



Chairman, Alvin Warshaviak

The City of New York
Borough of Queens

Community Board 8

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

PUBLIC HEARING: Newsstand Application – New Applicant

Date: Monday, February 10, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Hillside Manor
188-11 Hillside Avenue
Hollis, NY 11423

ATTENDANCE: Mark J. Lefkof, Area 7 Chairperson
Susan Cleary
Kevin Forrestal
Marc A. Haken
Harbachan Singh

Purpose of Public Hearing

This is a proposal for a newsstand on the sidewalk at the northeast corner of Homelawn Street and Hillside Avenue.

Mark. J. Lefkof, Area 7 Chairperson, called this meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were five (5) Board Members present; therefore, we did not have a quorum. Mr. Lefkof explained that the applicant of the newsstand could not be here this evening. Mr. Lefkof read aloud the following letter received by the applicant:

Dear Sir/Madam.

I am Subarna Karmaker, the applicant of the newsstand at the NE corner of Homelawn Street and Hillside Avenue. I received a notice to attend the public hearing on February 10, 7:30 pm. I wish to attend the hearing, but I will not be able to attend for family problems. My statement is the same as I represented at the first meeting. It is a very small business. The people who are in a rush to catch a train or bus, they will be able to buy a water, newspaper, candy or gum without making a line inside any store. I think it will be very helpful for pedestrians also. Since I will not be able to attend the meeting, whatever decision you make I will respect your decision. I, therefore, pray and hope you will be kind enough to represent my speech at the hearing and will make a decision which is going to be helpful for everyone.

Sincerely,
Subarna Karmaker

Public Participation:

Khalida Machriqi and her husband, Rahim Mashriqi are the owners of the food cart that is located on the NE corner of Homelawn Street and Hillside Avenue. This is the same corner the proposed newsstand wants to be located. Khalida Machriqi is opposed to this newsstand. The newsstand will conflict with her business. We sell water and drinks that are just as convenient as the newsstand wants to sell. She doesn't want this newsstand to impact her business. She has three children and she does not want her business to subside because of their business. Also, when my husband parks the food cart, he needs to bring up his van to pull the cart onto the sidewalk. The newsstand will be in the way of this.

Rahim Mashriqi, owner of the food cart. He has been on this corner since December 2006. He has built up a clientele on this corner. People in the community know him. They come and get legitimate food. This location is a hill; it is not a straight sidewalk. He avoids backing up the car in any way. He brings it with the van and parks it. At night he has to take the cart away for cleaning. If the newsstand comes there, he will not be able to pull the cart away from the sidewalk with his van.

Marc A. Haken asked if the food cart license only permits the owner to put the food cart in that spot. Answer: Mr. Mashriqi stated that he can put his cart in the five Boroughs. He will not make any business if he were to move. People know him here. It took him nine months to establish himself on this corner. If he moves to another corner he would be done with. He will lose his customers.

Harbachan Singh asked if the food cart will be in the same location at the newsstand. Answer: Mr. Mashriqi stated that the newsstand will be next to the food cart.

Susan Cleary asked what is at the end of the block. Answer: A taxi service, a restaurant, a parking lot and an apartment building. There is no room.

Patel Bharatkumar, owner of the small candy/convenient store located at the corner of 169-07 Hillside Avenue. He has the same business as what the newsstand is proposing to sell. His business will not survive with the newsstand there. The corner is a very busy spot. The traffic is very hectic. There is not sufficient space for the newsstand. The newsstand is not needed. Newspapers do not sell in this area. He is opposed to this newsstand.

Mohammed Nuruddin, R. Ph., owner of the Estates Pharmacy Inc.

Mr. Nuruddin stated that there are way too many convenient stores that sell the same merchandise. This area will be too crowded. He receives many sanitation tickets because pedestrians drop litter in front of his establishment. He objects to the proposed newsstand.

Mr. Nuruddin submitted to the Community Board, for the record, a signed petition from 30 residents who live in the community. They urge our leaders to deny the newsstand proposal located at the corner of Homelawn Street & Hillside Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11432.

Board Member Comments:

- Mark J. Lefkof explained that Community Board 8 will inquire as to whether this newsstand application needs to go to the full Board for review. Kevin Forrestal expressed that the Community Board office should be prepared to put this on the meeting agenda should it need a full vote.

- Kevin Forrestal expressed that this corner has established vendors who have been there for some time, dealing with the same activity. They are fixed and semi-fixed properties. It is a reasonably congested area. It doesn't appear to be a greater advantage to the community, since the same things are being sold elsewhere. The sidewalk appears to have an oversaturation. He is not in favor of this newsstand.
- Harbachan Singh feels the food cart is mobile. The food cart can move to any place. There is a need, because there is a subway station, for people who are in a rush to purchase a newspaper. The City has newsstands all over the place. He doesn't see a conflict. He is in favor of the newsstand.
- Susan Cleary remembers newsstands from when she was a child. However, she is concerned with the traffic congestions. Mark J. Lefkof explained that DOT will be reconfiguring that corner because of safety issues.
- Marc A. Haken stated it is not the Community Board's role to actively restrain businesses. He will vote in favor of the newsstand.
- Mark J. Lefkof explained that this newsstand will restrain the businesses that have already been established. The storeowners pay rent and try to support families. This newsstand does not have to be placed on this corner. It is a bad corner to put the newsstand on. It is a major hardship on the existing storeowners. He is very opposed to this newsstand at this location.
- Kevin Forrestal stated that if this newsstand makes the other established vendors nonviable, then we will have vacant properties. We see that all along Union Turnpike. This will be a problem.
- Marc A. Haken stated that there is a non-fixed business there right now. A market survey of the area had to be done to determine that particular corner would be most beneficial to their business. The area is a very large population of people. There is a subway station where people will purchase newspapers, water and gum.

Motion:

Kevin Forrestal made a motion to approve the new application for a newsstand to be located on the northeast corner of Homelawn Street and Hillside Avenue, seconded by Marc A. Haken.

Vote: 2 in favor 3 opposed 0 abstained

Board Members in favor of the newsstand: Marc A. Haken, Harbachan Singh
 Board Members opposed: Susan Cleary, Kevin Forrestal and Mark J. Lefkof

Adjournment

This public hearing adjourned at 8:02 p.m.
 Respectfully submitted by Barbara McKeon, CB8 Staff Member
 February 11, 2014