

Testimony Council redistricting –
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Elmhurst, South side of Queens Blvd consists of predominately working class homeowners who live in private two three family homes. Codwise Place, Hilyer St, Manila St. Simonson St, Jacobus Kneeland, Calamus, just to name a few streets on the south side. It is a quiet oasis against the more hustle and bustle of the North side. **We are asking the south side of QB up to Grand Av be redrawn to be included with Maspeth (district 30).**

Our two communities share the same civic organization (COMET, EU). WE walk to the same supermarkets, churches schools. Our families bought homes in the two neighboring communities. We even once shared the same elected. We're asking to return to original council maps that aligned our little enclave with our sister community of Maspeth. The recent Assembly redistricting returns this part of Elmhurst with Maspeth.

Most of us do not cross Queens Blvd, to the north side, as it is a very dangerous intersection. It is a major barrier. We are currently in District 25 which encompasses most of Jackson Heights and Elmhurst. The communities on the North side and south side of QB are very different. Unlike the south side, the North side consists of taller and more densely populated apartment dwellers. The difference is so great that many of interests that effect our lives are in direct conflict with the residents in the North Side. Our concerns are muted against the more populous and louder voices of the communities on the North side of QB and Jackson Hts.

The South side wants to keep intense development of North side at bay. The influx of developers buying up houses in the area and converting them into condos and apartment buildings have saturated the North side. They are now eyeing the south side. We're seeing beautifully kept owner occupied homes bought up by developers and having it be converted to multiple family absentee landlord buildings. These new structures destroy the scale and context of the community. Where there was once neatly preserved with similar architectural designed homes, we have newly built ugly eyesores that juts out against the once neat and uniform street. Long time residents are moving out of the area, allowing developers to infiltrate with little resistance. These changes destabilize a community. Many of these unwanted changes would not have occurred had we had the support of the civics and local elected.

. We use to be able to walk to our elected official's office to speak with them. We see them around the neighborhood. He sees first hand what the needs of the area are. There was no need for us to go to them and argue our point. We don't have this anymore. Our elected are in Jackson Heights. District 30's office is in closer proximity to us than ours. We never really see our elected officials. No reason for them to pass this area, they don't use our subways, our shops, our schools. They don't even have to drive thru this area so we are forgotten. Being forgotten has diminished our voices. Businesses that should not be opened in a residential area have flourished (illegal car washes, strip club's). The streets are dirtier. District 30 is more aligned with our needs. Many residents in the south side go to the council member in District 30 for real estate tax help, DOB building violation help, Sidewalk violation, DEp issues etc instead of our own because they are more equipped to handle our questions.

We need representation from our elected officials are aligned with our interests..
Many of our wishes are in direct conflict with the North side.

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-should he represent Homeowners or tenants.

-should he advocate for increasing development and housing density to accommodate the housing needs of his North side's constituency or should he advocate for the desires of the less influential south side?

-The schools in the south side has experienced a massive influx of students from the North side. Our schools are already overcrowded, but not to the extent of those in the e North side. Which side should he support? He as no choice in this case. But if were a different district, we would have more control in this issue.

- our area had an increase in criminal activity including gang, drug, prostitution activities. Our homes broken into, our cars stolen, yet we continued to be told by our precinct, their efforts are on the North side. We know that side has a higher concentration of criminal activity, but should our neighborhood suffer too?

I could go on and on. But in the interest of time, and with consideration to the other speakers, I just want to conclude with – Elmhurst So side of QB would be better served, if it is aligned with District 30