoting CB #7. Please be part of a group, a business or a civic association. The Civic Associations let us know what is going on and the business groups let us know what problems they are having. The business groups are having a difficult time getting deliveries. It is important to be part of a group.

Meeting ended: 09:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted

**Anne Krzyzanowski,
Community Assistant**