

**Community Board 1 Full Board Meeting, Tuesday, March 11, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.  
Virtual/Zoom.**

**Nicholas Siclari, Chairman**

**Members**

Joe Ahlstrom	Lillian Lagazzo ex
Michelle Akyempong ab	Peter Lisi
Arguello, Tatiana	Ali Lula ex
Berksteiner, Dora	Nicole Meyers ab
Berksteiner, Doreen	Mohan Radhakrishna
Joseph Bird ex	Alina Nevradakis
Allison Brown	Friday Ogbewe
Telee Brown ab	Ernest Paige ab
Christopher Campbell	Francine Reali
Loretta Cauldwell	Joshua Renta ex
Andre Ciprut	Cindy Salzillo
Kathleen Coen	Catherine Schiavone ex
Christopher Corbo ab	Anthony Scutari
Anthony Cosentino	Anthony Sgarlato
Claudette Duff	Sean Sheil
Samir Farag	Nicholas Siclari
Timothy Forsyth	Jaclyn Tacoronte ab
Selina Grey ab	George Turner
John Guzzo	Steven Williams ex
Robert Holst ex	
Linda Huff ab	
Sunny Jain	
Linda Juarbe	

**Office Staff**

Joan Cusack, District Manager  
Linda Maffeo, Community Coordinator

**Guests:**

Marie LaFrancesca, Michael Arvanites, Makeda Campbell, Dawn Clarity, Agnes McBeth, Elena Brady, Cathleen Kenny, DOT Borough Commissioner, Roseann Caruana, Leora Nevins, DOT, Dustin Khuu, DOT, Elizabeth Van Der Els, MTA, Ryan Hall, MTA, Phil Rampulla, Peter Rampulla, George Christo, Nicole Brooks, Mario Buonviaggio, Prince Cobbina, Michael Harwood, Terry Troia, Saul Porter, Robin Hatchett, Rose Uscianowski, Leo Heinert, Sergey Chuprik, Suzanne Dvells, Lisa Crosby, RV Augusty, Vincent Atkinson, Bruce Lauria, James Smith, Bill Morrish, Saul Porter, Diane & Marshall Duberstein, Robin Hatchett, Colin Vautrinot, Scott Kerr, Maria Mendez, Linda Adolina, Rosemary Algerio, Victoria Carstensen, Frank M., Elisa DiSimone, Det. Duane Conner, Andrew Dorman.

Meeting called to order by Nicholas Siclari, Chair – 6:30PM  
Pledge of Allegiance

**Public Session - Friday Ogbewe**

Makeda Campbell, Special Projects Director for Senator Jessica Scarcella-Spanton's office –IFTAR Partnered with Comptroller, Councilmember Hanks, Assemblyman, Charles Fall. Annual dinner held March 27. Ramadan Values & Staten Island Non-Profit. Happy Ramadan.

Youth Recognition Awards – Reach out to the office for more information. Prefer a nomination from a school. Date March 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mobile Offices, March 19<sup>th</sup> 11:00-1:30PM. Check office flyer.

Michael Arvanites, Councilmember Hanks Office – Fill out the Transportation Survey to send to the MTA for more buses. There have been delays, lost bus stops and buses going to the SI Mall, S44, 59 & 79. Any questions, call 718-556-7370. We will hear DOT talk about bus lanes tonight. Public feedback is important.

Cathleen Kenny, Assemblyman Sam Pirozzolo's office – Strongly opposed to Retail Cannabis Dispensaries including the proposed site on Forest Avenue. NYC is avoiding the voices of Staten Islanders. NYC Council has issued a Bill giving 1-2 family homeowners receiving the Star Exemption a free garbage can or rebate if you already purchased one. It still has to be signed. Details from DSNY. 2025 Proposed Tax Exemption is Friday 3/15/25.

Agnes McBeth, Community & Youth Liaison, Office of DA McMahon's office – along with ADA Carlos Gonzalez. Carlos went to NY Law School and lives in Staten Island since September 2024.

Agnes – Resolution reforms to Discovery Law. The DA is the President of DASNY to make NYS safer and modifications to the Discovery Law. Modifications to the Discovery Law has been sent to Governor Kathy Hochul. Handouts were given.

RV Augusty – VP of the St. George Civic Association – 78 Fort Place. We voted against allowing the variance, 45 yes and 3 no vote. Tiny units marked above market pricing, location on a hill lacking parking, no access to food stores or public transportation. The building will add two floors and will block the sunlight.

Nicole Brooks, NYC Parks – Invitation to the New Brighton/St. George/Tompkinsville Area Committee Meeting on Tuesday, 3/18/25 for presentation regarding Lt. Lia Playground Public Restrooms.

Mario Buonviaggio, Port Richmond North Shore Alliance – Day 45. Hotel is being built with Department of Homeless Services. Reached out to all the Elected Officials. We received meaningless responses. Growing petition of small businesses opposing a shelter on Bennett Street and Port Richmond Avenue. "This benefits no one".

Prince Cobbina, CCRB – Annual 2024 Report is out with stats. Go to our website: NYC.Gov/CCRB.

Michael Harwood – Revitalization of 78 Fort Place. In favor of it. "We have been advocating for additional housing". Market rate apartments for 55 & over with 20% reserved for younger people. They reached out to CUNY & CSI for students. The residents will not need school seats. The correct zoning will only allow 6 single family homes on the site which is economically unfeasible. Originally the site would be a shelter for the mentally ill. A lawsuit was brought to fight this. George Christo bought the building. He restored houses across from the Cargo Café. Please support this application.

Saul Porter, Northfield LDC – Spread the word, Department of Finance will be sending letters regarding the Tax Lien Sale. If you need to, set up payment plans before May 20<sup>th</sup>. Watch out for scams.

Robin Hatchett – Commercial property in my neighborhood with high-end vehicles that are very loud and shake my windows. The business is open all the time with no hours of operation posted. The cars parked everywhere and in front of a fire hydrant. This business should not be in a residential area. I've called 311. The police come and leave. I propose a rezoning of this commercial property.

Rose Uscianowski, Organizer with Transportation Alternatives – DOT expansion of the bus lanes on Victory Blvd. The final design will be made through community output. I'm excited. I'm on Victory Blvd everyday and a resident of St. George. I've experienced many problems on Victory Blvd. It will be an easier safer area for CSI students. Safety in walking, biking and getting around safer.

Leo Heinert, Professional Skateboarder from Staten Island – New Skate park on Staten Island, we only have two and Brooklyn has 27, Bronx has 10. We need one in St. George. Olympics is coming up with qualifiers. Follow me on Skate to Elevate.

Sergey Chuprik, NYC Comptrollers' office – Please see video for transcript.

Lisa Crosby, Assemblymember Charles Fall's office – Leaving a leaflet to fill out with the community concerns. Charles Fall is always interested in what the community concerns are.

Chairman, Nicholas Siclari introduced Marie LaFrancesca to swear in our new CB1 Board Member.

Vincent Atkinson was sworn into Community Board 1 by Marie LaFrancesca of Borough President Vito Fossella's office.

Chairman, Nicholas Siclari stated that we are all non-paid workers for the City of New York. "I expect all board members to be civil to one another. Sometimes we get yelled at by the public. The one thing that brings us altogether is that we care about our community."

Secretary, Loretta Cauldwell took attendance.

Reverse roll call for the Resolution from DA Michael McMahon's office In Support of Changes to New York's Discovery Laws Proposed in Governor Hochul's Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Budget.

**Vote passes unanimously.**

**Presentation:** NYC DOT Transit Development Unit will give a presentation about existing conditions on Victory Boulevard and discuss ideas for a potential Transit and Safety Improvement Project.

DOT Commissioner, Roseann Caruana speaking about the issues on Victory Blvd with buses in traffic and to improve the bus lane. It can't be a continuous bus lane due to the narrowing of the roadway in certain areas. We need to improve it as best as possible. People in this area are not near the train. According to a survey, Staten Island has the highest level of dissatisfaction.

Transit Development - Leora Nevins, Project Manager DOT, Dustin Khuu, DOT, Elizabeth Van Der Els, MTA, Ryan Hall, MTA.

Leora Nevins – Victory Blvd. is a high ridership route with over 25,000 daily riders and 16 bus routes. Safety is important and in the past five years, there have been over 600 injuries, motor vehicle, cyclists, pedestrian, etc. The existing bus lane has been there since 1963 from Bay Street to Forest Avenue, alternating going North & South at different times. There were improvements made in 2020 & 2016. One of the issues is parking on the bus lane at the times where the lane needs to be vacant. Roadway narrows and expands, narrows and expands throughout. There are certain sections of the roadway that have more than 15 injuries (slide 7 of handout). Average speed is 12-13 mph and other areas on that roadway are 7-8 mph. We want this to increase. 48% bus riders and 52% car riders. Improvements to bus stops include filling in concrete, leaning bars and benches. Pedestrian safety, rubber speed bumps, islands, curb extensions. Parking tools such as meters, truck loading zones. Camera enforcement on corridor and improved signal cycles.

There is no proposal or design at present. We will gather feedback from the community. We will do this in a couple of months.

Q&A – Mention was made that the area by the Staten Island Mall was a priority situation. Carrying packages over 6 lanes of road.

Fran Reali, businesswoman on Victory Blvd. said to ask the people driving their cars on Victory Blvd those parking on side streets (in front of houses for 8 hours) to catch the bus and the store owners. Maybe there is a piece of land to put a park & ride. Commissioner Caruana said they will look at the hours in order not to impede the businesses.

Someone said bus stops are invisible with no seating or overhang for bad weather and bus lanes are blocked near schools with drop-offs and pick-ups.

Question: Tatiana Arguello asked the MTA about more buses? Answer: DOT & MTA will work closely on that.

A St. George resident mentioned more crosswalks. Commissioner Caruana said she would look into that but should have crosswalks only by traffic controls.

Roseann Caruana said there are cameras on the buses taking pictures of your license plates. 16 bus routes, S46, S48, S61, S62, S66, S91, S92, S93, S96, S98, SIM3, SIM3-C, SIM30, SIM32, SIM33, SIM34.

Is the MTA committed to more buses. MTA Rep said they will be analyzing ways for improvement. DOT will work closely with the MTA on that.

Officers' Reports in the packet.

**First Vice-Chairman, Anthony Cosentino** – No report.

**Second Vice-Chairman, Timothy Forsyth** – No report.

**Third Vice-Chairman, Friday Ogbewe** - No report.

**Secretary, Loretta Cauldwell** – No report.

**Treasurer, Sunny Jain** – Report in the packet.

**Chairman, Nicholas Siclari**

**District Manager, Joan Cusack**

Functional Committee Reports:

**Land Use, George Turner** – **59 Sherman Avenue** (corner of Sherman and Fort Place). Proposal for a two-family building construction. **Special Hillside Preservation District** application seeking City Planning Commission authorizations.

The land use committee endorsed this application since it's pretty straight forward.

**Motion to accept application:** Vote: 24 Yes, 1 Abstention.

**78 Fort Place** - John Guzzo said a small unit might be perfect for seniors. Look at it with a "broad brush". The North Shore needs it. Maybe some compromise.

Timothy Forsyth said this is a positive thing.

Claudette Duff - There is a need for housing for seniors. They can't afford 2-3 bedroom houses.

Fran Reali said these units can't only have 55 & over which is discriminatory so a student can take an apartment also. How does it compare to housing in Brielle for example? Phil Rampulla said the square footage is 368 sq. Feet. Fran said it is sad to squeeze our seniors into a small apartment like this but knows there is a need for housing.

Motion to approve the application. Vote: Yes 13, No 13. Motion failed. No vote.

John Guzzo asked for a motion to send a letter about conduct during a board meeting. Behavior unacceptable. Motion passes unanimously.

**Waterfront, Joe Ahlstrom** – Met with Captain Garvey, Chief Operating Officer of the Staten Island Ferry. Concessions, we have 5 stores at Whitehall Terminal and 5 in St. George Terminal. Three of the five spots are filled handled by EDC. Problem with the ramp at Slip 1 in Whitehall Terminal. He can only use American steel which is on a delay but now the slip is fully functional. Talked about the NYC Ferry going to 69th Street in Brooklyn. Studying traffic in the harbor especially with the SI Ferry. Dunkin Donuts will be on the ferry as well as a beer vendor. Bay Street Landing and the Accolades - problems with emergency access. They will look into it and allow people to pass through. Crews will not confront unruly passengers Any problems with another person on the ferry, you must talk to a police officer. QR code in the St. George Terminal. Need your ideas especially for the Brooklyn Ferry. US Coast Guard Rescue Helicopter that saved the two people who turned over in the boat. The helicopter came from Atlantic City. Looking for a helicopter in a closer vicinity like Floyd Bennett Field.

**Public Services, Sunny Jain** – Composting is mandatory starting April 1st. There will be fines.

**Youth Services, Katheleen Coen & Mohan Radhakrishna** – Minutes in the packet.

**Rules & Legislative Affairs, Anthony Cosentino & Timothy Forsyth** – Guidelines for Cannabis Applications. Back in May 2024 we unanimously approved it and that will be our official document. It's in the packet and these laws are enforceable.

**Budget & Finance, Anthony Cosentino** – Statement of District Needs every year. Reverse roll call for the letter in the packet. Passes unanimously.

**Parliamentarian, Catherine Schiavone** – No report.

**Anthony Scutari - Bread of Life.** Dates are April 11th, Blessed Sacrament, 7:30 AM. The trucks meet and deliver in Brooklyn and Staten Island (27 locations). April 12th, Farrell High School. Starting something in New Jersey. High School and Grammar School kids are there. We get 150 electricians, Nick Siclari comes. The sad thing is that we still have to do it. People in Brooklyn know the trucks are coming and actually chase the trucks.

**Transportation, Joseph Bird** – Minutes in the packet.

**Small Business & Non-Profit**, - Meeting April 17th, in person.

**Labor, Robert Holst –**

**Parks & Recreation, Anthony Cosentino** – Walker Park will be at our April Parks meeting as a joint meeting with West Brighton Area Committee.

**Cultural Affairs - Anthony Sgarlato** – Minutes in the packet. The site has been updated on the CB1 Website. If I missed anything, please let me know. There are about 30 Cultural sites. It will bring you to the sites schedule events. Please share the link and promote it.

**Health and Human Services, Fran Reali –**

**West Brighton/Randall Manor, Anthony Cosentino** – No meeting. Last meeting we had a Cannabis applicant for 755 Forest Avenue. I used the guidelines and it was very effective. This owner gave up and is looking at a place in Brooklyn.

**New Brighton/St. George/Tompkinsville, Claudette Duff** – Report in the packet.

**Silver Lake/Sunnyside/Grymes Hill/Westerleigh/Willowbrook, Timothy Forsyth**: No meeting or minutes. Meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup> in person.

**Rosebank/Shore Acres, John Guzzo** – Minutes in packet.

**Mariner's Harbor/Port Richmond/Elm Park/Arlington, Selina Grey & Dora Berksteiner** – No quorum, no report.

**Stapleton/Clifton/Concord, Peter Lisi**- We meet the third Thursday of the month at the Stapleton Library and on Zoom. One committee member wasn't coming to the meetings so we took them off the committee. We have to make quorums. All other committees should go through their members and do the same. A resident came to our meeting and is fed up with the addiction problems and wants Staten Island to get acknowledge the drug abuse and addiction issues. We will have a letter in next months packet. We will ask for a vote. Concerns with DOB inspections and a backlog. Shouldn't wait too long for an inspection or permit. Olympia Blvd (not in our area) needs to be fixed. We are going to make a map of our area of Stapleton/Clifton/Concord/Park Hill of all vacant properties owned by city, state and federal agencies and try to get something moving. Stapleton Library has a lot of events please check it out. Support your local libraries and make sure they thrive. Community board work is thankless, pay-less with a lot of emotion. If you're a resident or board member, stick to the issue at hand. Try not to attack anyone personally. Go after the problem. We need respect but with people's concerns also. Solve problems without making enemies of each other. We are a "community". Women's History Month. 1911 we had International Women's Day. It was hard to push forward with oppression. What if Amelia Earhart didn't fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean? What if Harriet Tubman didn't run the underground railroad? What if Susan B. Anthony stopped trying? What if Rosa Parks didn't board that bus? If there's a woman in your life that never gives up, thank her.

**Old Business** – None

**New Business** – None

**Meeting Adjourned – 8:26 PM**

