

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD 11  
GENERAL BOARD MEETING**

*March 6, 2023*

*Michael Budabin – Chair*

**PRESENT AT MEETING**

*CB 11 Staff:*

Joseph Marziliano – District Manager

Christina Coutinho – Community Associate

Jane Bentivenga – Community Coordinator

*Elected Officials and/or Representatives Present*

Maria Di Leone

Representing Congress Member Meng

Anthony Iuliano

Representing Mayor Adams

Susannah Go

Representing Assembly Member Rozic

Nicole Kiprilov

Representing Council Member Paladino

David Troise

Representing State Senator Stavisky

Kate Boehme

Representing Queens DA Katz

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chair, Michael Budabin.

Mr. Budabin led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Kate Boehme, representing Queens DA Katz, stated that the DA is working closely with the Sheriff's office to close illegal cannabis shops.

Susannah Go, representing Assembly Member Rozic, spoke regarding events sponsored by the Assembly Member.

David Troise, representing State Senator Stavisky, said their office number is 718-445-0004.

Mr. Budabin stated that Mr. Haber will be leaving the Board as of March 31<sup>st</sup>. At tonight's meeting, Mr. Haber will be honored for his time on the Board. He served on the Board for over 50 years. He was chair for 30 years. Mr. Haber is the longest standing Board Member in the City's history. Mr. Budabin, on behalf of the Board and the Community, thanked Mr. Haber for his service. His service to the community is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Iuliano, representing Mayor Adams, presented Mr. Haber with a Certificate of Recognition for his decades of outstanding service.

State Senator Liu and Assembly Member Braunstein greeted Mr. Haber in person to show their appreciation. Senator Liu spoke about his first meeting with Mr. Haber at the age of 17. He thanked Mr. Haber for all that he has done for the community. Mr. Braunstein said he met Mr.

Haber in 2009 when he joined the Board. They presented Mr. Haber with a State Proclamation for his 53 incredible years of service. Mr. Haber was given a standing ovation.

Mr. Budabin presented Mr. Haber with a plaque from CB11 to commemorate his time on the Board.

Mr. Jerry Iannece, former Board Member and Chair, spoke regarding Mr. Haber's retirement. He thanked him for his service on the Board for so many years.

Mr. Budabin presented the family of the late Mrs. Haider with a plaque from CB11 to commemorate her time on the Board.

Joseph Ottomanelli, DSNY Community Affairs, spoke regarding trash setout time changes starting April 1, 2023. Residential schedule for placing trash, compost or recyclables in a secured container 50 gallons or less can be placed curbside starting at 6:00 PM; trash, compost or recyclables in a bag can be placed curbside starting at 8:00 PM.

### ROLL CALL

#### *Members Present*

Michael Budabin, Susan Cerezo, Sharon Chin, Carmen Collado, Victor Dadrás, Lourdes December, Paul DiBenedetto, Mary Donahue, Henry Euler, Omarr C. Evans, Mario Ferazzoli, Michelle Fields, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Roy Giusetti, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Bernard Haber, George Hadjiconstantinou, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, John Kelly, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Eileen Miller, Douglas Montgomery, Akshar Patel, Wendy Pelle-Beer, Stephen Pivawer, Stephan Popa, Gunjan Rastogi, Christina Scherer, Benjamin Turner, Sam Wong

#### *Members Absent*

Dawn Anatra, Adriana Aviles, Lana Bind, Justin Chew, Christopher Fuentes-Padilla, Yosef Lee, Jyothi Sriram

### ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the February 6, 2023, meeting by Mr. Euler. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mihaltses. There were additions made by Mr. Euler to the paragraph regarding the letter sent to the Governor. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 37 in favor and 2 present. The minutes were approved with additions.

*(In favor - Michael Budabin, Susan Cerezo, Sharon Chin, Carmen Collado, Victor Dadrás, Lourdes December, Paul DiBenedetto, Mary Donahue, Henry Euler, Omarr C. Evans, Mario Ferazzoli, Michelle Fields, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Roy Giusetti, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Bernard Haber, George Hadjiconstantinou, Laura James, John Kelly, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Eileen Miller, Douglas Montgomery, Akshar Patel, Stephen Pivawer, Stephan Popa, Gunjan Rastogi, Christina Scherer, Benjamin Turner, Sam Wong – Present- Mohan Jethwani, Wendy Pelle-Beer)*

### CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The scheduled committee meetings were announced. Mr. Budabin said April 1<sup>st</sup> there will be new Board Members, and some may choose not to renew. He thanked all the Board Members for their service.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

***East Flushing Zoning Committee – ULURP #C220218ZMQ*** – 189-10 Northern Blvd. – An application to the Dept. of City Planning which seeks a zoning map amendment from the Dept. of City Planning (DCP) to rezone 189-02, 189-08, 189-14, 190-10, 191-20 Northern Blvd. and 43-17 189 Street (Block 5513, Lots 8, 10, 11, 12, 22, 27 and a portion of 5) from R3X and R3-2 zoning districts to R3X/C2-3 and R3-2/C2-3 zoning districts. Mr. Budabin, Acting Committee Chair, said this application would add a commercial overlay on all or a portion of the lots included in the application. This proposed amendment will facilitate the development of a new three-story plus cellar mixed-use, commercial and community facility building. The building will be approximately 40' high with a total of 35 parking spaces. The Committee made a motion to approve the application. The Committee voted against the application by 2 in favor and 2 opposed. There were 3 registered public speakers; (1) Ann Avalos spoke in opposition of this application stating that any building could be built without community input. She discussed parking and how there are buildings adjacent that are vacant, therefore, the need for this building is lacking, (2) Lina Vrachnis spoke in opposition of this application stating that this proposal will take away from the nature of the area, (3) Paul Graziano spoke in opposition of this application stating that this applicant is bypassing a variance and is choosing to apply for a zoning change. The applicant's representative, Richard Lobel, gave a presentation. Mr. Lobel said that this block is the only block in a 25-block stretch of Northern Blvd. that is not commercially zoned. He stated that there will be approximately 85 parking spaces with a parking lot that will remain. There will be retail space on the first floor, office space on the second and a community facility on the third. Mr. Budabin made a motion to approve the application. The motion was seconded by Mr. Popa. There was Board Member discussion. Mr. Euler stated that this applicant should seek a Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) variance. The community does not want a rezoning of the area. Currently, their site is in poor condition and not maintained. Mr. Popa said that in the future, this will be a public transportation intersection and there must be a balance for businesses and residents. Mr. Budabin said that he is sympathetic to residents that want to maintain community control by the variance process. Northern Blvd. is a commercial corridor. Mr. Budabin said he is also sympathetic to business owners that want to be able to develop in our community. Mr. DiBenedetto said that a zoning change is not needed, and this will allow for overdevelopment. Ms. James spoke regarding the parking lot on the block and how if the application passes, an as-of-right structure could be built on that lot. Mr. Hadjiconstantinou stated that he does not see the negative impact of this application since this area is already a commercial thruway. Mr. Lobel gave a few points; the choice of not going to BSA, this application does not fit the findings for a variance; the rezoning conforms to the area. Mr. Turner said that he agrees with Mr. Lobel and that new businesses must be allowed if they are needed. Mr. Montgomery wanted to remind the Board of the Douglaston project at Northern Blvd. and Douglaston Parkway and how it changed the neighborhood. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 10 in favor, 27 opposed and 2 present. The motion was denied.

*(In-favor - Michael Budabin, Sharon Chin, Victor Dadras, Elias Fillas, George Hadjiconstantinou, John Kelly, Stephan Popa, Gunjan Rastogi, Benjamin Turner, Sam Wong – Opposed - Susan Cerezo, Carmen Collado, Lourdes December, Paul DiBenedetto, Mary Donahue, Henry Euler, Omarr C. Evans, Mario Ferazzoli, Michelle Fields, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Roy Giusetti, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Bernard Haber, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Eileen Miller, Douglas Montgomery, Akshar Patel, Wendy Pelle-Ber, Stephen Pivawer, Christina Scherer - Present – Mohan Jethwani, Wendy Pelle-Ber)*

**North Bayside Zoning Committee – ULURP #C210323 MMQ – 43 Avenue Demapping.** An application for an amendment to the City Map involving the elimination, discontinuance and closing (demapping) of 1,559 square foot portion of 43 Avenue between 222 Street and 223 Street and adjustment of grades and block dimensions necessitated. Ms. Lanzetta, Committee Chair, stated that this application is to eliminate the encroachment of a retaining wall. There were no registered public speakers. The applicant’s representative, Joseph Sabro, gave a presentation. This will be on the south side of 43 Avenue between 222 and 223 Streets. The applicant is the owner of 222-08 43 Avenue, this property and the adjacent property have a retaining wall that encroaches on 43 Avenue. Without resolving the encroachment, the applicant is not able to obtain a C of O or resolve violations. The applicant is seeking this application to correct the violations and obtain a C of O. There are plans to build and repair the retaining wall. The Committee made a motion to approve the application. The motion failed. The Committee also discussed the traffic on 43 Avenue. A motion was made to the approve the application by Mr. Popa. The motion was seconded by Ms. Garippa. There was Board Member discussion. Mr. Popa stated that the retaining wall does not encroach onto the street. The street and sidewalk will stay the same. The greenery will stay the same. He said there is no impact on traffic. He was confused as to way the Committee voted against the proposal. Mr. Mihaltses said that in 2005 the owner built the retaining wall. The wall was built knowing it was encroaching on City property. He also discussed the bottleneck traffic flow on 43 Avenue. To approve this application will set a precedent that anyone can build on City property. He said the owner can seek a revocable consent to allow it to be there or rebuild and have DOB approve the wall. Mr. Montgomery said the wall never should have been built; it was built on City property. Discussion ensued regarding how this should have been built the right way. It was clarified that the retaining wall was built in 2005 not 1996. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 0 in favor, 39 opposed, 2 present.

*(Opposed - Michael Budabin, Susan Cerezo, Sharon Chin, Carmen Collado, Victor Dadras, Lourdes December, Paul DiBenedetto, Mary Donahue, Henry Euler, Omarr C. Evans, Mario Ferazzoli, Michelle Fields, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Roy Giusetti, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Bernard Haber, George Hadjiconstantinou, Laura James, John Kelly, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Eileen Miller, Douglas Montgomery, Akshar Patel, Stephen Pivawer, Stephan Popa, Gunjan Rastogi, Christina Scherer, Benjamin Turner, Sam Wong - Present - Mohan Jethwani, Wendy Pelle-Ber)*

#### **BOARD MEMBER NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Collado requested a meeting to discuss the current problems with the Port Washington line of the Long Island Railroad into NYC. A committee meeting will be scheduled.

Mr. Euler discussed upcoming cases at the Board of Standards and Appeals.

Mr. Montgomery discussed a proposal to have the entrance of the park at 234 Street clearly identified before it is included in the zoning change. A joint Douglaston Zoning, Parks and Transportation Committee meeting will be scheduled.

#### **COMMUNITY BOARD OFFICER ELECTIONS**

Mr. Budabin said that he enjoyed his time as Chair, and he thanked everyone on the Board including the staff. Mr. Jethwani thanked Mr. Budabin for his time as Chair.

Mr. Mihaltses chaired the elections.

Motions were made to nominate the Board Officers as follows:

Paul DiBenedetto was nominated for Chair by Mr. Dadras. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Jethwani. Mr. DiBenedetto accepted the nomination.

Stephan Popa was nominated for Chair by Mr. Turner. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Kelly. Mr. Popa declined the nomination. He will be resigning from the Board. There were no other nominations. There was one vote cast by Ms. Scherer for Paul DiBenedetto.

Mr. DiBenedetto will be the Chair starting April 1, 2023.

Victor Dadras was nominated for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair by Mr. DiBenedetto. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Guidice. Mr. Dadras accepted the nomination. Ms. Donahue nominated Henry Euler. Mr. Euler declined the nomination by saying that he supports Mr. Dadras. There were no other nominations. One vote was cast by Mr. Popa to re-elect Victor Dadras. Mr. Dadras will continue his role as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

Henry Euler was nominated for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair by Ms. Scherer. The motion was seconded by Ms. Guidice. Mr. Euler accepted the nomination. Eileen Miller was nominated for 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair by Ms. Cerezo. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jethwani. Ms. Miller accepted the nomination. Ms. Miller introduced herself. Mr. Euler introduced himself. There were no other nominations. An electronic ballot was collected resulting in 31 for Mr. Euler and 8 for Ms. Miller. Mr. Euler will be 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair starting April 1, 2023.

**(Henry Euler** – Michael Budabin, Sharon Chin, Carmen Collado, Victor Dadras, Lourdes December, Paul DiBenedetto, Henry Euler, Omarr C. Evans, Mario Ferazzoli, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Roy Giusetti, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Bernard Haber, Laura James, Mohan Jethwani, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Douglas Montgomery, Akshar Patel, Wendy Pelle-Ber, Stephen Pivawer, Stephan Popa, Christina Scherer, Benjamin Turner - **Eileen Miller** – Susan Cerezo, Mary Donahue, Michelle Fields, George Hadjiconstantinou, John Kelly, Eileen Miller, Gunjan Rastogi, Sam Wong)

Eileen Miller was nominated by Ms. Donahue for 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Cerezo. Ms. Miller accepted the nomination. Fleur Martino was nominated by Mr. DiBenedetto. The nomination was seconded by Mrs. Guidice. Ms. Martino accepted the nomination. Ms. Martino introduced herself. An electronic ballot was collected resulting in 19 for Ms. Miller and 20 for Ms. Martino. Ms. Martino will be 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair starting April 1, 2023.

**(Eileen Miller** – Susan Cerezo, Sharon Chin, Victor Dadras, Lourdas December, Mary Donahue, Henry Euler, Omarr C. Evans, Mario Ferazzoli, Michelle Fields, Albert Galatan, Joan Garippa, Bernard Haber, George Hadjiconstantinou, Mohan Jethwani, Jena Lanzetta, Robert Liatto, Eileen Miller, Stephen Pivawer, Christina Scherer – **Fleur Martino** – Michael Budabin, Carmen Collado, Paul DiBenedetto, Elias Fillas, Jack Fried, Roy Giusetti, Michael Golia, Rosemarie Guidice, Laura James, John Kelly, Fleur Martino, Karen Mazza, George Mihaltses, Douglas Montgomery, Askhar Patel, Wendy, Pelle-Ber, Stephan Popa, Gunjan Rastogi, Benjamin Turner, Sam Wong)

Mr. Marziliano said that on the behalf of the staff and himself he wanted to thank Mr. Budabin for his service as Chair during a very challenging time. Mr. Budabin once again thanked everyone.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM.