



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

*The City of New York*  
*Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

197-15 Hillside Avenue  
Hollis, NY 11423-2126  
Telephone: (718) 264-7895  
Fax: (718) 264-7910  
Qn08@cb.nyc.gov  
www.nyc.gov/queenscb8



District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Meeting held on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 183-02 Union Turnpike, Queens, NY 11366.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Neeta Jain, Jennifer Martin, Caitlin Marziliano, Nikolas Michael, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Hersh Parekh, Israel Peskowitz, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Steven Villaran, Rabbi Mayer Waxman and Jacob Weinberg.

**Board Members Absent:**

Edward Chung, John Gebhard, Tobias Paris, Simon Pelman and Jenna Citron Schwab, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Marva Dudley, Allen Eisenstein, Joshua Glickman, Michael Hannibal, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Tammy Osherov, Frances Peterson, Simon Pelman, Aliyah Salim, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Jenna Citron Schwab and Alan Ong.

**Others Present:**

Josh Simanowitz representing Assembly Member Sam Berger, Shubhra Datta representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Ruocheng Chen representing Council Member Linda Lee, Councilman James F. Gennaro, Scott Sieber representing Senator John Liu, Lya Rothmann representing Senator Toby Stavisky, P.O. Kevin McCarthy representing NYPD – 107th, 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.

*Chairperson Taylor requested a roll call*

*DM Adam-Ovide announced we have a quorum*

**Elected Officials’ Announcements**

**Honorable James F. Gennaro, Councilmember**

Monday is Sey Schwartz’ Birthday. He was born in 1925. Last week the City Council passed the “City of Yes” with a lot of modifications. He had his statement passed out about what he said after the passage of the “City of Yes”. There is a draft that shows the proposal as it was originally offered by the Mayor and there is another one that was passed by the Council. The one passed by the Council had significant modifications to it and made it better but no where near as good as it needs to be for him to support it. He voted NO.

He is co-sponsor on a bill Intro 758 that was heard today that will require every bicycle that is motorized or electric assisted or scooter must be registered. In regard to the other scooter problem where you see them lying around all over the place you can get hurt, he's made arrangements to meet with the borough commissioner about this.

His office is having a Winter Coat and Toy Drive (they are only accepting new coats and toys)  
Monday-Wednesday from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm through January 6<sup>th</sup> (except holidays)  
180-32 Union Turnpike, Fresh Meadows, NY 11366 / Contact: (718) 217-4969

**Question: Dr. Penny Stern** – What happens when it snows with these e-scooters lying around where people can fall on the ice and get hurt?

**Answer: Councilmember Gennaro** – I have concerns about the weather as well and how it will affect people. No, they haven't thought that out. They put it out as a pilot and it's just here. We will push back on this, but it is an executive function and it's going to be a problem. I will bring it up to the borough council when we meet at my office to see what can be done about it.

**Question: Hersh Parekh** – On the City of Yes, I saw that in this council district that parking requirements will change in some parts but not others. So where is it changing and what does that involve?

**Answer: Councilmember Gennaro:** There is a section in Briarwood where there is a transit-oriented development near the subway. Henry can better fill you in on this. He has the information.

**Chairperson Martha Taylor:** The Queens Civic Congress is bringing a lawsuit against the city; it's called Article 78. It's when we feel that something is being done in an arbitrary and capricious manner, which we definitely feel that it is. I will let you know more. You'll be seeing it in the newspapers. It's going to be a very big case. I should say that they do have a lawyer and are asking for volunteers to help the lawyer. They are clearly and obviously looking for donations. Almost all of the people in the civic have already donated or made a promise to donate money. You can do it individually as well. They did start a Go Fund Me.

**Councilmember Gennaro:** If anyone were to come to me asking me to join this lawsuit, that would be the equivalent of me suing myself, right!

**Question: Saaif Alam** – You mentioned the City Council voted on the City of Yes with modifications, correct? If the residents express concerns after this takes effect, will the city council revisit the City of Yes with more modifications? final vote of 31-20 – close vote:

**Answer: Councilmember Gennaro -** I would say NO! There were dozens of people on the left who voted no. It didn't favor single-family homeowners enough. Most people who own a single-family home in New York are people other than non-Hispanic white. This is about class warfare not race warfare. Anyone living in a single-family home is like a bad person. It's a mindset.

**Question: Chairperson Martha Taylor** - If I want to build a house on my property in the backyard and rent it out to anybody for any price, which is not affordable? This is the absurdity about this whole thing.

**Answer: Councilmember Gennaro** - Yes. There will be more information disseminated about this. Henry has my statement if you want a copy.

*He wished everyone Happy Holidays!*

### **Public Participation:**

#### **Wendy Gennaro**

We recently had a Human Services Committee meeting. I am really happy about chairing this committee. I think it's really important, for people in the New York area, to be aware of our services and what support is out there. Thank you to Mayer Waxman, Dr. Peterson and Dr. Penny who came to our meeting. We discussed some of the initiatives that we would like to start. We compiled a list of organizations in our community that offer services to the community. If there is anyone here who knows of anything in our district that you would like to share with the committee, please do. We

can send out an email and ask you for those recommendations. We can then compile a list. We can get it out to the community and make it more available. It can be anything from Veteran's services, Disability services and food pantries. Anything that is out there that people need information about. We have our Health Fair in June and possibly do an indoor resource fair in the winter months. Also, I really welcome anyone else on the board that might already be in Human services who's not on the committee. Any member of the community that is not on the community board, there is a form you can fill out if you want to sit on our committee if you are interested in helping out. We would love that input and assistance and hopefully help someone out there that may have issues within our community board. If you are interested, you can email the community board at QN08@cb.nyc.gov. We will then get a form to you and you can submit it. We would love to have you join us.

*She wished everyone Happy Holidays!*

**P.O. Kevin McCarthy - NYPD 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct**

He wished everyone Happy Holidays!

There was a small problem going on with Landscapers but now that the season is over, hopefully so are the burglaries.

**Question: Bhitihara Fulton** – I was told earlier by a neighbor that there is a van following the Amazon delivery truck. Once the packages are delivered, the van drives up behind the truck and steals the packages.

**Answer: P.O. McCarthy** – I haven't heard anything about that, but it is the holiday season, and I wouldn't be surprised. There was a situation where an actual Amazon worker was taking packages.

**Question: Dilip Nath** – You mentioned that crime is down. Is that city wide or local? Cars are getting broken into.

**Answer: P.O. McCarthy** - I was talking about the 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct but I believe it is down in the city. People are calling the precinct saying things are happening when they are not. Are cars getting broken into, yes, but it is not happening a lot.

**Dilip Nath** – When you call 911, it takes a day or two before anyone shows up and people just give up.

**Heather Bennett-Idels** – People are not reporting crimes. I call the precinct numerous times and no one picks up. Crime is up in my neighborhood; I don't care what the official numbers are.

**Neeta Jain** – My car was broken into. I took pictures and sent it in the precinct, and nothing happened.

**P.O. McCarthy** – You are not the only one we're hearing this from. With each complaint, I have to go, turn on my body camera, turn it off and make my report. This is very time consuming. We are working with what we have. We have a lot of cops on the street working really hard.

**Josh Simanowitz representing Assembly Member Samuel Berger**

The assemblymember wanted to wish everyone Happy Holidays! The Albany legislative session is starting up and the assemblyman is very, very focused on the issues. If there is any state legislation you'd like to see happen, we are always happy to discuss it and work with you. We are always working to make this state better.

**Ruocheng Chen representing Councilmember Linda Lee**

We now have legal services back in our office. If you have any legal questions, we are offering a free 30-minute consultation. The services are offered every first and third Wednesday of the month.

Our office also offers Notary Services by appointment only. You can call or email us. We would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays!

**Shubhra Datta – representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards**

The Community Board Application will open on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Next Monday, we are having our annual Christmas Tree Lighting. We are hosting our ongoing coat and clothing drive. You can drop off donations at the following locations:

- Queens Borough Hall lobby – 120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens, NY on weekdays bet. 9:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.
- Assembly Members Jessica Gonzalez Rojas and Catalina Cruz, who are partnering with us.
- Assemblymember Rojas – 75-35 31<sup>st</sup>. Avenue – Suite 206B (2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.) East Elmhurst from Monday- Thursday bet. 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- Assemblymember Cruz – 41-40 Junction Boulevard, Corona – From Monday-Thursday bet. 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Friday from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- December 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Queens Borough Hall - Annual Kwanzaa Celebration co-sponsored by the African American Heritage Committee. Happy Holidays to all!

*Salute to Flag – Martha Taylor led the salute to the Flag.*

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***Chairperson Taylor requested a motion to approve the minutes.***

***Approval of Minutes:*** Saaif Alam made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, November 13, 2024, seconded by Harbachan Singh.

***Chairperson Taylor asked if anyone had any corrections or concerns about the minutes – answer was no. Chairperson Taylor requested that those in favor of approving the minutes raise your hand.***

**27 Yes**

**0 No**

**0 Abstentions**

***The motion passed unanimously.***

**Members for:** Dilafroz Ahmed, Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Neeta Jain, Jennifer Martin, Caitlin Marziliano, Nikolas Michael, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Hersh Parekh, Tobias Paris, Israel Peskowitz, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Steven Villaran, Rabbi Mayer Waxman and Jacob Weinberg.

### **Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor**

Announced that Mohammed Tohin, Board Member, has been appointed as the Committee Chair for the DEP/Sanitation Committee. He has been a CB8 member and a member of that committee for over 10 years. Good luck to you and I hope all goes well. Thank you for accepting the responsibility.

On Monday, two days ago, Marie and I attended the Ribbon Cutting for the 210<sup>th</sup> Street Playground, which is part of Cunningham Park. It is an absolutely delightful, delightful playground renovated with a woodland theme. It has all kinds of little critters around. It’s like a little treasure hunt scenery. It warmed my heart that day to see a little boy, with his grandpa, enjoying it so much. However, there is one slight problem which was left out of the capital plan which we are going to advocate for. The restroom is not disability accessible and I’m not going to stop fighting until it becomes ADA compliant.

In your packets, you have the final meeting dates for the Executive and Board Meetings for 2025. Please add them to your calendars and make every effort to attend the monthly meetings. We are not making any changes to the calendar. You had every opportunity to let us know if you had changes to the dates and no one did.

***She wished everyone Happy Holidays!***

**Public Hearing:**

**Hersh Parekh, Zoning Committee Chair, introduced Mr. Jay Goldstein**

BSA Application No. 99-00-BZ – 147-06 76th Avenue (AKA 76-01 147<sup>th</sup> Street, 147-02 & 147-10 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue) – Queens, Block 6685 Lot 1. As of right enlargement of the first and second floors of the building. It is an amendment to a previously approved BSA variance. The proposal will not trigger any new bulk non-compliances.

**Mr. Jay Goldstein representing the applicant**

The school itself was approved as a BSA Application in 2001/2002 and it has existed in that space since then. Once a BSA case, always a BSA case. The application before you, when it came, had waivers for the upper floors. We are here tonight seeking enlargements to two floors. (he went through the slide show)

**Question: Michael Nikolas:** What is the square footage of the lot?

**Answer: Mr. J. Goldman:** The lot itself is 32,000 sq. ft. – We are allowed 64,000 sq. ft. – We are proposing 62.

**Question:** Hersh Parekh – Are there any violations on the property?

**Answer:** Mr. J. Goldstein – No. Just the standard/minor issues

**Chair Hersh Parekh** – We will close the discussion and open up for questions. No one signed up from the public to speak so we have no public comments.

**Chair Hersh Parekh asked for a motion to approve.**

**Tobias Paris made the motion to approve, seconded by Jesse Rosenbaum.**

**Chair Hersh Parekh** - This has been in the area for over 20 years. I would like the Area 1 Chair to comment and share any concerns from the neighbors.

**Jennifer Martin - Area 1 Chair:**

People reach out to me about everything you can imagine. Not a single person has come to me with a complaint about this.

**Mr. Jay Goldstein**

I would like to say thank you and wish everyone a Happy Holiday.

**Chairperson Taylor:** The same to you. Thank you.

**Chair Hersh Parekh:** We will close our discussion and proceed to a vote.

**DM Adam-Ovide** – Unanimous in favor

**Members for:** Dilafriz Ahmed, Saaif Alam, Heather Bennett-Idels, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara Martha-Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Neeta Jain, Jennifer Martin, Caitlin Marziliano, Nikolas Michael, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Hersh Parekh, Israel Peskowitz, Mohammad Rahman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed

28 Yes

0 No

0 Abstentions

### **District Manager's Report, September 2024**

#### **Department of Design and Construction**

The DDC Project # HWTRQX1 mobilized on Thursday, December 5, 2024. The agency is providing weekly Curbside Parking Access Restriction advisories detailing work operations and impacts until Friday, January 31, 2025. These restrictions are occurring Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. at 186th Street between 73rd Avenue and 75th Avenue.

Additionally, the recently scheduled test shut down failed. It had to be rescheduled for December 10, 2024.

#### **Department of Sanitation**

There were some snow operations done last week in preparation for snow events this season. The center median clean-ups have been completed. They started on August 30, 2024, and ended on November 27, 2024.

Residents voiced concerns about their newly purchased garbage receptacles not being returned. DSNY confirmed that their workers must return the receptacles back on the sidewalk next to the curb, and they may not block traffic nor driveways.

#### **Department of Parks and Recreation**

The agency is also training new employees to do snow removals as well. The Ribbon Cutting for 210th Street Playground was held on Monday. As for the Menorah lighting ceremony, any entity that had permits last year would be renewed if there were no issues. There are no fireworks allowed. One of the applicants is contemplating a light show using drones. That would be under the FAA if they are flying any object.

#### **Police Department**

Crime is down in every category except Grand Larceny Auto and burglaries. There is still an issue with people posing as landscapers who are burglarizing homes. If you observe anyone dressed as a landscaper at night, please call it in.

#### **Department of Buildings**

The complaints for Community Board 8 year to date are:

- Illegal Conversion 310
- Work Without Permit 205
- Electrical 147
- Multi Elevators 100
- Construction Contrary to Plans 85
- Fence 52

- Tenants 50
- Sweeps 46

### **NYC Aging [unable to attend sent written statement]**

National Family Caregiver Month is in December. This is just for awareness, there are many types of caregivers. The agency has a caregiver unit in-house that can provide resources to caregivers. Callers can get information by calling the Aging Connect Hotline.

The agency has Transportation Programs. There is at least one per borough plus a supplemental citywide provider. For CB8, the transportation program is Cathay Express. They can be reached at 212-225-8989. Clients must call in advance to schedule the rides.

Call Aging Connect at 212-244-6469 to speak to an aging specialist for other programs or services.

### **Mayor's Community Affairs Unit**

Sanitation is going through a transition following the departure of Commissioner Jessica Tisch who went to the NYPD.

We discussed possible ways to address the maintenance of the center medians (Adopt-a-Median, etc.) moving forward. Sanitation also addresses complaints about street vendors and illegal mobile car washes. The NYPD also assists with the illegal vending issue.

### **NYC Commission on Human Rights**

Starting January 1, 2025, prospective landlords or those selling a property (co-op/condo) cannot request a background check unless they have offered a contract to lease or sell. If they deny renting or selling the property following the background check, they must provide a copy of that background check. Furthermore, they must wait at least five (5) days to allow the prospective renter, lessee or seller to respond before offering the property to someone else.



*Happy Birthday to: Allen Eisenstein, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Villaran, Seymour Schwartz, Bhithara Fulton, Tammy Oshero, Mohammed "Delwar" Islam, Deepti Sharma and Simon Pelman!*

*Marie Adam-Ovide*

### **Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern – Health Committee Chair**

December is a month of many celebrations but it is also National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. Impaired driving is a leading cause of traffic accidents, injuries and deaths. In general, impaired driving is especially prevalent on holidays and on weekends. New Year's Eve is the deadliest day of the year in terms of being on the road. Statistics indicate that driving under the influence spikes 129% over the average on New Year's Eve. During December, you can expect more in the way of sobriety checkpoints and law enforcement efforts to identify those driving impaired. Alcohol and drugs are the elements most commonly associated with impairment at the wheel but fatigue and stress have also been found to play significant roles. If you plan on celebrating away from home, plan ahead.

- Be sure to have plans to get a safe way home, in terms of transportation.

- If alcohol is being consumed by you or by others who may need a ride, call for a taxi or consider public transportation.
- If you are not consuming alcohol, volunteer to be the designated driver for others.
- If you're hosting a celebration that involves alcohol, check with your guests to make sure how they will be getting home.

***Enjoy a happy and safe holiday season!***

Chairperson Martha Taylor made a motion to adjourn, Hersh Parekh seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Nettie V. Norris, CB8 Staff  
December 20, 2024*