



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 February 12, 2020

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Antonetta Binanti; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Brian Dooley; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoefflerle; Richard Huber; Edward Lettau; John Maier; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Carmen Santana; Dennis Stephan; Gyanal Thapa; Patrick J. Trinchese; Michaeline Von Drathen; Crystal Wolfe; Maryanna Zero; Nan Zhang

Board Members Absent

Robert Cermeli; Patricia Grayson; Paul A. Kerzner; Maryann Lattanzio; Mike Liendo; Patricia Maltezos; Edgar Mantel; Kelvin Rodriguez; Walter H. Sanchez; Connie Santos; Catherine Sumsky; Megan Tadio; Barbara Toscano

Elected Officials

Joseph Nocerino – Queens Borough President Sharon Lee
Cristian Romero – U. S. Representative Grace Meng, 6th C.D.
Sarah Spellman – NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, 15th SD
Kevin Wisniewski – NYS Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
Lesi Hreb - NYS Assemblyman Brian Barnwell, 30th AD
Alison Cummings – NYS Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, 37th AD
Christine Stoll – NYS Assemblyman Michael Miller, 38th AD
Fatima Elmansy – NYC Council Member Antonio Reynoso, 34th CD

Staff Present

Catherine O’Leary and Laura Mulvihill, Community Associates - CB5Q Staff

GUESTS

P.O. Michael Berish, P.O. Asar Sanad – 104th Precinct Community Affairs Unit
P.O. Taisha Perez – NYPD Patrol Borough Queens North
Benjamin Fang, Queens Ledger, and David Russell, Queens Chronicle
Mario Matos – Community Liaison and School Treasurer, Maspeth High School

Board Chairperson Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:35pm, following the Salute to the Flag. He informed everyone that tonight’s Board Meeting will be live-streamed. The video will be posted on YouTube tonight, and appear on our Community Board website at www.nyc.gov/qnscb5 soon.

He announced the first item on the Board Agenda, reminding everyone that no personal attacks or foul language are permitted during the Public Forum.

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PUBLIC FORUM

Crystal Wolfe, a Board member, and founder of Catering for the Homeless, reported that over the past 3 years, she has partnered with 100 local groups and organizations, with a goal of providing food and clothing to homeless and poor people. She said that by working together with this local network of nonprofits, she's been able to:

- 1) Provide over 35,000 meals to homeless and poor people, mostly by redistributing food that would otherwise have gone to waste, ending up in landfills;
- 2) Provide more than 15,000 items of clothing for the homeless throughout New York City;
- 3) Provide 5,000 socks and 500 meals to the homeless;
- 4) Provide over 20,000 items of toiletries to churches, homeless shelters and homeless people on the subways throughout NYC; and
- 5) Provide approximately 3,000 canned and non-perishable goods to local food pantries.

In addition, she said that she has authored a book on homelessness, *Our Invisible Neighbors: Accounts, Causes, and Solutions to the Epidemic of Homelessness*, as well as novels, and gives Author Talks and has weekly speaking engagements to advocate for the homeless and educate the community.

In the past year, she said that she worked with a group of Maspeth residents to reinstitute the Friends of the Maspeth Library, and now serves as its president.

In closing, she thanked all the local elected officials and members of the Community Board for their continued support. This year, having been elected to serve as co-president of a local nonprofit, Together We Can, she's circulating a petition that would empower local public schools to redistribute any excess food, that would otherwise be thrown away, to local nonprofits that feed poor and homeless people in our communities. She said that in 2017, State Senator Joe Addabbo sponsored legislation that passed in the State Senate in support of this initiative, but it's never been implemented. She wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day. Flyers were distributed.

Carmen Santana, a Board member, addressed the entire Community Board, Elected Officials, et al, as follows:

"In the mid to end of the 1990's, I along with other community members advocated for Greater Ridgewood Youth Council (GRYC) in support of funding for after school programs, then called Beacon programs which GRYC went on to receive public dollars for JHS 93 to create a Beacon Program, eventually other after school programs were extended to other schools in Ridgewood. Funding was made by elected officials to GRYC.

"In 2001 several parents approached me with serious concerns and questions about GRYC requesting payments for what they believed to be public programs paid for by public funding. I then in 2001, brought the parents concerns to all elected officials and Mr. Bob Monahan, Director of GRYC. That was almost 20 years ago.

"In December 2019 CB 5 Board meeting I provided a copy of the NYS Comptroller Di Napoli's Audit regarding their findings of DYCD and GRYC. NYS Comptroller Di Napoli's findings were very disturbing and scathing. The NYS Comptroller's report of 2019 mirrored concerns back to 2001 and throughout the years. The fact is that it is apparent that for 20 years nothing has been done to date to stop these concerns and practices and then some at GRYC by the elected officials.

"After sharing copies of the NYS Comptroller Di Napoli's June 2019 Audit at the December 2019 CB 5 monthly Board Meeting, I have been slandered as well as my family. I have been informed that board member as well as others were "ordered" by elected officials and others not to associate themselves with me because I was a trouble maker and more. Worst yet Monahan has emailed elected officials slandering and defaming my son then stating that I was retaliating for the wrongful termination of my son when employed at GRYC in 2017. Which by the way no final time sheet was provided at that time in 2017 either by GRYC to my son.

"Know that Mr. Monahan and others have used the slandering of my family and me as a distraction to take the focus away from the 2019 Audit by NYS Comptroller Di Napoli's office.

"Therefore, please consider this open letter as, I, am respectfully requesting you cease and desist. You know who you are. Stop!"

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Tony DiPiazza, president of the Federazione Italo Americana di Brooklyn Queens Inc., spoke in favor of their application to hold the annual Fresh Pond Road Street Festival in September of this year. He said that this festival is a celebration of Ridgewood's Italian American Cultural Heritage that has been held for the past 25 years without incident. He said that the proceeds from last year's festival enabled them to reopen the Federazione's office at 66-35 Myrtle Avenue, in Glendale, in order to provide social services for senior citizens who live in our community. He thanked the Board for their past support and asked for their continued support for the Street Festival this year.

Vincent Armano, a member of the Federazione, spoke in favor of the Fresh Pond Road Street Festival by saying that the Festival provides a public gathering place where people can enjoy themselves with family, friends and neighbors for a few days. He said that he and his family have attended the Festival for years and they all enjoy seeing people from other communities and boroughs visit Ridgewood to attend this Festival. He said that bringing people together through activities and festivities only makes the community stronger and helps local businesses in the area.

Peggy O'Kane, a Board member and Ridgewood resident, spoke against granting a permit to hold a 4-day Street Festival on Fresh Pond Road in Ridgewood because it creates so much traffic congestion that local residents who live east of Fresh Pond Road are prohibited from driving their cars to and from their homes for the duration of the Street Festival. Furthermore, she said that vendors' stands will block the dedicated Bus Lane on the southbound side of Fresh Pond Road, and local delivery trucks will block local side streets when making their daily deliveries. Lastly, she objected to the accumulation of trash, public drinking and urination that takes place along Traffic Avenue, between Menahan Street and Woodbine Street, which occurs during this 4-day Street Festival every year.

John Maier, a Board member and member of CURES, reminded everyone that CURES is still advocating for the passage of legislation in Albany to mandate solid covers on rail cars that transport construction and demolition debris and putrescible waste, through local residential communities from New York to states as far away as Ohio. He said that, last year, the Senate passed this piece of legislation, but it was stuck in committee in the State Assembly. He asked everyone to advocate in support of this legislation by signing one of the post cards that are circulating at tonight's meeting. He said CURES will mail out any post cards that are signed and returned to him tonight.

Richard Huber, a Board member, commented on the new set of bail reform legislation that took effect in New York State this year. He said that: "Under New York's new 'justice reforms,' prosecutors will have to hand over ALL evidence to the criminals in 15 days or their cases will be dismissed, including names, addresses and contact information of victims and witnesses. How many cases are getting thrown out? How's that going to work out? Me, personally, if asked by police 'I didn't see nothin'! He said, in my opinion, we will rapidly approach a Homicide Clearance Rate of 12%, like Chicago, while 88% of the cases remain uncharged!" Mr. Huber said that a Senate Majority spokesman said: "The reality is all these reforms will save taxpayers money." \$6 Billion deficit - but I digress...Jonathan Muldinado is DEAD! And, he died because a multiple repeat felony offender was cut loose. There are already so many stories of recidivists' horrible actions after immediate release," he said.

Mr. Huber stated that in response to a question about how this bail reform legislation passed in Albany, Senator Addabbo said "It was in the budget. We had to vote for it." Our electeds claim it's the "process" that they "have to pass the budget or government shuts down." In my opinion, he said, it's a GREAT bit of plausible deniability, almost sounds like the Nuremburg defense: "We were just following orders." Our electeds are following the orders of the party and Governor, he said, when they should be accountable to their constituents. But, that's not

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so, in a one party system. Welcome to New York, he said. Then, he asked “Wonder why we’re losing a congressional seat or two?” And, he replied that the Governor holds them hostage with the annual budget. Mr. Huber stated that back in JUNE of last year, a group of state senators, headed by James Gaughran, a Democrat, and Monican Martinez, a Democrat, backed a new bill that would have given judges discretion to fix some of this mess. Around that time Mayor DeBlasio went to Albany and begged our electeds to fix the mess of bail reform - but it fell upon deaf ears. Can you believe it? I am agreeing with Mayor DeBlasio!

Mr. Huber said that they could have fixed it, but now they say we have to fix it - tell it to the grieving families and victims. He said these are the people you supported and voted for, and extolled their virtues on social media, worked petitioning, told friends and neighbors to go vote for. He asked, “What did you get in return?” and then answered his own question by saying that the jails emptied into our neighborhoods. Remember to thank them on Election Day, he said.

Mr. Huber continued by saying that our electeds DO NOT represent us, they represent the Governor and the homeless shelter industrial complex. He said “I cannot believe that murders are up, along with many other crimes. This is all part of a master plan. Releasing recidivists without bail, empty our jails, thereby supplying Homeless halfway houses that are, in reality, jail annexes, like we're gonna have in Glendale. This is a sure recipe to return to the Dinkin's years with 2,000+ murders a year.”

In closing, he reminded everyone about what Will Rodgers said “I’m not telling jokes, I’m just observing government and reporting facts.”

Kris Kozlowski, architect, spoke on behalf of Marek Pawlowski, the owner of 60-48 71 Avenue, a 2-family located in the Central Ridgewood Historic District. He said that his client received a violation by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2019, for repairs that were made to the front stoop and handrails of his house. He displayed photos of the stoop in front of this house, showing the steps were resurfaced. He said that his client is not changing the number of steps in this stoop but changing the finish on the top of each step. He plans to install cast-iron handrails, which replicate the original railings that were installed on this stoop.

Carmen Santana commented that the front steps look dangerous, particularly for a handicapped person.

Kathy Masi said that the Zoning and Land Use Committee decided not to take a position with regard to Landmarks Preservation violations, because Community Boards have no input on their decisions.

John Maier commented that it looks like the first step protrudes out over the sidewalk in the photo, but it won’t protrude over the sidewalk when this job is completed and the new railing is installed there.

The Board Chairperson referred the matter to the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee for further consideration.

He announced the next Item on the Board Agenda as:

Public Hearing Re: FY2021 Preliminary Budget of the City of New York

Theodore M. Renz, a Board Member and Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, requested the Board’s support for a new Capital Improvement Project for Myrtle Avenue and adjacent side streets in Ridgewood and read the following statement:

“On behalf of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District we thank you for your support for a new Capital Improvement Project for Myrtle Avenue in Ridgewood, Community Board 5’s number 5 priority for FY2020.

The last time Myrtle Avenue in Ridgewood, between Wyckoff Avenue/Palmetto Street & Fresh Pond Road, was included for a major capital project was 1983/1984. At that time the project, under the New York City Commercial Revitalization Program, included major improvements to the shopping corridor. The improvements included the following:

- New concrete sidewalks with decorative brick pavers building line to curbside, new street trees and new steel faced curbing.
- The creation of three pedestrian plazas:

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1) Woodbine Street/St. Nicholas Ave/Myrtle Avenue now known as Venditti Square, named for Detective Anthony Venditti who lost his life in the line of duty in January 1986.

2) Ridgewood Memorial Triangle (named for the Veterans of WW1) Myrtle Avenue/Putnam Avenue/Cypress Avenue; and

3) Times Triangle, now known as Clemens Triangle (named for the owner of the Ridgewood Times)

Over the years other improvements have included historic M Streetlight Poles, World's Fair benches along various curbside locations and in the plaza areas, historic marker signs along the avenue and in plazas, historic marker signs on the M streetlight poles, a new plaza at 71st Avenue, Myrtle Avenue and Stephen Street, as well as a new raised planting area at the northwest corner of Myrtle & Catalpa Avenues.

Over the years, many of these improvements, particularly the brick pavers imbedded in the sidewalk, have seriously deteriorated, causing tripping hazards and unsafe conditions for pedestrians. The situation has resulted in a number of lawsuits being filed, which in many cases also name the BID, which have led to higher insurance premiums for the BID.

While there are several very important projects for this board to support, we kindly ask for your continued support for this important improvement project.

Myrtle Avenue in Ridgewood is a major comparison shopping corridor serving the Greater Ridgewood area including Ridgewood, Glendale, Middle Village, Maspeth in Queens and Ridgewood/Bushwick in Brooklyn and beyond. Along this corridor, there are approximately 345 retail stores and service establishments.

The improvements we are asking for may include, but are not limited to, new sidewalks without brick pavers, new curbs, new M streetlight poles on side streets within the boundaries of the BID, removal of all Belgian blocks from over 300 tree pits, additional benches and other amenities. Since the last project only included a repaved street bed, it may be wise to consider a total reconstruction which includes new water and sewer lines, as well as upgrades to utilities. Thank you again for your support."

Mike Porcelli, a Board member and faculty member of Bronx Community College, spoke about the need to promote education programs for automotive repair and technology in the City. He said that there's been a severe shortage of properly trained mechanics in the New York area for years now, and the problem has only been getting worse. He pointed out that Bronx Community College offers the only automotive repair career training program in the City University of New York. He said that CUNY should offer automotive career training programs in local community colleges in every borough to give high school graduates a chance to earn a living wage, instead of working for minimum wages in the service industry. He volunteered to speak at local community meetings to spread the word about the benefits of pursuing a career in automotive technology. In closing, he provided documentation to the Board to back up his point.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.

Chairperson Arcuri announced that a presentation by representatives of Wyckoff Heights Medical Center has been cancelled for tonight's meeting.

The Board Chairperson informed everyone that the Board recently received correspondence from the NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene stating the most recent facts about the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (named by the World Health Organization as COVID-19). He said that to date, New York City has not identified any positive cases of COVID-19, and the risk to New Yorkers remains low. However, the Mayor wants to ensure New Yorkers now that the City is prepared to respond if the virus that causes COVID-19 is detected in the city.

He explained that coronaviruses are a group of viruses that are common throughout the world that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more serious illnesses like pneumonia. He said that there is evidence that the infection can be spread person-to-person. He pointed out that a "novel coronavirus" is a strain that has not been previously found in humans. Infections with this new virus have been reported in other parts of the world, mainly China.

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The Chairperson cautioned everyone to remain vigilant because this situation is rapidly changing, as is our understanding of the virus that causes COVID-19. At present, the Health Department is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to identify people who may have been exposed to the virus, monitor potential cases, and engage health care providers, community partners, and the public. Mr. Arcuri is important that we separate facts from fear, and guard against stigma and racism. He said that there are a lot of social media posts and news reports that are not rooted in science and are offensive, demeaning, and racist. He asked everyone to help us keep our communities focused on facts, not misinformation, by visiting the [Health Department's coronavirus page](#) or the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's coronavirus page](#) for the latest information.

In closing, the Board Chairperson encouraged everyone to practice the same precautions that they would during any cold and flu season, such as:

- You should still get your flu vaccine if you haven't yet — it's not too late.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- If you feel sick, stay home.
- Do not touch your face with unwashed hands.

The Board Chairperson recognized the staff present: Community Associates Catherine O'Leary and Laura Mulvihill. He said that the District Manager Gary Giordano is resting at home tonight, due to a foot injury. He thanked the members of the press for their accurate coverage of the Board's business.

The Board Chairperson announced the next Item on the Agenda as:

Executive Committee Report

Vincent Arcuri

Chairperson Vincent Arcuri reported that the Executive Committee met on Monday night in the Board 5 office to review five applications that were submitted to the Mayor's Office, for Street Fairs that are being proposed in the Board area this year. He stated that the Committee voted in favor of 4 applications and denied 1 application. A list of all the Street Fair applications was distributed to all Board members present at the meeting.

He announced the first application for the Board's consideration as:

Fresh Pond Road Street Festival

On FRESH POND ROAD btw Woodbine Street & Menahan Street – Ridgewood – 5 blocks

THURSDAY - SEPT. 3rd - 6:30pm to 10:30pm

FRIDAY - SEPT. 4th - 6:30pm to 10:30pm

SATURDAY - SEPT. 5th - 6:30pm to 10:30pm

SUNDAY - SEPT. 6th - 6:30pm to 10:30pm

SPONSOR: FEDERAZIONE ITALO-AMERICANA di BROOKLYN QUEENS

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to discussion on the Executive Committee's motion to deny this Street Festival. Kathy Masi asked on what grounds did the Committee reject this application. John Maier responded that the Fresh Pond Road Street Festival is a 4-day Festival, while all of the others are 1-day only. He said that the Committee voted to deny this Festival because it ties up traffic on a major thoroughfare through Ridgewood for four consecutive days. In addition, he said that the applicant did not submit the financial documentation, including a detailed account of income and expenses for the Street Festival, as the Board had requested. He pointed out that the other applicants complied with this request.

The Board Chairperson explained that when the Executive Committee met to review this application, the original application showed that the Festival would be 5 days, starting with set-up at 8am on Wednesday, September 2nd and setting up at 8am daily until Sunday, Sept. 6th. He asked if any Committee members wanted to reconsider their position, based on the revised schedule that's presented to the Board at tonight's meeting. No one agreed. Mike Porcelli asked if a motion to table would be in order at this time, to give the applicant more time to comply with the Board's request for additional documentation. The Board Chairperson replied that a motion to table

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always takes precedence over a motion on the floor. Mr. Porcelli then made a tabling motion regarding the Executive Committee's recommendation, seconded by Kathy Masi. After a brief discussion and clarification of the tabling motion, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote which carried by a vote of 17 in favor, 14 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting. The Board Chairperson stated that this matter will be introduced as the first order of business at next month's Board Meeting on March 11th, 2020.

The Board Chairperson announced the second Street Fair application for the full Board's consideration, which was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee:

Myrtle Avenue Festival in Ridgewood

On MYRTLE AVENUE btw Fresh Pond Road & Forest Avenue in Ridgewood - 4 blocks

SUNDAY - JULY 19th - 10 AM to 6 PM (Street closing 8am to 8pm)

SPONSOR: KIWANIS CLUB OF GLENDALE

Fred Haller stated that due to his affiliation with the Kiwanis Club, he would not vote on this motion.

As there was no further discussion of the Committee's recommendation, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the motion which carried by a vote of 29 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 not voting, and 0 abstentions.

The Board Chairperson announced the third Street Fair application for the full Board's consideration, which was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee:

Maspeth Chamber of Commerce-Lions-Kiwanis Grand Avenue Festival

On GRAND AVENUE btw 65 Street to 72 Street - Maspeth - 7 blocks

SUNDAY - JUNE 28th - 10 AM to 6 PM (Street closing 8am to 8pm)

SPONSOR: MASPETH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE-LIONS-KIWANIS CLUB

As there was no further discussion of the Committee's recommendation, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the motion, which carried by a vote of 30 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 not voting, and 0 abstentions.

The Board Chairperson announced the fourth Street Fair application for the full Board's consideration, which was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee:

Myrtle Avenue Ridgewood Festival

On MYRTLE AVE btw Wyckoff Ave & Fresh Pond Road – Ridgewood - 11 blocks

SUNDAY – APRIL 19th - 10 AM to 6 PM (Street closing 8am to 8pm)

SPONSOR: RIDGEWOOD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Kathy Masi asked if the Board of Directors of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District and Ridgewood Local Development Corporation are the same people. The Board Chairperson said that some of the members serve on both Boards. Vincent Arcuri, Toni Binanti and Theodore Renz said that due to their affiliation with the RLDC, they would not vote on this matter.

As there was no further discussion of the Committee's recommendation, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the motion, which carried by a vote of 26 in favor, 2 opposed, 3 not voting, and 0 abstentions.

The Board Chairperson announced the fifth Street Fair application for the full Board's consideration, which was unanimously approved by the Executive Committee:

Myrtle Avenue BID Myrtle Avenue Festival

On MYRTLE AVENUE btw Wyckoff Ave & Fresh Pond Rd – Ridgewood - 11 blocks

SUNDAY – SEPT. 13th - 10 AM to 6 PM (Street closing 8am to 8pm)

SPONSOR: MYRTLE AVENUE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Vincent Arcuri, Toni Binanti and Theodore Renz said that due to their affiliation with the Myrtle Avenue BID, they would not vote on this matter.

As there was no further discussion of the Committee's recommendation, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the motion, which carried by a vote of 26 in favor, 2 opposed, 3 not voting, and 0 abstentions.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri

MINUTES

The Board Chairperson asked Board members to review the minutes of last month's Board Meeting conducted on January 8, 2020. Jerry Drake said that he asked about whether there's a count of the locations that are repeatedly graffitied in our Board area and asked that his question be entered in the Old and New Business portion of the minutes from last month's Board Meeting. The minutes were adopted, as amended, by acclamation on a motion by Kathy Masi, and seconded by Walter Clayton. The Chairperson replied to Mr. Drake's question by stating that there is no official count of the locations that are graffitied repeatedly.

LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

The Board Chairperson 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 the last monthly Board Meeting on January 8, 2020. Each Board member received a copy of the list.

New Liquor Licenses

- 1) 867 Holiday Café Corp. d/b/a **Holiday** 867 Cypress Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
(Applicant called the Board office today to inform us that they're withdrawing their application).

Liquor License Renewal

- 1) 1 New Farm Deli Inc. d/b/a **Las Margaritas Bar & Restaurant** 67-12 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **Zum Stammtisch Inc.** 69-46 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385
- 3) *Woodward 652 LLC d/b/a **Aunt Ginny's** 652 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 4) 299 Wyckoff LLC d/b/a **The Bonus Room** 991 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 5) **Palace of Zuly Inc.** 913 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

- 1) * **While in Kathmandu, Inc.** 758 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Alterations, Corporate Changes and Other

- 1) *Rahany 5 LLC d/b/a **Walsh's Pub, 68-67 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385** notified our Board office that they will submit a Class Change application to the NYS Liquor Authority to change their license from a Tavern Wine License to an On Premises License which includes serving Liquor, Wine, Beer and Cider.
- 2) * We are 138 LLC d/b/a **Sweet Jane's, 64-02 68 Ave, Ridgewood NY 11385** notified our Board office that they will submit a Method of Operation Change application to the NYS Liquor Authority to operate until 4am, 7 days a week.
The Board Chairperson said that the NYS Liquor Authority was notified that our Board objects to their plans to extend their hours of operation until 4am, 7 days a week.
*Indicates Outdoor Area

Demolition Notices

The Board Chairperson reported that the Board received the following demolition notices since last month's Board Meeting on January 8th: **80-97 and 81-05 Cypress Avenue** – demolition of a 3-story vacant building, in **Glendale**; **82-55 61 Drive in Middle Village** – partial demolition to convert existing semi-detached three-story, 2-family dwelling into a 3-family dwelling with one enclosed parking space and two open parking spaces. For more information about work permits that have been issued for construction at these locations, click on the link to the NYC Dept. of Buildings website at: www.nyc.gov/buildings. The Chairperson asked that anyone who has questions or comments about possible illegal construction in our Board area to please contact our Board 5 Office at (718) 366-1834.

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The Board Chairperson recognized the elected officials' representatives and invited them to address the Board.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Sharon Lee, Joe Nocerino announced that their office is sponsoring a Queens Week of Service this week, until February 17th, working together with 14 Community Boards in Queens to collect socks, toothpaste, body lotion, body wash, zippered hoodies, and sweatpants with drawstrings for distribution to American Veterans in the St. Albans Veterans Home, in Queens.

Mr. Nocerino announced that the deadline to submit an application to be appointed or reappointed to Board membership has been extended until March 13th, 2020.

He announced that Homeowners and Tenants Enrollment Events will be held in Queens Borough Hall from 10am to 12 Noon on Thursday, February 27th, Thursday, March 12th and Monday, April 13th, 2020, when local residents and property owners can meet with representatives of the Department of Finance to apply for tax exemptions and abatements, or rent exemptions. In addition, he said that a Black History Month Celebration will be held from 6pm to 8pm on Wednesday, February 26th, 2020 in Queens Borough Hall. Flyers were distributed.

P.O. Michael Berish and P.O. Asar Sanad in the 104th Precinct's Community Affairs Unit gave a brief report on the recent increase in the number of crimes that have occurred in our precinct. Officer Berish said that in the past 28 days, there were 19 robberies reported, and 26 burglaries committed mainly in Ridgewood and Maspeth, between 8pm and early morning hours. He warned everyone to lock their windows and doors. He reported that 60 Grand Larcenies were reported in this precinct over the past month. He reminded everyone that most Grand Larcenies in this precinct involve situations where people leave valuables inside their car, after parking at the curb. He said that thieves will break a window in order to grab what they can and run away. He warned everyone not to leave anything of value inside your car, even if it's parked nearby. In addition, he reported that there were 7 incidents involving Grand Larceny Auto in the precinct over the past month and warned everyone not to leave their car engines idling while unattended, because it makes it so much easier for car thieves to steal your car.

Officer Berish thanked everyone for alerting their neighbors about phone scams that remain a common occurrence. He said that, as a result, many elderly residents have contacted the Precinct about the fraudulent phone calls they've received, instead of falling prey to these scams.

Officer Sanad spoke about fraudulent phone calls that local residents have been receiving, supposedly from the IRS. She advised everyone that the IRS will only mail correspondence to taxpayers; they never make phone calls or send emails to taxpayers. So, don't be fooled by that scam.

Officer Sanad also informed everyone that the Census 2020 count will start next month. She said that every household will be identified by a separate code, and will have the option to either call in responses to the questionnaire or respond online. She advised that if you don't answer the Census questionnaire by the end of March, a Census worker will visit every household that doesn't respond to their questionnaire, beginning in April. She alerted everyone that Census workers are prohibited from entering anyone's home and asked that any suspicious behavior that they observe is reported to the precinct.

Kathy Masi asked how soon the Precinct's Mobile Unit can be relocated from the corner of 80 Street at Cooper Avenue, in Glendale. Officer Berish replied that the Mobile Unit remains in the same location for at least a month. She followed up with a question about how they determine where to station it. He said that it's stationed at a particular location, based on the number of crimes that are reported in any given sector.

In closing, he introduced P. O. Aiesha Perez, who works in Community Affairs at Patrol Borough Queens North. Carmen Santana reported a scam that involves men who claim to be HPD subcontractors entering into tenants' apartments after 4pm on weekdays, supposedly to repair violations. She said that when she inquired further, she was informed by HPD that their subcontractors never begin making repairs in residential apartments after 4pm. She said that it's a scam.

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On behalf of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Christian Romero reported that the Congresswoman has introduced legislation in Congress, called the Locality Based Social Security Benefits Act of 2019. He said that this Bill directs the Social Security Administration to increase an individual's monthly Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance benefit amount in accordance with the locality-based comparability payment rate applicable to the federal locality-pay area in which the individual resides.

Carmen Santana asked for an update on President Trump's interest in making cuts to Medicare and Social Security Benefits. Mr. Romero said that he had no information to report on current budget negotiations, but he would report back to the Board when he has more information.

On behalf of Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Fatima Elmansy welcomed everyone to attend the Black History Month Celebration that their office is sponsoring in Woodhull Hospital in Brooklyn on February 28th, 2020. She said that in conjunction with the City's Ban on Single Use Plastic Bags that begins on March 1st, the Council Member will be distributing free reusable shopping bags to his constituents this month. In closing, she informed everyone that at the end of March, voting will begin on this year's list of Capital Budget Requests that were submitted to their office during the Participatory Budgeting process. She said that proposals include a new play area in Grover Cleveland Park, and a new playground at PS 81 on Cypress Avenue, in Ridgewood. She welcomed calls for information or assistance to their office at (718) 963-3141.

On behalf of State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Sarah Spellman informed everyone that the Senator is currently working up in Albany, making further reforms to the Bail Reform Bill that went into effect this year. She announced that the Senator will hold the next session of his mobile office hours on Thursday, April 2nd from 5:30pm to 7pm in the Maspeth Public Library on Grand Avenue.

She welcomed everyone to participate in the Spring Recycling Event that is scheduled to take place from 10am to 2pm, on Saturday, April 26th in the parking lot of the Forest Park Bandshell. She wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day.

On behalf of Assemblyman Daniel Hevesi, Kevin Wisniewski reported that the Assemblyman succeeded in passing new legislation last year that requires that certain workers in homeless shelters are trained to identify and assist victims of trauma and/or domestic violence in their facility. Copies of their newsletter were distributed.

On behalf of NYS Assemblyman Brian Barnwell, Lesi Hreb announced that their office plans to sponsor a Homeowners and Tenants Enrollment Event soon, when representatives from the Dept. of Finance will be on hand to answer questions and file applications for tax or rent exemptions, and so forth. For more information, she welcomed calls to their office at (718) 651-3185.

In addition, she said that the Assemblyman is attending the MTA's Queens Bus Network Design workshop in PS 49 tonight to receive input from local residents on the proposed changes to local bus routes.

In closing, she welcomed volunteers to help prepare peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to distribute to homeless in the district on every second Tuesday of the month in Martin Luther High School, on Maspeth Avenue at 60 Street.

On behalf of Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Alison Cummings welcomed constituents to call their office with their comments and suggestions with regard to the proposed changes to local bus routes that are included in the Queens Bus Network Design Plans. She welcomed constituents to meet with the Assemblywoman during her Mobile Office Hours at the Ridgewood Public Library at 20-12 Madison Street from 12 Noon to 2pm on Thursday, March 19th, 2020. For more information, she welcomed calls to their office at (718) 784-3194.

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On behalf of Assemblyman Michael Miller, Christine Stoll thanked everyone for their donations to their 11th Annual Valentines for Veterans Drive for Veterans who live in the St. Albans Veterans Home. In addition, this year they will be accepting donations of new sweatshirts and pants, hoodies, unused travel size toiletries, and over the ear headphones and MP3 players to distribute to Veterans in the St. Albans Home. Donations of clothing and personal items will be accepted at their office at 83-91 Woodhaven Boulevard until further notice. Ms. Stoll announced that both Janine Mahon, Assistant Director of the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council, and State Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan will receive this year's Women of Distinction Award in a ceremony that is scheduled to begin at 7pm on Monday, March 9th in the Richmond Hill Block Association's office. For more information, she welcomed calls from constituents at (718) 805-0950.

In response to a question from the floor, the Board Chairperson reported on the current status of the proposed Homeless Shelter Residence at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, in Glendale. He said that he wrote three letters of inquiry to the Queens Borough Commissioner of the Dept. of Buildings regarding the status of the plans to complete building alterations and change the occupancy of this site from a warehouse into a residence facility. He said that, to his knowledge, the plans are still pending further review. He also pointed out that to-date, no contract has been executed between the City and Westhab, the nonprofit operator of this site.

Kathy Masi reported that the Coalition has filed an Appeal in State Supreme Court, in response to their Article 78 lawsuit being denied in Court this month. She said that they're anticipating a response from the Court sometime within the next 20 days as to whether this case will be granted a hearing. In addition, she said that they're requested an Audit of Alteration Plans that were submitted for this site, as well as adjacent property where Artistic Stitch is located.

Lee Rottenberg commented that Westhab has already begun hiring personnel to work at this site, prior to signing a contract to operate a homeless facility at this site.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, February 4th in the Board 5 office to review the contract for the removal of invasive species, otherwise known as fragmites, in Basins 1 and 3 at the Ridgewood Reservoir in Highland Park, at a cost of \$2.3 Million. He pointed out that for years, the Community Board has been advocating for the preservation of the Ridgewood Reservoir as a natural habitat for existing wildlife, including grass, plants, trees and small mammals. In keeping with the Board's previous recommendations regarding the Ridgewood Reservoir, he read the following Committee recommendation into the record:

"In advocating for the Ridgewood Reservoir to be natural preserve for more than 20 years, Community Board 5, Queens is very concerned about heavy equipment being used in Basins 1 and 3 to remove invasive plant species. Heavy equipment, such as bobcats, has a very high decibel level that would disturb the creatures that have made the Ridgewood Reservoir their home or nesting place. This includes birds, ducks, geese, hawks, swans, salamanders and turtles. There is no guarantee that these creatures would return to the reservoir if they feel forced to flee. Only hand tools should be used.

Therefore, we recommend and reinforce that no heavy, loud equipment be used for any reason in Basins 1 and 3 in the upcoming contract to remove invasive species. To our knowledge, the contract for this invasive species removal states that no heavy equipment will be used for these removals, but we need to reinforce the position of Community Board 5, Queens regarding this very important contract."

On a point of clarification, Jerry Drake asked what are fragmites. Mr. Fiedler replied that the term refers to plant species that are not native to this area, such as, black locust trees.

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As there was no further discussion on the matter, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee recommendation which carried unanimously by a vote of 30 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 not voting and 0 abstentions.

For more information about the Ridgewood Reservoir, Mr. Fiedler pointed out that renderings of the site are available in the Board 5 office.

Regarding the status of several capital projects in the Board 5 area, Mr. Fiedler said that he was happy to report that the children's playground at Rosemary's Playground in Ridgewood has been successfully completed. He said that it looks great.

In addition, he said that the contractor is expected to begin work by the end of next month, on the Rehabilitation of the Running Track and Turf Soccer/Football Field in Juniper Valley Park. He said that this project is slated for completion within 9 months. He also reported that work is slated to begin this year on the new Myrtle Avenue Entrance and Pedestrian Path in Forest Park in Glendale.

Regarding the design plans for Starr Playground on Onderdonk Avenue in Ridgewood, he said that the Committee will meet with representatives of the Dept. of Parks next month to review the proposed plans for the children's playground.

Regarding the drainage problems that have been reported this year at Frank Principe Park, he said that the Parks Dept. is aware of this problem and is working to address it now.

Public Safety Committee

Maryann Lattanzio

In Maryann Lattanzio's absence, Patrick Trinchese reported that the committee met with 104th Precinct personnel on Wednesday, January 22nd in the Board office to review recent crime statistics, staffing levels and problem areas in the Board area.

He reported that 198 uniformed officers are currently assigned to the 104th Precinct, including 2 Captains, 6 Lieutenants, 18 Sergeants, 3 Detectives and 169 patrol officers.

He said that in the past 28 days, the number of crimes reported in the precinct include: 1 rape; 18 robberies; 21 Felonious Assaults; 17 Burglaries; 45 Grand Larcenies; and 5 Grand Larceny Autos.

Regarding the status of the NCO Unit, he reported that committee members expressed concerns about their NCO officers not being responsive to their complaints, particularly in Middle Village. He said that, for example, he's reported several cars, with out-of-state plates on them, parked on location for months in Middle Village. He said that there's been no response from the Precinct.

Jerry Drake commented that there are a lot of abandoned cars in his neighborhood, too.

Peggy O'Kane said that there had been a car parked on Traffic Avenue in Ridgewood for over a year before it was towed away last year.

The Board Chairperson said that the City has been vacating property where the NYPD's Vehicle Storage Pounds were located throughout the City. He said that now, there are not enough sites where abandoned vehicles can be towed and stored until reclaimed by their rightful owners.

Richard Huber said that the City will have to hire additional towing companies as well, in order to address the current situation.

Mr. Trinchese said that the committee found that the Build-a-Block program is not very well advertised. He said that they plan to invite Sergeant Reimann to attend their next Committee meeting so that they can bring these matters to his attention.

Regarding their request for additional patrols in the vicinity of the proposed homeless shelter, he said that the Precinct Commander plans to assign a patrol car to the area, particularly during daily school arrival and dismissal times. He said that the 104COP/Glendale Civilian Observation Patrol plans to supplement daytime patrols in that vicinity, as well.

Mr. Trinchese said that committee members asked Officer Sanad if the recent Bail Reform package that was passed by the Legislature explains the reported spike in serious crimes over the past 28 days. He said that Officer

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Sanad replied that it's too early to determine any trends, and that they'll need more time to identify criminal patterns in the most recent statistics.

Edward Lettau asked if the Committee discussed the proposed legislation to legalize prostitution in New York State. Mr. Trinchese said that Assemblyman Barnwell had told him that this legislation has been held up in Committee for years and he does not expect it to be voted out of Committee anytime soon.

Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee

John Maier

John Maier reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, January 28th, in the Board 5 Office to review the progress on the L Train Tunnel Rehabilitation and related track work, as well as the painting contract on the M Train line's elevated structure. He said that work is progressing ahead of schedule on the repairs to the L Train Tunnel, and that work is expected to be completed in April.

Regarding the painting of the M Train line structure, he said that the MTA's contractor has been performing so much structural steel repairs on the structure that painting the structure has been delayed, except for underneath the Forest Avenue train station.

Mr. Maier reported that the extended service for commuters on the M Train line is slated to be reduced in April, once the repairs to the L Train Tunnel have been completed.

Regarding the MTA's proposed Queens Bus Network Design project, Mr. Maier welcomed everyone to attend their next Transportation and Public Transit Committee Meeting at 6:30pm on Tuesday, February 25th, in the cafeteria of Christ the King High School where representatives from the MTA will give a brief presentation on the proposed changes to local bus routes in Queens, then answer questions from the public and give everyone an opportunity to comment on their proposed plans. He said that local bus routes have not been revised in 70 years, so the MTA's plans to revise the bus routes are long overdue.

Regarding the Reconstruction of Wyckoff Avenue, he said that this project is still in the final design phase. He reminded everyone that Community Board 5, Queens has been advocating for this project for the past 20 years. He said that the Committee plans to meet with both federal and state elected officials to request that they allocate funding for this project. The Chairperson said that section of roadway on Wyckoff Avenue between Myrtle Avenue and Cooper Avenue, in Queens, is very deteriorated and full of ruts on the surface of the roadway.

Mr. Maier said that the Committee continues to review many traffic safety requests, including speed reduction measures, new traffic signal installations, One-Way conversions and All-Way Stops, at their monthly meetings. He welcomed everyone to attend their next committee meeting that is scheduled to begin at 6:30pm on Tuesday, February 25, in the cafeteria of Christ the King High School.

Old and New Business

The Board Chairperson reminded Board members to sign a Get Well card for Connie Santos, who is convalescing from a bad fall on the stairs inside her home.

He thanked Toni Binanti for donating the donuts that everyone enjoyed eating during tonight's meeting.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Board Chairperson Arcuri wished everyone well and adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 9:15pm.