



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 Remote Community Board 5 Public Meeting

April 14, 2021

Board Members Present

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Antonetta Binanti; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Jessica Boiardi; Alyssa Bonilla; Eric Butkiewicz; Rachel Caracci; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Maria de la Cruz; Brian Dooley; Derek Evers; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Dr. Sukh Gurung; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoefflerle; Richard Huber; Paul A. Kerzner; Kinga Kurzyrna; Maryann Lattanzio; Diego Leclery; Edward Lettau; John Maier; Patricia Maltezos; Edgar Mantel; Katherine Masi; Marcin Nadgorski; April Narsasian; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Dennis Stephan; Catherine Sumsky; Katarzyna Syta; Gyanal Thapa; Barbara Toscano; Patrick J. Trinchese; Michaeline Von Drathen; Maryanna Zero

Board Members Absent

Eileen Moloney; Kelvin Rodriguez

STAFF

Gary Giordano, District Manager-CB5Q
Laura Mulvihill, Community Associate-CB5Q

Vincent Arcuri, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:33pm. Before proceeding, the Board Chairperson stated that due to the COVID19 pandemic, our Monthly Board Meetings are being conducted remotely on the Zoom platform. Board members, staff and guests were provided a link to participate. He said that members of the public are welcome to view the livestream of this Board Meeting on YouTube, which will be posted on our CB5Q Website Homepage at www.nyc.gov/qnscb5 tomorrow.

Following the Salute to the Flag led by Donald Passantino, the Board Chairperson announced the first item on the Board Agenda as:

PUBLIC FORUM

The District Manager read aloud the following statement that was submitted by Mario Matos, Jr., Community Liaison, for Maspeth High School:

“Greetings from Maspeth High School.

Our students successfully returned to the BLENDED LEARNING model on March 22. We were able to increase in-person learning by 50%. In addition, students who chose to return to blended learning during the recent opt-in period, will soon return to Maspeth High School as well.

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Our “Maspeth Makes a Difference” Club participated in recent community cleanups and graffiti removal along Grand Avenue, and the LIE Service Road. In addition, the M.M.A.D. members also covered up graffiti and removed trash on 57th Avenue between 74th and 80th Streets (the strip spans both Community Boards 4 and 5 in Queens).

Our students continue to look for opportunities to take part in community cleanups and graffiti removal. Please contact Mr. Pachter, Assistant Principal at jpachter@schools.nyc.gov if you have opportunities for students to help beautify our neighborhoods. For school updates, check our website at www.mhs.nyc. If you have questions, email us at D24Q585@schools.nyc.gov.

Thank you, stay safe, and stay healthy!” Mario Matos, Jr., Community Liaison, Maspeth High School

The District Manager read aloud the next statement, written by Dorothy Stepnowska, president of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce, regarding donations being collected to help families who lost their homes in the fire on 89 Street in Jackson Heights last week.

“The Glendale Queens Chamber of Commerce will be collecting clothing and toiletries from April 14th to the 16th to help the families who were displaced by the huge fire in Jackson Heights last week. All donations are appreciated and will be delivered to those in need by the Glendale Chamber of Commerce. The 89th Street Tenant Association is working closely with the American Red Cross to help these families through this disaster. If you’d like to contact them directly, their phone number is (347) 699-5982, and their email address is 89StreetTenant@gmail.com.

Please contact me, Dorothy, at 347-447-4158, if you cannot drop off whatever you’d like to donate yourself, and I’ll be very happy to come to your house or storefront business to pick it up and deliver it to the 89th Street Tenant Association for you.

Thank you for whatever you’re able to contribute, Dorothy Stepnowska.”

Lastly, the District Manager read aloud the following statement submitted by Benjamin Engel, in support of the creation of a community garden at the intersection of Cypress Hills Street and Central Avenue, in Glendale:

“Greetings members of Community Board 5 and fellow neighbors,

I am writing on behalf of the Cypress Central Community garden group. We are a group of neighbors coming together with the hopes of creating a community garden at the corner of Cypress Hills Street and Central Avenue. The empty lot next to the Stop and Shop on Myrtle Avenue.

The lot has stood empty since 2002, when homes there were razed. This is such a big piece of land, with so much potential, sitting vacant in the heart of our neighborhood for almost two decades. We are asking for help in trying to persuade the owners to permit a community garden on the site. Our research into the ownership records leads us to believe that the lot is ultimately owned by Stop and Shop.

We currently have a petition circulating online that is gathering signatures and voices in support of this idea. Being leaders in our community, we are asking for your help in making this connection for us. If anyone has ideas or interest in making this happen, we look forward to hearing from you.

Best, Benjamin Engel, Cypress Central Community Garden

Instagram: [@cypresscentralgarden](https://www.instagram.com/cypresscentralgarden)

Facebook: Cypress Central Community Garden

email: cypresscentralgarden@gmail.com”

Staff member Laura Mulvihill read aloud the following statements submitted by local elected officials:

Statement from NYC Council Member Robert Holden, 30th CD

“Hello neighbors, Community Board 5 members, and fellow elected officials.

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I thank you all for your continued volunteerism and the work you do on behalf of CB5 residents. My office continues to work hard on behalf of Ridgewood, Glendale, Maspeth, Middle Village, Woodhaven, and Woodside. Should anyone need any assistance, you can call at 718-366-3900 or email District30@council.nyc.gov.

Over the past few weeks, my office has been inundated with inquiries on several quality of life issues. We heard complaints of increased drag racing, speeding, reckless driving, and ongoing issues of illegal car meet up's and loud music. Two weeks ago, I met with top brass of the NYPD, including the 104th Precinct Commander Deputy Inspector Hall, to discuss solutions. The assault on our quality of life should not be tolerated, and I expect the Police Department to take serious action in combatting this problem.

I was thrilled to hear of the city's recently announced plan for increased Sanitation services. The mayor pledged to restore the services cut during the pandemic's early days, including increasing dedicated litter basket services and the restoration of funding for Sunday trash receptacle pickups. During last year's budget cycle, I made sure to use discretionary money to fill any voids and employ non-profits, like Wildcat and ACE, to remove graffiti, shovel snow, and keep our commercial corridors clean. We are lucky to have our very own Commissioner Ed Grayson leading the Department of Sanitation, and we will continue to work together in keeping our neighborhoods clean and healthy.

Next Thursday, April 22 at 7 PM, I will be hosting a Conversation with your Councilman Public Safety Town Hall with various Commanding Officers in the area and an official from the NYPD's Asian Hate Crimes Task Force. This is an excellent opportunity to speak directly with NYPD leadership and bring up any public safety issues you may have. It will be on Zoom, and I invite all to visit my social media pages to register.

Once again, I thank you for your continued volunteerism and service to your community and hope to see everyone soon."

Statement from NY State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, 15th S.D.

"Good Evening, and thank you to the Community Board for their volunteerism and efforts in the community, such as making this monthly meeting possible. This past week, the state legislature passed the \$212 Billion state budget. While with every budget there are good and bad items included, please contact me if you should have any questions regarding the document. Also, please let me know if you would like to discuss that, why after reading the 116-page bill to legalize marijuana, I voted against it. My office team and I have a few upcoming events, including our April Recycling event at Forest Park Bandshell on Sunday, April 25th for paper shredding, where we will also be accepting household goods, books, American flags and eyeglasses, from 10 am to 2 pm. On the following Sunday, May 2nd, we will be hosting an Electronics Recycling event, at Forest Park, from 10am to 2pm. We are also hosting a free public education webinar on Offshore Wind Energy and related job opportunities, on April 28th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm. Please call my office for the link and details.

If any constituent has questions about the COVID vaccine distribution or COVID testing sites, they can contact my office. I have directly reached out to the Mayor's office about the lack of vaccine distribution sites in Community Board 5, and I am working on adding more sites throughout my district. My Middle Village office is open Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm, and can be contacted 24/7 by calling 718-497-1630. Thank you and stay safe."

Statement from State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 35th A.D. submitted by Kevin Wisniewski

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"Good evening and hope everyone is staying well.

Assemblyman Hevesi is proud to relay that New York was able to pass one of its strongest budgets in recent memory.

As Chair of the Assembly Committee on Children and Families, Assemblyman Hevesi was able to ensure that \$2.3 Billion in funds would be effectively allocated to expand access to childcare, and support providers. Additionally, in response to increasing childhood trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) during COVID, the Assemblyman introduced a proposal that would (1) create a statewide educational campaign on childhood trauma (2) require mandated reporters to be trained to identify ACEs and implicit bias, both in person and virtually, and how to mitigate trauma, and (3) create trauma-informed services for children who have been impacted.

There were also provisions in the budget to provide additional small business assistance, rental assistance, and services for numerous other issues. We ask that you call our office at (718) 263-5595 if you need assistance applying for such services.

Our office is continuing to deliver and distribute free PPE. If anyone is interested in acquiring PPE, or has any other concern, we again ask that you reach out to us at (718) 263-5595.

Thank you, and hope everyone stays well."

Statement from State Assembly Member Brian Barnwell, 30th A.D.

"We hope everybody is doing well and staying safe. As you know, the NYS Budget was recently passed. Some of the provisions include historic funding for education, through what is called Foundation Aid. (a \$1.4 billion increase in Foundation Aid and a three-year Foundation Aid phase-in that will finally fulfill a promise made in 2007 to fully fund our public schools). The Budget also increased funding to the Tuition Assistance Program, provides \$600 million in homeowner assistance, and \$2.4 Billion in COVID rental assistance. This program will help renters and homeowners by making sure owed rent is paid. The Budget also includes an additional \$1 billion investment in New York State small businesses, protects the enacted middle-class personal income tax cuts, and it also delivers property tax relief. If you have any questions about the recently enacted NYS Budget, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact our office at [718-651-3185](tel:718-651-3185). If we do not answer, please leave a voicemail message, and we will call you back. Stay safe."

Statement from Assemblywoman Jenifer Rajkumar, 37th AD

"Good evening, Community Board 5. I hope you had a very Happy Easter. To my Nepalese-American friends, wishing you a very Happy New Year.

This month, I held a Town Hall on Public Safety. It was an enormous success, with over 125 attendees. Glendale Kiwanis, Ridgewood Kiwanis 321, Glendale Civic Association and G-COP were all Co-Sponsors, and related quality of life concerns. Commanding Officer Hall of the 104th Precinct was on hand the entire time, as well as the Commanding Officers of the 102nd and 106th Precincts.

I am a proud member of the State Assembly's Veterans Committee. I have assembled a Veterans Advisory Committee for my Assembly District. Leaders of the American Legion have joined as well as key veterans advocates. If you have any recommendations of anyone who you think should sit on my Veterans Advisory Committee, please reach out to my office by the end of this week.

I am continuing a great community tradition and sponsoring the community Recycling Event started by Senator Addabbo. Myself and Senator Addabbo are co-hosting the event. It will be on Sunday, April 25th from 10am to 2pm at the Forest Park Bandshell. Bring on over your paper to be shredded, or your household items to be recycled. The items will be given to our beloved veterans. I will be manning the shredder!

My office has continued to be a leader on food insecurity. Every Thursday for the past few months, I have held a food distribution at my office. Each week, hundreds of constituents come for fresh food, and

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we are honored to serve them. Our next food distribution is at my office this Thursday at 5pm. If you would like to volunteer, please let my office know. Many volunteers bring their children to volunteer. Families are most welcome for this community effort.

I am hosting the Queens COVID Remembrance Day on Saturday, May 1st, along with Senator Addabbo. I have introduced a Resolution in the State Assembly calling on the State of New York to pause in its deliberations on May 1st, in remembrance of all those we lost to this pandemic in Queens. The event will take place at the Forest Park Bandshell.

After many late nights and long hours, we passed the State Budget last week. Significantly, New York State's public schools will receive an additional \$1.4 Billion in aid every year for the next three years. This is an unprecedented amount of funding for our schools. I look forward to working with you to build capacity at our schools and to put this new funding to good use for our children.

As always, my office is available to help you make vaccination appointments. We have scheduled hundreds already for constituents. I have also advocated for a new mass vaccination site to serve the west part of my district, specifically Glendale, Ridgewood, and parts of Woodhaven.

We had a testing site this month in Glendale, near Glendale Diner, and successfully tested hundreds of residents. My Office is also a testing site on weekends, including this weekend. Stop by for a rapid test. It's free. No insurance is needed. No appointment is needed.

My office has remained fully open and fully staffed during this entire pandemic. As a reminder, we have also extended to weekend hours and are open on Saturdays. During this pandemic, leadership and accessibility are needed more than ever. Myself and my staff are here for you. Thank you for this opportunity to serve."

District Manager Gary Giordano read aloud the following **Announcements from the Mayor's Office submitted by Jessica Schabowski, Deputy Commissioner of Community Affairs:**

"Per FDA and CDC guidance, The City has paused the administration of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine pending investigations into extremely rare cases of blood clots. This is out of an abundance of caution -- New York City has no known cases. Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are still being administered.

The City has expanded the number of walk-in vaccine sites for New Yorkers 75+. Folks who accompany a New Yorker 75+ can also get a walk-in vaccine.

With the goal of making the vaccine more accessible to priority populations, the Mayor announced the launch of mobile vaccinations, with mobile vaccine vans and buses. The mobile vaccination effort will be traveling throughout the five boroughs as the City's vaccine distribution continues.

The Mayor and Schools Chancellor announced that 3-K for All will expand to the remaining sixteen community school districts in the 2021-2022 school year. By this year, the City will support approximately 40,000 3-K seats across all 32 community school districts.

The Mayor announced the launch of the City Cleanup Corps (CCC), a New Deal-inspired economic recovery program to directly create 10,000 jobs. Folks can apply at nyc.gov/ccc."

Jessica Schabowski, Deputy Commissioner, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit - (347) 443-4029

The District Manager announced that P. O. Asar Sanad, assigned to the Community Affairs Unit in the 104th Precinct, delivered a healthy baby boy about 2 weeks ago and is home on maternity leave for the next few months. He delivered the following report from the 104th Precinct:

Statement from 104th Police Precinct submitted by P. O. Michael Berish, Community Affairs Unit:

"For the past 28 Day Period: the incidence of Rape was up by 3 cases; the number of Robberies were up by 3 cases; Felony Assaults are down by 5 cases; Burglaries are down by 8 cases; the incidence of Grand Larceny is up by 14 cases; and the number of Grand Larceny Auto crimes are down by 1.

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We are up by 3 in the Rape category, this is a crime that the NYPD takes extremely seriously. In all three of these cases, the victim had a relationship or knew the perpetrator as an acquaintance or from a relationship.

We have seen a slight uptick in Robberies, more specifically in the Ridgewood and Maspeth neighborhoods of the Precinct.

We continue to urge you to be aware of scams that are taking place throughout the nation. Please check your bank accounts daily and contact your bank if there is any suspicious activity. Do not give any information over the phone to someone who is stating they are from the Social Security Department. As we so often say, please DO NOT leave your vehicle running, or the keys/key fobs inside of your vehicle. This accounts for the majority of our Grand Larceny Auto thefts. These habits create opportunities for criminals to easily access your vehicles.

Thank you to everyone who came out this past Saturday and participated in our Graffiti Clean Up. It was a huge success. We were able to clean up multiple locations.

We hope to see everyone soon as we enter the Spring and Summer seasons, please feel free to call or write with any questions or concerns. Be well.”

On behalf of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Joseph Nocerino welcomed all the newly appointed Board members who were present and commended the entire Board for all their efforts for the greater good of the community over the years. He announced that the Swearing-In Ceremony for new and reappointed Board members will be conducted remotely on April 19th. He said that everyone will be notified via email by the Borough President’s Office to confirm the time and date of this event. He also announced that the Queens Borough President will host a Virtual Job Recruitment Fair tomorrow afternoon, starting at 2pm. For more information, he welcomed everyone to visit their website at www.queensbp.org.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri

MINUTES

The Board Chairperson asked Board members to review the minutes of last month’s Board Meeting which was conducted on March 10, 2021. The minutes were adopted by acclamation on a motion by Walter Clayton, that was seconded by Margaret O’Kane.

Laura Mulvihill, CB5Q staff member, read aloud the following Liquor License notifications that were received at the Board office since last month’s Board Meeting:

LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

New Liquor License

- 1) **Mansions Worldwide LLC** 46-63 Metropolitan Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) * **Hail Mary 7778 LLC** 678 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) Little Havana Cigar Company Inc. d/b/a **Havana Dreams** 63-10 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park, NY 11374
- 2) **The Ridgewood Ale House Inc.** 57-38 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) Brinker Restaurant Corp. d/b/a **Chili’s Bar & Grill** 80-16 Cooper Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385
- 4) **Taqueria Kermes Inc.** 66-36 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 5) Connbro Tavern Corp. d/b/a **Connolly’s Corner** 71-15/71-19 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378

Wine and/or Beer License Renewals

- 1) Tzuo Pen, Ma d/b/a **C&B Luncheonette** 983 Wyckoff, Ground Floor, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) Andrew & MJ Inc. d/b/a **Andrew Pizza** 79-22 Eliot Avenue, Middle Village, NY 11379
- 3) GW Ridgewood LLC d/b/a **Gyro World** 66-57 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385

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Other Notifications

- 1) Poppers Locarno LLC d/b/a **Holo, 1563 Decatur Street (Basement) in Ridgewood** will be submitting an Alteration Notification to the NYS Liquor Authority to add outdoor seating in the side yard, and to add space to the patron area in the basement. They will also be submitting a "Method of Operation" Change to add patron dancing.
- 2) **The Ridgewood Ale House, 57-38 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood** will be submitting a Corporate Change application to remove Louis Selamaj as President and assign Marcos V. Cardovacabrera as President and 100% Shareholder.
- 3) * Raheny 5 LLC d/b/a **Walsh's Pub, 68-67 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood** will be submitting a Class Change to upgrade their current Tavern Wine License to a full On-Premises Liquor, Wine, Beer and Cider License.
- 4) **681 Seneca Bar Corp. in Ridgewood** has amended their original notification, changing their applicant/licensee name to **Seneca Bar Corp.**, and adding recorded music and security to their method of operation.
- 5) SSC Group LLC d/b/a **Sugarcoal-Aroma, 63-20 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park** will be submitting a Method of Operation Change to operate a hookah lounge in addition to a restaurant and add a DJ. In addition, the owners would like to engage at least two licensed security personnel from Thursday through Sunday.

*Licensed Outdoor Area

Demolition Notice

The Board Chairperson reported that there was one demolition notice received at the Board Office since last month's Board Meeting: **1711 Hancock Street, in Ridgewood** in connection with new construction of a 7-story multiple dwelling on this site. He said that this new building will be constructed as-of-right. He said that comments regarding any questionable construction that's currently underway, as well as possible illegal activities in local bars and restaurants, should be sent in writing to the Board office. The Board Chairperson announced that staff will return to work in the Board office on a full-time basis next month, starting on May 3rd. He said that he drew up a list of items, including modifications to the ventilation system in the office, to be accomplished prior to admitting the public into the office. He said he plans to meet with the landlord to discuss the list of proposed improvements. Regarding Local Law 152, the Board Chairperson stated that this law takes effect this year in the Board 5 area. He advised everyone that this law mandates that homeowners of buildings with 3 or more apartments hire a plumber to inspect their gas piping system and certify that it's fully compliant with the law, before December 31st, 2021.

The Board Chairperson also reported that the Borough President's Office has tasked all Queens Community Boards with reviewing and updating their By-Laws by making several suggested amendments to their existing By-Laws. In response, the Chairperson said that he appointed Peggy O'Kane, the Board Secretary, to form a By-Law Committee consisting of 9 Board members to review our Community Board's By-Laws and recommend whatever amendments may be warranted. He said that a representative of the Queens Borough President, in addition to himself as Board Chairperson will serve as Ex-Officio members. He asked her to schedule a meeting of the By-Law Committee as soon as possible and report back to the Executive Committee regarding any amendments the By-Laws Committee recommends for adoption by the full Board. Ms. O'Kane replied that she plans to contact all Board members via email to see who's interested in working on this Committee assignment and then prepare a package of information to be forwarded to them, prior to setting a date for their first meeting.

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Regarding the homeless situation in our Board area, the Board Chairperson spoke about the lack of attention that is paid to the homeless in our community by the current City administration. He pointed out that one homeless man recently died, after being homeless for several years. He said that we need to stress the need to care for people who are living on the street, to save their lives.

Staff member Laura Mulvihill took attendance of Board members and staff who were present at the Board Meeting.

The Board Chairperson recognized the newly-appointed Board members who were present and asked them to introduce themselves to their fellow Board members. Toby Sheppard Bloch, who had served as a Board member until 2019, said that he lives with his family in Glendale and works as a social entrepreneur developing nature-based jobs to address climate change. Jessica Boiardi said she was born and raised in Glendale and bought a home in Middle Village to raise a family. She said that she works in the field of digital advertising. Alyssa Bonilla, a Ridgewood resident, is formerly from Rego Park where she started a dog run, community garden and got involved in participatory budgeting. She said that she worked teaching college students until she was laid-off last year. Rachel Caracci, a Glendale resident for the past 10 years, said that she has 2 pre-school aged children and works as a Special Needs teacher. Maria de la Cruz, a Maspeth resident, said that she's an attorney with her own practice in Family Law. She said that she has lots of experience assisting victims of domestic violence. Derek Evers, a Ridgewood resident, said that he's the Democratic District Leader for Assembly District 37B, with a 3-year old daughter and wants to work with the Community Board to improve the neighborhood. Diego Leclery, a Ridgewood resident, said that he's an artist and works as an Arts Educator. Marcin Nadgorski, a Ridgewood resident, said that he's an attorney who specializes in Family Law and that he's a Polish immigrant. April Narsasian, a Ridgewood resident, said that she's a Social Studies and Science teacher and wants to play an active role in building and strengthening Queens. Katarzyna Sita, a Middle Village resident, said that she belongs to a family of immigrants and works for New Visions for Public Schools, a nonprofit organization. She said that she's joining the Community Board so she could become more involved in the community.

District Manager's Report

Gary Giordano

The District Manager gave a brief overview of the Board's major budget priorities and accomplishments over the past 30 years. He said that improving public transit has always been a major budget priority for this Community Board. He pointed out that our Board spearheaded the campaign to Reconstruct the Myrtle/Wyckoff Transit Hub at a cost of \$60 Million. The Redesign and Reconstruction of the Metropolitan Avenue M-Train station was accomplished almost 20 years ago with our Board's input and advocacy, he said. In addition, he said that the elevated station staircases and platforms on the BMT M-Train line were rehabilitated in response to our Community Board's advocacy. At present, the M-Train structure is being repaired and repainted after years of repeated requests for this improvement project.

Regarding graffiti vandalism, the District Manager pointed out that up until 2019, our Board had worked with the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council painting over graffiti on over 30,000 locations in our Board area for 15 years, until we ran out of funds to do it. He said that as a result, you see more and more public spaces, and private properties in Ridgewood, Glendale and Maspeth, are covered with graffiti this year. He said that the Greater Ridgewood Restoration Corp. is looking to hire someone full-time to supervise workers to power wash the graffiti off brick walls of residential and commercial properties in our area. And he thanked everyone who volunteered to work with the 104th Precinct on Graffiti Clean Up this past Saturday, April 10th, 2021.

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Regarding the status of water and sewer main projects in our Board area, the District Manager reported that work is progressing on schedule on Cypress Avenue in the vicinity of Willoughby Avenue, where the contractor is currently installing a new trunk water main from Troutman Street to Himrod Street. The next phase of this project will include the installation of a new trunk water main and sewer on Himrod Street between Cypress Avenue and Grandview Avenue, in Ridgewood. The project is expected to be complete in 2022.

The District Manager also reported that the sewer reconstruction project on 70 Street between Calamus Avenue and the Long Island Expressway, in Maspeth, is continuing on schedule. He said the contractor has begun micro-tunneling down as far as 60 feet deep in certain locations to install new sewer mains as part of this project. He said that this project will tie into the sewer and water main project that was completed over two years ago on Calamus Avenue and connect up with the large sewer and water main installation project on 69 Street between Calamus Avenue and Queens Boulevard. He explained that these major sewer and water main improvements are needed in order to avoid the major street flooding and sewer back-up problems that we experienced between 2007 and 2012, when localized heavy rainstorms dropped more than 3" of rain per hour in our area.

The District Manager also pointed out that, over the years, our Board has advocated for funding to build additional schools and school space in local public schools which were in the most overcrowded school district in the City of New York, until recently.

He said that our Board has also sought capital improvements in many local parks to accommodate the needs of local residents and their families. In addition, he said that new street tree plantings has always been a high priority of this Board.

The District Manager cautioned everyone, even those who've been vaccinated, to continue to wear a face mask, keep at least 6 feet distance from each other, wash your hands frequently, and stay at home if you're sick. And, he encouraged anyone who hasn't already been vaccinated for COVID-19 to do so. In closing, the District Manager announced that our Board's Annual Election of Officers will be conducted during our June 9th Board Meeting. He said that nominations of Officers will open at next month's Board Meeting on May 12th, and once again at the following month's Board Meeting on June 9th. Last year's Election of Officers was conducted remotely, which may be the case once again this year, he said.

Ken Rehberger commented that at last night's Liberty Park Homeowners Association Meeting, Council Member Holden stated that the cost of planting a tree in the City of New York has risen to \$3,400 per tree this year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that at their meeting on Tuesday, March 30th, Committee members viewed a remote presentation of the Schematic Drawings for Reconstruction of Evergreen Park given by representatives of the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation. He said that Evergreen Park is located adjacent to PS 68 on St. Felix Avenue at 60 Street, in Glendale, Queens. This planned reconstruction project is budgeted for \$4.6 Million.

He said that at their Committee Meeting, an excellent power point presentation was given primarily by designer Jacqui Harris of the Parks Department Capital Projects Division, showing the existing conditions and proposed improvements to: the asphalt softball field to be reconstructed; the entrance way on the 75th Avenue side of the park; the concrete spectator bleachers at the north end of the existing asphalt field; and the pedestrian walkway adjacent to the east side of the softball field.

Mr. Fiedler showed slides from the Parks Department's power point presentation as he described the Schematic Drawings presented to the Committee for the Reconstruction of Evergreen Park – Phase 3 including: reconstruction of the entryway to the park on the 75th Avenue side, a 4,000 square foot skate park area at the north end of the current softball field, followed by 2 junior basketball courts to the southwest, and a hard surfaced area which is planned to contain 3 volleyball courts at the southeast side of the current softball field area. A walking track is planned around the circumference of these planned new uses; a fitness area is planned at the far southeast end of the subject area; and new World's Fair type benches will be installed. New trees and beautiful low plantings are planned for the area between the volleyball courts and the basketball courts. Some new lighting is planned. The existing walkway area along the east edge of the park has lighting. This area is darkened by numerous tall trees, so reasonable lighting improvements would be beneficial in this area.

In addition, he said that new, 6' high, chain link fencing is planned around the proposed skate park area, and new 12' high chain link fencing is proposed across the ends and in the middle of the two proposed junior basketball courts. Steel fencing, of 2' 6" in height, is proposed along the east end of the planned volleyball courts area and around the trees at the northwest end of the planned volleyball courts.

Mr. Fiedler pointed out that Anne Marie Snadecky, the Principal of PS 68, attended the Parks Services Committee Meeting, along with parents from this school, to provide input on this project. The principal stated that children who attend PS 68 utilize Evergreen Park for recess and other school activities. When he inquired about the possibility of removing the concrete bleachers, he was advised by representatives of the Parks Department that this would be expensive and the concrete bleachers act as a retaining wall for the adjacent freight railroad embankment.

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments.

Diego Leclery, a Board member, noted that volleyball players use Evergreen Park extensively, and they'll lose a lot of space if these plans are implemented. Mr. Fiedler replied that 3 volleyball courts will remain in Evergreen Park. The District Manager, Gary Giordano, said that volleyball teams play on the fields in Mafera Park, Grover Cleveland Park, and Rosemary's Playground, in Ridgewood, so they have plenty of choices about where to play volleyball.

Mr. Leclery also asked for the timeline for completion of this project. The District Manager replied that the Design Phase takes about a year to complete; the Procurement Process takes at least 9 months; and the Reconstruction Project is expected to take 1 year to complete.

As there were no objections, the Board Chairperson introduced the next item on the Agenda as:

Transportation Services Committee

John Maier

John Maier, Co-Chair of the Transportation Services Committee, reported that the Committee met remotely on Tuesday, March 23rd to review the status of current and planned major capital improvement projects in our Board area, as well as traffic safety requests.

He reported that Lucille Songhai, the MTA-NYCT's representative, had informed the Committee via email that crews will begin painting the structure of the elevated BMT M-Train line soon. He said that the painting is expected to be completed on this line on the Queens side of the Brooklyn border this Summer. He said that recently, he saw their crews working to repair the structure of the elevated train in the area of the Seneca Avenue station, in Ridgewood.

Regarding the proposed plans to replace the Grand Street Bridge over the Newtown Creek in Maspeth, Mr. Maier said that our Board is still waiting for the NYC Dept. of Transportation Bureau of Bridge's representatives to arrange a joint-meeting with representatives of Community Board 1, in Brooklyn and

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Community Board 5, Queens. The Board Chairperson pointed out that the Grand Street Bridge over Newtown Creek will be closed for the next two consecutive Saturdays for structural repairs.

Mr. Maier also reported that the Committee is still waiting to hear back from the Dept. of Design and Construction regarding a start date for the Reconstruction of Wyckoff Avenue from Flushing Avenue to Cooper Avenue, near the Brooklyn-Queens border.

Regarding resurfacing requests for the coming year, Mr. Maier reported that a list of the most deteriorated roadways in our Board was sent to the Dept. of Transportation recently.

Mr. Maier said that the Committee also reviewed traffic safety requests, including traffic lights and All-Way Stop designations, during their meeting.

Mr. Maier said that the next Remote Committee Meeting is scheduled for 7:30pm on Tuesday, April 27th, 2021. He welcomed input from residents regarding traffic safety requests in writing, to be reviewed by Committee members at their next meeting. He requested that new Board members ask for a meeting invite if they want to attend.

Zoning and Land Use Review Committee

Walter Sanchez

Walter Sanchez commented that most Community Boards in Queens have already submitted their recommendations in opposition to **INTRO 2186-2020**.

Mr. Sanchez explained that **INTRO 2186-2020** is a local law that, if passed, would amend the NYC Charter in relation to a proposed methodology to create long-term planning goals and citywide targets for housing, jobs, industrial space, open space, infrastructure, city facilities, school seats, public transportation and more.

He said that Committee members met remotely three times last month, on March 2nd, 9th, and 29th, regarding this matter. At their March 9th Committee meeting, Annie Levers, a representative of the City Council Speaker, presented the **Intro 2186-2020** plan to the committee in a meeting that lasted well over an hour. Ms. Levers presented the goals of the proposed legislation. It seemed to committee members that, if each community has real input regarding planning for and implementing programs, policies and actions to meet sensible long-term community development, this proposed law might be one that we could support.

However, after a thorough review of **Intro 2186-2020**, as submitted on December 17, 2020, he said that our line-by-line examination determined that this proposal does not accomplish the intended goals. If community input is a high priority, **INTRO 2186-2020** does not accomplish that, he said.

Mr. Sanchez pointed out that, decades ago, the City had successfully changed from the culture of operating under the powers of the Board of Estimate and an appointed person with ultimate influence over land use. **INTRO 2186-2020**, as written, takes the deciding influence away from shared input with City Council approval, and important input and influence away from Community Boards and Borough Presidents.

Mr. Sanchez said that **INTRO 2186-2020** clearly puts overwhelming and decisive influence into the hands of a Director of the Office of Long-Term Planning. This is not progress. The Committee recommends not adopting this law.

As there was no further discussion of the matter, the Board Chairperson Vincent Arcuri requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee recommendation which then carried in opposition to **INTRO 2186-2020**, by a vote of – 45 – in favor; - 3 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and – 0 – not voting.

New Business

Derek Evers, a Board member, said that he is supportive of the idea of creating a community garden on the site owned by Stop n Shop on Cypress Hills Street and Central Avenue. He also asked if the new 7-story building to be built on the lot where the vacant warehouse at 1711 Hancock Street is being

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demolished will involve more than one zoning lot. Ted Renz, as Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, replied that there are 3 adjoining zoning lots that will be affected by this new development which includes 60 dwelling units.

Peggy O’Kane asked what is being built at the former Oasis Theatre site on Fresh Pond Road. Theodore Renz replied that the developer is affiliated with the owner of ABC Stores. He said he would contact the owner to ask him what’s planned for that site.

Lee Rottenberg commented that, to his knowledge, some candidates for public office in this year’s election support the conversion of basements into individual apartments.

Fred Haller publicly thanked Council Member Robert Holden for his efforts to preserve the character of our local neighborhoods.

Alyssa Bonilla asked when new Board members will be appointed to Community Board Committees. The Board Chairperson replied that the Executive Committee plans to meet to review Committee assignments in consultation with all of the Committee Chairpersons and make new appointments as soon as possible.

The Board Chairperson, Vincent Arcuri, announced that the next monthly Board Meeting will be held remotely at 7:30pm on Wednesday, May 12th, 2021. As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Board Chairperson entertained a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm.