



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

The City of New York
Borough of Queens

Community Board 8

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Meeting held on Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 183-02 Union Turnpike, Queens, NY 11366.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, D. Lavelda Davis, Marva Dudley, Howard Fried, Bhithihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Wendy Gennaro, Michael Hannibal, Neeta Jain, Elke Maerz, Caitlin Marziliano, Doretha McFadden, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Oshero, Hersh Parekh, Marisol Perez, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Amy Tse, and Mayer Waxman.

Board Members Absent:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Sheleeza Deen, Armando Echeverry, Allen Eisentstein, Maria DeInnocentiis, John Gebhard, Joshua Glickman, Ashan Habib, Mohammed "Delwar" Islam, Roger Joyner, Jennifer Martin, Nikolas Michael, David Mordukhaev, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Aliyah Salim, Kelly Sexton, Douglas Sherman, Mohammed Tohin, Steven Villaran, and Jacob Weinberg.

Others Present:

Georgia Katsalis representative of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Keith Felsenfeld representative of Council Member Linda Lee, Henry Yam representative of Council Member James Gennaro, Rokeya Akher representative of District Attorney Melinda Katz, Scott Sieber representative of Senator John Liu, Ryan Alwi representative of Senator Comrie, Juan Palare representative of Senator Toby Stavisky, Vanessa Dinardo and Anthony Lemma representative of Assembly Member David Weprin, Daisy Wang representative of Housing Works, 107th Precinct Captain Shumon Syed, 107th Precinct Officer Kevin McCarthy, D.M. Marie Adam-Ovide, and CB8 Staffer Nettie V. Norris.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

Saaif Alam representing Jamaica Hill Civic Association

The Jamaica Hill Civic Association has two cleanings taking place in March. Flyers were provided.

Charline Mitchell representing Birth By Queens Foundation Inc.

The organization's goal is to have the first birthing center in Queens. Flyers were provided.

Elected Officials' Announcements

Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz

District Attorney Katz had two recent cases in which the defendants were convicted. To learn more about the cases, residents can sign-up for their newsletter.

Ryan Alwi representing Senator Leroy Comrie

Senator Comrie has upcoming events. To learn more about the events, you can give their office a call at (718) 765-6359.

Peter Paolo representing Council Member Jim Gennaro

Council Member Gennaro has upcoming events. To learn more about the events, you can give their office a call at (718) 217-4969.

Scott Seiber representing Senator John Liu

Senator Liu has upcoming events. To learn more about the events, you can give their office a call at (718) 765-6675.

Vanessa Dinardo representing Assembly Member David Weprin

Assemblymember Weprin has been working in Albany. A notice was sent to residents regarding a new men's shelter that is being developed. If any constituent needs any assistance, they can give their office a call at (718) 454-3027.

Keith Felsenfeld representing Council Member Linda Lee

Council Member Linda Lee was appointed as Chair of the Finance Committee. The office has upcoming events. To learn more about the events, you can give their office a call at (718) 468-0137.

Georgia Katsalis representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

Borough President Donovan Richards has upcoming events. To learn more about the events, you can give their office a call at (718) 286-3000.

Juan Palare representing Senator Toby Stavisky

Senator Stavisky has upcoming events. To learn more about the events, you can give their office a call at (718) 145-0004.

Chairperson called on Captain Shumon Syed to speak.

Captain Shumon Syed, 107th Precinct Executive Office

Crime is down in the 107th Precinct with a slight spike in Grand Larceny. Resources have been deployed overnight to combat this issue.

Officer Kevin McCarthy, 107th Precinct Community Affairs

Looks forward to continuing to have a good relationship with the community.

Chairperson Taylor requested for the roll call.

DM Adam-Ovide announced we have a quorum.

Salute to the flag – Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Chairperson Taylor requested a motion to approve the minutes.

Approval of Minutes: Michael Hannibal made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, February 11, 2026, seconded by Dr. Penny Stern.

Chairperson Taylor requested that those in favor of approving the minutes say aye.

25 Yes

0 No

0 Abstentions

The motion passed unanimously without corrections.

Members for: Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, D. Lavelda Davis, Marva Dudley, Howard Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Wendy Gennaro, Michael Hannibal, Neeta Jain, Elke Maerz, Doretha McFadden, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Oshero, Hersh Parekh, Marisol Perez, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Amy Tse, and Mayer Waxman.

Chairperson's Report – Martha Taylor

The staff is now required to take active shooter preparedness training. This will be done online by March 25, 2026. They will learn:

- Ways to prepare for an active shooter event.
- The A-B-C Protocol and actions to take when faced with an active shooter situation.
- Expectations when engaging with law enforcement officers who are responding to a crisis situation.
- Other considerations to make when in a crisis situation.

We are working to change our telephone system. We have many issues with the current telephone system including dropping calls, inability to leave or retrieve messages, etc.

The new system is more reliable and is already in use at another community board, which gave great reviews.

- The phones can be taken home and used remotely during the inclement weather.
- The phone can send text messages reminders for meetings – some of our members only have cell phones and no email.
- There is no cost for installation.
- Voicemails are sent to the email.
- Our main number shows when/if we call residents remotely.

Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern – Health Committee Chair

National Nutrition Month began in 1973 as a weeklong observance and grew to a month-long one in 1980. It was and is sponsored in March each year by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and usually focuses on an overarching theme. This year, the theme is “Discover the Power of Nutrition”. The purpose of this awareness campaign is to make sure that people know about the importance of developing good eating and physical activity behaviors.

Public Hearing:

Fiscal Year 2027 Capital & Expense Budget - Michael Hannibal, 1st Vice-Chair

This year, CB8's top priorities were upgrading electrical wiring at the Briarwood Family Shelter for their air conditioning, and adequate staffing at the 107th Precinct. Our infrastructure priorities are roadways, sidewalk repairs – reconstruction of Goethals Avenue near St. John's University, and flooding. The board supports investments in our parks, libraries and schools. This includes improvements in Cunningham Park, local playgrounds and Briarwood Library. The board also urges that funding be available for accessibility elevators at the Briarwood

subway station, expand services for seniors and resources to allow for community boards to hold hybrid meetings. The letter with the priorities will be sent to the Mayor's Office.

Howard Fried made the motion to approve the letter. It was seconded by Seymour Schwartz.

Yes - 27

No - 0

Abstention - 0

The motion passed.

ULURP C250290ZMQ & N250291ZRQ – 164th Street Rezoning – Hersh Parekh, Zoning Committee Chair

The request for rezoning is on 164th Street on the eastside between 75th Road toward the north and 76th Avenue toward the south. In 1961, the location was designated as R3-2 Zoning District. The location is 23,000 square feet and is currently being occupied by a daycare, landscaping business, laundromat and residential above. Around the location is considered low density residential with one- and two-family homes. The block that they are seeking to rezone has a commercial overlay. There are two actions they are seeking. The first is a zoning map amendment which would change the existing R3-2 District to and R6A with a C2 Overlay. The second is a zoning text amendment to establish the area to include Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH). Including MIH would mean that residential development would have to include permanently affordable and income restricted housing. An R6A would allow for higher residential density. The building would be six-stories, even though the zoning allows for a higher height. The floor area ratio (FAR) would be 3.9. The proposed rezoning would replace and expand the existing daycare. Twenty-four of the eighty units will be considered affordable under the MIH program. The unit distribution is for five studios - two of them will be permanently affordable, forty-six units will be one-bedroom, twenty-nine units will be two bedrooms. Of the forty-six one-bedrooms, thirteen of them would be set aside for permanently affordable housing. Of the twenty-nine two-bedrooms, nine will be set aside for permanently affordable housing. The building will be electric and have a parking garage.

MIH has two options. The second option requires a little more affordable housing but higher income levels. The first option provides fewer affordable housing units, which is between twenty and twenty-four.

Hersh Parekh – We appreciate that you increased the number of parking spaces from thirty-seven to fifty. Why include a commercial overlay if the intent is to have the location as a daycare?

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – There is commercial use at that location. Adding a commercial overlay to the project would reflect the historical commercial nature of the block front. It also provides flexibility for development.

Hersh Parekh – Has the applicant done any outreach to residents after the zoning committee meeting?

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – We did not do an in-person outreach, but we did send a letter advising residents of this meeting.

Zoning Chairperson Parekh opened for questions from the board.

Dr. Penny Stern – I live in the area and parking is already difficult. Where do you expect these people to park their vehicles?

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – If there is not enough parking available in the building, they would have to look for street parking.

Saaif Alam – Why were the civic association presidents not consulted about this project?

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – I have not seen letters from civic association leaders. I would like to engage with them going forward.

Wendy Gennaro – *You have four stories in the back and one story in the center section. What is happening in the center?*

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – The building is a U shape. The center view represents the roof of the downstairs daycare. There will be no development.

Neeta Jain – *I have a business on 164th Street. I want to know why we were not notified about this project.*

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – There is not a public notice requirement for an application such as this.

Howard Fried – *The neighborhood is not real commercial. Why are you placing a six-story building when the neighborhood has one-story and two-story buildings?*

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – We believe this is an opportunity to create more housing.

Israel Peskowitz – *What percentage of apartments are reserved for people who live in the community?*

Answer [Frank St. Jacques] – Reserving units for the neighborhood generally violates the Fair Housing Act. Under the mandatory inclusionary housing fifteen percent of the units will be set aside for CB8 residents. It used to be fifty percent and then it was reduced to fifteen percent.

Zoning Chairperson Parekh closed the board questions. He informed the community that letters were submitted by the Flushing Heights Civic Association and Utopia Estates Civic Association. We also received an email from a resident who expressed their opposition to the project. He then opened up for public participation.

1. Marva Dudley – The Flushing Suburban Civic Association is opposed of the application.
2. Bill Anello – The Flushing Heights Civic Association is opposed of the application.
3. Jill Cheatham – She opposes the application.
4. Kumar Lakheeram – He opposes the application.
5. Yuk Yeung – He opposes the application.
6. Lieguang Wen - He opposes the application.
7. Linda Gochena - She opposes the application.
8. Raymond Su - He opposes the application.

Kenneth Cohen II made the motion to approve the application. It was seconded by Michael Hannibal.

Zoning Chairperson Parekh opened for board discussion.

Zoning Chairperson Parekh – The Zoning Committee voted the application down. We asked the applicant to address a few conditions. They only addressed one condition related to parking spaces. At the committee meeting, Mr. St. Jacques mentioned that there is an issue with setting aside housing for seniors. I do not know if that is accurate since we have senior designated housing across the borough.

Saaif Alam – As President of a civic association, I would expect for you to communicate with the civic leaders and residents first before coming to the board. With that, I oppose.

Kenneth Cohen II – We had a productive Zoning meeting last month; however, it seems as though your team did not think our considerations were important. You also did not contact the closest civic associations. You want us to do something for you, but you did not think it was important enough to do what was requested by the committee. With that, I encourage the board to oppose the application.

Israel Peskowitz – We have a desperate need for housing; however, we ask that you fix this parking issue and come back to us.

Zoning Chairperson Parekh closed the board discussion and asked for a roll call.

Yes - 0

No - 27

Abstention - 0

Members in favor: none

Members opposed: Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, D. Lavelda Davis, Marva Dudley, Howard Fried, Bhithara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Wendy Gennaro, Michael Hannibal, Neeta Jain, Elke Maerz, Caitlin Marziliano, Doretha McFadden, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Oshero, Hersh Parekh, Marisol Perez, Israel Peskowitz, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Amy Tse, and Mayer Waxman.

The motion failed.

Zoning Chairperson Parekh called up Henry Yam to make a comment on behalf of Council Member Gennaro.

Henry Yam representing Council Member Gennaro

Our office is paying attention to the application. We are reserving our public comment until after the community board and borough president makes their comment.

District Manager's Report, March 2026

Department of Parks and Recreation

Work is ongoing at Cunningham Park's upper parking lot. They do not have a completion date yet. They will share it once it becomes available.

We were notified that the Captain Tilly Goose Pond Restoration Project's construction started this week.

Con Edison

The utility company is still in emergency mode until further notice. Following the snowstorms, the salt on the road caused damage to their wires. Residents may experience power outages. If this occurs, please file a complaint by calling 1-800-75-CONED (1-800-752-6633); jot down the reference number and share it with your community board.

Department of Transportation

DOT is still on snow duty. There have been inoperable traffic lights due to the snow melting and salt corroding electrical wiring. Please call 911. This allows the NYPD to get notified so they can send traffic Enforcement agents to direct the traffic. Additionally, pothole repair is complaint driven; please let your community board know about the potholes in your area so we can get the Department of Transportation to repair them.

NYC Commission of Human Rights

With many religious holidays underway, the agency wanted to remind employers that workers can take time off for religious observation. They are usually unpaid, unless they use banked annual leave. If the employee is fasting, the employer must make reasonable accommodation like allowing multiple breaks throughout the day instead of the one-hour lunch break.

Department of Buildings

The stats for CB8 are as follows:

Elevator Complaint (more than one)	52
Illegal Conversion	37
Work Without Permit	36
Zoning not Conforming	24
Defective Boiler	21
Single Elevator	20
Structural Stability	13
Construction Safety Compliance	13
Construction Safety	13
Exposed wiring	11
Construction Beyond Approved Plans	11

Department of Social Services

The new date for HOPE count NYC is March 10, 2026. If you have already signed up for the earlier date, you must re-register for the new date. The Department of Homeless Services allows anyone seeking shelter to walk in when the temperature falls below freezing or it is 100 degrees.

Able bodied residents with food stamps/SNAP Benefits must work 20 hours a week to keep these benefits. Residents who cannot work must get a signed document from their medical provider.

Department of Consumer and Worker Protection

It is tax season and New York City has free tax services for families making \$97,000 or less or singles making \$68,000 or less. Please use this link below to find more information:

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/dca/talk-money/file-your-taxes-individuals-families.page>

Department of Design and Construction

Project HWPR20QC - Complex Ped Ramp – They are done with the underground electrical work. They should resume ped ramp installation when the weather improves.

Project HPWPR321 – There is currently no activity. Work will resume in about two weeks.

HBPED800Q Tide Gate Bridge – Demolition work will be done in quadrants on the east side of the bridge as listed below:

- ☐ Pier demolition
- ☐ Pier extension demolition (followed by debris removal)
- ☐ Daily site maintenance



Happy Birthday to: Michael Hannibal, and Dilip Nath!

Marie Adam-Ovide

Chairperson Taylor requested a motion to adjourn.

Hersh Parekh made the motion. Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Soleil Griffin-Green, CB8 Staff
March 20, 2026*