



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, March 13, 2023

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
Vincent Gianelli
Cody Herrmann
Pablo Hernandez
Jeff Huang
Lawrence Hughes

Eugene Kelty
Phil Konigsberg
Esther Lee
Wensong Li
Wendy Louie
Frank Macchio
Barbara McHugh
Michelle Miao
Selma Moses
Sergio Nicolich
Millicent O’Meally
John Park
Terence Park
Yacov Pshtissky
Frank Quatela

Kris Ram
Paul Rifino
Warren Schreiber
Kevin Shields
Matthew Silverstein
Josh Sussman
Joseph Sweeney
Saleem Syed
John Tsavalos
Clarissa Wong
Maggie Wong
Dian Yu
Linna Yu
Lei Zhao

ABSENT: Peter Tu, Jie Zhu

EXCUSED: Betsy Mak, Rev. Richard McEachern, Harpreet Wahan

COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Mary O’Neill, Community Coordinator

Anne Krzyzanowski, Community Assistant

GUESTS

Susan Liu - Congresswoman Meng’s office
Mark Wooley – Congressman Santos’ office
Ashely Lin - NYS Senator John Liu
Jessica Muller- Assemblyman Braunstein’s office
Councilwoman Vicky Paladino
Alexis Winters - Councilwoman Vicky Paladino’s office
Xin Wu - Councilwoman Ung’s office

James Mongeluzo – NYC Comptroller’s office
Donovan Richards Queens Borough President
Maricela Cano - Queens Borough President’s Office
Fanny Lin - Queens Borough President’s Office
Elisabeth Bian - Queens District Attorney’s office

Chairman Eugene Kelty opened meeting at 7 pm via audio and video teleconference. Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag and a moment of silence 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.

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards spoke.
NYC Councilwoman Vickie Paladino spoke.

Attendance was taken with (44) Present (2) Absent (3) Excused

Approval of February 2023 minutes

Announcements from Chairman Kelty.

Public Hearing

**1 - Parks Capital Team presented their design plans for the MacNeill Park Seawall project.
Chaired by Matthew Silverstein, CB7Q Chair of Parks Committee**

Attending from New York City Department of Parks & Recreation:

Eric Mattes, Team Leader; Jim Mituzas, Director; Nicholas Magilton Deputy Director; Frank Varro, Project Manager; Kevin McClain, Park Manager; Sumiyah Dupass, Park Manager for Queens District 7; Meira Berkower, Chief of staff for Queens Parks

Parks Department: Seawall reconstruction is part of Phase I of the Waterfront Reconstruction at MacNeil Park. Funding for this project is \$8.688,000. This project will also include adding a sea rail, shoreline treatment, scenic overlook, reconstruct existing staircase, drinking fountain with a dog bowl & a kayak wash. The seawall reconstruction is on the North-western side of the park. The staircase is on the west side. Additional benches will be added, and more trees will be planted. Sections of the current seawall are in advanced deterioration and there are many sinkholes near the present seawall.

Matthew Silverstein: Will the benched have arms to prevent people from sleeping on the benches?

Parks: Department: Yes.

Some concerns that were brought up at the committee meeting were: Tree roots protruding into seawall, access to waterfront has sharp stones and need a hose to wash off kayaks.

Parks Department: The existing seawall wall will remain to protect the tree roots. The original seawall is deteriorating because it is over 100 years old and not caused by tree roots. Parks Citywide services will improve the pathways damaged by tree roots. The wall needs to be secured before any other projects. We don't have funding for other projects or improvements besides the seawall. This new wall will have a 50-year expected use life span.

Chairman Kelty: The tree roots damaged the sidewalk in front of my home just like the concerns here.

Matthew Silverstein: The beach at the kayak launch is has many rocks making it difficult to get to the water.

Parks Department: DDC is extending a pipe further out into the water for outflow which is near this kayak launch. We don't have funding for a major improvement for the kayak launch. We will provide these comments to the DDC.

At another project we installed a hose attachment to the water bottle filler. We are looking to have a locked storage box installed, as well.

James Cervino: The kayak launch is in good condition. There are jagged rocks at the end of the launch. We need 5 or 6 feet of flat rocks.

Parks Department: We and do that as part of our maintenance and operations.

Kat Cervino: There is always debris on the kayak launch, we have to keep cleaning it. Would it be possible to move the rocks on the beach away from the launch?

Parks Department: We could meet on-site with the marks manager to look at the rocks and also invite the Waterfront and Marine Operations which oversees Kayak launches.

Warren Schreiber: Why don't the benches have backs? People might have trouble sitting on a bench with no back.

Parks Department: We put backless benches so that people can sit and face the either water or the park. We will consider adding benches with backs.

Kim Cody: Will the faucet be locked in case someone leaves it running all night?

Parks Department: The faucet will not be locked. It is part of the bottle filler station.

Chairman Kelty: We have a motion on the floor to approve this project with two stipulations, to clean the kayak ramp and move the rocks to the water and not plant trees at the pathway.

Seconded by **Yacov Pshtissky**.

Matt Silverstein: I was glad that the Parks Department got back to me with some of the changes discussed at the committee meeting. The pictures with the new upgrades looked stunning.

43 – In favor
0 – Against

0 – Abstention
0 – No vote

6 - Absent

Chairman Kelty: The motion carries.

2- 141-10 & 141-12 32nd Avenue, Flushing – BSA Calendar #'s 2022-93-BZ & 2022-94-A. Applicant seeks a variance to permit the development of a seven-story residential building with 32 dwelling-units. This application also seeks a waiver of the General City Law (GCL) section 36 to permit the development of a seven-story residential building without frontage on a mapped street.

Chaired by Frank Macchio, Land Use Committee Chair

Attending for applicant Sheldon Lobel, P.C.: Richard Lobel, Amanda Iannotti, Kevin Williams, Michael Muroff, Rikki Frenkel Owner & Applicant: Sam Zirkiev

Sheldon Lobel's Office: This is a 13,000 SF land-locked property in the middle of a city block. The applicant wants to construct a seven-story building with an entrance on 32nd Avenue. Currently this lot has garages and is paved over. They have a letter of no objection from FDNY. The applicant wants to build 36,000 SF. The front yard waiver is for 690 SF of planting, we are requesting a reduction of 220 SF to allow access to this property. The new construction will be at the rear of the property. They will have underground parking for 21 cars.

Michael Muroff: The first floor will have 2 one-bedroom apartments and a rec room. There will be six apartments on each of the upper floors.

Frank Macchio: FDNY sent a letter of no objection, but if they drive in, they cannot turn around to get out.

Charles Apelian: There is 9ft head room for the underground parking, how will the firetrucks maneuver and get out?

Sheldon Lobel's Office: FDNY stipulation is that no trucks will enter this site.

Charles Apelian: The driveway is narrow, and if someone blocked the driveway, how do emergency vehicles get there?

Chairman Kelty: They will have a plan of how they will go into this property.

Lei Zhao: The new buyer must have known that this lot will have all sorts of issues. There is no sidewalk to get there.

Sheldon Lobel’s office: The owner did not cause these conditions and thus is not cause to reject a variance. The entrance is for pedestrians and vehicles.

Frank Quatela: Is the concrete strong enough to hold a firetruck? What year was this lot created?

Sheldon Lobel’s office: Yes, it is reinforced. This lot has been in existence prior to 1961.

Phil Konigsberg: Where will the traffic be located & how will it work? Will there be any queuing blocking the street?

Sheldon Lobel’s Office: There will be a stop sign at 32nd Avenue for cars leaving. The traffic light will be at the underground parking garage. We will have a study about possible queuing.

Pablo Hernandez: There should be a traffic study done of 32nd Avenue. The cars will not be able to get out of the driveway because of t traffic on 32nd Avenue.

Frank Macchio: This was addressed at the committee meeting.

Serge Nicolich: If there is a severe medical emergency in that building how does an ambulance get there?

Sheldon Lobel’s Office: There will be room to get in and turn around.

John Park: They should reconsider her traffic is controlled coming out of the driveway. Even on normal days only 3 or 4 cars can go through the traffic light on Union Street.

Selma Moses: In my opinion there is no room for a seven-story building in this area.

Kevin William (Environmental consultant): There will be approximately seven out-bound vehicles and one in-bound during morning peak time and the reverse in the evening.

Barbara McHugh: How will the new building affect quality of life for the people living in the building surrounding this one?

Sheldon Lobel’s Office: That is why this is a valid reason for a variance. There is no other lot like this one.

Chairman Kelty: We have a motion on the floor to disapprove this. Seconded by **Selma Moses**.

Arlene Fleishman: I agree with everything said. They must take into consideration that 32nd Avenue starts at College Point Boulevard and goes past Union Street. Some apartments on that block have only one window in the back.

Chairman Kelty: I would like to see a sprinkler system at the back of the building since FDNY cannot get into this property.

39 – In favor
1 – Against

2 – Abstention (for conflict)
0 – No vote

7 - Absent

Chairman Kelty: The motion to **DENY** carries.

3- New, approximately 696 seat primary school facility in School District 25, will also include a District 75 School. The proposed site is located at 137-31 45th Avenue. All or portions of Block 5145, Lot 90 on the northern side of 45th Avenue, between Colden Street and Kissena Boulevard in the Flushing neighborhood of Queens. The site is

currently vacant land. The proposed site is to be acquired by the New York City School Construction Authority (SCA), on behalf of the New York City Department of Education, is an approximately 69,757 square foot lot.

Chaired by Arlene Fleishman, Education Committee Chair
Representing NYC SCA: Ben Goodman

Lei Zhao: Will the school take up the entire lot?

Ben Goodman: Yes.

Lei Zhao: Could they consider adding a traffic signal on 45th Avenue at Colden Street?

Phil Konigsberg: Can you explain what is a District 75 School?

Ben Goodman: These students have severe disabilities. They cannot be educated with their peers.

Charles Apelian: The \$50 Million seems like a very large amount of money to spend on just the land. By the time they add the construction costs it will be over \$100 million.

Chairman Kelty: We have a motion on the floor to approve this project. Seconded by **Lei Zhao**.

Chuck Apelian: SCA never tells us about the design of the building. We are spending money on new projects while the crime rate is high. I believe that the city should give us a new police precinct. If we have this amount of money to spend on a school, we should be able get a new precinct.

Lei Zhao: I have lived here for over 25-years and have seen a huge population growth here. We need a new school.

Matt Silverstein: I am in support of new schools. SCA is not a good partner. I cannot trust them.

Arlene Fleishman: We are talking about educating children. Sometimes we need to put certain differences on the side. They are our future.

Pablo Hernandez: It is insane to spend \$100 million on a school.

Chairman Kelty: I am not going to vote in favor of this. One reason is the high price. The other is that the SCA does not tell us what they are putting on the site.

29 – In favor
11 – Against

0 – Abstention
0 – No vote

9 - Absent

Public Participation

Susan Peters: I am speaking about the jumbo cell tower that the City is installing on our sidewalks. They are 32 feet with five antennae. What are the radiation levels that we have now? And how much radiation comes from the new antennae? The FCC guidelines are over 25 years old. A study found that radiation exposure is harmful to human health. There are debates around the world about this subject.

Cody Herrmann: The Casino proposal is coming to Willets Point. We will try to do what we can before it is approved.

Kevin Shields: The St. Patrick’s Day Society had a dinner recently where Chairman Kelty was honored.

Meeting ended: 10:58 PM

Respectfully Submitted

Anne Krzyzanowski,
Community Assistant