



Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale
61-23 Myrtle Avenue • Glendale, NY 11385
(718) 366-1834
E-mail: qnscb5@nyc.rr.com



Vincent Arcuri, Jr.
Chairperson

Gary Giordano
District Manager

Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting November 13, 2019

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Antonetta Binanti; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Jerome Drake; Steven Fiedler; Richard Huber; Paul A. Kerzner; Maryann Lattanzio; Edward Lettau; John Maier; Patricia Maltezos; Edgar Mantel; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O'Kane; Michael O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Kelvin Rodriguez; Luis Rodriguez; Connie Santos; Dennis Stephan; Megan Tadio; Gyanal Thapa; Barbara Toscano; Michaeline Von Drathen; Crystal Wolfe; Maryanna Zero;

Board Members Absent

Brian Dooley; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Patricia Grayson; Mohan Gyawali-Chhetri; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoefflerle; Mike Liendo; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Carmen Santana; Catherine Sumsy; Patrick J. Trinchesi; Nan Zhang

Elected Officials

NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, 15th SD and Staff Sarah Spellman
NYC Council Member Robert Holden, 30th CD and Staff Charles Vavruska
Joseph Nocerino - Queens Borough President Melinda Katz
Julio Salazar – U. S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7th C.D.
Cristian Romero – U. S. Representative Grace Meng, 6th C.D.
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

Gary Giordano, District Manager, CB5 Queens
Catherine O'Leary, Community Associate - CB5Q Staff

GUESTS

Sayaka Kobayashi Prestia, NY Regional Office of US Census Bureau
Denise Esposito, CERT Training Coordinator, NYC Office of Emergency Management
Theresa Whittlesey, Manager of Community Relations –Forest Hills-L.I.J. Hospital
P.O. Asar Sanad and P.O. Michael Berish – 104th Precinct Community Affairs Unit
Portia Dyrenforth, Administrator of Forest Park and Highland Park - NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation
Benjamin Fang, Queens Ledger; David Russell, Queens Chronicle; and Luca Powell, NYC News/Queens Eagle

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Board Chairperson Vincent Arcuri called the monthly Board Meeting to order at 7:32pm, following the Salute to the Flag.

The Board Chairperson informed everyone that tonight's Board Meeting will be live-streamed. The video will be posted to YouTube, and appear on our Community Board website at www.nyc.gov/qnscb5 sometime tomorrow. He said there are no plans to livestream our Board Meeting on December 11th, in light of the fact that it will be a brief meeting, immediately followed by our annual holiday celebration. He reminded everyone that the next month's meeting will begin at 7PM, and we'll be accepting donations of toys and gifts for young children, infants to 5 years old, who are enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children's Food Assistance Program (WIC) for low-income families.

He said that tomorrow morning, the Dept. of Transportation plans to reverse the direction of 71 Place from Myrtle Avenue to Cooper Avenue to a One-Way Northbound toward Cooper Avenue, in Glendale.

He announced the first item on the Board Agenda as:

PUBLIC FORUM

Denise Esposito, CERT Coordinator for NYC Office of Emergency Management, said that the agency was established in 1996, to plan and prepare for emergencies, educate the public about preparedness, coordinate emergency response and recovery, and collect and disseminate emergency information.

Ms. Esposito explained that NYC Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are groups of dedicated volunteers who are trained in basic response skills needed for fire safety, light search and rescue, community disaster support, disaster medical operations, and traffic control. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age, live or work in New York City, and pass a NYC Emergency Management background check. She said that the training schedule covers a 10 week period, three times per year, with classes of between 30 to 50 volunteers meeting twice a week with their instructor, either on Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday. The volunteer commitment is for at least one year of service following graduation, she said.

Ms. Esposito said that by joining NYC CERT, volunteers will have an opportunity to educate themselves and others about how to prepare for emergencies, such as, how to pack a Go Bag. She said that CERT members participate in community preparedness and support first responders during disaster responses and public events in many ways, including:

- Traffic and crowd control;
- Escorting New York City residents of evacuated buildings in order to retrieve personal belongings;
- Missing person searches;
- Staffing assistance centers and interpreting for New Yorkers affected by emergencies;
- Emergency food and supply distribution during power outages and water main breaks; and
- Presenting Ready New York preparedness information to communities in order to build community disaster networks.

In closing, Ms. Esposito distributed Sign-Up Sheets for anyone who is interested in applying for their next 10 week training session, which may possibly be conducted in the Board 5 area, beginning in February, 2020. For more information, she distributed cards, and welcomed everyone to visit their website at: www.nyc.gov/cert.

Richard Huber, a Board member, asked if she knew the interview dates for individual background checks of potential volunteers. She said that everyone who registers to apply for training is welcome to attend any of their orientation sessions, when individual interviews will be scheduled.

Sayaka Kobayashi Prestia, a representative of the NY Regional Office of the US Census Bureau, gave a power point presentation on the importance of the 2020 Census, titled The Census Made Simple. She stressed the importance of every resident being counted in the Census, which is conducted every ten years. She pointed out that population statistics that are compiled from the Census data will determine the number of Congressional Representatives in the US Congress in each state. She reminded everyone that, after the most recent Census count in 2000, the metropolitan area of New York City lost one seat in the House of Representatives, out of the total of 435 representatives. She explained that, as a result, New York lost a proportionate share of federal

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funds, which amounted to tens of billions of dollars per year. She said the annual distribution of more than \$675 Billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities is based on Census data, so it's critically important to get an accurate count of the local population during the 2020 Census.

Ms. Prestia said that, between mid-March and the end of April next year, residents will have the option of responding to the US Census in three different ways: online, by mail, or by phone. She gave the following timeline for conducting the 2020 Census:

- between March 12th and 20th of 2019, nearly every household will receive an invitation from the Census Bureau to participate in the Census from a postal worker;
- between March 16th and 24th, of 2019, the Census Bureau will mail reminder letters to all households;
- between March 26th and April 3rd, of 2019, a follow up reminder postcard will be mailed to respondents;
- between April 8th and 16th, of 2019, another follow up letter along with a paper questionnaire will be mailed to respondents; and
- between April 20th and 27th, a final reminder postcard will be mailed to respondents before a Census taker is assigned to follow up in person to complete the count.

Ms. Prestia estimated that in March of 2020, 95% of households will have received their Census invitation in the mail. She explained that, in cases where households either use PO boxes or have vacated their residence due to a natural disaster, or other emergency, a Census taker will be assigned to drop off a questionnaire at their place of residence. She said that in less than 1% of households, a Census taker will be assigned to conduct the count in person, instead of by mail or online. She said that, generally speaking, Census takers conduct the Census count in person in rural areas of northern Maine, Alaska or upon request in American Indian areas.

Ms. Prestia assured everyone that the Census Bureau will safeguard any personal information that is entered on the 2020 Census questionnaire. She said that the Census Bureau is prohibited by law from sharing anyone's personal information with any other agency, including law enforcement.

Ms. Prestia announced that the Census Bureau has begun interviewing and hiring tens of thousands of workers to complete the 2020 Census. She said that new hires earn \$25 per hour, have flexible schedules, and are paid on a weekly basis. She said that anyone interested in applying online can go to: www.2020census.gov/jobs. For more information, please call 1-855-JOB-2020, she said.

In closing, she said that completing the US Census is safe, important and easy. She urged everyone to complete their questionnaire as soon as it arrives in the mail because everyone counts. Besides, she said that completing the US Census is mandated by the United States Constitution, it's about fair representation, and it's about getting a fair share of federal funding for schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs. Hand-outs were distributed to everyone.

Crystal Wolfe, a Board member, thanked everyone who has already donated items for this year's Fall Toiletry, Clothing, and Food Drive for homeless individuals and families, that is co-sponsored by Catering for the Homeless in conjunction with several local elected officials and community organizations. She said that Community Board 5 will extend drop-offs to their office until next month.

Regarding our Community Board's most recent meetings and hearings, she said that while it is important to hear from the community about their concerns and opinions on any given topic, our Board's By-Laws clearly state "no cursing, slander, shouting, disruptions" etc. She objected to the disregard for the members of Community Board 5, mainly Mr. Vinnie Arcuri and Mr. Gary Giordano, and elected officials like Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, which was uncalled for.

Ms. Wolfe reminded everyone that Board Members are all volunteers who donate their time to serving and improving the community. She said that Vinnie and Gary are two of the most wonderful and caring men that she has ever known. She said that she also admires Assemblyman Hevesi, who has been working hard to advocate for permanent housing solutions to homelessness. She said that they are wonderful people who deserve our appreciation, and these kinds of personal attacks from the community should not be permitted at any Board Meetings. She said that, with all due respect to members of the community, we must all abide by the Board's

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By-Laws so that everyone may be heard. The recent disruptions and personal attacks don't help anyone to reach their goals and, in her opinion, it would be much more productive to work together than to shout at each other. In closing, she suggested that the Board appoint a Parliamentarian to maintain proper decorum at Board meetings. She said that if anyone is acting disruptively in a meeting, they should receive 1 or 2 warnings, and then be escorted out of the meeting. She nominated Jerry Drake to serve in that position, because of his many years of experience working closely with the NYPD. She said that she was grateful to Board members for their time, service, generosity, and kindness that she's been afforded since her first meeting with Board Members and staff.

Daniela Rivera, a college student and Glendale resident, advocated in favor of adopting new legislation, Intro 1407A-2019, sponsored by Council Member Rafael Espinal, 37th CD in the City Council, to conduct a comprehensive study of new waste policy initiatives that will reduce the sale, distribution and use of single use plastics that are designed and intended to be used only once for drinking or eating and then discarded after one single use. She pointed out that, for instance, 500 billion plastic cups are used and discarded in the United States every year. She urged everyone to contact Council Member Robert Holden's office to advocate for limited use of plastic containers, by mandating that store owners allow customers to fill their own containers, instead of using a new plastic container, each time they purchase something to drink in their establishment.

Wylie Goodman, a Ridgewood resident and Chair of the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board (QSWAB), explained that the SWABs in other boroughs are very busy advocating for cleaner, less wasteful communities that benefit us all. Since the Queens SWAB has not met in the past few years, she's working to reactivate it this year. She welcomed everyone to attend their meeting next Wednesday at 6:15pm in Room M-310 of LaGuardia Community College, located at 31-10 Thompson Avenue, in Long Island City. She said that she is also planning to improve the streetscape along commercial corridors in the Board 5 area by working with artists to improve the façades of vacant storefronts, and thereby encourage small businesses to move into available commercial space in the district. She is asking Council Members for Discretionary Funding to activate storefronts and commercial spaces in conjunction with artists.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Vincent Arcuri, Jr.

Chairperson Arcuri recognized the staff present: the District Manager Gary Giordano, and Community Associate Catherine O'Leary.

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

On behalf of Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Joe Nocerino announced that students who are interested in working in the Borough President's Office may apply for new intern positions next semester. He said that over the past year, he supervised 37 interns during the Summer and another 15 interns this Fall. While student interns are unpaid positions, they are eligible to earn academic credits toward a high school or college degree. For more information about this program, he welcomed calls to his office at (718) 286-2900. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

On behalf of Congresswoman Grace Meng, Christian Romero thanked everyone who attended their next Town Hall Meeting that was held from 11am to 12:30pm on Saturday, November 2nd in the Rosenthal Library in Queens College, located at 65-30 Kissena Boulevard, in Flushing. He said that the Congresswoman recently voted in support of HR 4674, the College Affordability Act sponsored by the House Committee on Education and Labor to provide a comprehensive overhaul of higher education that will mean students can spend less and earn more. He said that the Congresswoman has also been advocating for

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the passage of HR 4567, the FAFSA Translation Act, based on the successful model developed by the City University of New York in expanding translation services in order to improve access to education for all.

On behalf of Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, Julio Salazar reported that, as a member of the Urban Caucus in Congress, the Congresswoman is working to strengthen the Community Reinvestment Act, in order to ensure that financial institutions, particularly banks, continue to reinvest a percentage of their profits into low and middle income neighborhoods that are located in their service areas in the wake of multinational mergers, etc. He said that the Congresswoman is working with Senator Charles Schumer to draft new legislation that would ensure the protections for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients are extended, and afford 800,000 DACA youth an opportunity to study and earn a living in America without fear of deportation. For more information, he welcomed calls from constituents to their office at (718) 599-3658.

NYC Council Member Robert Holden thanked Community Board members for volunteering their time and energy to improve the quality of life in their community. He informed everyone that this year, he was appointed to chair the City Council's Committee on Technology that has jurisdiction over the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT), Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, NYC TV, and dissemination of public information through the use of technology. He announced that the City is preparing to roll out a new Next Gen 9-1-1 system in June of 2020, to enable people to send TEXT messages to 9-1-1, which should prove especially helpful for deaf or hard-of-hearing people, or domestic violence victims who are under attack, to call for assistance. In addition, he said that the SMART 9-1-1 system will store your profile, including special needs that you may have, your address, etc.

Regarding the recent alleged grade fraud that's been reported in connection with Maspeth High School, he said that graduating seniors from high school should be adequately prepared to work when they receive their high school diploma, and that's not happening.

The Council Member also reported that he's working with authorities to prevent drivers from blaring music from their cars inside the Forest Park Bandshell Parking Lot. In addition, he said that he's co-sponsoring legislation along with Council Member Paul Vallone that would double the fines on loud speakers that are installed in private vehicles and then used to disturb the peace. He said loud music can be very dangerous by preventing people from hearing emergency service sirens.

Regarding the proposed Homeless Shelter at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, he informed everyone that he attended the Public Hearing on this proposal, which was conducted by the Mayor's Office of Contracts last Monday, along with the District Manager Gary Giordano and several local residents. He thanked the District Manager for his testimony at the hearing, as well as the members of Community Board 5, for having adopted the Resolution in opposition to this proposed shelter. He said that the contract indicates that there will be 88 beds in this proposed homeless shelter, but no operating budget was submitted as part of this \$61 Million contract. He said that he testified at the Public Hearing that smaller shelters would be a better fit in this community. He said that he intends to file a court challenge to the City's approval process in this case. The Council Member said that he has been denied a copy of the contract, even though he, as a Council Member, is entitled to receive such. He said that he has allocated \$136,000 for Food Pantry programs this year.

On behalf of Council Member Antonio Reynoso, Fatima Elmansy said that she was happy to report that there was a large turnout for their Participatory Budgeting Session that was held in PS 305 on Seneca Avenue in Ridgewood last week. She announced that, in cooperation with CUNY's Citizenship Now! Initiative, free legal consultations and application assistance for immigrants eligible to apply for U. S. Citizenship will be provided by appointment only at their District Office, located at 244 Union Avenue, in Brooklyn. She said their office phone number is (718) 963-3141. She welcomed calls for assistance from constituents whenever they have problems, such as, no heat and hot water in their buildings.

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On behalf of State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Sarah Spellman said that the Senator met with constituents recently during a Java with Joe session at the Avenue Diner in Woodhaven on Sunday, November 3rd, 2019. She also announced that free prostate screenings for men will be provided, by appointment only, at their Howard Beach office, located at 159-53 102 Street, between 10am and 11:30am on Saturday, November 16th. She welcomed calls for appointments to the District Office at (718) 738-1111. In addition, she said that the Senator will hold mobile office hours in the Woodhaven Public Library at 85-41 Forest Parkway from 5:30pm to 7pm on Thursday, November 21st, 2019.

Regarding National Grid's recent decision to deny service connections for new customers in New York, State Senator Addabbo said that he agrees with Governor Cuomo's position that no customers should be held hostage by their local utility company. He said that he supports establishing a Task Force to determine alternative solutions to the present crisis, and he sponsored legislation declaring that utility service is a civil right.

Regarding the increasing rate of suicide in the American Veteran population, the Senator said that statistics show that 14 suicides per 100,000 people occur in the general population, while the rate of suicide among Veterans is 30 per 100,000. He thanked all of the Veterans present for their service, and pledged to focus his attention on the growing incidence of suicides among Veterans during the next session of the Legislature. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

On behalf of Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi, Kevin Wisniewski said that their office was happy to cooperate with Crystal Wolfe and Catering for the Homeless, by hosting a Toiletry Drive for homeless families and individuals up until last Friday, November 8th. He said that donations were dropped off at their office at 70-50 Austin Street, Suite 118, in Forest Hills, until they filled their office. He said that their office is also partnering with the Shoe Box program to help women who are homeless. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

On behalf of NYS Assemblyman Brian Barnwell, Lesi Hreb announced that they are sponsoring an annual Turkey Drive for low-income families in the neighborhood. She said donations can be dropped off at their office at 55-19 69 Street in Maspeth until Wednesday, November 27th, 2019. In addition, she said that they are accepting donations of toys for children in need until December 20th, and warm coats of any size until January 28th, 2020. She welcomed calls for more information to their office at (718) 651-3185.

On behalf of Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Alison Cummings wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. She welcomed calls for assistance from constituents at (718) 784-3194. Newsletter copies were distributed.

On behalf of Assemblyman Michael Miller, Christine Stoll announced that their office is sponsoring a Thanksgiving Food Drive for needy families until the end of the November. She said that their office is also co-sponsoring a Toiletry Drive for homeless families, along with Crystal Wolfe and Catering for the Homeless. She said that donations will be accepted at their office at 83-91 Woodhaven Boulevard until further notice. She announced that the Mobile Mammography Unit will be stationed in front of their office between 9am and 12 Noon on Sunday, November 24th to provide free breast exams for women who have called their office to set up an appointment at (718) 805-0950. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

P.O. Michael Berish and P.O. Asar Sanad in the 104th Precinct's Community Affairs Unit, gave a brief update on recent crimes that have occurred in our precinct. Officer Berish warned that the incidence of phone scams that occur in this precinct, particularly among elderly residents, has been increasing. He advised that if you don't know the number of any particular caller, then don't pick up the phone to answer the call. He said that sometimes, callers pretend to be representatives of the Social Security Administration. But, he warned that no one working for the Social Security Administration contacts clients by phone. Instead, they send their correspondence to clients by mail only, so don't be fooled by that scam, he said.

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Officer Berish also warned 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.

Officer Berish said that, at this time of year, there's always a dramatic increase in the number of packages that are stolen from doorsteps. He advised everyone to install security cameras in front of their homes, in order to assist police to identify the criminals and apprehend them.

Officer Sanad announced that the NYPD Counter Terrorism Division will hold a training session that is open to the public, on Monday night, November 18th, in Christ the King High School. Pre-registration for this training is required. She said that anyone interested in attending this training session should contact the 104th Precinct Community Affairs Unit at (718) 386-2431.

Portia Dyrenforth, the Administrator for Forest Park and Highland Park, welcomed everyone to attend a meeting with local community residents who live in Community Board 5 in Brooklyn and are members of the Highland Park Stakeholders group. She said that the meeting is scheduled to begin at 7PM on Thursday, December 5th, in St. Peter's Lutheran Church, located at 94 Hale Avenue, in Brooklyn. She said that the purpose of the meeting is to give local residents an opportunity to provide input to the NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation regarding what types of programs and services they would like to have in Highland Park. Portia wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

MINUTES

The Board Chairperson asked Board members to review the minutes of last month's Board Meeting conducted on October 16th, 2019. The minutes were adopted by acclamation on a motion by Walter Clayton, and seconded by Kathy Masi.

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 October 16, 2019. Each Board member received a copy of the list.

New Liquor Licenses

- 1) **Hills Place LLC** 464 Onderdonk Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) Ran NY Group LLC d/b/a **Joya Hall** 63-108 Woodhaven Boulevard, Rego Park, NY 11374
- 3) 8338 Woodhaven Rest, Inc d/b/a **Don Tequila Urban Cantina** 83-38 Woodhaven Blvd, Glendale, NY 11385

Liquor License Renewal

- 1) *5 Time Champs d/b/a **Courtside Lounge** 69-08 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385
- 2) **Aby's Bar Corp.** 681 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) Woodhaven Blvd Rest, Inc. d/b/a **Woodhaven House** 63-98 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park, NY 11374
- 4) Inbing Inc. d/b/a **Chasers** 60-63 & 60-65 Flushing Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378
- 5) *Wyckoff Weirfield Corp. d/b/a **Trans-Pecos** 915 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385

New Wine and/or Beer Licenses

- 1) **El Buen Sabor Restaurant Corp.** 1070 Cypress Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) Viandas Corp. d/b/a **Las Viandas** 61-02 Myrtle Avenue, Glendale, NY 11385

Wine and/or Beer License Renewals

- 1) Angel Fire Buffet Inc. d/b/a **K&K Super Buffet** 341-345 St. Nicholas Avenue-Rear Unit, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- *Indicates Outdoor Area

Alterations, Corporate Changes and Other

- 1) *Dhaka Inc. d/b/a **Hush, 70-10 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378** provided an update to the notification we received from them in March 2019 of their intention to file a new application to serve Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider. The update changes their “type of establishment” from a “Restaurant/Lounge” to “Bar/Lounge”, and adds Disc Jockey and Mix Tape 20 (Mix of top 20 songs) to their “Method of Operation” in addition to what was previously included under that category: Recorded Music, Live Music and Patron Dancing.
- 2) Alan Dumain d/b/a **7-Eleven, 72-01 Eliot Ave, Middle Village, NY 11379** notified our office of their intention to renew their Grocery Beer License.
- 3) Cahill Enterprises Inc. d/b/a **Glen Patrick’s Pub, 53-73 65th Place, Maspeth, NY 11378** will be filing an application with the NYS Liquor Authority for a Corporate Change due to the passing of the licensee, Catherine Hickey. Her son, Phillip Hickey and Daughter will be the new licensees.
- 4) *Grove Productions d/b/a **Nowadays, 56-06 Cooper Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385** intends to apply for an All-Night Permit on New Year’s Eve, from 7pm to 8am.
- 5) *Charlie Work LLC d/b/a **Evil Twin Brewing, 1612-1616 George Street, Ridgewood NY 11385** intends to make a minor alteration to the patron bar inside the brewery tasting room, by converting it into a service bar for the preparation of food and beverages.

Demolition Notices

The Board Chairperson reported that the Board received the following demolition notices since last month’s Board Meeting on October 16th: **71-11 71 Street** – demolition of a residential garage, **in Glendale**; **1818 Grove Street**- 1-story vacant warehouse; **314 Woodward Avenue**- residential garages; **460 Seneca Avenue** – 1-story structure, **in Ridgewood**. 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.

District Manager’s Report**Gary Giordano**

District Manager Gary Giordano thanked everyone for all the good that they are doing for this community, and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Regarding the proposed Homeless Shelter Residence at 78-16 Cooper Avenue, in Glendale, he reported that on Monday, November 7th, 2019, he attended the Public Hearing advertised by the Mayor’s Office of Contracts, regarding the proposed Contract between the NYC Dept. of Homeless Services and Westhab, Inc. to Develop and Operate a Stand-Alone Transitional Residence for Homeless Single Adults at 78-16 Cooper Avenue in Glendale, Queens. He said that the proposed contract to operate a homeless shelter residence for 200 single men at 78-16 Cooper Avenue is for the period from January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2025, with an option to renew.

The District Manager read from a copy of his testimony, as follows:

“I request that this proposed contract not be enacted, and this residence not be established, for the following reasons:

- 1) The site in question is in walking distance to at least 4 public schools, 2 parochial schools, and there is a gymnastics center and dance studio for youth located across the street on Cooper Avenue. In addition, there is a youth sports facility adjacent to the site in question and a child care center is under construction nearby at 79-40 Cooper Avenue. Locating a homeless shelter residence at 78-16 Cooper Avenue certainly poses serious risks to children and teenagers in the nearby area.

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- 2) The site in question is in an M1-4 Zone, which did not permit residential uses until a Hotels, Motels and Boatels Zoning Text Amendment was enacted late in 2018.
- 3) The size of the proposed homeless shelter residence, for 200 men, is much too large in a community of one and two family homes.
- 4) The amount of the contract is for \$61,808,956.00, which translates into taxpayers paying unreasonable cost of \$4,682.00 per man, per month.

For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons stated in the Recommendation/Resolution attached, it would be irresponsible to establish a homeless shelter residence for 200 men at the former factory location at 78-16 Cooper Avenue in Glendale, Queens, NY.”

He reported that when he requested to review the proposed contract, he was told that all visitors are required to make an appointment prior to reviewing the contract, so he’d have to return at another time. He requested an appointment in the afternoon to review the contract. When he returned later that same day to review the contract, he read that the contract is for 88 beds, not 200, without providing any specifications as to staffing and/or capacity. He said that he has not received any response to his testimony or the Board’s Resolution in opposition to the proposed shelter at this site.

The District Manager informed everyone that one or more lawsuits have been filed in opposition to the proposed homeless shelter at 78-16 Cooper Avenue.

Regarding the Dept. of Sanitation’s collection of household garbage and recycling, he said that residents should put their garbage, recycling and compost materials out at the curb at 4pm on the evening before their regular collection day until spring. He said that the change in the household collection schedule is necessary in order to ensure that the Department will be ready to clear snow from local streets throughout the City through the winter months.

Regarding the status of the 74 Street/Penelope Avenue sewer project in Middle Village, he said that both the Board Chairperson and he met with representatives of the Dept. of Design and Construction and Council Member Robert Holden recently to discuss the contractor’s request to work on weekends, in addition to weekdays, until the end of December. He said that work on this contract had been delayed for approximately 9 months, due mainly to contaminated soil being found under the roadway.

The District Manager reported that work on a separate 96” sewer main installation project is slated to begin next year in Middle Village. The project includes the section of roadway on 71 Street, on the west side of Juniper Valley Park, and then travels under the railroad tracks to connect with 71 Street by Our Lady of Hope School, and then north on 71 Street to the Long Island Expressway.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Youth Services and Education Committee

Patricia Crowley

Patricia Crowley reported that the Youth Services and Education Committees held a joint-committee meeting on Wednesday, November 6th in the Board 5 office to review the public school enrollment figures and test scores for reading and math proficiency in our local schools. She reported that the Committee members found that several schools in our Board area currently exceed their seating capacity:

- IS/PS 58 in Maspeth, the school’s capacity is 977 students, with 1,027 students enrolled;
- IS/PS 73 in Maspeth, the school’s capacity is 1,556 students, with 1,571 students enrolled;
- IS/PS 119 in Glendale, the school’s capacity is 957 students, with 1,277 students enrolled;
- IS/PS 128 in Middle Village, the school’s capacity is 676 students, with 969 students enrolled;
- IS/PS 153 in Maspeth, the school’s capacity is 1,118 students, with 1,204 students enrolled;
- IS/PS 229 in Woodside, the school’s capacity is 1,077 students, with 1,469 students enrolled;
- Maspeth High School, the school’s capacity is 905 students, with 1,196 students enrolled.

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Ms. Crowley commented that the local public schools in Ridgewood had always been the most over-enrolled schools in the Board 5 area. She said that the changing demographics in that neighborhood may be attributed to the higher rents that are being charged to move into an apartment in Ridgewood now, making them unaffordable for most families with children.

She reported that when the Committee members reviewed the test scores for reading and math proficiency, they found that, on average, the test scores for 3rd Grade students are higher than those of older students in 5th to 8th Grade levels. She said that the Committee plans to follow up, to find out why the test scores appear to be dropping so much in the higher grades in certain schools.

Ms. Crowley also reported that there is one Gifted and Talented Program in the Board 5 area, at PS/IS 119 in Glendale. She said that the Committee members would like to find out what kinds of resources are available to other local schools in the district that don't have a Gifted and Talented Programs.

Regarding After-School Programs, she said that most public schools in our Board area have After-School Programs that are run by the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council or Maspeth Town Hall. She said that most of the After-School Programs are free, but some are of them are fee-based programs. She said that the NYC Dept. of Youth and Community Development funds most, but not all, of these After-School Programs. She said that the Committee believes that DYCD should fully fund all of the After-School Programs in the low-income areas of our district.

Ms. Crowley said that the Committee also reviewed the estimates for the number of homeless students who are enrolled in public schools in our district, as compared to citywide. She said that school children who are sharing their apartments with relatives, rather than living in their own separate apartments, are included in the overall number of homeless students in the city. She said that on a citywide basis, it is estimated that 1 in 10 students are homeless. Homeless students have a lot of trouble finding a quiet place to do their homework and study, she said.

Bob Cermeli asked if the City is planning to do away with the Gifted and Talented Programs in local public schools. Ms. Crowley replied that there's no definitive information on that change in policy.

Edward Lettau said that low reading scores in the 5th to 8th Grades is very concerning. He asked if it could possibly be due to a policy of social promotion in local schools. Ms. Crowley said the Committee would look into it at their next Committee meeting.

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that the Committee met on Monday, September 16, 2019, at 6pm, at the Ridgewood Reservoir in Highland Park. This meeting included a tour around the Ridgewood Reservoir and along the interior causeway between Basin 1 and Basin 2, which was led by Matt Malina, the Founder and Director of NYCH2O. Mr. Fiedler said that one of the main issues raised at their committee meeting, related to the Ridgewood Reservoir, was the fact that the N.Y. City Dept. of Parks and Recreation intends to spend \$5.3 Million to stabilize the Eastern Gatehouse at the Ridgewood Reservoir. This project is reportedly in the final stage of design. This \$5.3 Million is part of the remaining funding of \$9 million for improvements at the Ridgewood Reservoir, made available after the Reservoir was reclassified as a low hazard dam, from a high hazard dam, and the \$9 million of funding to breach the walls of the Reservoir basins no longer had to be used to breach the basin walls. He said that \$3.2 million of the remaining funding is earmarked for the removal of invasive species in Basins 1 & 3 of the Ridgewood Reservoir.

At the September 16th Committee Meeting, he said that several committee members questioned the use of such a large amount of funding (\$5.3 Million), just to stabilize this gatehouse building, and said that the funding would be much better used for improvements to the Ridgewood Reservoir Property that would benefit those who visit the reservoir, including the hundreds of school children and others who have taken tours of this beautiful site. Many of the tours are sponsored by NYCH2O, a not-for-profit organization that has spearheaded the Ridgewood Reservoir being listed in the State and National Historic Registers.

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It was agreed by Committee Members that the committee would try to meet again soon, at the CB5Q office, to further discuss whether a recommendation should be made to the N.Y. City Dept. of Parks and Recreation stating that the \$5.3 Million earmarked by the Parks Department, for stabilization of the east gatehouse at the Ridgewood Reservoir, should be used for better purposes.

Mr. Fiedler said that the Committee met again on Wednesday, October 2nd, at the CB5Q Office and discussed the fact that, to our knowledge, and that of NYCH2O representatives in attendance, the eastern gatehouse building (Gatehouse #27) has a 1,000 square foot footprint. Committee Members unanimously voted in favor of a Recommendation to request that the Dept. of Parks and Recreation put the design for stabilization of Gatehouse #27 on hold and work with CB5Q, CB5K, the community and elected officials to consider better uses for the \$5.3 Million earmarked for the building stabilization for the following reasons:

- This is a common brick building, that is deteriorated and not likely salvageable.
- The slate and steel from this building are rotted.
- The building seems to have little historic value, is an eyesore and a safety hazard.
- It might be more prudent and cost effective to demolish the building, which has no use, than to spend more than \$5 million just to stabilize the building.
- There is likely contamination in the building, because of lead paint, asbestos and pcbs.

THEREFORE, BE IT, RESOLVED, that the design plans for the planned \$5.3 Million project to stabilize the Gatehouse #27 building at the Ridgewood Reservoir in Highland Park, be put on hold for the reasons given in this report, and that this \$5.3 Million of funding instead be used to: Complete the Development of a Pedestrian Causeway between Basins 1 & 2 , Investigate the Feasibility of Developing Controlled Pedestrian Access Into Basins 1 and 3, and, if feasible, Develop Controlled Pedestrian Access Into Basins 1 & 3. If there are funds left over, it is recommended that the remaining funding from this \$5.3 Million budget allocation be used toward the Removal of Invasive Plant Species (i.e. phragmites) in Basin 2 at the Ridgewood Reservoir.

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments.

Paul Kerzner said that he is not in favor of restoring the causeway between Basins 1 and 2, and he would prefer to use the funding to remove the phragmites from Basin 2 instead.

John Maier said that when he attended a public meeting about the Ridgewood Reservoir a few years ago, the removal of the phragmites from all three Basins in the Reservoir was estimated to cost \$10 Million. Mr. Fiedler replied that in the past few years, he's volunteered several times to remove phragmites from the Basins, along with personnel from the Parks Department and members of NYCH2O.

As there were no further questions or comments on the Committee's recommendation, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call on the matter, which then carried by a vote of -30- in favor, -2- opposed, -0- abstaining, and -0- not voting.

For more information about the Ridgewood Reservoir, Mr. Fiedler pointed out that there are renderings of the site, along with more literature about the Ridgewood Reservoir, which he has on the side of the room.

Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee

John Maier

John Maier reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, October 22nd, in the Board 5 office to review the status of the repairs and repainting of the elevated structure of M train line in Ridgewood. He said that after repeated interruptions, crews have resumed work on the structure between Forest Avenue and Fresh Pond Road, in Ridgewood.

Regarding the Reconstruction of L Train Tunnel connecting Manhattan and Brooklyn, Mr. Maier said that it is progressing ahead of schedule, and is expected to be completed in April, 2020. He said that the subway entrance at Avenue A has been reopened to the public.

He reported the Committee also reviewed the status of the Dedicated Bus Lane on the southbound side of Fresh Pond Road from Bleecker Street to Putnam Avenue, in Ridgewood. He said that police have begun to issue

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warnings to drivers who park in the Dedicated Bus Lane, and that next week, summonses will be issued to anyone who blocks this lane between the hours of 3pm and 7pm on weekdays. He said that signal timing changes have been made along Fresh Pond Road, favoring Fresh Pond Road during rush hours.

Regarding the Kosciuszko Bridge project, Mr. Maier said that construction is underway adjacent to the Bridge, so the bike lane entry and exit points still need to be improved. He said that this project is expected to be completed by Spring of 2020.

Regarding the Replacement of the Grand Street Bridge over Newtown Creek, he said that the Dept. of Transportation recently hired a design consultant for this project.

Regarding the Reconstruction of Wyckoff Avenue, he said that this project is still in the final design phase.

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 announced that their next committee meeting is scheduled for 7:30pm on Tuesday, November 19th, in the Board 5 office.

Old and New Business

Jerry Drake, a Board member, raised his concerns about how Carmen Santana, a Board member, spoke to the Board Chairperson in a disrespectful way at last month's Board Meeting. For anyone who wasn't in attendance at the meeting, he referred them to view the video of the Board Meeting that's posted on the Board's website. He said that it's important that everyone in attendance at our Board Meetings, especially Board members, remain civil to each other. The Board Chairperson replied that the Executive Committee would review the Board's By-Laws and review the matter.

Edward Lettau reported that at ABY's Bar, located at 681 Seneca Avenue, there's loud music coming from the bar after 10pm on weekends, when lots of dance hall girls work there, disturbing the peace in the area. He said that the problem was resolved for a time, when the 104th Precinct's Mobile Command Unit was stationed on the corner of Gates Avenue and Seneca Avenue, in Ridgewood. He said that the Tequila Time Bar on Gates Avenue, east of Seneca Avenue, also has music blaring from their establishment late at night on weekends. The Chairperson directed staff to look into this situation.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Board Chairperson Arcuri wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and adjourned the public meeting of Community Board 5, Queens on a motion from the floor at 9:12pm.