

COMMUNITY BOARD #1 VIRTUAL FULL BOARD MEETING APRIL 13, 2021 – 6:30 P.M.

NICHOLAS SICLARI, CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS

Vincent Accornero
Joseph Ahlstrom
Anjail Ameen-Rice
Larry Beslow, Excused
Joseph Bird, Absent
Telee Brown
Loretta Cauldwell
Anastasia Ciluffo, Leave
Anthony Cosentino
Megan Delmar
George Doyle
Claudette Duff
Linda Eskenas
Timothy Forsyth
John Guzzo
Celeste Holmes
Robert Holst
Sunny Jain
Lisa Lattanzio
Ali Mir Masum
John McBeth
Pearl Minsky, leave
Friday Ogbewe
Ole Olsen
Ernest Paige
Catherine Paradiso
Amy Poirer, Medical Leave
Mohan Radharkrishn
Fran Real, Excused
Chris Rooney
Anthony Scutari
Nicholas Siclari
George Sona, Absent
George Turner, Absent
Kevin Washington
Daniel Williams, Absent
Steven Williams
Camille Zarrelli
Nicholas Zvegintzov

OFFICE STAFF

Joseph Carroll, District Manager
Lisa Crosby, Community Coordinator
Linda Maffeo, Community Associate

GUESTS

Donald DeRosa, Rep. Comptroller Stringer
Francine Capelli, Rep. Councilman Matteo
Robert Sibri, Rep MOA Fall
Hanane Dbajt, Rep. Assemblyman Tannousis
Jeanine Woody, Rep. Senator Lanza
Jermaine Williams, Dept. of Social Services (HRA)
Kendal Henry, NYC Cultural Affairs
Frank Fontana, Dept, of Buildings
Debbie Derrico, DM. Board #2
Janet Dugo, SI Chamber of Commerce
Steve Colavito, SI Chamber of Commerce
Nicole Brooks, NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Joan Cusick, Executive Director Dept. of Social SVS. (HRA)
Michael Morrell, Westerleigh Improvement Society
Mary Bullock, Port Richmond Strong
Mario Buonviaggio, Port Richmond Strong
Angelo Aponte, Charter School 2230 Richmond Terrace
Dave Mandel, Percent for Art, Snug Harbor
Miriam Arnold
Tatiana Arocha
Neil Berry
Dora Blount, DDC
Nick Borges
Martha Bromelmeier
Sam Schiff, Non Board Member Land Use
J. Facciponti
K. Eugene Foley
Jeff Greary, Rep. Oder Avenue
Sarah Gowell
Michael Keane
Jyotsna Jain
Adriana Jean
Bruce Lauria, Westerleigh Improvement Society
Andy Levison, CTV
Sergio Pardo Lopez
Vincent Perri
Ale Psomas
Leticia Remauro
Shellise Rogers
Patricia Rondinelli
Mary Therese
Diane Sorensen, NWP
Barbara Sanchez

Chairman Nicholas Siclari called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.
Nicky Siclari led the Pledge of Allegiance.
Secretary Loretta Cauldwell took roll call attendance, quorum present.
Motion made seconded and passed to accept March 2021 Full Board Minutes.

PUBLIC SESSION

Ms. Lisa Thompson from DA McMahon's office announced some virtual meetings Thursday, April 15th, Town Hall, Topic - Scams. With Councilman, Steve Matteo. The flyer is in the chat. Secondly, Thursday, April 22nd, Our Victims Vigil. It will be virtual this year.

Mr. Jermaine Williams, Department of Social Services gave three updates. Air conditioning season is open. Seniors can apply for cooling assistance starting May 3rd. Applications will be accepted until August 31st. The funds will be there until exhausted it's on a first come, first serve basis. Secondly, Snap and Cash assistance needs to be re-certified. Medicaid renewal assistance, from July 2020 to December 2020 is extended for 12 months. We are sending out notifications of these updates.

Mr. Mario Buonviaggio, Port Richmond Strong spoke on several incidents in public safety in the Port Richmond area. 54 Port Richmond Avenue, individuals trespassing on church grounds smoking weed. On April 6th, an elderly Asian couple were victims of a robbery in broad daylight. April 11th, the NYPD conducted a city-wide anti-graffiti cleanup only for a "deep-rooted" criminal sprayed graffiti over it only hours after. All incidents captured on my body camera. All from Project Hospitality, 27 Port Richmond Avenue. Some call them troubled teens. Make no mistake, these are deep-rooted criminals. Have no care for human life. They will either end up either dead or in prison. None of these criminals are Staten Island residents. This Community Board and the area chair and this mismanaged organization thinking he has the pulse of Port Richmond is a joke. Because of this, all those responsible are putting residents in danger.

Ms. Leticia Remauro spoke on behalf of the Downtown Alliance opposing the Homeless Shelters not only in St. George and Stapleton but around Staten Island. Some years ago, we started down a path of a lawsuit together. We have secured an attorney, not just for 44 Bay Street and other RFP's that were answered for emergency shelters. The lawsuit is based on the RFP's state that they would like to place people where they live in the community and will move onto permanent residences. We don't have them for people to move into. The City would like to see a plan for permanent residences. We have seen this emergency go on for many years. The people in the shelters will have to move off the island to have permanent shelters or stay in the homeless shelter. If you want to be a petitioner, please contact me. If you live near the shelter you can oppose these people having to stay in these shelters. We understand shelters don't help the people they serve nor does it help the neighborhood. We need permanent affordable homes. Lack of planning right now that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Jeff Geary, architect for 235 Oder Avenue. A vote went down to 50/50 at the Land Use meeting. A revote was taken and it was denied because the motion wasn't supported to support the application. The application is for building in the bed of a mapped street. The owner has a property that is 75 wide with 35 feet in the bed of the mapped street along Steuben Street. Steuben Street runs around 2100 feet from the base of a right of way for the Staten Island Expressway to Richmond Road to Targee Street. On the bottom portion of Steuben Street there are 3-4 houses that are built in the bed of a mapped street. We have a letter from DOT that they have no intention to widen the street. There is no 10- year Capital Improvement Plan. The length that this street runs was not apparently clear at the Land Use Committee Meeting. In my experience, I have never seen such a short block widened. Only 16 houses would be affected by that. One of the members noted that this hardship was created by a

subdivision. That's not exactly accurate. The owner would not be able to put a deck there, parking pad or garage, nothing. Essentially 40% of his lot would be only something he can mow and pay taxes on. There is an opportunity there by the zoning by the BSA to put a house there.

Mr. Ruben Sibri from Assemblyman Charles Falls office mentioned the budget passed in Albany. We secured funding for Staten Island Legal Services, 200K. We also restored funding to keep residents toll discount at \$2.75. Funding for gang and gun violence, increased funding for Pre-K education and for higher education for CUNY. Increased funding for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Cost of living adjustments for caregivers. We also have a few events coming up. This Friday, for Ramadan we are doing a Food Drive at 180 Burgher Avenue. We will be teaming up with Mosque New York and Project Hospitality to serve groceries to the community. We are also having a Gun Buy-Back Program with the NYPD and the DA's office. This will be at 30 Maple Parkway on Saturday, April 24th. The drop off site will be open from 10am to 4pm. You will receive \$200 on a prepaid card for operable handguns and assault rifles. \$25 prepaid card for rifles, shotguns, and handguns. Tuesday, April 20th at 10am we will cosponsor beautification at 686 Forest Avenue at 10am, alongside Senator Savino and the DA's office. Please come out.

Mr. Frank Fontana from the Department of Buildings mentioned the Building Department just released an interactive map on their website. I will share in the chat as well. Property owners with two or more hazardous units, will be restricted from getting permits until they correct those hazardous units. The buildings department has an advocate's office. The information is on our website. If there any tenants that feel the property owner is using construction to harass them, the advocates office with intervene and inspect those conditions. Local Law 152, the council extended the deadline. Property owners received mailers. Lastly, job updates on the Buildings website. Sign up for the DOB newsletter.

Ms. Gabriella Velardi-Ward - Supervisor for the Parks Department. Showed a presentation of an aerial view of the Graniteville Wetland and Forest. Across from this is Newark Bay. All this water will empty out with storm surges. We have a mobile home community is right across the street from the tolls from the Goethals Bridge. The flood insurance will be astronomical. The Forest is full of life, birds, frogs, turtles - this will be gone, they will be killed. The building department gave permission to pull the trees which they did last December. We have an appeal. We can only fight the technicalities. We have been in court for over two years. We are in trouble with climate change.

Ms. Barbara Sanchez spoke of a fire that occurred on Narrows Road North last Wednesday. This fire was caused by squatters in a house that was foreclosed. There was a renter there and they moved out and the squatters moved in. They were also squatting in a condo in Richmondtown and were paid to move. When the police came to confront them, they said they were entitled to stay there from the court. There were fights 2am in the morning with kids screaming for help. Breaking open people's mailboxes. They were beating a dog on the balcony, by the time the police came, the dog was not found. Four firefighters were hurt at this fire. There was only one unit destroyed but the other units were destroyed by water damage. It's a warning for your community with squatters. It has to be done immediately. After 30 days, they cannot get out. This is a bad situation.

PUBLIC SESSION CLOSED

Mr. Kendal Henry speaking for David Mandel, Department of Cultural Affairs for the Arts gave a presentation of a project that we did four years ago but now are updating. Percent for art was established in 1982 with Mayor Ed Koch. We have a panel process to vote what the Art Project is. Five years ago, we started this project at Snug Harbor. We selected an artist five years ago, but he decided not to continue with the project. Tatiana Arocha will speak about her project.

Ms. Tatiana Arocha mentioned she has been spending time at Snug Harbor and photographing nature. I am creating textures from the surroundings area.

Chairman Siclari said we look forward to seeing the art.

Mr. Steve Colavito, SI Chamber of Commerce is supporting the NYC Small Business Network. They help businesses across the Island. We help them address issues that come up such as financing, legal counsel, moving their business to take-out, etc. We helped hundreds of business in the last several months. Example, an auto-glass business on Hylan Blvd. The landlord was not responsive to her needs. She had to move to the Charleston area. She was looking for ways to continue her business. We were able to introduce her to one of our lenders. We got her a \$35,000 bridge loan. Another business had a fire in August of 2020 along with the Pandemic. We got them a \$500 E-Commerce-ready website to continue to market their business. We helped many others. I will give you the website in the chat. Thank you.

Ms. Janet Dugo, SI Chamber of Commerce – spoke about the Lease Assistant Program. This is a NYC Program to help small businesses with their lease. This is free legal services. Lease review, lease amendment, negotiating a new lease, oral or unwritten agreements, etc. Any small business in NYC is eligible. No franchise businesses. There are some income restrictions. Example, for an individual would be \$64,000. People need to know what they are eligible for and what their rights are. Please get the word out. Flyer was left in the chat.

Mr. Angelo Aponte, Chairman of the Board of New World Prep solicited from EDC and new construction loan. We are building a new K-8th grade school on Richmond Terrace between Sharpe Avenue and Treadwell Avenue. It will require demolition of existing structures such as St. Mary's of Assumption Church which was decommissioned years ago. Demolition will be sometime the end of the month and construction starting around June 1st.

Mr. Eugene Foley President of the School showed a power point presentation, students will be coming from the North Shore. Presently we are off the campus so this expansion can happen. We are expanding from 6th - 8th grade. Last three years, we have been expanding to a K through 8th grade school. Our K and 1 are at the property of Moore Catholic School. Our 2nd, 5th and 6th are at our former St. Adalbert's Property and our 7th and 8th grades are at St. Carmel School. As a charter school, public school, we have a lottery. We have preferences within the lottery such as siblings and students who come from homes where English is not the first language spoken. Predominantly Spanish, African, etc. Presently we have 70% Spanish in the last 12 years and 28% African American, 3% Special Education, etc. We wanted to expand to get these students who are years from their ELA earlier in their schooling for their readiness for High School. The present school will be renovated inside and out, and a four-story building will be attached. It will be made up of atrium, classrooms, counseling offices, security, science labs, gym, etc. The atrium will host artifacts from the old St. Mary's church so the history will be maintained. We are a laptop school. We have been for five years. Going to virtual this past year was easier for us because of this.

Mr. Aponte added that the building can be used as a safe harbor in the event of a natural disaster as far as generators, and the community can take shelter, house, and feed people. Facility will be completed by the end of the Fall/Beginning of the Winter of 2023.

Mr. Carroll, District Manager asked if there was indoor and outdoor recreation? Angelo said yes, we have indoor. In terms of the exterior we are currently working with the neighbors who expressed the interest to sell their property to have outdoor recreation.

Mr. Robert Holst asked if the SCA is responsible for this construction? What is the responsibility of the School Construction Authority here? Mr. Aponte answered this is a private activity bond issued by EDC. Investors who have invested in Charter Schools will provide construction dollars acquiring bonds that will be issued through the EDC. It is an open construction. We are operating within the law.

Mr. Nicholas Zvegintzov asked who would own the school? New World Prep Charter School Board of Trustees will be the land- owner and the lease owner of the property. Mr. Anthony Scutari asked if there is any City or State money involved in this school? Mr. Aponte answered, no there are three authorizes of Charter Schools in NY. One is SUNY, Board of Regents, the State and Department, and the Department of Education is the third. Mr. Scutari means my tax dollars are being used to build this school. The school is being built because of a bond issue issued to private investors who invest in Charter Schools throughout the country. We will provide contact numbers for you.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN, ANTHONY COSENTINO – Mr. Cosentino will be attending the ribbon cutting ceremony at Faber Park.

SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN, TIMOTHY FORSYTH - No report. Everyone stay safe.

THIRD VICE-CHAIRMAN, FRIDAY OGBEWELE - No report.

SECRETARY, LORETTA CAULDWELL - No report.

TREASURER, LARRY BESLOW – The report was e-mail to all members.

CHAIRMAN, NICHOLAS SICLARI - Mr. Siclari discussed three items. - 1. I want to wish Amy Poirier a quick recovery. She had to go back in the hospital and have another procedure done. I want to thank Bobby Holst and son Colin who moved boxes for her. Keep your thoughts and prayers for her as she recovers. 2. Our Land Use Chairman gave me a little homework assignment. The board office Joe, Lisa, and Linda reached out to the Chairs of the five boroughs. We wanted to see how the rest of the community boards are coming along. Vinny has stated we don't get treated as others do it seems that it's not just our board issue. I spoke to the Board Chair of Harlem yesterday. It is an administration wide issue. No matter what we do we get no response. I don't know if they are obsessed with Covid right now? It's frustrating not getting information out. We are a city agency. 3. Land Use. You do a terrific job. I remember going to one Land Use meeting a few years back and it went on until 11:20pm. I said to myself, I will never do that again. An older gentleman came to me and said, "don't these people know that this applicant is a neighbor who is paying real money, getting real lawyers to do something." I always think this way with Land Use. These are real people on the other side of this application. They are spending real money. Perfect strangers are interpreting the law the best we can. They hire real architects and lawyers.

DISTRICT MANAGER, JOSEPH CARROLL - I remember those late nights. Everyone is our constituent. Nick you pointed out something that is very ominous. The centralized bureaucracy crushing our local borough chiefs. The effect of this community board citywide is really being eroded. When you hear Vinny's presentation, you will be stunned to see what the Speaker of the Council wants to do. He wants to take us out of the ULURP process. The Borough President's required workshop is going to be April 29th about the Human Rights Law, 1pm and 7pm. Four workshops that the Borough President is requiring. We will send the link from the office.

FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

LAND USE, VINCENT ACCORNERO – The minutes of the meeting and motions were e-mailed to all Board Members.

Department of City Planning Application Nos. N 210064 ZAR, N 210065 ZAR and N 210066 ZAR – authorizations of development on steep slope to authorize modification of lot coverage controls, and to authorize modification of grading controls to facilitate the development of three single family attached homes located at 680-684 Van Duzer Street.

This motion was tabled last month for additional information on drainage on the property.

Motion made and seconded to approve as submitted with a letter to be sent to DEP to ask for more stringent drainage requirement due to the history in the area and steep slope of the site. Roll call vote taken; vote passed 16-11-1.

Board of Standards & Appeals Application No. 105-81-BZ reopen and renew the variance at 235 Forest Avenue.

Motion made and seconded to approve as submitted. Roll call vote taken; vote passed 28-0-0.

Board of Application No. 2020-49-A - Proposed one single family detached residence at 235 Oder Avenue in the bed of a mapped street.

Motion made and seconded to deny the application, roll call vote taken, vote passed 19-8-0.

Letter to Councilmembers for Introduction 2186-2020:

An initial motion was made a Land Use Committee Meeting which passed unanimously:

Motion to send letter rejecting the Bill that it completely works around the ULURP Process and CB#1 SI reject with limitation and extreme prejudice.

Staten Island Community Boards 2 and 3 are also working on letters to send as did many many

Mr. Accornero expanded to send the letter as follows for consideration at Full Board Meeting:

Introduction 2186-2020 is a far-reaching, complicated piece of legislation that could have profound effects on the City. It is not a task to be taken hastily and without significant amount of deliberation and public review.

When a rezoning is consistent with the comprehensive goals, it can be approved without ULURP. It would allow a developer to proceed with construction without further review. It is fast tracked with a pre-existing environmental impact statement.

Determining future capital infrastructure needs under long term planning is reasonable for major works such as sewers, school seats and, similar structural interdependent projects. Committing capital funding on a strict timetable is very problematic due to inconsistent funding. The task of developing a comprehensive plan will require significant amounts of new resources and no dollars have been identified.

Speaker Johnson's comments about eliminating single family zoning under the premise it represents the "majority-white-middle-income communities: in whiter wealthier neighborhoods" is simply racist and divisive and these words have no place in government. Furthermore, the actions you seek in your plan circumvent due process and violate the laws of our NYC Charter.

We implore our Councilmembers to oppose this divisive and non-inclusive plan.

Motion made and seconded to send letter to all Councilmembers, roll call vote taken, vote passes 26-1-1.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AMY POIRER – A speedy recovery was wished to Ms. Poirer.

WATERFRONT, OLE OLSEN – Mr. Olsen has been working on to get at the very least at least the construction aspect of wind turbine on Staten Island. This is an ongoing project Mr. Olsen has been working on and when more information is available Mr. Olsen will report back to the Board.

PUBLIC SERVICES, SUNNY JAIN – No meeting, no issues.

YOUTH SERVICES, ERNEST PAIGE – Mr. Paige thanked everyone for their well wishes especially Joseph Carroll and Norman Light who sent cards to his family.

RULES AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, CHRISTOPHER ROONEY – No report.

BUDGET & FINANCE, ANTHONY COSENTINO – We are waiting for the Mayor to finish his report, Governor just completed his report.

TRANSPORTATION, NICHOLAS ZVEGINTZOV - Two years ago there was a big fuss about announcing that Beryl Bikes were coming to Staten Island. King George the 3rd said, “this will never work”. He was right, they canceled. Nobody seemed to ask if rental bikes made any money. It’s all up in the air. It probably doesn’t make money. The NYC Ferry was not coming to Staten Island, so we are still expecting a fast ferry to the West Side of Manhattan later this summer. They are building a dock. I was introduced to the new commissioner who claims there is something called an Agency Response System. George Doyle asked about putting a box on Tompkins Avenue and Hylan Blvd. Buses and trucks are blocking the street. Move the traffic light back to Tompkins Avenue.

Sunny asked. With all the infrastructure funds, we have a problem from Bradley Avenue to the bridge on South Avenue. Additional funding needed. HOV lane should be extended too. Traffic mitigation onto the expressways.

AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

LABOR, ROBERT HOLST - We have been working with the Correction Officers’ Union. They are having trouble on Riker’s Island. The city is having them work extra shifts, 24 hours a day. Sleeping in their cars in the parking lot. They reached out to the board. They asked if we could put them in touch with the state elected officials in our area. We did that. If you know anyone that has been laid off and has lost their medical coverage, the American Recovery Act that President Biden and Congress passed and signed allows for Cobra continuing coverage. You must go to Benefits.gov.

PARKS, NORMAN LIGHT – Well wishes and a speedy recovery was wished to Mr. Light who had to have surgery. There will be a ribbon cutting at Faber Park this Thursday, Mr. Cosentino is attending.

Mr. Accornero asked Ms. Brooks from the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation asked Ms. Brooks a few months ago. The area by Alaska Street and Richmond Terrace mentioned Parks raised the building and cleared the site. According to Parks there are no plans for the site. It’s sitting dormant. What is the long-term goal for this site? Ms. Brooks said there are no plans for this site. Joe asked if it could be a community garden? Linda said that’s part of the North Shore Greenway. We want and need to have it.

AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS

WEST BRIGHTON/ST. GEORGE, LORETTA CAULDWELL – Ms. Cauldwell asked everyone in the St. George/West New Brighton Area to please look at Land Use Public Hearing Notices for anything that might be in the area. In addition if you have any issues in the area please contact the Board Office.

SILVER LAKE/SUNNYSIDE/WESTERLEIGH, TIMOTHY FORSYTH/CAMILLE ZARRELLI – No meeting, no report.

ROSBANK/FT. WADWORTH, JOHN GUZZO - No report.

MARINERS HARBOR/PORT RICHMOND, JOHN MCBETH - We had a meeting. The minutes are not in the packet. We are meeting next week of course. I am also putting in the chat my contact information. Apparently, people are having trouble contacting me and letting me know what's going on. I would like to make a proposal. We are elected because we have compassion for our community. I would like a rededication for decorum. A return to respect and language. As a city agency, we can get those concerns and requests across in a better fashion.

There are Robert's Rules of Order. We should talk as long as we are civil to each other. Mr. Carroll said a lot of people are doing stuff in chat. It's not for venting. You are going to have to police the chat. Chairman Siclari we have to wait until we go live again. Mr. said I don't disagree with everyone having their say with some level of decency. Loretta said it's political and sarcasm and have no part here in the meeting. They don't follow them. Lisa said we won't allow them in the next meeting. Mr. Carroll said if this was a live meeting, they would be ruled out of order by the chair. Mr. McBeth said the issue on Trantor Place is terrible. We are getting a slow return on information on what they are going to do. Joe said the Commissioner did say they are working with the State to determine ownership. I got into a bit of a huff with her. She did say she would get to the bottom of this issue. She said she would fix it.

Mr. McBeth said we are no further along from when we asked the question.

CLIFTON/CONCORD/STAPLETON, LARRY BESLOW – No meeting, no report.

Secretary Loretta Cauldwell announced the current Executive Committee Members have all submitted their names to run for their current position.

Nicholas Siclari, Chairman
Anthony Cosentino, First Vice-Chairman
Timothy Forsyth, Second Vice-Chairman
Friday Ogbewe, Third Vice-Chairman
Loretta Cauldwell, Secretary
Larry Beslow, Treasurer

Ms. Cauldwell asked for nominations for each position, there were none. Members can submit their names up to the start of the May Meeting to run for an Executive Committee position. Nominations will be taken again at the May meeting only for the last time for this year.

OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Teele Brown talked about a gas incident. She called 311 before 911. The Fire Department came and said there was no gas. Five minutes later, National Grid came in and told her to leave her due to gas. He wants to make a complaint with the FDNY. Joe said he will talk with the guy from the Fire Department.

Mr. Guzzo called 311 regarding 42 Shaunessy they took down the porch without permits amongst other things. Nobody ever came. Mr. Siclari asked Mr. Guzzo to contact Lisa or Linda next time.

