

**COMMUNITY BOARD #1 VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.**

NICHOLAS SICLARI, CHAIRMAN

**MEMBERS**

Vincent Accornero, Absent  
Anjail Ameen-Rice  
Larry Beslow  
Joseph Bird  
Telee Brown  
Sandy Carles, Leave  
Loretta Cauldwell  
Anastasia Ciluffo, Leave  
Anthony Cosentino  
Megan Delmar, Excused  
George Doyle  
Claudette Duff  
Linda Eskenas  
Timothy Forsyth  
John Guzzo, Absent  
Celeste Holmes, Absent  
Sunny Jain, Excused  
Lisa Lattanzio, Absent  
Norman Light  
Ali Mir Masum  
John McBeth  
Pearl Minsky, Leave  
Friday Ogbewele  
Ole Olsen  
Ernest Page, Excused  
Catherine Paradiso  
Amy Poirer  
Mohan Radharkrishn  
Fran Reali, Excused  
Christopher Rooney  
James Samuels, Leave  
Anthony Scutari  
Nicholas Siclari  
George Sona, Absent  
George Turner, Excused  
Kevin Washington  
Daniel Williams, Excused  
Steven Williams  
Camille Zarrelli, Excused  
Nicholas Zvegintzov

**GUESTS**

Hon. Michael McMahon, District Attorney  
Ashleigh Owens, DA Office  
Lisa Thompson, DA Office  
Andrew Olsen, CAU, Mayor's Office  
Fitim Shabani, Rep. Comptroller Stringer  
Troy McGhie, Rep. Councilwoman Rose  
Elena Brady, Rep. Councilman Matteo  
Setonji Agosa, Rep. MOA Fall  
Hanane Dbajat, Rep. MOA Tannousis  
Lilly Zafarnloo, Rep. Congresswoman Malliotakis  
Frank Fontana, Buildings Department  
Joseph Helferty, Department of City Planning  
Jahi Rose, Civilian Complaint Review Board  
Joan Cusack, Dept. of Social Services (HRA) Director  
Nicole Brooks, NYC Parks & Recreation  
Jessica Prahl  
Mark Anderson, Pres. Westerleigh Improv. Society  
Michael Morrell, Westerleigh Improv. Society  
Mario Buonviaggio, Port Richmond  
Mary Bullock, Port Richmond  
Saul Porter  
Diana Caughell, West Brighton  
Sarah Gowell, Bay Street Landing Resident  
Marsha Russell, Bay Street Landing Resident  
Neil Berry, St. George Resident  
Cathy Bernstein  
Martha Bromeimeier  
Chantel Babrera  
Linda Cohen  
Zandra Graham  
Selina Grey  
Nija Howard  
Linda Huff  
Bruce Lauria  
Ahmed Zanib, NYC Dept. Consumer Affairs  
Andy Levison, CTV  
William Martin  
Diane Mitchell  
Sam Schiff  
Eric Selitto

**OFFICE STAFF:** Joseph Carroll, District Manager, Lisa Crosby, Community Coordinator, Linda Maffeo, Community Associate

Chairman Nicholas Siclari called the meeting to order at 6:04 P.M.

Nicky Siclari led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll call attendance taken, quorum present.

Chairman Siclari asked everyone to keep Sandy Carles son in your thoughts and prayers. He is in Baltimore getting treatment. In addition, George Doyle a long member of the community board just had a procedure done. Robert Holst is recovering from Covid as well as Linda.

Chairman Siclari introduced District Attorney Michael McMahon and Ashleigh Owens to give a presentation.

District Attorney, Michael McMahon thanked Chairman Siclari and Community Board 1 for having us. I feel like I've come home having served on the board a long time ago. It's good to see that so many members are still here and so many new members as well. As someone who has lived on Staten Island all of my life, I've benefitted from all of your hard work especially in Community Board #1. We really appreciate you.

We want to talk about the state of public safety on Staten Island and in Community Board #1. Staten Island continues to be the safest city, if you will, of its size, close to 500,000 inhabitants in the condition of crime. We have seen, especially with Covid, some spikes in areas that have been a concern to us. We want to talk to you about what we're doing and hear from you if you have any ideas we should be trying as well. This presentation some of you have seen in our community convenings and we invite you to join those as they go forward. We believe by having the conversation with the community and Community Boards, we can be more effective. That dialogue is so critical. I have with me on the call, Ashleigh Owens, our Chief of Staff and Lisa Thompson who is present at most of your meetings. Both people you can talk to as well as myself with issues that you may have. Our goal is to put ourselves out of business, if you will, but in the meantime to bring justice and security to the people of Staten Island every day. I want to thank you for remembering Mark Carles, who is my nephew and everyone else who is recovering from illness or from Covid and throughout the Covid era, if you will, I hope you all stay safe and healthy.

Ashleigh Owens from District Attorney McMahons Office showed a power point presentation and mentioned that we are going to talk about some of the trends of 2020 and the progress that's been made in 2021. You will see an abbreviation NFS which stands for non-fatal shootings and GLA which stands for grand larceny auto. You will get a copy of this presentation after. Percentages are a good way to track trends. 2020 City Crime Numbers chart. Murder, robbery, grand larceny. Overall arrests are down 32%. Broken down by Precinct. North Shore index crimes were down. Murder and shootings were up. Burglaries, robberies, rape and GLA were up. Gun arrests were down in Staten Island. Homicides were up in 2020. 2018 and 2019 numbers were lower. Non-Fatal Shootings up in 2020 from 2018 and 2019. 0 shootings so far this year. Cameras, lighting, police presence, trimming bushes are all important because these crimes are in public places. Homicides, NFS and shots fired clusters in West Brighton and New Brighton and in Port Richmond. Also, Mariner's Harbor and Arlington as well. ShotSpotter is audio technology that uses satellites to capture when a shooting occurs and are in the confines of the 120 and 121 Precincts. It pinpoints where it occurs in a very small range of area. Why are we seeing this increase and what is being done about it? There isn't one reason. Quarantine, Covid, no school, no after school programs and rising unemployment. Rates of unemployment in 2019 was 3-1/2 and 4%. It is now 20%. Most are from minor disputes, "you were talking to my girl", "you stole my shoes", "you dissed me on social media". Is that really a problem you solve by picking up a gun? We've been talking to groups like NYCID on how we get more conflict resolution in our community. Is it because of bail reform? None of

the arrests had an open case. They had criminal histories though. 40% of guns are recovered in search warrants. What are we doing about it? Strategies: Everyone deserves to feel safe. Worked with community organizations that deal with gangs and groups. Funding these organizations. Community Convenings. Fill the holes, gaps of services. Precision policing and precision prosecution. Small number of individuals that commit the vast majority of crime. Opioid Crisis: Before Covid: We saw progress. In 2016, 116 deaths in our borough. 2019 we saw 92 overdoses which was a 17% decline. After Covid: There are already 25 overdoses since January 1, 2021. We are seeing a lot of Fentanyl. In Heroin and Cocaine. In other boroughs they are seeing it mixed with Meth. We have the HOPE team in our office. Always available to help. Attorneys are included in that team. Floyd Miller is a miracle worker. He has a great connection with the treating of the cases. The cases are all over the island. In 22 out of 27 cases Fentanyl was found. It is easily manipulated to become a new drug. Fentanyl is a synthetic drug and is very potent. Robberies and burglaries: Domestic violence robberies. Felony assaults: 50% are domestic violence. Burglaries were up in 2020. GLA uptick in 2020. 64% were not recovered. 42% keys were in the car and 14% car was running. These are preventable crimes, help spread the word, don't leave keys in the car, and don't leave it running. Scams are up. Everyday there is a new scam. All shapes and sizes and all amounts. Not often recorded in the press. They are not often solved. Not living in this country. Spread the word: Online dating website, blackmail. Granddaughter arrested, needs money. Malware problem on computer, called Apple support, asked to buy gift cards to solve the problem. Apple gift cards are a big one. Some strange form of payment. A victim sent \$500 to a Con Ed employee or were told their electricity would be turned off. There is a small window of time on getting your money back if possible. If you fall victim, call the DA's office. We will have a hotline coming soon. Speaker: DA Michael McMahon FOCUS areas for 2021: COVID impact on cases and courts Gun Violence Prevention Opioid Epidemic Domestic Violence & Victims of Crime - An advocate gets assigned to the victim. Rebuilding trust in the justice system, restoring safety to community Protecting our businesses Educating the public about scams and Cybercrimes. It is rampant right now. Neighborhood focus: Quality of life improvements Next Community Convening Meeting, March 4th.

Public Session, Friday: Due to time restraint, each speaker is entitled to 2 minutes.

Ms. Jessica Prah (and Edward Rainy): We live adjacent to 33 Ridgefield Avenue where a developer has proposed to put 3, double houses in a spot that had one single family home. The street has 4 homes on it. It's under hillside protection agreement that prevents overdevelopment. No parking on one side of the street. The sanitation doesn't do garbage pickup because the street is narrow. With the new plan, there will be garbage piled up for weeks. Keep the character of the neighborhood with trees.

Ms. Setonji Agosa from Assemblyman Charles Falls office. Updates. Links in the chat YouTube links from Town Hall meeting last week. On the February 23rd, the Assemblyman will be hosting Voting Event to explain city council elections next month. Also, to provide updates on his legislative affairs in Albany. A bill that allows employees to take time off to get a COVID vaccination. We will work in partnership with the DA's office on some of these issues mentioned on the North Shore. Thank you. Joe Carroll: I was on the Town Hall meeting. I was impressed by the depth of his knowledge.

Mr. Troy McGhie from Councilwoman Debi Rose's office. Councilwoman has asked that the Empire Outlets to open immediately. Governor and Mayor to streamline the vaccination procedure. Discretionary funds are due February 16th at 5pm. This is a hard deadline. The system will shut down after 5pm. We are holding Black History Month celebration virtually this year on Friday, February 26th at 7pm. Watch online at YouTube or Facebook Live. If anyone would like to submit a 20 or 30 second video

on how you celebrate Black History Month, send to: [Vgragnani@council.nyc.gov](mailto:Vgragnani@council.nyc.gov). or text to 646-630-0575. Thank you.

Ms. Diane Mitchell: My husband and I have lived on Ridgefield Avenue for 16 years. It's like a country road lined with one family houses with tall trees. Many birds live in these trees and sometimes owls. It's a unique environment in NYC. Serious problems with the sewer system, narrow streets and sanitation workers are reluctant to come up the street. Please deny their application. Thank you.

Mr. Mario Buonviaggio gave updates in the Port Richmond area. Small business initiative for senior citizens and veterans. 10 to 15% discount every day. A card with our civic group's logo on it. A sticker on the business door saying they support this group. Hopefully will have it in 60-90 days. Port Richmond Veterans Park, last two snowstorms, the condition is bad. There is no snow removal on the sidewalks. Our DOT Borough Commissioner, Tom Cocola will be retiring.

Ms. Senif Ahmed (not sure if the spelling is correct and she wasn't on the participant list sent). From NYC Department of Consumer. City free tax prep program. There is a service available if you meet a certain income. If you are not required to file taxes, one of our preparers can guide you on a stimulus payment help. Four different ways. Virtually with video conference to prepare the tax return, self-assistance preparation with a preparer on the phone or email to help you, drop-off service and pickup when done, and in-person, make an appointment. Three sites open in Staten Island that are accepting appointments. Go to [NYC.Gov/talkmoney](http://NYC.Gov/talkmoney) will take you directly to the page.

Mr. Saul Porter: Announcing Outreach efforts for a Commercial Lease Assistance Program through the Staten Island Urban Center with support from the Brooklyn Legal Aid Society and NYC Department of Small Business Services. We are going to focus on small businesses in 10301 and 10304 zip codes. Will assist with nonlitigation lease issues such as, renewing leases, formalizing any non-written agreements and assistance with landlord harassment between now and June. We will focus on NWBE's, Veteran-owned businesses and anyone that has a lease that's expiring. We will also be doing community cleanups. Something to look forward to in the community.

Mr. William Martin: 33 Ridgefield Avenue proposal. Hillside Preservation lot. Steep slope, steep slope buffer and area to build in. The remaining property to build in is very narrow. The developer proposes three lots with six housing units. The remaining space is so small they have asked for a waiver. If they only did two lots, they wouldn't need a waiver. Very narrow street. This huge increase in the population of the lot is not warranted and it's not permitted by the Hillside Preservation Law.

Mr. Jahi Rose: Deputy Director of Outreach and Intergovernmental Affairs of the Civilian Complaint and Review Board. The CCRB, city civilian oversight of the City's Police Department. We investigate, mediate and in some cases administratively prosecute allegations of police misconduct. We have four categories of jurisdiction. Force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, and offensive language. We would love to work with organizations, community members to conduct presentations that notifies individuals of this option in the event they have an encounter with a police officer that they believe is misconduct. There are several ways to reach the agency. I will put them in the chat. The agency is also going to be having a board meeting tomorrow at 4pm. It will allow people to have a discussion regarding police accountability and we will be voting on our rules that are likely to be added to our CCRB's jurisdiction of abuse of authority which includes police officers making untruth statements during the course of an investigation and allegations of sexual misconduct made against a police officer. My contact information

is in the chat if you want to have presentations conducted. Right now, they are virtual. Thank you and have a wonderful night.

Mr. Frank Fontana from the Department of Buildings mentioned he has not seen plans for 33 Ridgefield Avenue. There is a challenge period where residents can once the plans are filed with the building department. Go to NYC.Gov/buildings. Type in the address of the building. There is a challenge section. It's 30 days after the job is filed. You can go to the website and ask for updates. Type in a job number and every time there is an update, it will email you the update. Local Law 152 on gas inspections on buildings more than two family are required to get gas inspections by a plumber every 4 years. The city council has extended the deadline until June 30th for Community Boards 1, 3 and 10. Extended for a 6-month period because of COVID. Restaurant guidelines for outdoors. This will be given shortly once it is released. Concludes.

### **PUBLIC SESSION CLOSED**

#### **OFFICERS' REPORTS**

**FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN, ANTHONY COSENTINO** – CB#1 response to the Mayor for FY '2022 will be voted on under Budget Committee.

**SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN, TIMOTHY FORSYTH** – No report.

**THIRD VICE-CHAIRMAN, FRIDAY OGBEWELE** – No report.

**SECRETARY, LORETTA CAULDWELL** – No report.

**TREASURER, LARRY BESLOW** – The report was sent to all Board Members.

**DISTRICT MANAGER, JOSEPH CARROLL** - District Manager, Nick. Cathy, Loretta, and I have been meeting with the lady from the Mayor's office and the Department of Health. I can tell you the administration has little regard for getting vaccines distributed on Staten Island. You can neither get appointments or the actual vaccine and the response from the city has been dismal. They've not increased hours, dosage availability, have not opened a large scaled site and they don't seem to care that the borough which has one of the highest rates has one of the least effective vaccine implementation systems. The borough has been dismissed particularly with an issue that is so life-threatening. Nick agreed to get her at our next monthly meeting so we can ask her in person.

**CHAIRMAN, NICHOLAS SICLARI** - Next month we will get the lady back from the Mayor's office regarding the vaccine rollout. it's been a nightmare. My wife is a teacher and it was the hardest thing in the world to get an appointment. I hope it gets a little easier with the transition with the comorbidities.

Joe also mentioned a follow up to what Mario said. Commissioner Cocola was a good friend to Board 1. We are going to miss him. We probably should acknowledge his service and send a letter of thanks. Nick agreed he was one commissioner that would answer every email and would go above and beyond and was a pleasure to deal with. We wish him good health in retirement. Mario came on to say Walgreens is accepting appointments for vaccines. Nick said with the co-morbidities next week, will patients need letters? Joe said there will be problems with the website trying to book these appointments as more and more people are added to the availability list. It's a nightmare.

### **FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**LAND USE, VINCENT ACCORNERO** – Co-Chairman Christopher Rooney chaired the Land Use Public Hearing. Mr. Rooney presented the following applications and motions:

An application has been submitted to the Board of Standards & Appeals Application No. 2020-82-A to 2020-83-A for an appeal pursuant to General Law 35 to permit construction of 2- one-family homes that will be located within a portion of the bed of a mapped but unbuilt street at 51 & 53 Cortlandt Street. The Land Use Committee made a motion to deny the application. Passed the Land Use Committee 9-1-0.

**MOTION MADE AND SECONDED TO DENY APPLCIATION AS SUBMITTED**  
**Roll Call vote taken; vote passed 25-0-0.**

Authorizations have been submitted to the Department of City Planning to subdivide 1 existing zoning lot into 3 zoning lots and, requesting certification of Section 119-04 for future subdivision, Section 119-311 authorization of a development on a steep slope buffer & section 119-314 modification of lot coverage controls at 33 Ridgefield Avenue east side of Ridgefield Avenue and north of Cunard Street. The Land Use Committee made a motion to deny the application. Motion to deny passed 9-0-0.

**MOTION MADE AND SECONDED TO DENY APPLCIATION AS SUBMITTED.**  
**Roll Call vote taken; vote passed 25-0-0.**

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AMY POIRER** -Nothing to report. Amy has helped several of our Board 1 constituents with medical issues they have had. She has been doing a great job behind the scenes. Joe and Nick both said thank you to Amy.

**WATERFRNT, OLE OLSEN** - We continue to work with Assembly member Cusick regarding a potential location on the North Shore for servicing the off-shore wind industry. There is still hope. Thank you to Assemblyman Cusick for his laser-like focus on securing a location to provide many good union jobs to available Staten Islanders. We are also reaching out to the Waterfront Conservancy to schedule a meeting to discuss locations on the waterfront for the environmental issues and concerns. We will have information regarding that meeting. Please wear your masks. Be careful. It's still a very serious virus and its killing people.

**PUBLIC SERVICES, SUNNY JAIN** – Chairman Siclari mentioned Sunny's not here, the last snowstorm Sanitation did a good job. We sent a letter thanking them. Now it seems like, as a point of information, we must get after them to transition when the snow is gone, to garbage pickup. Mr. Rooney asked that they finish plowing Colonial Court from the first storm. Joe said anyone that complained to us, they took care of those issues right away. Sunny has been meeting with them regularly and he has had discussions with them about resuming normalcy to garbage and recycling pickup.

**YOUTH SERVICES, ERNEST PAIGE** - Chairman Siclari mentioned last month that Ernest Paige lost his son, his address was sent to all members if they wanted to reach out and send their condolences.

**RULES & LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, CHRISTOPHER ROONEY** – No report.

**BUDGET & FINANCE, ANTHONY COSENTINO** - Before we go into Budget, I attended a meeting with the CEC on behalf of the Youth Committee and its very interesting on how much is getting done with the school construction authority.

We have prepared a preliminary budget response to the Mayor for the FY'2022 capital and budget request. The letter was sent to all members prior to the meeting.

**Reverse roll call taken to send the FY'2022**

**TRANSPORTATION, NICHOLAS ZVEGINTZOV** – Mr. Zvegintzov did not know Commissioner Cocola was retiring. He truly was responsive and would walk with us to locations. A letter will be written. We lost Ed Pincar went off to be Commissioner in Manhattan. Chairman Siclari said Tom Cocola would walk around with you and answer every email.

#### **AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**LABOR, ROBERT HOLST** Robert Holst, Chairman Siclari said he is recovering from COVID, no meeting, no report.

**PARKS, NORMAN LIGHT** – No meeting, no report, a report will be given next month.

#### **AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**WEST BRIGHTON/ST. GEORGE, LORETTA CAULDWEL** – No meeting but good news. Something we have been working on for years on Bard Avenue by Delafield where there has been pooling of water along Delafield. I've been sending pictures to the office. The office has been reaching out to DOT and DEP. DEP has put in several catch basins in the beginning of the month. Hopefully that's our short-term solution especially with all the ice we've been having with the bubbling up there. There is another problem but hopefully this will take care of it for now. I'm thankful to Lisa, Linda, and Joe for following up and forwarding pictures and everything and able to get this moving.

**SILVER LAKE/SUNNYSIDE/WESTERLEIGH, CAMILLE ZARRELLI/TIMOTHY FORSYTH** – No meeting or report

**ROSEBANK/FT. WADSWORTH/SHORE ACREAS, JOHN GUZZO** – No meeting. Mr. Carroll reported that there are two issues coming: New Lane testing system for their pipes and large development being built. John will report on that next month.

**MARINERS HARBOR/PORT RICHMOND, JOHN MCBETH** - We did have a meeting. I don't have the minutes unfortunately. We will be meeting next week. Reminder to the other area chairs, I'm still offering my Zoom account if you want to hold local meetings. You don't have to purchase a Zoom account or limit yourself to the 40-minute limit for the free account. I have also expanded my Zoom account to accommodate more than 100. We almost went over 100 last meeting, but we can accommodate that. Congratulations to Loretta on that issue with the sewage and the backing up. That has been a long-term issue for a long time. Loretta said it's been more of a water problem with pooling.

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

Nick said I know Loretta there is going to be more issues on the West New Brighton area. There was pooling on Morrison. They're going to put catch basins all over the place.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Siclari said there is going to be more issues with DEP, there is pooling on Morrison Avenue. Ca

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

