



*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 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, June 14, 2017 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Rachele Van Arsdale, Jacob Weinberg, and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members Absent:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Carolann Foley, Paul S. Lazauskas, Frank Magri, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Steven Sadofsky, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh and Stanley Weinblatt.

**Others Present:**

Crystal Stone representing Mayor Bill de Blasio, Wilson Thomas representing NYC Public Advocate Letitia James, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Stacey Yearwood representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Daniel Rosenthal representing Councilman Rory Lancman, Andrew Taranto representing State Senator Leroy Comrie, Anthony Lemma representing Assemblyman David Weprin, Marilla Li representing Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Stephen Everett representing NYC Department of City Planning, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff member.

**Call to Order:**

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

**Public Participation:**

**Sam Verstandig** – Mr. Verstandig is a representative from the office of Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. He announced that Senator Addabbo will be hosting mobile office hours from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at the Maspeth Library [69-70 Grand Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378]. Constituents are welcome to speak with him on any issues or concerns they have about the district. Flyers were left on the table.

**Crystal Stone** – Ms. Stone represents the Mayor’s Center for Faith and Community Partnerships. The Center was just started this year. Ms. Stone came to introduce us to what they do and how they serve

communities. The Center's mission is to empower neighborhoods and forge partnerships between faith and community leaders by developing capacity to mobilize civic action.

Four areas of focus:

- **Capacity Building** – Network, organize and access resources to maximize capacity to serve communities.
- **Community Wellness** – Network, organize and access resources to nurture healthy communities.
- **Tenant and Homeowners Resources** – Network, organize and access resources to promote community informed development.
- **Community Inclusion** – Network, organize and access resources to protect rights, promote inclusion and celebrate the diversity of all New Yorkers.

*Flyers were left at the table with more information and contacts.*

**Fabrice Armand representing NYC Department of Corrections** – Mr. Armand is the Director for Strategic Partnership at the Department of Corrections [DOC]. He stated that he was honored to be here since he grew up in this neighborhood and went to St. John's University. He came to inform the community of the hiring opportunities with the DOC. Over the past year, about 1500 new officers were hired. They are looking to hire another 1200 in the coming year. Many of the officers who started at the job at 21 years of age, are retiring at the age of 42, leaving many job openings available. DOC exam #7327 is currently being held from June 1 through June 30. The starting salary is \$44,000 and after 5 ½ years the base salary increases to \$95,000. Normally when you take a Civil Service Exam it takes about 4 years before you get called, but they are moving through the list within 6 months. There are currently non-uniform positions available as well. For information visit: [nyc.gov/jointheboldest](http://nyc.gov/jointheboldest)

**James Gallagher Jr.** – Mr. Gallagher invited everyone to the next Fresh Meadows Homeowners Civic Association meeting on Wednesday, June 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. at Utopia Jewish Center, 64-41 Utopia Parkway. Guest speakers will be Deputy Inspector Scott Henry of the NYPD 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct and representatives from NYC DEP to discuss bioswales and other DEP Green Infrastructures Programs. DEP will be doing Free Rain Barrel giveaways on Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> at St. John's University from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and on Sunday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at Cunningham Park from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Mr. Gallagher thanked Borough President Katz and other elected officials for honoring his wife, Yolanda Dela Cruz Gallagher at the Annual Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Celebration for her community service. He wished everyone a happy and restful summer.

**Kevin Forrestal** – Mr. Forrestal was speaking as President of the Queens Civic Congress. He reported that last April there was an independent commission led by former Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman to close Rikers Island. The Queens Civic Congress is having a debate on this controversial issue on Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Parkway, Floral Park, NY. He encouraged everyone to attend. *The panel will include:*

**Pro** - Karen Koslowitz-Council Member 29th District and Rory Lancman-Council Member 24 District.

**Con** - Elias Husamudeen, President-Correction Officers' Benevolent Association and James C. Quinn, Sr. Executive DA, Trial Division-Office of Queens County District Attorney.

**Juanita Martinez** – Ms. Martinez is Sr. Community Health Worker with Public Health Solutions [PHS]. She represents their Aged, Blind and Disabled Program. They are one of the oldest and largest health non-profits in the city. In cooperation with HRA and the Department for the Aging, they are rolling out a program to assist people 65 years or older and individuals of any age that are certified blind or disabled. PHS offers assistance with enrollment with Medicaid and Medicaid-related programs. The program is free and the staff is able to go directly to the client at their home or other community-based sites where eligible individuals and families already receive services. Ms. Martinez announced that PHS are hiring and

anyone interested should go to [www.healthsolutions.org](http://www.healthsolutions.org) and apply directly online. She encouraged any community organizations who may be interested in co-locating with them to please speak with her after the meeting. Anyone who is interested in more information about their services can contact 311.

**Wilson Thomas representing NYC Public Advocate Letitia James** – Mr. Thomas informed us that the beaches in Far Rockaway are open and the Mayor has extended the season to September 10<sup>th</sup>. He wished everyone a safe and happy summer.

**Delwar Islam** – Ms. Islam spoke on behalf of the Jamaica Muslim Center [JMC] in Jamaica. He invited everyone to join Community Iftar at the Breaking of Fast in the Holy month of Ramadan on Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The center is located at 85-37 168<sup>th</sup> Street, Jamaica, NY.

**Abdul Ghafoor, President of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community** – Mr. Ghafoor represents the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. He invited the community to meet their Muslim neighbors tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. at the Bait-ul Zafar Mosque located at 188-15 McLaughlin Avenue, Hollis, NY.

*Chairperson Martha Taylor announced that there will be Ballperson Tryouts for the US Open. Flyers were left on the table for those interested.*

#### **Salute to the Flag**

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Mark J. Lefkof made a motion to approve the minutes of May 10, 2017, seconded by James Gallagher, Jr.

Count in favor   35                        Opposed:   0                        Abstained:   0  

#### **Board Members who approved the minutes:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pelman, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Rachele Van Arsdale, Jacob Weinberg, and Albert Willingham.

#### **Board Members who did not approve the minutes:**

None

*Chairperson Martha Taylor, seeing that guest speaker Christopher Roker, CEO of Queens Hospital Center, had not arrived yet, said that she would give him some time and proceeded with other agenda items..*

#### **Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:**

- Chairperson Martha Taylor welcomed back Board Member, Rachele Van Arsdale, who recently became a new mother.
- She announced that after many years of trying, the community finally has a Farmer’s Market [Down to Earth Market] in Cunningham Park. It is open every Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. from May 28<sup>th</sup> through November 19<sup>th</sup>. The market offers fresh fruits,

vegetables, pickled items. They also have meats and fish. It has been very well attended by the community. The vendors are a delight and we are very happy about it.

- She stated that for many years, Cunningham Park hosted the Big Apple Circus. They were recently in bankruptcy. They now have been brought out of bankruptcy and are back in business. It is believed that they intend to come back to Cunningham Park next year. They initially used the park for 4 weeks in May and June, then it was 6 weeks including set up and break down. It was a nuisance to the park and the community. There was virtually no parking in the lot while the circus was there. CB8’s Executive Board met and discussed the matter and came to a unanimous agreement that they should go someplace else next year. Chairperson Martha Taylor announced that the Friends of Cunningham Park have drafted a letter to go to Parks Commissioner Mitchell Silver *[against the return of the Big Apple Circus to Cunningham Park]*.

*Mark J. Lefkof made a motion to recommend to the NYC Parks Department that the Big Apple Circus does not return to Cunningham Park, seconded by Susan Cleary.*

**Chairperson Martha Taylor asked if there was any relevant discussion that we have not already heard. Seeing there was no discussion, she took a hand count on the motion to recommend that the Big Apple Circus does not return to Cunningham Park.**

**Count in favor    36                      Opposed:    2                      Abstained:    0**

**Board Members who voted in favor:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Tamara Oshero, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Rachele Van Arsdale, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members who voted against:**

Florence Fisher and Jesse Rosenbaum.

**Allen Eisenstein** – I would like to see the letter recommend Alley Pond Park as host to the Big Apple Circus.

**Chairperson Martha Taylor** – No. We can’t send it to any other park. We are just going to say that we don’t want it. There are plenty of parks in Queens and that is the job of the Parks Department to decide.

**Rachele Van Arsdale** – There is also the issue of them being bought by a new company. We don’t know what to expect from that company either.

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**District Manager’s Report, June 2017**

**DSNY-** During the renovation of the Kew Gardens Hills Library, many parking spots were taken away on Vleigh Place, and on 72<sup>nd</sup> Road. To accommodate the residents, CB8’s office requested suspension of Alternate Side Parking (ASP). This had to be renewed several times due to the DDC construction

delays. The latest suspension was requested until June 30<sup>th</sup> and this information has been widely publicized. DSNY learned that the work at the library has been completed and wanted to return to the ASP regulation now. I requested that they keep the regulations as is until June 30<sup>th</sup> to prevent confusion. DSNY informed us that it will be kept until then.

**Human Resources Administration** – For residents with health problems that require climate control, HRA has applications for free air conditioning units. Please call 212-331-3126 or 718-557-1399 to request an application. To qualify you must:

- Meet HEAP income guidelines and
- Have at least 1 household member who suffers from a heat-related health problem, documented by a doctor.

**DDC** – Final restoration started under QED1001 Project. Completion is still anticipated for the end of June. CB8 requested resurfacing of several streets that were affected by this project and DOT stated that these streets would be reviewed upon its completion. Once we receive word from DDC that the project has been completed, follow-up letters will be sent to Commissioner Garcia of DOT. These streets are as follows:

- **87th Avenue** between Queens Boulevard and 143rd Street - **DOT-263535-T4H2** - Upon completion of DDC Project QED 1001
- **86th Avenue** between Queens Boulevard and 143rd Street - **DOT-251252-R9G3** - Upon completion of DDC Project QED 1001
- **Hoover Avenue** between Smedley Street and Main Street - **DOT-215711-C9N6**- Upon completion of DDC Project QED 1001
- **141-51 Pershing Crescent to Lander Street** - **QBC#12-1613**- Upon completion of DDC Project QED 1001

Area 2 Chair Seymour Schwartz will submit a list of other streets in Briarwood that need to be addressed.

**DOH &MH** – The department is in the process of scheduling its first meeting of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s newly created Community District Committee on mental health. The tentative dates are Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. Kevin Forrestal is our designee and has been in contact with the agency.

**DOB** – Enforcement activities continue to increase in CB8. The month of May had a 92% increase from the same period last year. Illegal conversions continue to be at the top of our list followed by work without permits and working beyond the scope of the plans. Mr. Iuliano reiterated that if applicants build beyond the scope of the approved plans that they are caught during the final inspection. At that time they must file a PAA to modify the plans. They received many elevator complaints due to the delay in the repairs. Many of the parts needed to repair the elevators are manufactured abroad and it takes time to get the parts.

**NYC Commission on Human Rights** – Recently, it was brought to our attention that there was an ad for a rental in a two-family dwelling and the real estate company informed a resident that the owner would only rent to students. This is illegal. The agency investigated and found that they discriminated based on lawful occupation.

**DFTA** – Hurricane season officially started on June 1<sup>st</sup> and will end on October 1, 2017. For New York City it will start on August 1<sup>st</sup>. It is time to look at your go bag and replace expired food items, prescription drugs and change the water. Make sure that you have a copy of your prescriptions in a plastic bag to protect it from water damage.

**DEP** – There were 623 complaints filed in May for CB8. Of these complaints, about 400 were for noise and the majority near Queens Hospital Center. The other noise complaints were for car alarms and ice-cream trucks. Please keep in mind for these noise complaints they need a pattern (i.e. every day from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.) to arrange for an inspection, as they do not have the manpower to dispatch inspectors on the spot.

**NYS Comptroller** – A while ago, we had a representative from the State Comptroller’s Office who informed us about a noise audit being done by the NYS Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli’s Office. This was to evaluate the responsiveness to noise complaints from NYC’s nightlife establishments. We recently received the report [*Report 2016-S-37*] from the audit. This information will be emailed to you. We have a limited number of hardcopies. If anyone is interested in receiving a hardcopy, please contact the CB8 office.

*DM Adam-Ovide reminded everyone about **Community Board 8’s Seventh Annual Health Fair**. It is scheduled for Friday, June 30, 2017 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Cunningham Park. We are still accepting vendors, so please spread the word. Flyers were made available for distribution. Please contact the Community Board office for more information.*

***Happy Birthday to Board Members Mohammed Tohin and Elke Maerz!***

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**Borough President’s Representative – Susie Tanenbaum**

- Ms. Tanenbaum apologized for being a little bit late to the meeting this evening. She explained that in addition to working for the Borough President, Melinda Katz, she is in a PhD program at the CUNY Grad Center and for the last 5 months she has been preparing for a 2-hour oral exam. The exam was scheduled for last Wednesday but the Committee Chair was ill and rescheduled for this afternoon. Ms. Tanenbaum reported that she passed the exam. [*Everyone applauded and congratulated her on the good news*].
- On Tuesday, June 27, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. at the Helen Marshall Cultural Center in Queens Borough Hall, Borough President Melinda Katz will be hosting the annual Awards Ceremony for Community Board members. This is to recognize Community Board members who are celebrating milestone anniversaries on their Community Boards. CB8 Board Members hitting milestones this year: *Jacob Weinberg - 10 years, since 2007; Jagir Singh Bains, Susan Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Howard Fried, Dilafroz Ahmed and Harbachan Singh - 15 years, since 2002; Robert Harris - 20 years, since 1997; Florence Fisher, Tami Hirsch, Stanley Weinblatt and Albert Willingham - 30 years, since 1987*. All Board Members are invited to attend.
- On Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. Borough President Katz in conjunction with the Foundation for Filipino Artists will host the Annual Philippine Independence Day Event at Queens Borough Hall in Room 213.
- On Thursday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Borough President Katz along with the Queens Jewish Community Council, the Jewish Community Relations Council of NY and the Young Israel of Hillcrest will be hosting a Celebration of Jerusalem. It will be held at Young Israel of Hillcrest, 169-07 Jewel Avenue, Flushing, NY. Please RSVP at [queensbp.org/rsvp](http://queensbp.org/rsvp) or (718) 544-9033.
- On behalf of Borough President Melinda Katz, Ms. Tanenbaum wished everyone a Happy Summer!

**Committee Reports:**

**Steve Konigsberg, Zoning Committee Chair**

**ULURP – No. M851031D ZSQ – 193-02 Horace Harding Expressway/BB1 4-717-189.**

A public hearing was held on June 5, 2017 for an Application to modify existing Special Permit and Restrictive Declaration to eliminate the existing management office from the ground floor and create a new two-bedroom apartment, 1,180 sf., at the rear of the building. There was a quorum of Committee Members at the meeting and no one from the public signed up for speaking time.

The law in terms of when you are allowed to make such changes requires that you may make such changes as long as the change does not create any non-compliances or increase the degree of any existing non-compliance; there is no increase in the height of the building; no extension of the location of the exterior walls of the building; no increase in the zoning lot covered by the building; no increase in the floor area on the zoning lot; no reduction on the amount of indoor or outdoor recreation space; no reduction in the amount of bulk storage space within a dwelling unit or shared bulk storage space. Basically they met all the necessary requirements. The additional changes they would be making would include an outdoor seating area for the residents of the building as well as an existing indoor recreation space. At the conclusion of the meeting, the motion made was passed unanimously.

**Marc A. Haken made a motion to approve ULURP No. M851031D ZSQ – 193-02 Horace Harding Expressway, seconded by Kevin Forrestal.**

**Zoning Committee Chair, Steve Konigsberg asked if there was any discussion on the motion, seeing none, a roll call vote was taken.**

**Count in favor   37                        Opposed:   0                        Abstained:   0**

**Board Members in favor:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pellman, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Rachele Van Arsdale, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members against:**

None.

***The motion was passed unanimously.***

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**Adjournment**

Mary Maggio made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:10 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff  
June 20, 2017*