



Vincent Arcuri, Jr.
Chairperson

Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale
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Gary Giordano
District Manager

Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting January 10, 2018

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Peter Comber; Deborah Cox; Patricia Crowley; Jerome Drake; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Sarah Feldman; Steven Fiedler; Patricia Grayson; Mohan Gyawali-Chhetri ; Fred T. Haller, III; Fred Hoeffler; Paul A. Kerzner; John J. Killcommons; Maryann Lattanzio; Edward Lettau; Michael LoCascio; John Maier; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O’Kane; Michael O’Kane; Donald Passantino; Theodore M. Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; David Sands; Connie Santos; Christopher Sperrazza; Catherine Sumsky; Barbara Toscano; Maryanna Zero

Board Members Absent

Henry Cross; Brian Dooley; Angela Giovannello; Kathleen Knight; Lydia Martinez; Michael Porcelli; Kelvin Rodriguez; David Sands; Carmen Santana; Patrick J. Trinchese

Elected Officials

NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr, 15th SD – Staff Neil Giannelli
NYS Assembly Member Brian Barnwell, 30th AD
NYC Council Member Robert Holden, 30th CD, and Chief of Staff Greg Mitchell
Don Capalbi – US Representative Grace Meng, 6th C.D.
Julio Salazar – US Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7th C.D.
Alexa Arrechi – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
Samantha Kung - NYS Assembly Member Michael Miller, 38th AD
Stacey Eliuk – NYC Public Advocate Letitia James

Staff Present

Gary Giordano, District Manager, CB5 Queens
Laura Mulvihill and Catherine O’Leary, Community Associates - CB5Q Staff
Joseph Nocerino – Queens Borough President Melinda Katz
P.O. Charles Sadler -104th Precinct Community Affairs Unit, and Det. Juan Toro – Patrol Borough Queens North

GUESTS

Gerald Caliendo, A.I.A, and Sandy Anagnostou, Assoc. AIA, 138-72 Queens Blvd. Briarwood, NY 11435
on behalf of Vertical Industrial Park Associates, the owner of record, 66-26 Metropolitan Ave, Middle Village

Board Chairman Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:48pm, following the Salute to the Flag. He announced the first item on the Board Agenda as:

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PUBLIC HEARING RE: BSA Cal No. 2017-305 BZ for 66-26 Metropolitan Avenue, Middle Village

IN THE MATTER OF AN Application to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals by Gerald J. Caliendo Architect PC, on behalf of Vertical Industrial Park Assoc., the owner of record, for a Special Permit, under Sect. 73-36, 42-31 and 42-10 of the NYC Zoning Resolution, for a proposed Physical Culture Establishment on a portion of the cellar level of an existing 2 story with mezzanine and cellar commercial building, located in an M1-2 Zoning District, at 66-26 Metropolitan Avenue (Block 3605, Lot 1), in Middle Village, Queens, NY.

On behalf of the owner of record, Gerald J. Caliendo, Architect, PC, explained that his client is seeking a Special Permit to permit the proposed physical culture establishment (PCE), doing business as FIT NATION, to operate on the cellar level of the Metro Mall, located at 66-26 Metropolitan Avenue in Middle Village, which is located in an existing two-story commercial building, with a mezzanine and cellar. He said that the building is located in an M1-2 Zoning District. He introduced his assistant Sandy Anagnostou to give more detailed information on this application.

Ms. Anagnostou explained that while the proposed physical culture establishment, FIT NATION, is not currently in operation at this site. She said that they have been in operation at another location in Astoria, called Matrix Fitness, for the past 8 years, and they're planning to expand their business by opening at this new location in June, 2018. She said that their client is seeking a Special Permit for a 10-year term.

She explained that the term "physical culture establishment" commonly refers to a gym. The proposed gym would occupy 25,265 square feet on the cellar level of the Metro Mall shopping center, which has an overall square footage of 956,800 square feet. She pointed out that the new entrance to the proposed facility would be from the rear parking lot, which is on street grade. Their proposal calls for the elimination of 4 existing loading docks in the rear of the building where they plan to build the new entrance to the proposed facility. She pointed out that the rear parking lot has a total of 1,075 parking spaces to be shared among patrons of the proposed gym and other commercial tenants and customers of existing stores in the Mall. She said that they anticipate that most of the proposed gym's clients would be travelling to and from the proposed facility via public transportation, because several local bus routes, as well as the M train, stop on Metropolitan Avenue.

An architectural rendering of the entrance to the proposed facility was on display as she spoke.

Ms. Anagnostou said that FIT NATION plans to hire 30 employees to work at this site. She said that the proposed hours of operation would be from Monday to Friday, 5AM to 12 Midnight, and from 7AM to 10PM on Saturday and Sunday. She introduced Gerry Kusick, the owner of the proposed gym. He said that their main emphasis would be to train people how to exercise properly. He said that they plan to install cardio-fitness training machines that are supervised by personal trainers, all of whom would be nationally certified instructors. In addition, he said that weight-training equipment would be installed for their clients to use, and yoga classes, diet and nutritional counseling, and food supplements, would be offered at this site. He said that they anticipate a total of 545 patrons utilizing their facilities during peak hours of operation. On average, he said that he would expect that their prospective clients and employees might utilize 68 parking spaces at any given time, out of a total of 1,875 parking spaces at this location, including roof-top parking. He explained that their hours of operation would be dictated by the shopping center's management.

The Board Chairman opened the floor to questions and comments.

Peter Comber said that parking spaces in the lot are often taken up. Mr. Caliendo replied that the proposed gym would occupy the space where the Conway Department store was located inside the Mall. He said that the proposed facility would not require additional parking accommodations above and beyond the existing capacity of this lot.

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In response to a question from Dmytro Fedkowskyj, Mr. Kusick said that the cost of their annual membership fees would be competitively priced, probably midway between the cost of an annual membership at Retro Fitness in Ridgewood and the NY Sports Club in Glendale.

In response to a question from the floor, Ms. Anagnostou said that all physical culture establishments, otherwise known as gyms, are required to obtain a Special Permit from the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals, as part of the process of obtaining a new Certification of Occupancy from the Dept. of Buildings.

As there were no further questions or comments, the Board Chairman closed the public hearing and referred the matter to the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee for further consideration and review.

PUBLIC FORUM

Pastor Daniel Klaus of the Calvary Bible Church, located at 74-15 Myrtle Avenue in Glendale, introduced himself to the Board by saying that he and his family just moved into the community this year. He said that their congregation has been active in the community for the past 55 years. He offered to provide light refreshments, including coffee and donuts, at all Community Board Meetings this year. The Board Chairman thanked him for his generosity.

Troy Walcott, a resident of Brooklyn and union organizer for the Communication Workers of America, informed everyone that their union is out on strike against Spectrum, Inc. since their takeover of Time Warner Cable, due to ongoing labor disputes with management. He asked everyone to join the boycott of the company's cable service, until Spectrum's management agrees to reach a settlement of this ongoing labor dispute. Mr. Walcott said that out of town workers are being hired, who may be carrying guns, and he suggested that public officials not renew Spectrum's franchise options. Flyers were distributed.

Board Chairman Arcuri commented that 40 years ago, when the City administration first considered providing Cable TV service in the metropolitan area, our Community Board was first to advocate for a public bidding process to govern the issuance of business franchises, in order to ensure that there would not be a monopoly of cable service providers in the City of New York.

Paul Kerzner, a Board member and president of the Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association, said that he recently discovered that the Parks Department in Jersey City, NJ, estimates that planting a new street tree in their municipality costs taxpayers about \$200, while it is estimated to cost about \$1,800 per tree in NYC. He said that he has requested a meeting with Mitchell Silver, the Commissioner of the Dept. of Parks and Recreation, to ask him what accounts for the wide discrepancy in charges for providing tree planting services in NYC, as compared to Jersey City.

The Board Chairman commented that the City contracts with nurseries that are located as far away as North and South Carolina. Board member Edward Lettau commented that the City requires that contractors plant disease resistant types of trees, with a required minimum height and species, which might be more expensive.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.

The Board Chairman requested a Moment of Silence in honor of Maria Thompson, the late civic activist and long-time member of Community Board 9, president of the Woodhaven Residents' Block Association and founder and Executive Director of the Woodhaven Business Improvement District, who passed away earlier today.

He introduced the District Manager Gary Giordano, and staff members Catherine O'Leary and Laura Mulvihill, and thanked Donald Passantino for his technical expertise with the sound system at all Board Meetings. He also

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recognized the members of the Press Corps and thanked them for disseminating information about the most important issues that come before our Board each week, including Benjamin Fang of the Queens Ledger, Chris Barca of the Queens Chronicle, Ryan Kelley of the Ridgewood Times, and Jon Cronin of the Queens Tribune.

The Board Chairman pointed out that next month's regularly scheduled Board Meeting date falls on February 14th, which is Valentine's Day. He said that in response to his suggestion at last month's Board Meeting, Board members were polled by Board staff and most members who responded were in favor of changing next month's meeting date to the first Wednesday of the month, February 7th. He asked the pleasure of the Board. After a brief discussion of the matter, he requested a voice vote, which carried.

The Board Chairman invited local elected officials and their staff to address the Board.

NYC Council Member Robert Holden said that he looks forward to working with the residents and members of Community Board 5, Queens in his new position, representing the 30th Council District. He introduced his new Chief of Staff Greg Mitchell, who was present at the meeting. He said that his district office will occupy the same quarters in Atlas Park, in Glendale, until further notice, and that he plans to retain the same phone number, (718) 366-3900. He wished everyone a Happy New Year.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Joe Nocerino reminded Board members that January 12th is the deadline to submit new and renewal applications for Community Board membership this year. He said that they are available on-line at www.queensbp.org and he pointed out that all Board members are required to renew their membership every other year. He said that the Borough President recently had knee surgery and thanked everyone for their good wishes on her recovery.

On Friday, January 26th, at 10am, the Queens Borough President will deliver the State of the Borough address in the school auditorium of Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, located at 35-12 35 Avenue in Astoria. He advised Board members to pre-register for reserved seating at: www.queensbp.org/RSVP.

He announced that on Tuesday, January 16, from 10am to 4pm, the Queens Borough President's office is sponsoring a Day of Action for senior and disabled homeowners who may qualify for local property tax exemptions. He said that this event is also open to senior and disabled tenants who may be eligible to freeze their rent at the current level. The event will be held in Room 200, at 120-55 Queens Blvd., in Kew Gardens, NY. Flyers were distributed.

On behalf of U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, Julio Salazar welcomed everyone to attend the upcoming Taxpayer Town Hall, from 11AM to 1PM, on Saturday, January 13th, in the cafeteria of Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, at 374 Stockholm Street in Brooklyn. He said that local experts will be on hand to explain how the new Federal Tax Plan will affect them and their families. For more information, he welcomed calls to their office at 266 Broadway, in Brooklyn, (718) 599-3651. He wished everyone a Happy New Year.

On behalf of U.S. Representative Grace Meng, Don Capalbi reported that their staff was fielding complaints about the lack of mail delivery last week, as a result of the snow storm. He apologized for the delays, and said that the backlog of mail delivery by the US Post Office is now being addressed.

Greg Mitchell, Chief of Staff for Council Member Holden, said that he is looking forward to working with Community Board 5, Queens.

On behalf of State Senator Addabbo, Niel Giannelli wished every a Happy New Year. He pointed out that the Family Leave Act took effect this year in New York State, on January 1, 2018. He also said that the State's minimum wage was recently raised.

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State Assemblyman Brian Barnwell wished everyone a Happy New Year, and thanked everyone for their generosity in donating toward last month's Coat Drive and Turkey Drive. He welcomed constituents to visit his district office at 55-19 69 Street in Maspeth. He announced that on March 22nd, 2018, free mammograms will be given at the Maspeth Federal Savings Bank parking lot and asked that people call (718) 651-3185 for an appointment. Flyers and newsletters were distributed.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Mike Miller, Samantha Kung wished everyone a Happy New Year and informed everyone that their office is conducting a Valentines for Veterans drive once again this year. She welcomed constituents to contact their office at 83-91 Woodhaven Blvd by calling (718) 805-0950. Flyers were distributed.

On behalf of State Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, Alexa Arrechi wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Detective Charles Sadler, of the 104th Precinct Community Affairs Unit, reported that there has been a 9% reduction in major crime for 2017, compared to 2016, in the 104th Precinct. He said that there has been a recent spike in the number of car break-ins reported, and warned everyone to remove personal property from their parked vehicles. He welcomed everyone to attend the Annual Cop of the Year Award Dinner from 6:30pm to 10:30pm on Thursday, January 25th, 2018 in the Knockdown Center, at 52-19 Flushing Avenue, in Maspeth.

On behalf of NYC Public Advocate Letitia James, Stacy Eliuk reported that their office received 100's of complaints from residents of NYC Housing Authority apartments about the lack of heat and hot water during the cold winter months. She said that NYCHA receives over 30,000 complaints per year about the lack of heat and hot water in their buildings. She welcomed calls for assistance about heat and hot water complaints to their office at (212) 669-4576.

The Board Chairman commented that to his knowledge, there are 20,000 vacant units of public housing throughout the City, which could house at least 60,000 people. He asked the Public Advocate's assistance in resolving the current backlog of building maintenance issues, such as, providing heat and hot water, in order to make them habitable. Ms. Eliuk said that there has been cutbacks in public housing, including for workers.

MINUTES

The Board Chairman asked Board members to review the minutes of the December 13, 2017 Board Meeting. The minutes were approved by acclamation, on a motion to accept them, as written, by Walter Clayton and seconded by Katherine Masi.

LIQUOR, WINE and BEER LICENSE APPLICATIONS and RENEWALS

The Board Chairman read aloud the list of establishments in the Community Board 5 area that are in the process of applying for liquor, wine and beer licenses since the last monthly Board Meeting on December 13, 2017. Each Board member received a copy of the list.

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) Cahill Enterprises Inc. d/b/a **Glen Patrick Pub** 53-73 65th Place, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 2) **Zum Stammtisch Inc.** 69-46 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385
- 3) 299 Wyckoff LLC d/b/a **Bonus Room** 991 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

- 1) Greenbay Properties LLC d/b/a **Pita Gyro & Grill** 66-39 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **AMMA Café Inc.** 68-63 Forest Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

Wine and/or Beer License Renewals

- 1) *We are 138 LLC d/b/a **Sweet Jane's** 64-02 68 Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) **Susan's Deli Grocery Corp.** 501 Onderdonk Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

*Indicates Outdoor Area

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Demolition and Construction Notices

The Board Chairman reported that the Board received the following demolition notice since last month's Board Meeting: interior demolition of **60-62 69 Lane, in Middle Village**, in connection with the renovation of an existing 2-story 1-family dwelling with rear enlargement, and the removal and installation of interior partitions with plumbing work.

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

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

Gary Giordano

District Manager Gary Giordano wished everyone a Happy New Year.

The District Manager informed everyone that the Grand Street Bridge over the Newtown Creek has been closed in both directions on many recent weekends, in order to complete emergency repairs on the bridge.

Regarding the Calamus Avenue water and sewer main project, the District Manager reported that C.A.C. Industries installed new sewer and water mains on Calamus Avenue between 69 Street and 74 Street, in Maspeth and completed the temporary restoration of the roadway. He pointed out that work on this project was halted for over a year, mainly due to design problems.

Regarding the sewer and water main project in the vicinity of Penelope Avenue and 74 Street in Middle Village, he said that the same contractor, C.A.C. Industries, recently completed work on the installation of a new sewer chamber on 74 Street, between Pleasantview Street and Penelope Avenue. He said that the new sewer trench in the middle of the street is about 28 feet deep. He said that once this project is completed, the new sewer system should help to eliminate much of the flooding conditions in this area that have resulted from storm water run-offs during heavy rainstorms.

Regarding the Emergency Bridge Deck Replacement project on Metropolitan Avenue at Fresh Pond Road, he said that the contractor has not been seen working above ground at this site for months. He said that the City has defaulted the current contractor for this project and a new contractor needs to be selected.

Council Member Holden said that regarding the Select Bus Service on Woodhaven Blvd, traffic signals don't seem to be synchronized on Woodhaven Blvd, while they are on Queens Blvd. Katherine Masi said that from Eliot Avenue to Union Turnpike, the traffic signals are not synchronized. Board Chairman Arcuri said that part of the issue is that signals are synchronized for the buses. Fred Haller said that the signals are timed differently at different times of the day.

State Senator Joseph Addabbo wished everyone a Happy New Year, and announced that Governor Cuomo plans to release the 2019 State Budget, which projects a \$5 Billion budget deficit, with ongoing MTA budget issues and Federal Budget issues. The State Senator asked people to give input, as this is "your state." He also spoke about food waste issues, including at schools. He said that he is a member of 7 committees and now, he is ranking member of the Education Committee.

Old Business

John Maier said that the item that was tabled, related to the windows of a landmarked property located at 1879 Putnam Avenue, in Ridgewood, should be brought back to the Board for review.

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Sarah Feldman, Chairperson of the Library Services Committee, reported that on December 28th, 2017, a Groundbreaking Ceremony was held at the Glendale Branch Library, at 78-60 73 Place in Glendale, in connection with the planned capital improvements and renovations at this site that are slated to begin this year.

The Board Chairman said that over the past month, committee meetings were cancelled and re-scheduled to a later date, due to inclement weather conditions.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Board Chairman Arcuri adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 8:57pm.