



## Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens  
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale  
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Vincent Arcuri, Jr.  
*Chairperson*

Gary Giordano  
*District Manager*

### Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting April 8, 2015

#### Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Peter Comber; Daniel Creighton; Henry Cross; Brian Dooley; Tom Dowd; Sarah Feldman; Steven Fiedler; Dorie Figliola; Caroline Fuchs; Angela Giovanniello; Patricia Grayson; Fred Hoefflerle; Paul A. Kerzner; John Maier; Lydia Martinez; Katherine Masi; Alex Maureau; Eileen Moloney; Raquel Namuche; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Theodore M. Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; David Sands; Carmen Santana; Connie Santos; Lorraine Sciulli; Catherine Sumsky; Jean Tanler; Barbara Toscano; Mercy Wong; Maryanna Zero

#### Board Members Absent

Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Robert Cermeli; Patricia Crowley; Karamjit Dhaliwal; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Fred T. Haller, III; Robert Holden; John J. Killcommons; Kathleen Knight; Michael LoCascio

#### Elected Officials

NYS Senator Joseph Addabbo, 15<sup>th</sup> SD and Staff Neil Giannelli  
Don Capaldo - U.S. Representative Grace Meng, 6<sup>th</sup> C.D.  
Evelyn Cruz – U. S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7<sup>th</sup> C.D.  
Lauren Capozzi - NYS Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, 28<sup>th</sup> AD  
Anne Krzyzanowski – NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, 37<sup>th</sup> AD  
David Renz - NYS Assemblyman Michael Miller, 38<sup>th</sup> AD  
Deidre Feerick – NYC Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, 30<sup>th</sup> CD  
Kevin Worthington – NYC Council Member Antonio Reynoso, 34<sup>th</sup> CD

#### Staff Present

Gary Giordano, District Manager, CB5 Queens  
Catherine O’Leary & Laura Mulvihill - CB5Q Staff  
Catherine Moore, Community Liaison - Queens Borough President’s Office

#### Guests

Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, Director of Community Affairs – NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection  
Frank Fontana, Queens Coordinator, Community Affairs - NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection  
Haley Rogers, Program Manager, Recycling and Sustainability Unit – NYC Dept. of Sanitation  
John F. Schell, former Vice-Chair of CB5Q Transportation Services Committee

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Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:45pm, following the Salute to the Flag.

The Board Chairman announced the first item on the Board agenda as:

**Presentation Re: Green Infrastructure Bioswales Installation Project in Queens  
by Ibrahim Abdul-Matin, Director of Community Affairs  
NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection**

Mr. Abdul-Matin began the power-point presentation by explaining that the city's Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for ensuring the adequate supply of clean water and a reliable delivery system to the greater metropolitan area, as well as for managing the sewer system, including the catch basins, sewer mains and storm water runoff in the watershed area. He said that over the past decade, his agency has invested more than \$10 Billion to improve water quality in the New York City harbor, which is now the cleanest it has been in more than a century of testing. He explained that the biggest remaining challenge is to further reduce combined sewer overflows that discharge a mixture of untreated sewage and storm water runoff when it rains.

In addition to maintaining the city's water and sewer system, he said that his department enforces all of the city's regulations regarding air quality, hazardous waste and asbestos disposal. He pointed out that his agency employs 6,000 personnel, has a large capital improvement program which encompasses the City's watershed area, including local waterways that surround and feed into the greater metropolitan area. He said that his agency is financed by water and sewer charges that are set by the NYC Water Board on an annual basis.

Mr. Abdul-Matin said that, according to departmental estimates, grease builds up in the sewer line and results in 72% of all sewer back-up complaints each year. He pointed to illustrations in the power-point presentation, showing the existing sewer system infrastructure on local roadways, as well as several major sewage treatment plants that have been built over the past 30 years. Regarding the problem of combined sewer overflows, he explained that the city's local waterways and beaches are polluted by raw sewage each time that heavy rains combine with sewage in the sewer system, and then bypass the city's sewage treatment plants and flow directly into local waterways. He said that under the federal Clean Water Act, the city is mandated to address this problem by undertaking a major capital improvement program. Mr. Abdul-Matin explained that in 2012, the city signed a historic agreement with the NY State Dept. of Environmental Conservation to reduce combined sewer overflows, using a hybrid green and gray infrastructure approach. Under this agreement, the Dept. of Environmental Protection committed to meeting certain milestones for green infrastructure improvements over the next 20 years. And, in order to meet the first milestone in 2015, his agency initiated area-wide contracts to install Right-of-Way Bioswales and Stormwater Greenstreets in specific priority combined sewer overflow tributary areas within the City's main watershed areas: the Bronx River, Hutchinson River, Flushing Bay, Jamaica Bay, Newtown Creek, and Gowanus Canal.

Mr. Abdul-Matin pointed to illustrations on the slides behind him, showing examples of Bioswales and Greenstreets, where they were initially constructed in northern Queens. He described Bioswales as fairly large patches of greenery and plantings that have been built into the sidewalk at curbside. He said that they are 5 feet deep and from 15 to 20 feet wide. He said that Greenstreets are generally much larger structures that are constructed in public streets and plazas. He said that these structures serve to divert at least 3 thousand of gallons of storm water runoff away from the nearest catch basins. He said that the Dept. of

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Parks and Recreation is charged with removing litter and debris from these sites, as well as watering and maintaining the greenery. As a result, many New York neighborhoods are changing for the better, he said.

Mr. Abdul-Matin said that through this targeted approach to construction, there are some neighborhoods that will receive many Right-of-way Bioswales and Stormwater Greenstreets in the next few years. He said that work is expected to begin on as many as 250 Bioswales, and up to 6 Stormwater Greenstreets in the Newtown Creek watershed area this Summer. He said that in addition, 60 Bioswales are scheduled for installation in the Flushing Bay watershed area, beginning in the Fall of 2015. He pointed out the sections on the map which are currently under study, as he spoke. He said that staff will be doing walkthroughs in the coming months to survey and assess the potential sites that are shown on the map. He explained that all of the potential sites have been marked with fluorescent green paint, and are currently being evaluated by staff. In closing, he said that there is one public school project in the design phase, and four local schools and two parks under consideration for construction of new green infrastructure projects. He advised that Green Infrastructure Grants and Tax Abatements are available for local property owners and businesses that are interested in undertaking green infrastructure improvements, such as, green roofs and community gardens. Program brochures were distributed to everyone.

The Board Chairman opened the floor to questions and comments from the floor.

Don Passantino said that a potential site opposite his home would be very unlikely to be effective because it is the highest ground on the block. Alex Maureau said that the sidewalk in front of his house was originally marked with green spray paint, and is now spray-painted white.

Peter Comber requested a Bioswale installation alongside the Onderdonk House property at the corner of Flushing Avenue, where the property is frequently flooded by stormwater overflows during heavy rains. He said that Flushing Avenue is located in the Newtown Creek catchment area. Mr. Abdul-Matin thanked them both for their input.

John Maier asked if requests for Green Infrastructure could be given to a 3-1-1 operator. Mr. Abdul-Matin said that because they are addressing priority areas only, they are not accepting requests, as yet.

Henry Cross asked what the estimated cost of each Bioswale installation is. Mr. Abdul-Matin could not provide cost estimates per location, but said that it is far less expensive than building more sewage treatment plants throughout the City.

Dan Creighton asked whether there has been any attempt to coordinate with the Departments of Transportation, and Design and Construction, in order to make this kind of Green Infrastructure part of planned bridge, street or highway projects. Mr. Abdul-Matin thanked him for his input.

Maryanna Zero asked if a passenger can exit a car where a Bioswale may be located, without tripping and falling into it at the curb. Dawn Scala said she was particularly concerned about elderly seniors who may injure themselves as they exit a vehicle next to a Bioswale.

Board Chairman Arcuri requested a printed copy of their maintenance agreement with the Dept. of Parks and Recreation in connection with the Stormwater Greenstreet and Bioswale Programs.

As there were no other speakers, the Board Chairman thanked him for his informative presentation and introduced the next item on the Agenda as:

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**Presentation re: Expansion of Organics Recycling in CB5 Queens Area**  
**By Haley Rogers, Program Manager**  
**NYC Dept. of Sanitation - Recycling and Sustainability Program**

Haley Rogers announced that the curbside organics recycling program will be expanded to collect organic waste from residents who live in Maspeth and Middle Village this Spring. She said that once a week on your regular recycling day, Sanitation will collect all food scraps (including fruit & vegetables, meat, bones, grains, and prepared foods), food-soiled paper, and yard trimmings. Color copies of the maps of the expanded areas in Maspeth and Middle Village were distributed.

Ms. Rogers said that notices will be mailed to local residents beginning on May 6<sup>th</sup>, and that it should take a few days for everyone to receive their own copy by mail, according to schedule. She explained that organic recycling bins will be delivered by Dept. of Sanitation personnel to all of the homes and apartments in the expanded areas between May 19<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015. She said that during the week of Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, collection of organic recycling materials will start in the expanded areas of Maspeth and Middle Village. She advised that residents should:

- Set out organics once/week on your regular recycling day;
- If you don't have a recycling bin by May 18<sup>th</sup>, no problem - just start the next week;
- If you don't have a bin by May 25<sup>th</sup>, then call 3-1-1 to request one, or request it online at <http://on.nyc.gov/replace-bin>
- If your organics collection day falls on a holiday, set out organics after 4pm on that holiday for collection beginning the next day.

Ms. Rogers explained that all of the material that is collected as part of this program is managed locally and regionally, instead of being hauled thousands of miles away to dump sites in other states. She said that the organic waste is composted locally and is used by urban farmers, community gardeners, and the Dept. of Parks to rebuild the City's soil.

She said that residents do not have to line their outdoor recycling bin. No plastic bags may be used inside the recycling bin. Preferred liners are paper bags or certified compostable bags.

Board Chairman Arcuri opened the floor to questions and comments from the floor.

Kathy Masi asked how successful the program has been to-date. Ms. Rogers replied that under this pilot program, about 25% of the residents in the pilot areas are participating now. She said that their goal is to expand the program to all city residents within the next 5 years. Ms. Masi said that more than 85% of the residents on her block are participating in the program now, and it seems to have cut in half the amount of household garbage that is placed at the curb for collection.

Don Passantino said that schools don't seem to be participating in the organics recycling program at all. Ms. Rogers said that most schools do not have adequate storage space where they can separate the organic waste from the rest of the waste stream. She said that the Dept. of Sanitation is currently working to resolve these issues as part of a pilot program for local schools.

Mercy Wong asked whether a large apartment building with more than 20 units could enroll in this program. Ms. Rogers said that large apartment buildings can apply on-line at: [www.nyc.gov/dsny/recycling-and-garbage/residents/organics-collection-in-large-buildings-10-units](http://www.nyc.gov/dsny/recycling-and-garbage/residents/organics-collection-in-large-buildings-10-units)

As there were no further questions from the floor, Board Chairman Arcuri thanked Ms. Rogers for her informative presentation and announced the next item on the Board agenda as:

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### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Laura Regan, proprietor of the Footlight, located at 465 Seneca Avenue, in Ridgewood, said that she is applying for a new liquor license for this site. She said that she is committed to involving the creative community, as well as welcoming the general community, to any events that are held in this site. An information sheet about the Footlight was distributed.

Mike Liendo, president of Liberty Park Homeowners Association, and owner of All Purpose Pest Control, in Glendale, introduced himself and offered his services, at a reasonable fee, to eradicate pests of all kinds from private properties in the Board 5 area. He distributed his business card to the audience.

Dawn Scala, a member of the Glendale-Middle Village Coalition, gave a brief update on the progress of the Article 78 Proceedings to oppose the transitional housing facility that is proposed for 78-16 Cooper Avenue in Glendale. She said that the case has been adjourned for a hearing in State Supreme Court on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015, when Judge Schechter has agreed to hear this case. She referred to recent news articles that report squalid conditions in homeless shelters in Queens and the Bronx.

Ms. Scala pointed out that last month, the Dept. of Buildings approved the plans to convert the vacant warehouse located at 78-16 Cooper Avenue into a proposed homeless shelter.

Board Chairman Arcuri said that the Comptroller's office has not approved the contract between the owner of the building and Samaritan Village. He said that he believed the Dept. of Buildings incorrectly approved the plans, and he would contact the Commissioner's office to challenge their approval of this set of plans.

Richard Huber said that it has been an honor and a privilege to have served as a member of Community Board 5 for the past decade or so. He said that he plans to continue serving on several committees of the Board. Regarding the installation of bioswales in sidewalks in front of private homes and businesses, he expressed concern that maintenance issues will arise, due to the aging housing stock throughout the community. And, he said that any bioswales that are located next to bike lanes will present a problem, because parking is prohibited in bike lanes, which necessitates parking directly adjacent to the curb.

Kathleen Crosby, coordinator of GrowNYC, explained that GrowNYC is a local, non-profit organization that serves as a sustainability resource for New Yorkers: providing free tools and services anyone can use in order to improve our City and environment. She announced that a Stop 'N' Swap Community Reuse Event will be held at the Shops in Atlas Park, located at 8000 Cooper Avenue in Glendale, from 12 Noon to 3pm on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015. She asked that participants bring clean, reusable, portable items such as clothing, housewares, games, books, and toys that are no longer needed, and take home something new-to-you, for free. She said that no one has to bring something in order to take something, and that no furniture or large items will be accepted. She welcomed everyone to participate. Flyers were distributed.

Brian Dooley, a Board member and president of the Glendale Property Owners Association, said that the roadway on Edsall Avenue between 71 Place and 72 Place in Glendale has been flooding over every time it rains for the past ten years. He said that over this past winter, when ice covered the entire roadway, cars that were parked on the street were frozen in place for weeks there. He asked that this situation be addressed as soon as possible. The Board Chairman said that he requested an on-site meeting with representatives of the Dept. of Environmental Protection and the Dept. of Transportation, to assess this situation and develop recommendations to address it.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

**Vincent Arcuri, Jr.**

The Board Chairman recognized the press corps in attendance at the meeting, and thanked them for their

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reporting on Community Board matters and events.

Board Chairman Arcuri recognized the newly-appointed Board members who were present, and asked each one to introduce themselves to the full Board. Carmen Santana said that she is a long-time resident of Ridgewood and had previously worked in Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan's office some time ago. Raquel Namuche, a Ridgewood resident, said that she works as a housing advocate and community organizer. Alex Maureau, a Glendale resident and member of the Glendale Kiwanis Club, said that he's currently employed by the Parks Department. David Sands, Vice-President of the Liberty Park Homeowners Association, said that he is active in the sports program at St. Matthias School, and is married with 3 young children. Tom Dowd said that he is the president of the Friends of the Ridgewood Library, and is most interested in preserving the natural environment that surrounds the Ridgewood Reservoir. Sarah Feldman said that she relocated to Ridgewood from Texas about 4 years ago, and runs the Ridgewood Market at the Gottscheer Hall, at 657 Fairview Avenue, on weekends.

The Board Chairman advised that there are 3 newly-appointed Board members who could not attend tonight's meeting: Kathleen Knight, Karamjit Dhaliwal, and Tobias Sheppard-Bloch. He said that John Schell and Lucy Dolce resigned from the Board, and Richard Huber was not reappointed this year.

### MINUTES

Board Chairman Arcuri asked Board members to review the minutes of the March 11, 2015 Board Meeting. Patricia Grayson made a motion to approve the Minutes, and was seconded by Dorie Figliola. The minutes were accepted by voice vote.

### LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

The Board Chairman read aloud the list of establishments in the Community Board 5 area that are in the process of applying for liquor, wine and beer licenses since last month. Each Board member received a copy.

#### New Liquor Licenses

- 1) Outerborough Arts LLC d/b/a **The Footlight** 465 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385  
(formerly **El Equinoxio**)
- 2) \* Full Guard Inc. d/b/a **Outlaws** 61-08 Flushing Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378  
(formerly **Hickey's Tavern**)

#### Liquor License Renewals

- 1) Brinker Restaurant Corp. d/b/a **Chili's Grill & Bar** 80-16 Cooper Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385
- 2) Rheinerhof, Inc. d/b/a **The Windjammer Bar** 552 Grandview Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

#### New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

- 1) Dee Cee Corp. d/b/a **DISH Ridgewood NY** 57-42 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

#### Wine and/or Beer License Renewals

- 1) **La Playita Restaurant** 811 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **Goodfellas Grill Corp.** 56-26 Maspeth Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 3) **Wanka Peruvian Chicken Corp.** 74-01 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 4) **Super Pollo Restaurant Inc.** 865 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 5) **Corato I Pizza & Restaurant Corp.** 66-94 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 6) Tzuo Pen Ma d/b/a **C&B Luncheonette** 983 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 7) **Little Havana Cigar Company Inc.** 63-10 Woodhaven Boulevard, Rego Park, NY 11374

#### Liquor Stores

- 1) **Charles Liquor Store** 66-19 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **Middle Village Wines & Liquors, Inc.** 64-74 Dry Harbor Road, Middle Village, NY 11379

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\*Indicates outdoor seating area.

Board Chairman Arcuri pointed out that liquor stores are not required to inform Community Boards about their liquor license applications, but the above-named businesses have done so in this case, as a courtesy to Board 5, Queens.

Carmen Santana said that there is a Vacate Order is posted on the door outside La Playita Restaurant, located at 811 Seneca Avenue, in Ridgewood. She said that she didn't know if the Vacate Order applied to the premises itself, or to the apartments above, or both.

### Demolition Notices

The Board Chairman informed Board members of the following demolition notices that were received by Board staff during the past month: **66-02 Cooper Avenue**, in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, in Glendale; **64-27 75 Street**, a 2-car garage, in Middle Village.

He asked Board members to remain vigilant and to advise the Board 5 staff about any questionable construction work in the area, so they can investigate further.

The Board Chairman welcomed local elected officials and their representatives to address the Board.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Catherine Moore announced that all newly-appointed Board members and reappointed Board members are required to attend an Orientation and Training Session from 5:30pm to 9pm on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 that will be held in the Queens Hall of Science, in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. The Swearing-In Ceremony will be conducted on Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 6pm. She said all participants will receive personal invitations in the mail next week.

On behalf of Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Evelyn Cruz reported that federal budget negotiations are currently underway in Washington, D.C. She said that their office has prepared a report on the proposed House budget by which New York City stands to lose as much as \$13.4 Billion over the next 10 years. Copies of the report were distributed.

NY State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo welcomed the newly-appointed Board members to the Board. He said that he was happy to report that a \$146 Billion annual budget was adopted by the State Legislature and signed by Governor Cuomo last week. He said that the budget allocates more money for education, and veterans services. He said that he remains opposed to the plans to convert the vacant warehouse at 78-16 Cooper Avenue into a proposed homeless residence for families, and thanked Dawn Scala and the Coalition for their civic activism regarding this issue.

NYS Senator Addabbo welcomed everyone to participate in the annual Recycling Day Event in the Forest Park Bandshell Parking Lot from 10am to 2pm on Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015. And, he announced that on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, he will host the annual Job Fair for Seniors from 10am to 2pm in the Kew Gardens Community Center, which is located at 80-02 Kew Gardens Road. Flyers were distributed.

On behalf of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Don Capaldo welcomed constituents to contact staff in their office, located at 118-35 Queens Boulevard, Suite 1610, in Forest Hills by calling (718) 445-7861.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Mike Miller, David Renz welcomed everyone to participate in their Safety Event from 10am to 2pm on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> in the Glendale Community Garden, located at 74-10 88 Street. He also announced that from 9am to 4pm on Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, they

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will be hosting a Mobile Care Clinic that provides no-cost digital mammograms and clinical breast exams, in a mobile unit that is stationed outside their office at 83-91 Woodhaven Boulevard. He said appointments are necessary. For more information, he welcomed calls to their office at (718) 805-0950.

On behalf of Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, Deidre Feerick welcomed everyone to participate in their Electronic Recycling Event and a Free Tree Giveaway from 10am to 2pm on Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in the Maspeth Bank Parking Lot on 69 Street and Grand Avenue.

### **DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **Gary Giordano**

The District Manager announced that the annual election of officers who will serve on the Executive Committee will be conducted during the Board Meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015. A list of the current members of the Executive Committee was distributed to all of the Board members.

The District Manager reported that, as part of a citywide bridge painting project, the NYC Department of Transportation plans to begin sand-blasting the paint on the Myrtle Avenue Bridge over the Jackie Robinson Parkway this week. He said that most of the work will be completed at night. Traffic lanes in one direction on the Parkway will be closed while the work is underway. This project is expected to be complete within the next 6 weeks.

Regarding current capital improvement projects in the Board 5 area, the District Manager said that the contractor has begun work on the \$20+ Million project to replace the combined sewer and water mains on Calamus Avenue, between 69 Street and 74 Street, and in 69 Street, between Calamus Avenue and 47th Avenue. He said that under this contract, a 5 ft. by 8 ft. reinforced concrete box sewer will be installed in Calamus Avenue and in 69 Street, along with new water mains.

The District Manager said that another major sewer and water main improvement project in the Board 5 area is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2015 in the Penelope Avenue area, in Middle Village. He said that this project should alleviate the severe street and basement flooding that has occurred after heavy rainfall in this section of Middle Village. This project will also include new water main installation.

The District Manager reported that a roadway improvement project on the Jackie Robinson Parkway between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Grand Central Parkway is expected to begin this Spring. He said that for the duration of this project, there will be times when both lanes in one direction will be closed to traffic. Most of the work will be completed at night, between 11pm and 5am. He said that this project will include a new asphalt surface and replacement of concrete, where needed. Lighting and signs will also be replaced.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Education Services Committee**

##### **Patricia Grayson**

Patricia Grayson reported that Committee members met recently with Khurshid Abdul-Mutakabbir, the Principal of Maspeth High School, to discuss potential changes in admissions process and academic curriculum of the high school. She reported that members were reassured by the Principal that there are no plans to revise the curriculum or admissions process. She said that this year, the first graduating class of students will all be issued Regents Diplomas. And, Mr. Mutakabbir told the committee that almost



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all of the students plan to attend college next year. Regarding the admissions process, she said that Mr. Mutakabbir told the committee that he is not interested in making any changes in the curriculum. Instead, he'd like to find some way to fill 30 vacant seats in a grade whenever students opt out of attending Maspeth High School, because of the requirement to study Latin in their freshman year. She said that he describes Maspeth High School is one of the best high schools in the city, if not the entire country.

### **Parks Services Committee**

#### **Steven Fiedler**

Steven Fiedler gave a brief update on the status of the plans for Phase II of the Ridgewood Reservoir capital improvement project in Upper Highland Park. He delivered the following report and recommendation regarding future plans for this site:

While we understand that Basin 3 appears dry in the autumn and winter, we believe that this basin contains a freshwater wetland. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation website states that wetlands are known by many names including marshes, swamps, bogs and wet meadows. Wetlands are transition areas between inland and aquatic habitats. Standing water is only one clue that a wetland may be present. Many wetlands may only have visible water during certain seasons of the year.

To our knowledge, the Preliminary Assessment, prepared by Round Mountain LLC for the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation, identifies an important wetland in the south end of the west basin (Basin #3) of the Ridgewood Reservoir. It specifically identifies evidence conforming to NY Environmental Conservation Law, Article 24, Section 24-0107. Concurring with the preliminary assessment, to our knowledge, the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation Environmental Assessment Statement states that a "NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation Natural Resources Group study conducted in 2005 identified good quality native plant communities and/or wetlands in the southern end of Basin #3, which is also the area where the majority of threatened or endangered plants were found in this basin. Field visits were performed by the Natural Resources Group ecologists on May 15<sup>th</sup> and May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2014, which confirmed that the wetland characteristics in the southern portion of Basin #3, identified by Round Mountain Ecological, are still present."

Also concurring is a February, 2009 Summary of Wetland Delineation at the Ridgewood Reservoir Complex by Certified Wetland Delineator, Mickey Maxwell Cohen, which states that: "The West Basin is the largest of the three basins. The northern section is dominated by upland shrubs and trees, giving way to wetlands, confined mostly to the southern half of this basin." It was pointed out in the Round Mountain LLC Report of 2007 that at least three New York threatened and/or endangered species had been found in this area. This was reportedly reviewed and certified by Mr. Cohen on Sept. 5, 2013.

In a City having less than 10% of our original freshwater wetlands intact, the Ridgewood Reservoir is a priceless resource. We are informed that a 2007 breeding bird survey identified American Woodcocks at the south end of Basin #3. This native bird has reportedly declined in numbers by more than 55% in the past 40 years, due to loss of habitat. We believe that the type of habitat required is that found in Basin #3 at the Ridgewood Reservoir, which contains an upland habitat for nesting and a low lying wet habitat for feeding. Should a development plan be executed in the future, another precious breeding ground for the American Woodcock will almost certainly vanish. The Environmental Conservation Law, Article 24, the Freshwater Wetlands Act, was created in part to prevent this loss.

As stated in Article 24, Section 24-0105, Item 7: Any loss of freshwater wetlands deprives the people of

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the state of some or all of the many and multiple benefits to be derived from wetlands, and as stated in Item 7. (b), this relates to “wildlife habitat by providing breeding, nesting and feeding grounds and cover for many forms of wildlife, wildfowl and shorebirds, including migratory wildfowl and rare species, such as, the bald eagle and osprey.” Both the bald eagle and osprey have been observed at the Ridgewood Reservoir.

It is very important that the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation engage in an in depth study of plant life at the Ridgewood Reservoir, and that in depth soil samples be taken, and not limited to the dry season. If it is not feasible for the NYS DEC to conduct the necessary plant life studies that are required for wetland determination in the spring and summer, then DEC should be able to rely on expert studies that have been performed during the past 15 years, related to the Ridgewood Reservoir. We believe that Basin #3, if studied closely, will meet the requirements for wetland status.

As there were no questions or comments on the matter, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote which carried unanimously by a vote of – 35 – in favor; - 0 – abstentions; - 1 – not voting; and – 0 – opposed.

### **Zoning and Land Use Review Committee**

#### **Walter Sanchez**

Walter Sanchez reported Queens Borough President Melinda Katz has scheduled a public hearing regarding the Newtown Creek Aeration Facility to be held at 10am tomorrow morning in Queens Borough Hall, 120-55 Queens Boulevard, in Kew Gardens.

### **Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee**

#### **Vincent Arcuri, Jr.**

Board Chairman Arcuri gave the floor to John Maier, Co-Chairman of the Public Transit Services Committee, to give the Committee Report.

John Maier reported that the committee met recently with representatives of the Department of Transportation to review the proposed bike route options that would serve to connect Ridgewood to Rego Park, via Middle Village. He said that after considerable discussion, the committee recommends in favor of adopting Option 1, which calls for installing shared bike lanes along Metropolitan Avenue, between Woodward Avenue in Ridgewood and 69 Street in Middle Village, on the first leg of the route. The next leg of the bike lane route involves installing north-south shared bike lanes along 69 Street to Eliot Avenue, and the last leg of the route would install east-west shared bike lanes that connect to Woodhaven Boulevard in Rego Park.

After a general discussion of the matter, the Board Chairman requested a Roll Call vote on the committee’s recommendation, which carried unanimously by a vote of – 38– in favor; - 0 – opposed; - 0 – abstaining; and - 0 – not voting.

Kathy Masi asked whether committee members plan to attend any of the public meetings regarding the adoption of Select Bus Service along the Woodhaven Boulevard corridor that will be conducted by the NYC DOT and MTA this month. The Board Chairman replied that committee members have attended several public meetings on this subject over the years. He said that for safety reasons, he remains

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opposed to passengers boarding and being discharged from buses onto a center island in Woodhaven Boulevard.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Board Chairman Arcuri adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 10:15pm.