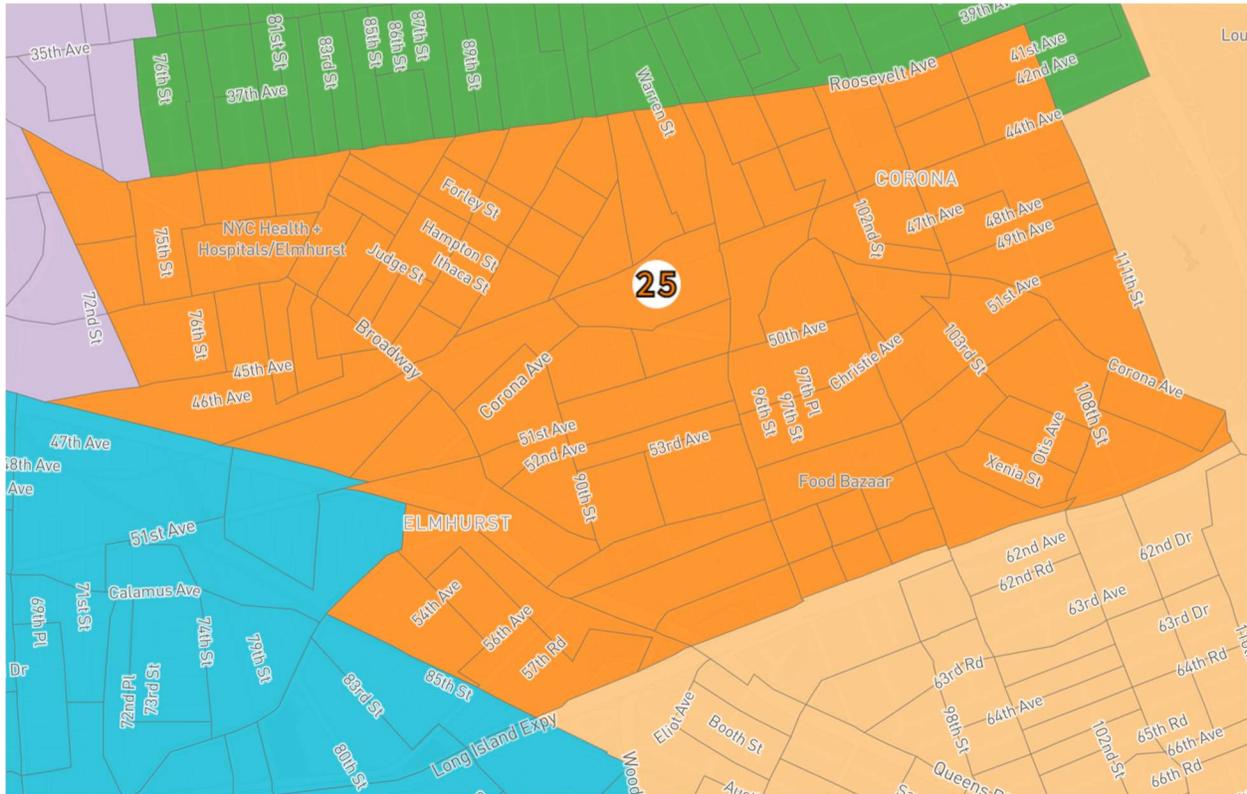


Current council district lines, particularly in Queens and southern Brooklyn, don't accurately reflect our communities.

District 25



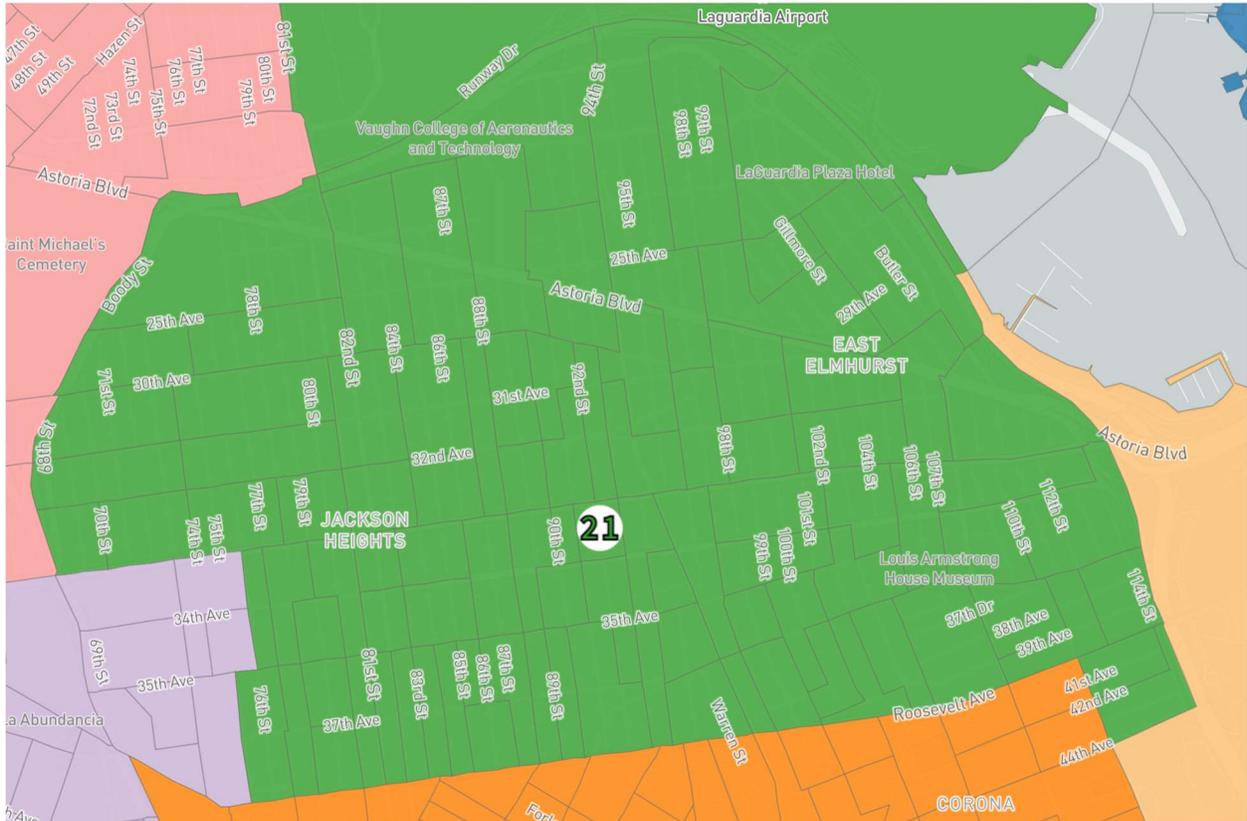
The current joiner of Elmhurst and Jackson Heights into the same council district makes no sense. They're not in the same Queens Community Board District. They're not in the same Public School District. They don't even share the same Police Precinct. Roosevelt Avenue and the IRT Flushing Line are a major dividing line between the two neighborhoods.

Elmhurst, in particular southern areas, primarily consists of two to three family houses while Jackson Heights is dominated by large apartment buildings. The southern half of Elmhurst is mostly inhabited by a working-class Chinese immigrant community, a population that has spilled over into neighboring sections of Corona, Maspeth and Middle Village. Their presence is visible in schools, parks and small businesses. By contrast, Jackson Heights is dominated by South Asian immigrants in the west and Latino immigrants in the east. The South Asian community has mostly grown west into northern sections of Woodside rather than south into Elmhurst.

These physical and cultural divides mean there is limited interaction between the communities in Elmhurst and Jackson Heights. The more rational alignment corresponds to Community Board, School District and Police Precinct dividing lines, which place Elmhurst with Corona in one district and Jackson Heights with East Elmhurst in another.

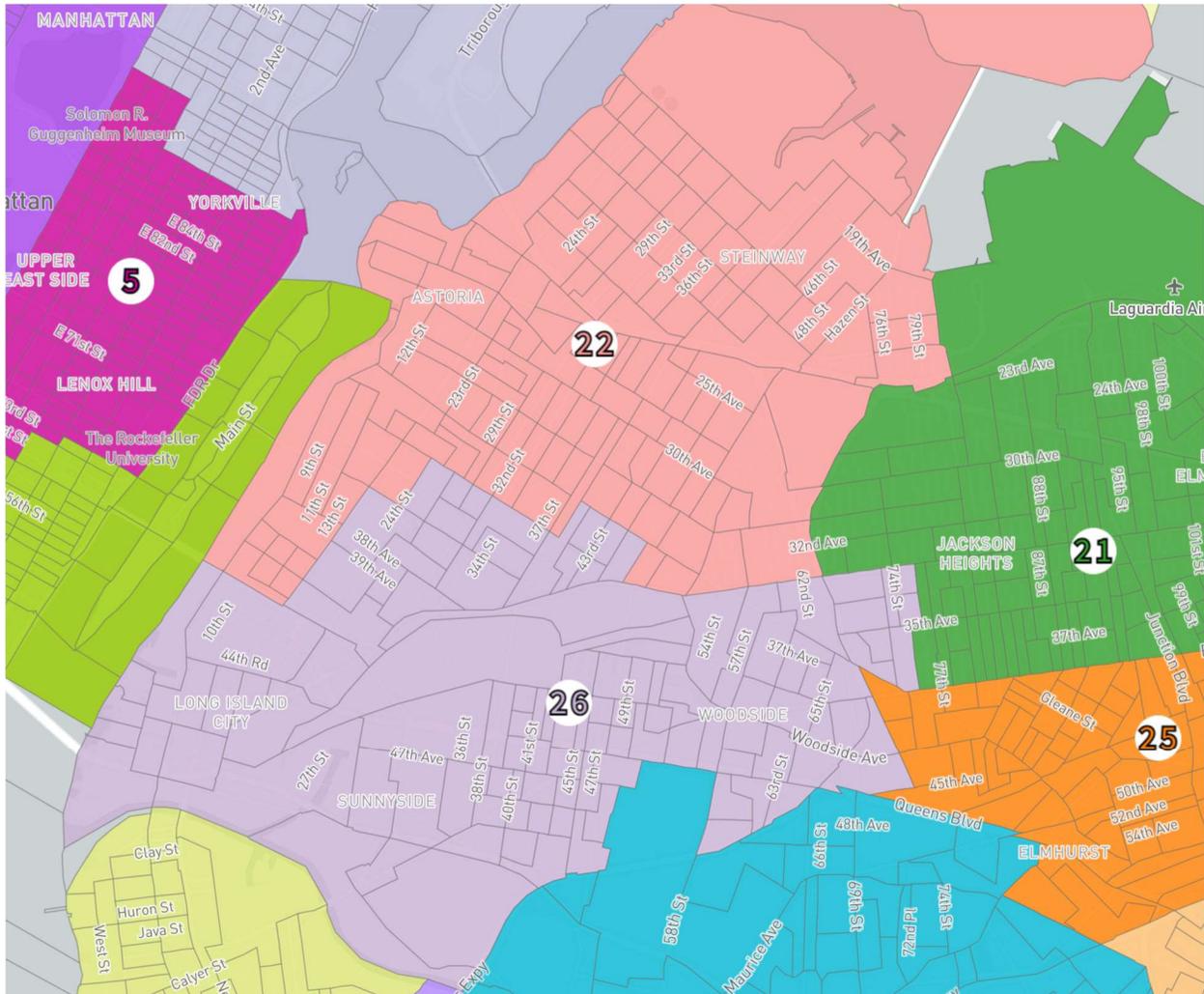
District 25 should use major roadways as boundaries: Roosevelt Avenue on the north, the Long Island Expressway on the south, the Grand Central Parkway on the east. The western border should follow Queens Boulevard and the Long Island Railroad, -moving the southwest corner of Elmhurst to District 30 for population purposes.

District 21



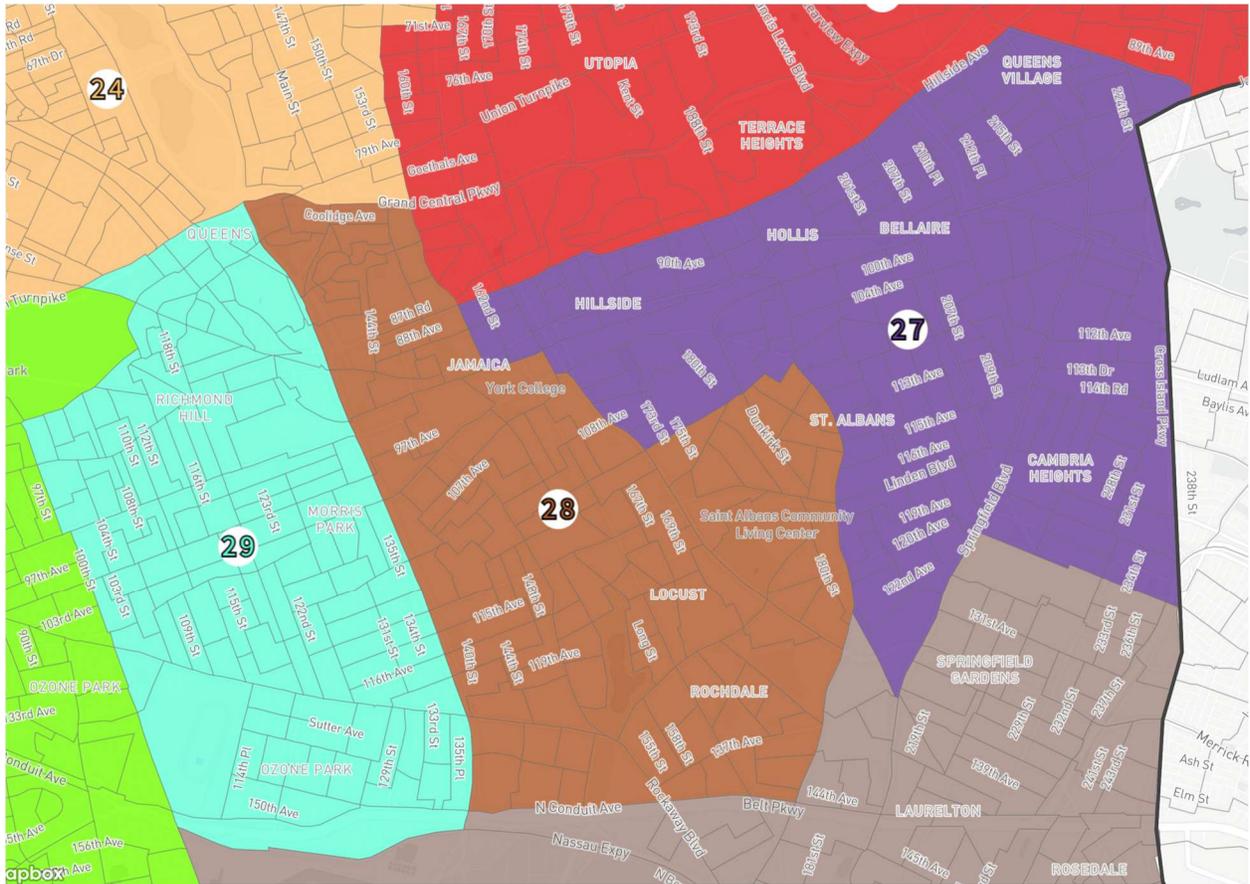
The most compact and rational boundary for District 21 would correspond to the one already used for the Community Board and Police Precinct, Roosevelt Avenue along the south and the Grand Central Parkway forming the northern boundary around East Elmhurst and Jackson Heights. The western edge of Jackson Heights should be included in District 26 to reflect the South Asian community there which flows west into northern Woodside.

District 22 and 26



District 22 currently crosses the Brooklyn Queens Expressway into northern Jackson Heights, but population growth in District 26 means it no longer needs to invade and heavily divide Jackson Heights. District 22 can instead move south to incorporate other areas of Astoria. The NYCHA projects are arguably a community of interest given their unique landlord-tenant issues and the similar socio-economic characteristics of their residents. District 22 can and should be easily redrawn to encompass the Astoria Houses, Ravenswood, Queensbridge and Woodside Houses. The redistricting commission should keep the NYCHA projects together in the same district to magnify their often neglected voice in western Queens.

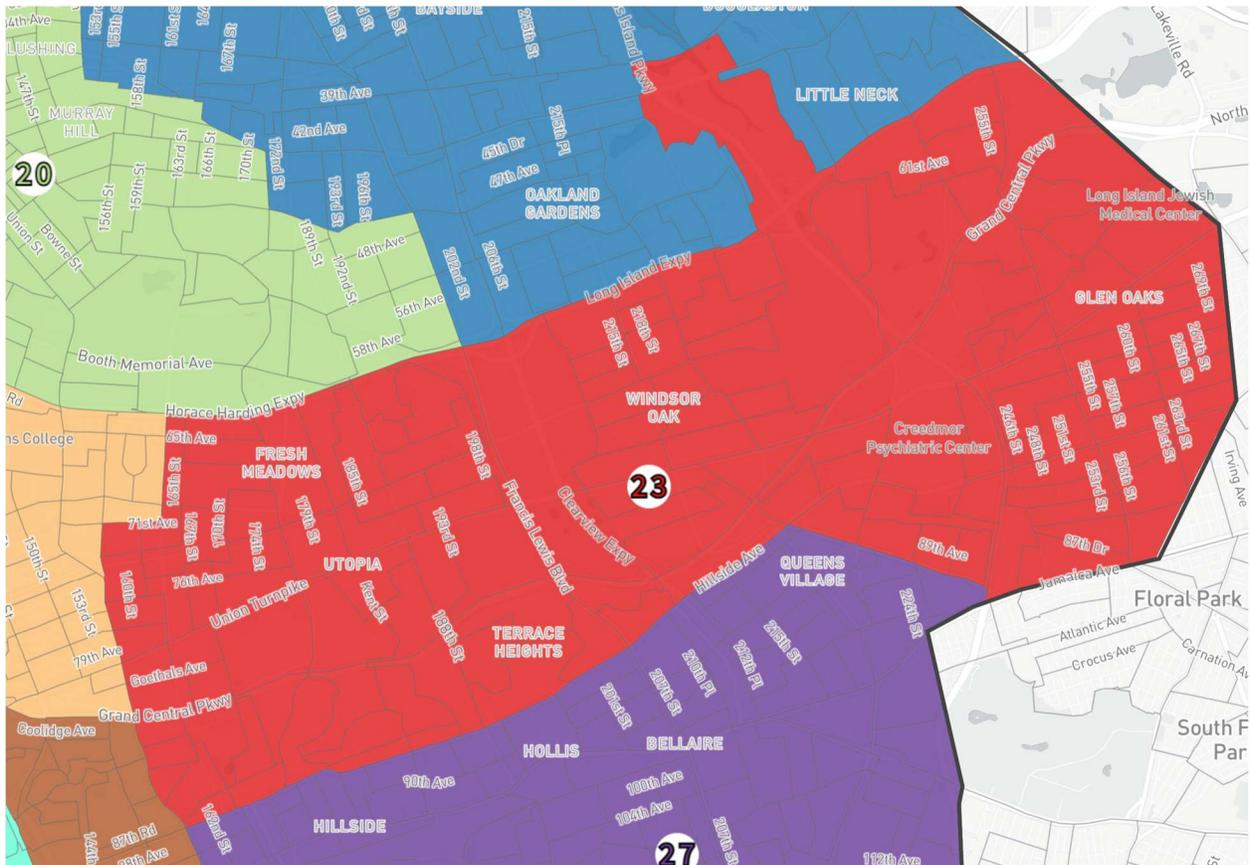
District 28 and 29



District 28 currently crosses the Van Wyck Expressway to join neighborhoods east and west of the expressway into the same district. There really isn't much tying these two areas together. Shifting District 29 to include Kew Gardens, Richmond Hill, South Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park would result in a more compact district. It would also be more effective at keeping the large South Asian and Indo-Caribbean community in these neighborhoods together.

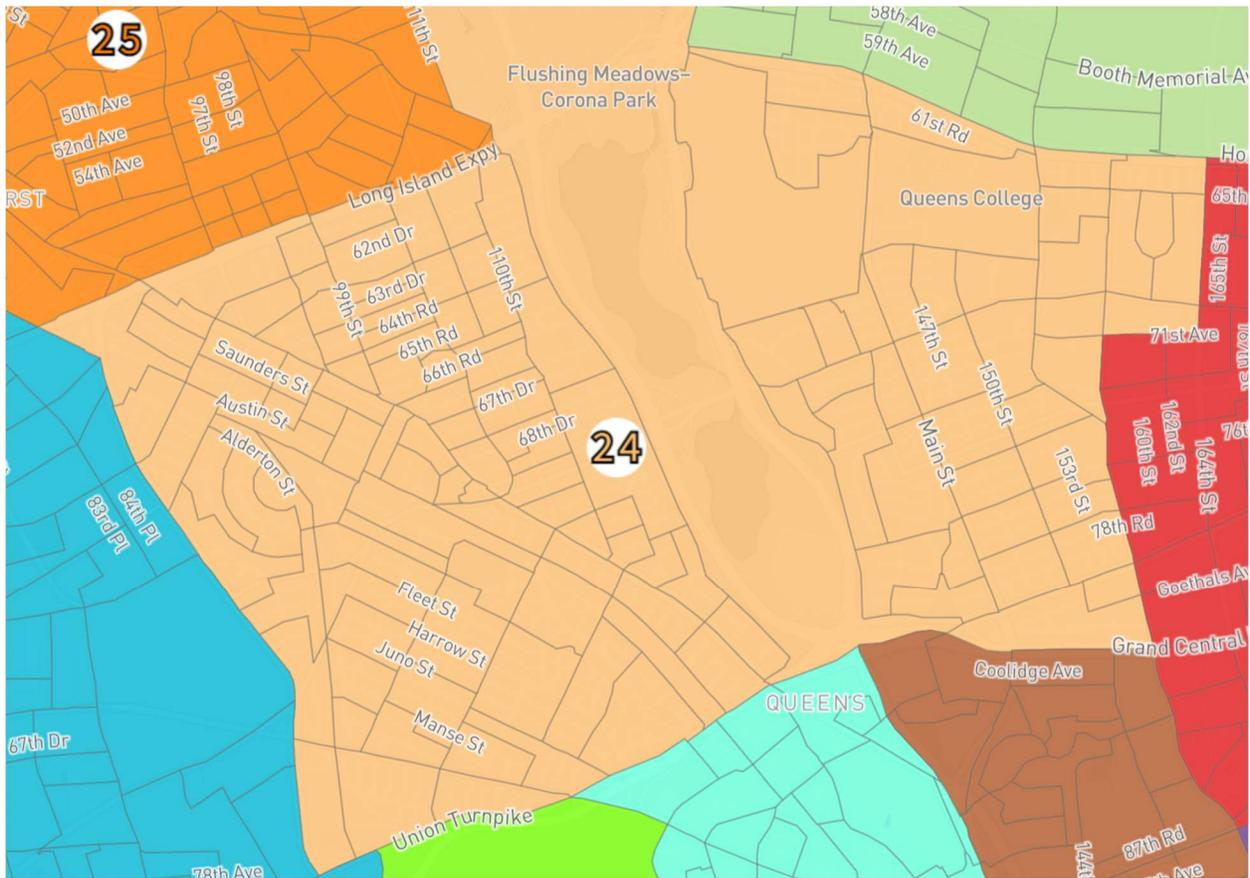
That would shift District 28 entirely east of the Van Wyck Expressway, north of the Belt Parkway, south of the Grand Central Expressway and west of Farmers Boulevard. And would require District 27 to shift north with Hillside Avenue as the northern border rather Jamaica Avenue. It reflects a reasonable divide as the areas north of Hillside Avenue (Jamaica Hills, Holliswood, Jamaica Estates) are less densely populated and more affluent than the areas just south of Hillside Avenue (Hollis, Queens Village, Hillside).

District 19 and 23



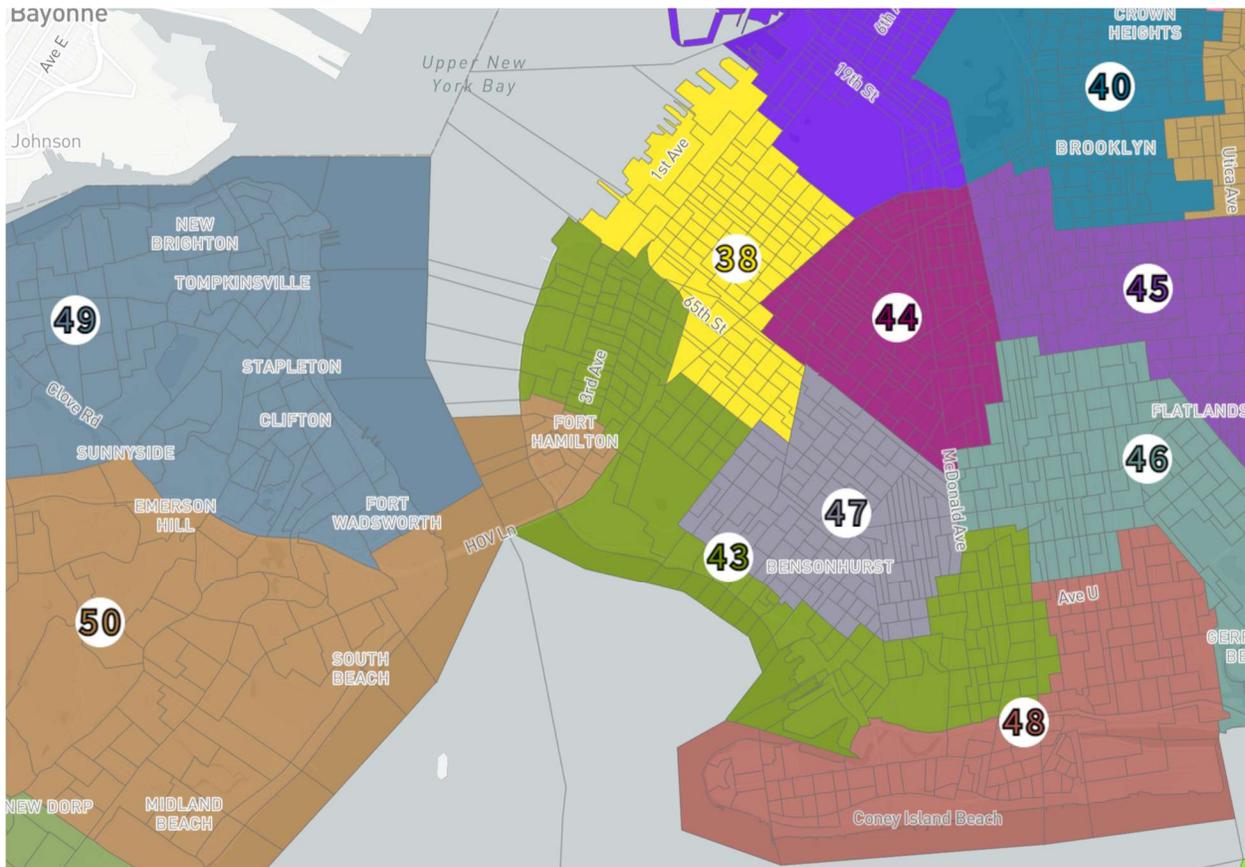
Both District 19 and 23 are underpopulated. This can be easily resolved by shifting the southern boundary of District 19 to the Long Island Expressway. District 23 would then need to shift west to Parson Boulevard, adding neighborhoods including Hillcrest and Jamaica Estates.

District 24



Placing Rego Park, Forest Hills, Kew Gardens Hills and Electchester together in District 24 would be a necessary consequence of the prior district line proposals. The district does unite areas bordering Flushing Meadows Corona Park as a shared public amenity. The areas on either side of the park consists of similar upscale neighborhoods with large Jewish and Asian communities. Areas on both sides of the park also contain large areas of single family detached homes in addition to tall apartment complexes. One district must cross the eastern and western halves of Queens to balance the population.

Borough Crossing District



All three districts on Staten Island are underpopulated. This necessitates a borough crossing into Brooklyn as the only physical link between Staten Island and the other boroughs is the Verrazzano Narrows Bridge. Others are proposing a ferry link to Manhattan, but that would appear to be an act of gerrymandering as the residents of Lower Manhattan have a very weak relationship to the residents of Staten Island. Meanwhile many residents of Staten Island have roots in Brooklyn and still travel across the bridge for family and business reasons. Joining the Fort Hamilton section of Bay Ridge to a Staten Island based district would be the best choice as it lies immediately across the Narrows.

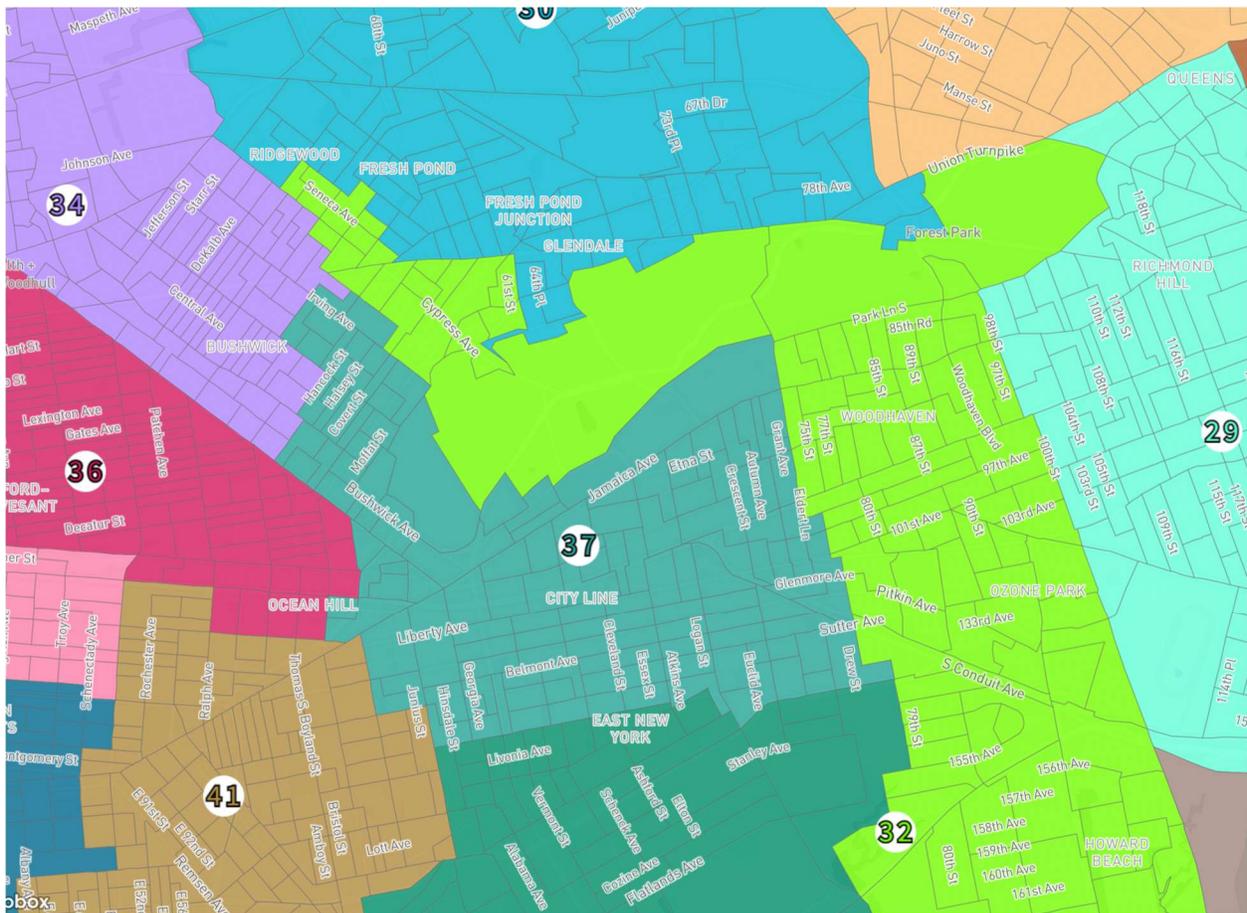
District 38, 43 and 47

Contrary to some of the hearing testimony offered, District 38 is not Latino majority. And there is no way such a district can be drawn because Sunset Park is a mixed Asian-Latino community. There isn't enough Latino population in surrounding neighborhoods either. Given the growth in population in southern Brooklyn, District 38 will actually need to shift south to keep the Sunset Park based district intact. This would result in expansion into northern Dyker Heights while removing Red Hook and South Park Slope portions of the district. The resulting district would actually have a larger combined Asian and Latino population than the current district. Affluent gentrified areas such as South Slope were always a poor match for Sunset Park.

The current division of Bensonhurst between District 43 and 47 heavily divides the neighborhood in an incoherent way. As drawn, it denies the mixed Chinese and Italian community in Bensonhurst the ability to select a representative of their choice. The growing Chinese community is now a large plurality of the Bensonhurst population and this dilution of their voting rights cannot continue. The simplest solution is to join Bay Ridge, southern Dyker Heights and Gravesend together in District 43 using Shore Parkway. This would allow most of Bensonhurst to be kept intact in a standalone District 47. This type of configuration would be reminiscent of District 33 which joins Greenpoint, South Williamsburg and Brooklyn Heights along the East River waterfront to accommodate minority districts in East Williamsburg and Bedford-Stuyvesant.

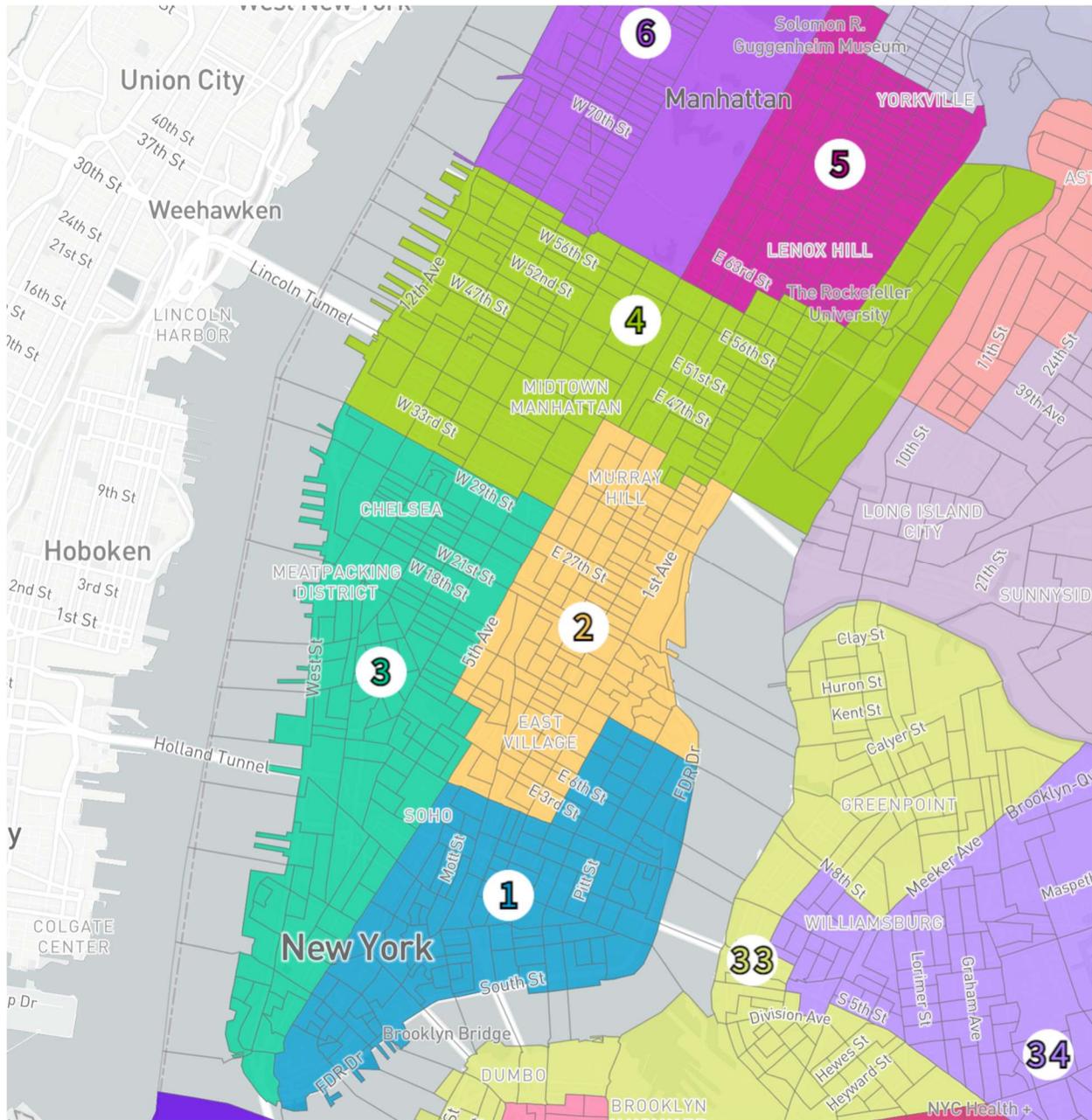
The commission should adopt lines for District 38 and 47 which keep Sunset Park and Bensonhurst intact, protecting the voting rights of minority communities in southern Brooklyn.

District 32



Since Brooklyn must be joined to Staten Island for population reasons, the existing Brooklyn-Queens Latino plurality District 34 would no longer be possible. The Queens portions of District 34 consists of sections of Ridgewood. The simplest solution to this borough crossing problem is to join these areas of Ridgewood to District 32, which also is Latino plurality. The resulting District 32 would have a similar largely minority population like the current District 34.

Manhattan



Working class Asian and Latino communities in Lower Manhattan are near extinction from gentrification. Chinatown is in obvious decline. The current districts don't serve these areas well. They add large tracts of wealthy neighborhoods such as Soho and Tribeca to dilute the voting strength of these minority communities. Placing the Lower East Side together with Chinatown and Loisaida-Alphabet City in District 1 would give residents the most impact in selecting their council member. As currently drawn, the districts are tilted toward affluent college educated residents in surrounding high-turnout neighborhoods such as Gramercy.

On a separate note, the growing population of Lower Manhattan makes the current configuration of District 4 no longer sustainable. Joining Stuyvesant Town to Fifth Avenue on the Upper East Side never made much sense anyway. Combining east and west sides of Midtown with Roosevelt Island would be more compact and create a District 4 that unites a large component of both international residents and office workers across Midtown. It would also help maintain the existing arrangement of Upper West Side and Upper East Side districts beginning at 59th Street.