



*The City of New York*  
*Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

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Chairperson, Martha Taylor

District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Meeting held on Wednesday, January 10, at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 183-02 Union Turnpike, Queens, NY 11366.

**Attendance**

**Board Members Present**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Mitch Lisker, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Yaniv Meirov, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Tobias Paris, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman and Jacob Weinberg.

**Board Members Absent**

Heather Bennett-Idels, Susan D. Cleary, Solomon Davydov, Allen Eisenstein, Neeta Jain, Steven Konigsberg, Elke Maerz, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Jenna Citron Schwab, and Seymour Schwartz.

**Others Present**

Anthony Iuliano representing Mayor Eric Adams, Kahleel Bragg representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Council Member James Gennaro, Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz, Ari Inniss representing Senator Leroy Comrie, Lois Marbach representing Councilwoman Linda Lee, Scott Sieber representing State Senator John Liu, Joshua Simanowitz representing Assembly Member Samuel Berger, Lya Rothmann representing Senator Toby Stavisky, Sam Verstandig representing Assembly Member David Weprin, Norris Johns representing NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, P.O. Gorman, Captain Tsang, P.O. McCarthy representing NYPD, D.M. Marie Adam-Ovide and [CB8 Staff Soleil Griffin, and Nettie Norris].

**Call to Order**

Chairperson Martha Taylor called the Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

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**Public Participation**

**Wendy Gennaro – representing Queens Center for Progress (QCP)**

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, QCP is hosting an event called Evening of Fine Food where some of Queens top restaurants and drink purveyors showcase their food and drinks at Terrace on the Park. CB8 Member, Hersh Parekh, is the 2024 Chef of The Year. QCP is also hosting their annual 5K Run/Walk which will take place in April at Alley Pond Park. Registration is open now.

**James Gallagher – representing Friends of Fresh Meadows Library**

Mr. Gallagher provided a list of activities and events taking place at the Fresh Meadows library. To find out more information, you can visit the Fresh Meadows Library website.

**Elected Officials’ Announcements**

**Rokeya Akhter - representing District Attorney Melinda Katz**

Ms. Akhter provided an update on a recent plea deal related to deed fraud. It involved two men - a landscaper and disbarred lawyer – who forged deeds and filed them with the city. The District Attorney’s office has restored ownership of fourteen (14) homes scammed from victims. Property owners can protect themselves by signing up for alerts from ACRIS.

*Chairperson Taylor thanked District Attorney Katz for the crack down at Major Mark Park.*

**Norris Johns - representing NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**

The public advocate passed two bills. The first bill bans solitary confinement. The second bill is for NYPD officers to report the number of stops they’ve made. There will be a Legal and Constituent Outreach Satellite Clinic on Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Queens Central Library. On January 21<sup>st</sup>, there will be an e-waste event at the Queens Library at Richmond Hill.

**Ari Innis - representing Senator Leroy Comrie**

The senator is hosting an e-waste event on January 20<sup>th</sup> at his office, 113-43 Farmers Boulevard. There will be mobile office hours starting Wednesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. Please feel free to call their office at (718) 765-6359 for more information.

**Lya Rothmann - representing Senator Toby Ann Stavisky**

The senator’s new office is at the College Point Shopping Center, 134-01 20th Avenue on the second floor. The number remains the same, 718-445-0004.

**Sam Verstandig – representing Assembly Member David Weprin**

The assembly member is back in Albany. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact their office at 718-454-3027.

**Scott Siebert - representing Senator John Liu**

The senator is hosting a Homeowner Benefit and NOPV Information Session on January 17<sup>th</sup> at the Flushing Library. There will also be a Lunar New Year Celebration on February 9<sup>th</sup> at Flushing High School. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact their office at 718-765-6675.

**Guest Speakers:**

**Council Member James Gennaro**

Had a meeting with the City Council’s Land Use staff about the City of Yes. He is working closely with his colleagues and the speaker to adjust the proposal. The Council Member passed a bill regarding making New York City Coastal waters no discharge zones. The proposals for the street co-naming for Michael Simanowitz, Nettie Mayerson, and Natalie Rogers, passed the City Council.

The Council Member is working with the Office of Cannabis Management to address illegal cannabis shops. If anyone has any questions, they could reach out to their office and schedule a meeting with Henry or the Council Member directly.

**Commanding Officer Mo Tsang, 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct**

Wished everyone a Happy New Year and looks forward to working alongside the community.

**Anthony Juliano – representing the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit**

The City Council passed Law 586, which would require the NYPD to provide quarterly reports detailing information on level one, two, and three investigative encounters between the police and civilians. The mayor is looking to either veto the bill or have the City Council consider making changes.

**Kahleel Bragg – representing Borough President Donovan Richards**

Announced that the Community Board application launched. The deadline is February 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.. Members who are even year applicants will receive communication by Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> regarding their renewal.

**Reappointments for 2024**

- Dilafroz Ahmed
- Heather Bennett-Idels
- Robert Block
- Susan Cleary
- Kenneth Cohen II
- Solomon Davydov
- Maria DeInnocentiis
- Allen Eisenstein
- Kevin Forrestal
- Howard Fried
- Bhitihara-Martha Fulton
- James Gallagher
- Michael Hannibal
- Mohammed “Delwar” Islam
- Netta Jain
- Steven Konigsberg
- Elke Maerz
- Jennifer Martin
- Rabbi Yaniv Meirov
- David Mordukhaev
- Dilip Nath
- Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov
- Alan Ong
- Tammy Osherov
- Hersh Parekh
- Frances Peterson
- Charlton Rhee
- Jesse Rosenbaum
- Seymour Schwartz
- Harbachan Singh
- Mohammed Tohin
- Amy Tse

The Borough President is hosting a Haiti 220<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary at Queens Borough Hall on January 24<sup>th</sup>. On January 27<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Queens Tech Job Fair at the Jamaica Performing Arts Center. There will also be a Queens Mental Wellness Basketball Classic to commemorate Mental Health Awareness Month at St. Francis Prep on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

*Chairperson Martha Taylor requested a roll call.*

*A quorum was present.*

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*Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.*

*Chairperson Martha Taylor called for a motion to approve the minutes.*

**Approval of Minutes:** Michael Hannibal made a motion to approve the minutes of Wednesday, December 13, 2023, seconded by Harbachan Singh. The motion passed unanimously with no abstention.

**Chairperson’s Report**

Chairperson Taylor extended her condolences to Elke Maerz who lost her son-in-law.

Community Board 8 is not able to meet at the Hillcrest Jewish Center on October 23, 2024. She requested that the board members email the CB8 office with suggestions of locations or to change the date.

**Wendy Gennaro** – We can host the meeting at QCP, I will have to find out.

**Chairperson Taylor** – I can possibly get the church on Midland and Grand Central.

*Chairperson Martha Taylor wished everyone who's birthday is in January a Happy Birthday!*

### **District Manager's Report**

#### **Mayor's Community Affairs Unit (CAU)**

The mayor will now have a new generation tech, Blade Runner 2.0. This replaces the old tech. It centralizes snow and garbage collection operations. This will provide real time updates on snow and garbage removal.

#### **Police Department (NYPD)**

Most crimes decreased last year. Only felony, assaults and burglaries went up.

#### **Department of Transportation**

There was a mixed bag for 2023. Pedestrian fatalities decreased. The number of car crashes and fatalities increased. Cyclists' fatalities increased. There was also an increase in the use of the road by cyclists.

#### **Department of Design and Construction (DDC)**

**DDC Project I.D: SEQ200558** - In Jamaica Estates, they finished saw cutting on Wexford Terrace and Eton Street. They are working on Barrington Street today. There will be some watermain work starting Tuesday, January 9, 2024. Please expect water shutdowns from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

#### **Department of Buildings (DOB)**

Beginning January 2, 2024, the Department of Buildings has not issued work permits if the Construction Superintendent designated on the permit application is already assigned to 3 or more active permits.

#### **Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)**

Community Board 8 area had 355 complaints called into 311 for December 2023. The top five complaints were:

Air and Noise Complaints	181
Catch Basin Complaints	18
Broken/Running Hydrants	18
Sewer Complaints	18
Dirty Water Complaints	11.

#### **Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)**

They are working with NYPD and Breaking Ground to address the homeless encampment discussed at the last meeting at Captain Tilly Park. They are taking steps to prevent new ones. The capital project work there is ongoing.

The capital project at 210<sup>th</sup> Playground is progressing. The capital project at Redwood Playground has been completed. They are waiting for the contractor to turn on the water so the comfort station can be used.

#### **NYC Commission on Human Rights**

They are moving away from handing out brochures. Information is being disseminated using fact sheets, which will be available on their website to download.



Happy Birthday to: Mohammad Rahman, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis & Martha Taylor.

**Committee Reports:**

**Kevin Forrestal, Executive Committee Member** - City Planning announced a zoning amendment that, if approved, will affect casino and ancillary project development in New York City. The proposed amendment would eliminate the ULURP and Special Permit requirements, which would eliminate community board and Borough President involvement in decision making. Community Board 8 requested a presentation; however, due to limited staffing, they are unable to present to the board.

**Hersh Parekh** – How has other boards reacted to this proposal?

**Kevin Forrestal** – CB4 and CB5 have unanimously opposed the proposal.

**Hersh Parekh** – What about CB12?

**Kevin Forrestal** – I have not heard from them.

**Kenneth Cohen II** – How are community boards voting for or against the facility when no casino licenses were issued?

**Kevin Forrestal** – They did not vote on the facility. They voted on the land use which indirectly relates to the casino.

***Kevin Forrestal called for a motion to support sending the letter urging the City Planning Commission to withdraw their Casino Zoning Revision Plan and refrain from proposing any further actions until they present to the community boards.***

Harbachan Singh made a motion to support the letter and was seconded by Howard Fried.

**Simon Pelman** – Opposing casinos would equate to the loss of jobs.

**Kevin Forrestal** – This letter is not about approving or opposing a casino. It’s about having the opportunity to review the proposed amendment.

**Simon Pelman** – Why do we need to send a letter when this does not affect CB8?

**Kevin Forrestal** – This is a citywide issue that would change the zoning rules for the entire city.

**Simon Pelman** – What is good for the city is jobs and creating tax revenue. We have asylum seekers that do need a source of employment. This would give them an opportunity to work.

**Kevin Forrestal** – By voting NO to the letter, you are stating that you do not want us to have a say in the decision-making process when it comes to the proposed City Planning zoning amendment.

***Kevin Forrestal called for a roll call of those in favor of sending the letter to the City Planning Commission.***

**26 Yes**

**9 No**

**0 Abstention**

**Members for:** Dilafroz Ahmed, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Maria DeInnocentiis, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher, Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Mitch Lisker, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Dilip

Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Mohammad Rahman, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman.

**Members against:** Kenneth Cohen II, David Mordukhaev, Hersh Parekh, Tobias Paris, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Deepti Sharma, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg.

There is another City Planning zoning proposal change that would remove the requirements, with exception, for housing projects where there are less than 175 units in low-density areas and less than 250 units in medium and high-density areas. Eliminating the environmental rules would result in expanding housing development.

*Kevin Forrestal called for a motion to support sending a letter opposing the Green Fast Track, to urge the Commission to deny the administrative action, and for the commission to refrain from future actions until enough time has elapsed to evaluate the effects of the City of Yes changes already approved or under review.*

Mary Maggio made a motion to support the letter and was seconded by Bhitihara-Martha Fulton.

*Kevin Forrestal asked if anyone had any questions.*

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – Does this take anything away from community boards?

**Kevin Forrestal** – No. It would mean that we would not have an environmental review.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – Would it remove the ULURP piece?

**Kevin Forrestal** – No. It removes once section from the ULURP that eliminates environmental rules.

*Kevin Forrestal called for a roll call of those in favor of sending the letter to the City Planning Commission.*

**34 Yes**

**0 No**

**0 Abstention**

**Members for:** Dilafroz Ahmed, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher, Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Mitch Lisker, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Tobias Paris, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Rabbi Mayer Waxman, Jacob Weinberg.

***Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, Parks Committee Chair*** - The CB8 Parks Committee met with the New Yorkers for Parks Director of Public Advocacy and Programs, Ms. Sherrise Palomino, concerning New York City budget cuts and a resolution to support the funding of NYC Department of Parks. New Yorkers for Parks conduct research and develop policy recommendations related to the quality of open space related to development, management and sustainability, by using research as a foundation for their advocacy of policies to protect open space for all neighborhoods throughout NYC.

The Parks Committee has voted to support a resolution that requires the Mayor to keep his promise of funding the Parks Department at 1% of the city budget. NYC spends less than other major cities and has three (3) to eight (8) times the amount of park space as other cities. Forty-four (44) members of the City Council are in support of this 1% budget.

**Dr. Penny Stern** – Why are we not asking for 2%?

**Bhitihara-Martha Fulton** – New Yorkers for Parks is asking for 1%.

**Marie Adam-Ovide** – The reason it's 1%, is because it was the mayor's campaign promise.

***Bhitihara-Martha Fulton called for a motion to support sending a letter to the mayor to allocate 1% of the New York City Budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation.***

Harbachan Singh made a motion to support the letter and was seconded by Michael Hannibal.

**33 Yes**

**0 No**

**0 Abstention**

The resolution was unanimously approved.

**Health Minute with Dr. Stern**

January represents cervical cancer awareness month. The month gives us an opportunity to raise awareness about cervical cancer and the effectiveness of the HPV vaccine. When diagnosed promptly, cervical cancer can be treated successfully, since it's one of the most treatable cancers. Black women have a low incidence of cervical adenocarcinoma [*one subtype of cervical cancer*]; however, they have the highest mortality rate of this subtype due to untimely access to healthcare/diagnosis. Black, Hispanic and Latina women are more likely than white woman to get diagnosed with cervical cancer and die from it. Vaccination is recommended for everyone from age 11 to age 26 (*who was not previously vaccinated*). She urged everyone to spread the word about cervical cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by,  
Soleil Griffin, CB8 Staff  
January 19, 2024*