

## Community Board 1, Queens – Board Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2021

Meeting opens with Chairperson, Marie Torniali at 6:30 p.m.

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney – Good evening. It has been a big week in Washington. It has been a busy fall and I am sure you have been following what is happening in Congress with infrastructure and the Build Back Better Act. I had an incredible day yesterday, I was invited to the White House for the bill signing, Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, with Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Progressive Caucus Chair, Pramila Jayapal, President Joe Biden, Jill Biden and Senator Chuck Schumer, it was a joyous day. This is the largest infrastructure bill in history, and it is bringing billions to New York City. The Second Avenue subway is going up to 125<sup>th</sup> Street, East Harlem, the connection to New Jersey is being built, there will be repairs on our roads and bridges, subway upgrades all kinds of wonderful things for our great city that have been stalled, the east side connector, any monies they need, they are going to open it up a year from now, I was on a tour of it recently. We have one bill down signed into law and another one we hope to pass this Friday, the Build Back Better Act. My section of the bill will have 12 billion to electrify the postal fleet and the federal vehicle fleets from moving us off fossil fuels, protecting our great city, our great country, from climate change it is a great part of this. There is money for the National Archives and many other things, over \$550 billion dollars for combating climate change. It will also provide access to childcare for over a million young children per year for families who earn under 2.5 times the NY median income it will ensure that these families pay no more than 7% of their income on high quality childcare. That is critically important, I literally know families that can work remotely that have moved to other countries. Affordable childcare is not available here in NY, I am very excited about this as a former teacher. Everyone says that preschool is the most important investment we can make for children, the program will pay for a \$329,000 an additional 3 and 4-year olds per year. It will increase the quality of preschool who are already enrolled and it will increase the maximum Pell Grant awards by 550% for our students and it will expand access to preschool meals to an additional 222,000 students during the school year and provide over 2 million students with resources to purchase food over the summer and very importantly, it will provide construction and rehab of over a million affordable housing units nationwide and a large portion of it goes to public housing and roughly \$30 billion maybe more. The board members should start smiling those who have been working with Astoria Houses and other houses in the neighborhood, the money will be there for the repairs. It will close the Medicare Coverage Gap to help millions gain health insurance and extend the American Rescue Plans health insurance premium. The Child Care Tax Credit increases to \$300 a month per child under 6 years old and \$250 per child ages 6-17. The Build Back Better framework will also provide a tax cut of over 1,500 in tax cuts for over 982,000 low wage workers by extending and expanding the earned income tax credit. It is really great news for affordable housing for NYC infrastructure repairing our subways. It is long been a goal of this Community Board and a goal of mine to have a transportation hub in Queens similar to Grand Central, that has been planned for years and I am pushing for that, for the infrastructure to be in Sunnyside Yards with a park around it, that would be a great addition to Queens building on the 31<sup>st</sup> Street park that we work together for with federal funding to build. I am ecstatic about it; it will bring a lot of money and improvements to Queens and all 5 boroughs it is very exciting. The 2 largest construction projects in the entire nation, are in the district that I represent and that is the Second Avenue Subway and the East Side Connector, we need a connection into the LIRR that is what we need in the transportation hub in Queens, we passed a resolution in support of it by the Community Board earlier and I thank you for that. That is a top priority of mine and when I set a priority, I usually get it done but it is a work in progress, I am trying to make it happen. The Governor has agreed to tour our Peaker Plants and to work with us to start closing them down to get a cleaner environment and to change the name of Asthma Alley by closing down these plants and make a cleaner environment in Queens.

### **PRESENTATION:**

William Jorgenson, Chief, Housing and Worker Protection Bureau, Office of Melinda Katz, Queens District Attorney - Presentation on Deed Fraud: How to Protect Yourself, Your Loved Ones, and Your Community (*Presentation Attached*)

Mr. Jorgenson introduced himself and made the presentation, followed by a brief Q&A.

### **Q&A:**

Stella Nicolaou – We all get a lot of mail about buying insurance, insurance fraud, anything you would recommend that we can apply to make sure we have insurance should anything like this ever occur. Make sure your deed is always in your name. Make sure if you paid your mortgage make sure that is has been cleared, etc. The New York Times had an article on what you just spoke about.

William Jorgenson – He responded, you may want to speak with your insurance company if you have any and what they would recommend. We can have a conversation offline and I am not able to give any particular endorsement because I am a member of law enforcement. You can also reach out to the Better Business Bureau. You can call our Help Line: 718-286-6673 and will put it in the Chat. If you are looking for anything in particular, please check their website and the District Attorney has a weekly bulletin.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Are there regular newsletters or bulletins on ongoing scams that you send out?

William Jorgenson – The District Attorney has a weekly update. She puts out information from my bureau from time to time. We also have 2 groups that we work with, the Labor Community and the Construction Community.

George Stamatiades (Constituent) - Is there anything government can do to prevent the record agency? Why if they know this is going on, why are they trusting the paperwork? Why not asking to see people in person and see ID?

William Jorgenson – He responded that part of the problem is that the clerk’s office is documenting/filing all the time if every time the clerk stopped and had to do a forensic analysis of a document, the entire system would come to a halt. He explained a few things they have in place. The first thing it is a crime to file a false document. For example, I have a case involving a woman who filed a false deed for a piece of property she is trying to steal. We found out about it because the sheriff’s office alerted us to it, because she had been trying to work her way into getting this property for a while. She was known to us, and so the owner of the property had signed up for this alert that the ACRIS system allows you to do and once that filing was made the alert popped and we found out about it. In other cases, let’s say we find out about it after the fact if somebody filed a false deed on your property, and you find out about it. You call us up, you let us know you say: hey somebody’s filing a deed on my property and it is not me we will look into it and if we have proof that the person you know filed this false deed, you know they said my name is Joe Jones and the property is actually owned and they are, not Joe Jones, they are Sam Spade, then we can prosecute them for false filing amongst other crimes. The other thing is that you know there may be other ways to ensure that this stuff that people do not get away with this, for example like demanding proper identification. As you pointed out, you know in the case that I spoke about recently. The woman actually shared a common name with a previous owner of the property, she was able to take advantage of that. That is how that got under the radar, but primarily we as the District Attorney’s office are a law enforcement agency, so we prosecute people for false filings.

Florence Koulouris, District Manager – Can you explain on how to sign up for The Automated City Register Information System (ACRIS) alerts, it is very important for the public.

William Jorgenson – Responded, if you go to the Department of Finance website and you look for ACRIS, there will be a link to the ACRIS website and then you can just follow the links, it will tell you how to do it. You can go to Google go to New York City Department of Finance, or you Google ACRIS you will see a link to New York City Department of Finance, and then you just follow the links and will tell you how to use it.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/finance/taxes/acris.page>

Chair, Marie Torniali - It is very easy to use, I have used it myself.

#### **BUSINESS SESSION:**

#### **Adoption October 2021 Minutes**

Motioned by George Alexiou; Seconded by Thomas Ryan

#### **Chair Report:**

Chair, Marie Torniali – I do not have a report. Please note, the December Full Board Meeting date was changed to December 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **District Manager Report:**

District Manager, Florence Koulouris - We have a new team with us who handle the electronic portion of the meetings and sending out the Zoom. We are sending you through Zoom personal links because we are doing Webinars. Each of you, the Board Members, gets your own link and we would like you to use those links. On the agendas you receive from the Board Office, are the public links, you get those on the back of the agenda in case there is an issue with the Webinar link but the preferred way you should come into the meeting to prevent delays is for you to use your Webinar link. Please make every effort to do this and if you have any questions always feel free to call the Board Office, we are here to help you. Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Dino Panagoulis, Consumer Affairs Committee – Please look at your November spreadsheet that Florence was kind enough to send to everyone. We have a number of businesses that are up for renewal. The Committee did not find any reason to deny any of the applications before us for the month of November. I would like to put a Motion forth to approve unanimously all of the attached businesses and their licenses.

**Seconded by Thomas Ryan**

Chair, Marie Torniali asked if there were any objections. Hearing none, the motion carries.

Evie Hantzopoulos, Housing Committee – We have a Committee Meeting scheduled in January.

Elizabeth Erion, Land Use and Zoning Committee – Yesterday the Planning Commission voted to adopt the Open Restaurant Text Amendment but they voted to adopt a modified text which basically says that the legislation and DOT rules that will be written will have public review and the zoning that the sidewalk cafe zoning is being eliminated from the zoning resolution will not be effective until the DOT rules and the legislation that is necessary to do the program are finished and have been approved have gone through public review. It was the major problem that a lot of people had that they were getting rid of any regulation that we had before we knew what was going to happen. Down the line sometime next year we will be getting more presentations on what DOT guidelines are going to be and the legislation will be required. The other rezoning proposal, 31<sup>st</sup> Street/Hoyt Avenue, the Board voted in September not to approve the proposal and subsequent to that, the Borough President recommended conditional

approval which were recommended measures to avoid adverse impacts and advance notice to the Community about traffic closures and posting contact information and also the applicant was going to baseline surveys in case there is damage to adjacent homeowners properties, to establish a community advisory board, to maintain a consultation with local residents and the applicant committed to a goal of 30% of union hiring's of local residents for jobs and also working with Urban Upbound. The Borough President recommended that they explore the feasibility of further lowering the heights of the proposed buildings. It subsequently went to City Planning on Monday; City Planning discusses the projects that they will be voting on in the future, this was after they had their Public Hearing. It is basically the same thing that we have, the Community was there explaining the issues that they have, and the Community Board forwarded a letter about the context issues. There were Commissioners that thought that the concept of increased density and new development in this area was appropriate, they did not think it was to the degree to which it was being proposed, they questioned the density and the heights. One of the Commissioners asked whether or not if the Department thought about a different zone a contextual zone something like an R7A perhaps. They are going to look into it, at least that is what the response was that they will respond to the feedback from the Commission. The Commission now has until the end of December to vote on this, and then it goes to the City Council for final review and the City Council is the one that will adopt it or recommend a modification.

George Alexiou - The thing is this: it does not matter what we voted at the Community Board when the big shots, the big lawyers want to bypass something they do it. Either they go to the City Planning, to the Borough President or the City Council, and we are here like nothing else like a face and so on, nothing. I mean this is a disgrace. That is what I want to say because they go to the big lawyers and they approve anything they want.

Amin Mehedi - I agree with him.

Elizabeth Erion - The Land Use Committee had a presentation on the Hallets North project last month it was a pre-certification review. A lot of information was not available because the draft EIS, the impacts are still being assessed and the questions that we have really revolve around those issues. The one thing that did come across was that out of the 1200 apartments that are being proposed for this project, which is in Hallets Point in Potts Cove in the vicinity of Shore Towers, the 1200 units, 85% of them are one family, one-bedroom apartments, which is just not accommodating at all the needs of those who have families. We let them know about that. We also questioned about whether or not why there was no retail or some kind of amenities eating amenities in the vicinity of the waterfront development that they are proposing. They say it just does not work well, we will talk about that when they come with the proposal with a plan as a certified plan, the Board will get a full report when the hearing is scheduled, they expect to have their project certified by City Planning sometime in December, it will be after the new year when we have a public hearing on this. Our next meeting is the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. We have three requests that we have to review, some of which will be going to public hearing in December. One is a BSA, Gas Station application; another is a rezoning, 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Vernon Boulevard and 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Street rezonings. I do not have the information for those two as, yet it will be posted, and you will get more information as we get closer to the hearing date.

Kathleen Warnock, Parks/Recreation/Cultural Committee - We will be meeting in January.

Mitch Waxman, Transportation Committee - We had a meeting the last week from the New York City DOT, discussing the roll out of neighborhood loading zones, phase three into the confines of Community Board 1. The neighborhood loading zone is basically a 40-foot, temporary parking spot, that is designed for both privately owned and commercially owned vehicles to pull over and to try and avoid double parking. The phase two actually played out in Jackson Heights and they provided some examples of how well this program is working there. This is going to be indicated on our streets by blue signage, indicating it is a neighborhood loading zone, and there is a presentation at the DOT website which I am sure Florence can direct you to. At that website they have a page designed for suggestions from the community as to where we would like to see loading zones placed that are, basically busy corridors through the neighborhood that right now have a lot of double parking. We also discussed a few bits of ongoing business with DOT, including the continuing build out of the Northern Boulevard bike lane and a few irritating issues that people on Crescent Street are experiencing as well, we will probably be meeting again in December, but I cannot tell you when yet.

Chair, Marie Torniali – It has been brought to our attention, so under new business, I am going to bring up the HONDA program, which is Housing Our Neighbors with Dignity Act passed by the state. There is a lot of concern in Dutch Kills regarding this program, as well as the condition of the current homeless shelters. I will speak very briefly on what I have found out about the HONDA program, nothing is really fleshed out yet onto implementation, but just to give you the facts. This is going to be a program administered by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation, to allow the corporation to finance the purchase, conversion or rehabilitation of distressed hotels and commercial office space, to create affordable, permanent housing. Some key FAQs, distressed properties are assets that are financially distressed as determined by the Housing Trust Fund. Vacant hotels are not necessarily distressed. Ownership of properties will then be transferred to appropriate non-profit organizations. Affordable housing means the housing must achieve income averaging 60% of lower AMI tenants will have full tenancy rights, including rent stabilization. The purpose as I understand it is to finance the acquisition of distressed hotels and commercial office properties by appropriate not-for-profit organizations for the purpose of stabilizing communities. This will be a state-wide program; I believe it is only been, and I use the word only loosely here, 100 million, because 100 million would be a lot to you and me. But a 100 million for a statewide program is not that much money. They will not be creating shelters. This is creating affordable, permanent housing. The properties must be converted and rehabilitated to enhance the condition of the property for use. I just want to be clear because I know there are a lot of issues in Dutch Kills with the homeless shelters and we feel for you. I just want to differentiate this program as far as I understand it, like I said the details are still being worked out. We do not know where or how it will be implemented, but we are very concerned for our Dutch Kills neighbors, because they have that much of a concern with the current homeless shelters. These will not be homeless shelters.

## **ELECTED OFFICIALS/REPRESENTATIVES – Announcements:**

### **Joseph Nocerino - Office of Borough President Donovan Richards:**

- Borough President Richard sends his regards
- The Hanukkah Menorah lighting is on the 30<sup>th</sup> outside of Borough Hall
- The Borough Hall Christmas Tree Lighting, will be on December 8<sup>th</sup>, this year we are doing a movie for kids at 4:30 p.m. Santa will be there, and I think he must be bringing toys, RSVP is needed and then followed at 6:30ish with the actual tree lighting outside of Borough Hall
- The Borough President wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving

### **Angelica Ramon - Office of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez:**

- The Congresswoman will be hosting a Virtual Town Hall next Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. You can send us your questions at: [aoc.townhall@mail.house.gov](mailto:aoc.townhall@mail.house.gov) (Will share that in the Chat)
- If you filed a claim with FEMA and were denied, you may appeal before the December 6<sup>th</sup> deadline
- Disaster legal services is now available, a tool free legal assistance hotline is available to those affected by the severe storms: You may call 888-399-5459
- Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is hiring interns for the spring of 2022 in our Jackson Heights District Office, interns will work with the staff and serve constituents of New York-14 Congressional District. Interns are compensated at a rate of \$15 an hour, if you are interested, applicants should apply by November 15<sup>th</sup>, Spanish language skills are highly preferred
- I will be adding links to the Chat for important information
- Happy Thanksgiving on behalf of the Congresswoman

### **Mary Jobaida, Office of State Senator Jessica Ramos:**

- We had our first turkey giveaway last Saturday and we are going to have another one this coming Saturday, will post the address on the Chat
- Our office is open, we are requesting the constituents to call our office to make appointments as COVID-19 is rising, the cases are rising, we are trying to maintain the flow and maintain the health guidelines
- Happy Thanksgiving on behalf of the Senator and Staff

Chair, Marie Torniali- We will go into the public session as I stated, there is a lot of concern about HONDA, the homeless shelters and the quality of life in Dutch Kills.

## **Old/New Business:**

### **PUBLIC SESSION:**

Dominic Stiller – We in Dutch Kills are realistically and statistically overburdened by homeless population and would like to meet with city representatives so that they can completely understand and support our plight and together we can meet the challenge in fairly distributing the New York City population of people experiencing homelessness throughout all neighborhoods. Dutch Kills residents are Not in My Backyard (NIMBY), Dutch Kills, currently houses, Pam's Place, 200 bed shelter, New York City Department of Correction, manages, Fairfield Hotel shelter and at least two other active homeless service establishments exist within a half mile radius. Dutch Kills housed up to 1,600 people during Covid-19 and up to 10 additional temporarily converted hotels, no area in the near vicinity was taxed with close to these proportions. The recently enacted well-intentioned HONDA program is intended to enable New York City to purchase and permanently transfer some or more stock of current non-occupied hotel buildings to not-for-profit homeless service corps to own and manage these buildings and these citizens. The HONDA legislation was penned with assistance of high-level reps in the non-profit homeless service industry. The HONDA program justifies itself by claiming to assist distressed properties, temporarily vacant hotels are not distressed properties automatically. Many of the owners of our adjacent buildings are multi-millionaires, who do not need handouts from the city and, furthermore, are optimistic about near future returning business for the benefit of all. In lieu of HONDA as enacted these following requests will modify the program to more fair homeless services prior to any building purchase New York City, please perform a transparent analysis of current homeless density, enact fair share guidelines to all city-owned properties and abide by fair share laws in all planning and procurement, impart a geographic limiter to HONDA legislation. New York City modified. How can CB1 review the ratios, support the facts and limit and reduce our unfair burden?

A response to the Chair's comments. It is just that the HONDA law, as enacted, will include up to 50% of the population or 50% minimum to be rent free from the homeless shelters and the other 50% to be the AMI the 80% of the neighborhood AMI as you mentioned. It is these corporations who manage the homeless services now extending these properties to have 50% .

Chair, Marie Torniali - You could be right, but I do not think the final points are fleshed out yet. I am just making a differentiation. I am simply reading FAQs.

Noni Pratt – (*Presentation Attached*) Dutch Kills needs the strong and continued support of CB1. To begin with, we would like you to draft a resolution to Eric Adams to address the overburdening of shelters here, we would like him to receive it when he first takes office January 1<sup>st</sup>. This map shows 20 hotels of Dutch Kills. As of the last reckoning, with 9 shelters, 6 are functioning hotels, 5 empty hotels, the colored numbers are hotels and the orange ones are schools within it, of which there is 7. There are 3 shelters: 1, 5 and 6, the one on the left, the Fairfield Inn has some sexual offenders and that is 260 feet from Newcomers High School, which is just up the street. This is a brand-new residential building that has not opened yet and they are very worried about getting people to be able to rent it. This is the Quality Inn which is a woman's shelter and then up the street is the Verve Hotel, which is Pam's

Place, which is a very troubled and badly run shelter all 3 of them actually. The last photo shows the stitches of a man who was beaten in the bodega nearby where the school children go. It is a real injury inflicted upon the owner, but it is also a metaphor for the injury due to every aspect of life in a community so overburdened by shelters over harms everyone. Please help Dutch Kills, we can fix this if we all work together and I am here with 12 other people in Dutch Kills public. This was the picture that I wanted to have up, and it is of the bodega owner that was beaten by a woman from a shelter and two friends that I think had been in the other shelter before. It is really dangerous around here.

Vanessa Jimenez - I am living close by and I will say the support that we need from you, so that is clear, especially the church, I am communicating with the church. We have St. Patrick Church in the corner, and we are so much people in front of the church. They are banging, the music, how they talk to us and drug and is so much going on in that corner, and we really need a help for you to come and support us, especially in the church they doing all that either they go around with, sex harassment, for our priest is very concerning on him too, and we are here really extending to support with them.

Lucas - I am in my early 20s, so I am just barely old enough to remember when it was not safe to walk home. I am very happy that in the past decade, or so things have gotten a lot better around here, a lot of investment came around a lot of brand new buildings, a lot of hotels and it really breaks my heart to see us start to regress, to the way that it was in the late 90s early 2000's when my mother would not want me walking home late at night, and now it is getting to the point where I do not want her walking home late at night either. We own a business here in the neighborhood and our hands are tied in terms of being able to recover economically from COVID-19. Our gorgeous outdoor patio that every restaurant in New York gets to enjoy, our customers do not get to enjoy because they are constantly harassed. There are thousands of people who need help who we recognize need help. We do not want to abandon them; we are not NIMBYs. We are a community of people of caring people and we just want something that is fair to us and to them as well. If you guys believe in a broken windows theory, then that is exactly what is going on in this neighborhood. You cannot walk down without seeing feces on the street or needles, if you guys, would take the time to walk down the block that Noni just showed you the picture of you would understand these people have children. These people are our parents, grandparents and they need to be protected and be safe and, like I said we are not trying to abandon anybody, but the way that it has all been put on our lap was really unfair, and this is coming from somebody who is seen what the neighborhood was, what it has the potential to be, and unfortunately, what it is regressing to.

Megan Friedman – I am 76 years old and I am now afraid to walk to the N train, I am afraid of what I have to run the gauntlet of human feces people leering and throwing bottles and sexual activity out in the open. This is all on us and we want our Community Board to support us and we want them to go to Eric Adams and make sure this HONDA program is just not another way to push us down and ruin this lovely small, very diverse community.

David Root – I have lived in this neighborhood a long time and in all the time that I have lived here. I have never felt really unsafe here until recently and I will tell you why I think that is. There is with this large influx of unhoused or under housed coming into our neighborhood it feels like they are being dumped here without any support. A lot, many of them have mental health issues. Maybe they are untreated, or they are self-medicating with drugs and alcohol, or they cannot afford the medication. But the end result is that you do not know what is going to set somebody off? You know if it is just if you look at them or if you walk by them too close in the neighborhood or just because you are there, it just feels it is a little terrifying honestly, my cousin is schizophrenic, he was undiagnosed, and he was not on any kind of medication. I was scared of him and I feel that way around some of these people here and there is no shame in it. I do not think I am not trying to shame anybody for being mentally ill, but you know they need support. They cannot just be dumped here and have the community be expected to absorb that without any help from the outside. We need help is what we need.

Michael Brancato – I live on 48<sup>th</sup> Street in Astoria, and I am here today to talk about a bill before the City Council INT 2338-2021. This bill would require the City's Department of Consumer and Worker Protection to report on delivery apps that violate the City's recently passed laws limiting the fees they can charge to Restaurants. Astoria, Long Island City and Woodside are well known for their diverse and excellent restaurants, most of which are locally owned small businesses. Delivery apps like Grubhub, Uber Eats and DoorDash, have used the pandemic to exploit these businesses charging outrageous fees and not allowing restaurants to charge higher prices for orders through the apps to compensate. New York City's Council recently passed legislation to protect our restaurants, but it is not enough. We need public disclosure of who is violating these laws and how often without this there is little incentive for delivery apps to abide by the laws and the finds incurred will simply become a cost of doing business pass on to the end consumer. Instead, we need public disclosure of violators, so New York's consumers can make informed decisions about who they are buying from and how these people conduct business. We need to make delivery apps accountable. I ask that CB1 petition our current sitting, City Council member Jimmy Van Bramer to work on getting INT 2338-2021 out of committee and onto a full council vote before the end of the year. If this bill does not pass, we will not be able to hold bad businesses accountable for their actions.

Jean Cauley - I just wanted to talk about Dutch Kills being overwhelmed and overburdened, and it is not fair to us as a small community, and it is not fair to anyone in the City to be overburdened. There are certain communities that the City just dumps Local Unwanted Land Uses (LULU's) in, we have a lot of them and there is something called the fair share analysis that the City is supposed to do for every single sighting of any kind of land use, and they do not do it. I have been foiling, I have been begging, I have been emailing, I have been asking; I have not seen one fair share analysis for this community. I have been asking about 29-27 40<sup>th</sup> Road, which is a homeless male hotel that has sex offenders in it, 300 feet from schools. I have been trying to get why did the City put that shelter right next to the women's shelter? Is there a fair share analysis? Was it done? I would like to see it. I have been trying to call or email the Mayor's Office of Community Justice, which I believe oversees the program. I have gotten hung up on by

that office and they have not answered my email and all I am asking for is information to keep my child and my family safe. That is what we are all doing here, but I am not getting any information. Please, I am asking the Community Board to try and get this information from the City and to also stop putting new facilities in this community. We accepted one, Pam's Place we welcomed with open arms, and this is what we get.

Minerva Gumara – I am here to express my deep concern of my own personal safety and those in the Dutch Kills section of LIC. Since COVID-19 they have opened multiple homeless shelters in a very small area within a 5-block radius. I have 9 shelters in my area. I have been followed 5 times in the past 6 to 8 months. The latest was on October 22nd I was followed from the corner of my street, up to another corner about an avenue and a block away where I could run into a restaurant. It is very concerning, as a healthcare professional, I can say clearly these are mental health issues that I am seeing on about 4 of the 5 people that followed me. Obviously, this area does not have the facilities and the services to provide these homeless shelters. To open more shelters in this area to me, is a disgrace. It is asking for more trouble. On the corner, I can see Pam's Place alone, there are EMS vehicles there, police vehicles multiple times per day. I can no longer go to church. Why? Because they had to lock the doors. Why? Because they found sexual activity happening, prostitution within the church itself. I cannot even walk to the steps of the Church, because there are daily block parties on the Church grounds. By 8:30, when I am walking by there is loud music. I would really like the elected officials on this board to help the Dutch Kills Community. Please, the HONDA program, we do not want it to be too late before they actually start opening it up. That is what happened with Pam's Place. They notified us a week before they actually opened it, there was nothing else we could do.

Toni Caesar - Dutch Kills is overburdened. It is heartbreaking to see this community in this situation. I have lived here for almost 68 years and we have so much potential, but the City is abusing this area by burdening us with too many shelters and not giving the people in them the services they need. It ought to be shared all over the City and that is not being done, and we need all the help we can get. We would like you to please make a resolution stating what we need to Eric Adams hopefully before his arrival in office. I do not know exactly what you have in mind, but anything you can do to help us we would greatly appreciate it.

Gloria Maloney - I know everybody spoke about the overburdened Dutch Kills. I know you received many letters from us. We do not seem to have any elected officials right now that can help us, I do not know where they are it is in between terms. You cannot get help from anyone. If there is anybody here, that is on this call and they are an elected official, please get in touch with us at Dutch. Kills. I would like to ask Marie and Florence to please do what they can to get in touch with somebody on our behalf. We had a terrible time in the summer with all these emergency shelters that came in, we had nothing to do with we could not but accept them. Then they started to close them down now. They are talking about this HONDA law, whether that is going to affect the shelters, I do not know. Pam's Place is completely out of control. I do not know what agency is running it now. I do not think it is Acacia. We have to meet with Amanda Nasner because we have not had a community meeting with her in months and it is getting outrageous and to put a men's early release from Rikers around the corner. I mean what were they thinking is right and they do party on the steps of the church. The girls are there, the guys on bicycles, you are afraid to walk there. It is not a good scene, it is and you are afraid to make any ways, because you do not know what they are going to do to retaliate and the police hands are kind of tied, and nobody wants to hear that. But it is true, so whatever you could do to help us, we would appreciate it.

Toni Benetatos - The thing I want to put forward is why we are making these requests. I could speak to multiple instances of public defecation on people's stoops, of assaults and harassment to members of the community and homeless members of the community. I could speak to robbery and indecent exposure to children. I know that some of the women from some of these shelters are soliciting children, high school boys to see if they can engage them in prostitution. This is creating a blight on our community. I do not fault the people in these situations, they need help. They do need the consideration of our society, but to place such a large density in our community, not properly equipped the shelters to deal with them, you are damaging our neighborhood, this needs to be spread across the City. We are overburdened, we do not feel safe and we need CBI to pass a solution stating that there will be a moratorium on the implementation of more shelters and the HONDA program in our neighborhood until this inequitable distribution is resolved and proper services provided to the homeless in the shelters we already have.

George Stamatiades - On behalf of the Dutch Kills Civic Association, we have carried this battle of quality of life since 1980, getting rid of the prostitution that was on every corner, and then we changed the zoning that permitted the housing to develop that everybody is enjoying today. There are two parts here that have been stated before, I do not want to go over everything that everybody has said. We got the HONDA; that is one issue and we've got the homeless that is another issue. We have asked Senator Gianaris to come to our November meeting, due to the fact that it was Veteran's Day he could not make it. We have got calls into his office for him to come to the next Dutch Kills meeting, which is December 9<sup>th</sup> in Dutch Kills. For more information, you can go on our website and you will see the location. The Department of Homeless Services is not doing their job. We have had to FOIL them to find out how many times the ambulances have gone there, we had to FOIL them to find out how many times the police have been called there and they keep stonewalling us. They do not really care what goes on. They got their job to do and they just give us a song and a dance. Hopefully with this showing somebody will wake up and respond to the Community, otherwise, it is going to continue, and it is never going to end, and they know that about the Dutch Kills community.

Kate Peterson - I was out of town this summer and just came back to realize that our ACE services for District 22 were cut on September 24<sup>th</sup>. To give context, the ACE services are the supplemental cleaning services that our district has on 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ditmars and a couple other locations, including Steinway. I wanted to bring that up because I am concerned in general in a metalevel that we have a situation where our district is not getting any discretionary funding distributed from City Council, because we do not have somebody filling that seat. I do

understand that our upcoming City Council person, Tiffany Caban, will potentially be taking office early, but I have not heard from anyone definitively that she can distribute discretionary funding before January. I would like to bring that up, I would ask Community Board 1 to consider writing a letter on this to Corey Johnson's office from what I was told from various people, the Speaker's office would be able to distribute our discretionary funding until someone took office and I have not seen that happen.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Frank Perez holds a position with the City Council and is managing District 22.

Frank Perez - In response to the funding question for ACE, the City Council did re-fund ACE this current fiscal year through the New York City Cleanup Initiative, and they once again received the funding that they got last year, so that funding is currently present in the district. I am happy to look into where specifically that stands, and I will provide my contact information in the Chat.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Frank, you can relay that to either myself or directly to Florence and we will pass it on.

Richard Madrid Jr. (aka RJ) - I am 10 years old. I currently attend Growing Up Green Charter Elementary School. I am talking to you because our neighborhood has become unsafe. I am no longer allowed to walk to the playground with my oldest sibling? like when we did when I was 7 years old. I know my voice is not important, but it is important for me as a part of this community to write to you and ask for help with kindness and respect RJ.

Chair, Marie Torniali – Actually RJ, your voice is the most important one of all that we have heard tonight. Thank you for coming on.

Vanessa Jones-Hall - I understand that a lot of hotels came up and you have multiples, but what has always been unfair with the NYCHA houses with the undesirables that we have been dealing with for a very long time, other than the rise in gun violence and gang violence was the fact that we, community of colors always seem to be dumped on, and no one cares when we have that outcry. No one says: oh, this is unfair to them, like how you all are gathering together to say how unfair. We do speak out, but it goes on deaf ears. It is unfair that when I hear about all of you complaining and how you do not want these things and these people in your communities all these hotels, but no one thinks about the burden that is placed upon the NYCHA communities continuously, where we have to deal with this continuously. We have these people sleeping in our buildings. We are afraid to walk indoors and outdoors because they lurk and live in the stairwells. We complain about this. We have let the Police Department know about this. We let NYCHA know, but the bottom line is like some others have said, the Department of Homeless has to be held responsible for the way these people are not being properly given the care that they need and allowed. We feel that it should be heard across the board, not in just one area of how this is affecting our quality of life.

Jean Cauley - I just have one question about the statement of needs that the Mayor's Office is supposed to give to the Community Board by November 15th. Did you receive it?

Chair, Marie Torniali - Not as far as I know. We are going to check on that tomorrow. It seems to me-and I am sure, to all the Board Members listening here tonight that there are a lot of issues in Dutch Kills, a lot of issues, but the HONDA program is separate in the part and I think we need to understand that this will not be a shelter, but we will try to get more particulars on the program and see how that fleshes out. I am asking the Housing Committee to take this on.

Evie Hantzopoulos - We can definitely discuss it at our next meeting and I also like to make sure that everything is conveyed in a factual manner, because I still feel that people are conflating what the HONDA program would be with shelters and that is not what it is and so I know we have said it a few times, but I still keep hearing people talking about that and I just want to emphasize that once someone who is homeless goes into permanent housing, they are no longer homeless, they have a permanent home. I understand the fact that there are have been a lot of homeless shelters placed in the Dutch Kills area. I know that people are concerned for their safety for a whole bunch of reasons. I just want to make sure that we are not scapegoating and stereotyping and blaming anyone who may be without a home for what is going on there. We can definitely take it up at our January meeting. We do have another speaker scheduled for our January meeting as well, but again I do think we need to actually hear from our State Senator who wrote the legislation, who was the sponsor, to really get the facts behind this, and also my understanding is there is no money, that is actually really attached to this, and there has been no HONDA site proposal I see anywhere at this point. I know there is a lot of things going on, there are two different issues though I just want to make sure that everyone understands that.

Chair, Marie Torniali - Yes, we are trying to differentiate between the homeless shelters and the new HONDA program which is affordable at the same time. We need to do some investigation into fair share, because even if it does not apply to the HONDA program, it certainly seems like Dutch Kills have more than their fair share of shelters. It is just something to find out if they ever look to fair share, and now I am not talking about HONDA just talking about the shelters. We could do some homework on that. We do agree that there are a lot of issues, that we feel for you. The HONDA program we will do some investigation that will go to the Housing Committee in January and I am sure you are inviting people to that meeting. What is going on with the quality of life in Dutch Kills, that is another story that I mean I feel like somebody should I do not know if Judy you are on the call, the quality of life and I mean the lack of services for the homeless. Maybe your committee could look into that.

Judy Trilivas- Okay, that is fine, we will.

Chair, Marie Torniali - I think this takes a village and there are so many issues there. It is not just about the HONDA program, it is about the homeless shelters and the residents, some of whom are certainly mentally ill and need services they are not getting. Judy if you could set up a committee meeting and address that issue.

Judy Trilivas - Will do.

Chair, Marie Torniali – We will look into the fair share as well. I want to thank everybody who came to express their feelings, is very important. We will not draft a resolution right now, of course, Evie has to have a meeting and we will see what the whole picture is, but certainly we will send a letter to our elected officials that this topic is a very concerning to the Dutch Kills community, as well as to the Board. Thank you all for coming and know that we do think about all these issues and we will do our best. There is power in numbers. Thank you all for coming.

The Chairperson, Marie Torniali asked for a Motion to Adjourn

**Motioned by Thomas Ryan; Seconded Rosemary Yelton**

The Chair, Marie Torniali – A very Happy Thanksgiving to all.

**Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 p.m.**

**ATTENDANCE FULL BOARD MEETING**

Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.	Community Board Member	Yes	No	Abs.
Helene Abiola	✓			Cristina Lastres	✓		
Rose Anne Alafogiannis		✓		Diana Limongi		✓	
George Alexiou	✓			Chelsea Lopez	✓		
Daniel Aliberti	✓			Hannah Lupien	✓		
Avninder Aujla		✓		Jeffrey Martin	✓		
Louise Bordley	✓			Amin Mehedi	✓		
Shoma Brahmanandam	✓			Antonio Meloni		✓	
Ann Bruno		✓		Doreen Mohammed	✓		
Gerald Caliendo	✓			Eric Mouchette			E
Irak Dahir Cehonski		✓		Stella Nicolaou	✓		
Jean Marie D'Alleva		✓		Mary O'Hara		✓	
Antonella Di Saverio			E	Dino Panagoulas	✓		
Katie Ellman			E	Juliet Payabyab	✓		
Elizabeth Erion	✓			RoseMarie Poveromo	✓		
Mackenzi Farquer			E	Yawne Robinson		✓	
Dean Feratovic			E	Brian Romero		✓	
Shahenaz Hamde	✓			Thomas Ryan	✓		
Evie Hantzopoulos	✓			Dominic Stiller	✓		
Amy Hau	✓			Andre Stith		✓	
Helen Ho	✓			Marie Torniali	✓		
Vanessa Jones-Hall	✓			Rod Townsend	✓		
Richard Khuzami	✓			Judy Trilivas	✓		
Nancy Konipol	✓			Kathleen Warnock	✓		
Amr Kotb			E	Mitchell Waxman	✓		
Jerry Kril	✓			Rosemary Yelton	✓		

Number Board Members Present 33

Present 33

Absent 11

Excused 6



# DEED FRAUD

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HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF, YOUR LOVED ONES,  
AND YOUR COMMUNITY

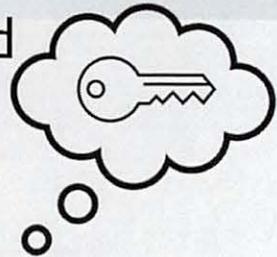
*William H. Jorgenson*

Chief, Housing Worker Protection Bureau  
Queens District Attorney's Office

# PREVENTING SCAMS

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- Homeownership is part of the American Dream. Unfortunately, bad actors and fraudsters are constantly finding new ways to defraud people out of their own home.



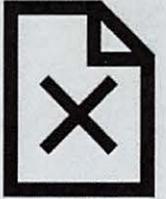
- We at **the Housing and Worker Protection Bureau** are working hard to hold accountable those who would steal someone's home. The best protection, however, is prevention so we would like to share with you some helpful information.



How does this happen?



- Using stolen identities or falsified documents, the thief can refinance the mortgage or home equity line of credit (HELOC), cashing out the equity and walking away with the difference. On top of that, they won't pay the new mortgage, meaning you'll face foreclosure!



- They can target an empty home – like unoccupied vacation homes or rental properties – using a forged deed to sell the home and profit without you knowing.



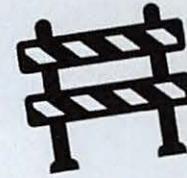
- They can con seniors or homeowners in crisis with an offer of “refinancing.” The vulnerable victim signs documents not knowing they have transferred title or the victim transfers title as part of a “mortgage rescue”.



How can you tell that  
you're a victim?



# Warning Signs



- Not receiving a water bill or tax bill that you *should* have received or if you suddenly stop receiving notices from the bank or mortgage company that you once got.
  - **In that case**, an identity thief may have gone to the taxing authority and changed the address to which the bills will be sent in order to hide the crime longer.
- Evidence of activity at an **unoccupied home or vacation home**: look out for higher-than-usual utility bills, especially on a vacant property or vacation home. Or worse, you find people living there.
- If you stop receiving **your tenants' rent payments** and learn that they *have* been making the payments to another person or location.
- You receive payment books or other information from a lender with whom you've never done business.
- You find yourself in default on a loan or notified of foreclosure proceedings when you don't even have a mortgage.

# How to Keep Homes Safe?



Confirm your title; Check the status of your deed:

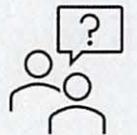
- Register for the **Recorded Document Notification Program** online to get notified anytime a document is recorded in relation to your property.
- Check the City Register's records often using the **ACRIS system** to make sure that there are no deeds or mortgages that you are not aware of recorded on your property. You can also check the city maps to see if there is any change in ownership at [maps.nyc.gov](https://maps.nyc.gov).

Maintain your home :

- Fraudsters target homes that appear neglected, because neglect is a sign of an absent owner. If your property is unoccupied, you should check often to make sure it is not occupied illegally. **Ask someone you trust** to look after your house if you are going to be away for a long period of time. **Have mail forwarded** or ask someone you trust to pick it up.

# How to Keep Homes Safe? (continued)

- **Stay away from aggressive lenders** or those who try to force you to use their lender, agent or appraiser.
- **Be skeptical of online ads or telephone solicitations** promising a mortgage modification or to save your home from foreclosure. Only your bank or loan servicer can approve a loan modification.
- **Do not give out personal financial information to a solicitor**, including your bank account number, social security number or the name of your loan servicer. Your bank would already have this information.
- **Never sign a blank form.**  
If you don't understand a form, don't be afraid to ask for help. Tell the person who is asking you to sign that you want to speak with an advisor or attorney that you choose.
- **Never pay an up-front fee for mortgage-related services.** It is a violation of New York law to charge upfront fees for such services, and violations should be reported to the Attorney General's office at **1-800-771-7755**.



# How to Keep Homes Safe? (continued)

Monitor your credit reports:

- Federal law provides you with the right to have a free copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies: **Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion**. Monitoring your credit report can help you discover any financial actions taken by others in your name.

Consider buying an owner's title insurance policy:

- **Owner's title insurance** can offer significant protection from the harm caused by deed fraud and can cover the costs involved in correcting the problem. As with many types of fraud or identity theft, the earlier that you become aware that you have become a victim, the better off you will be.

The New York City Department of Finance advises homeowners to make sure the appropriate **authorities have the correct mailing address** for you or the person who should receive notices about your property.



## WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF DEED FRAUD:

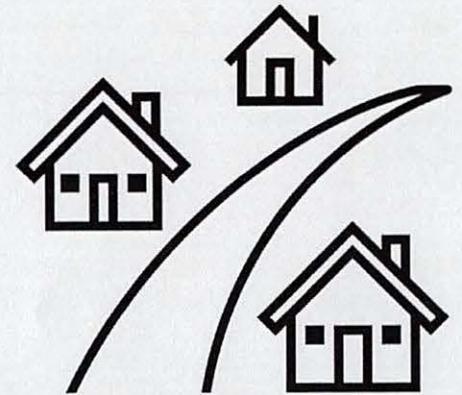
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- Call the companies where fraud occurred
- Place a fraud alert with **your creditors** and pull your credit reports.
- Report identity theft to the **FTC**.
- File a report with your **local police department** or the DA's office; If you suspect any kind of deed fraud, report it immediately.



If you have an elderly relative or neighbor who lives alone, don't be afraid to discuss these issues with them!

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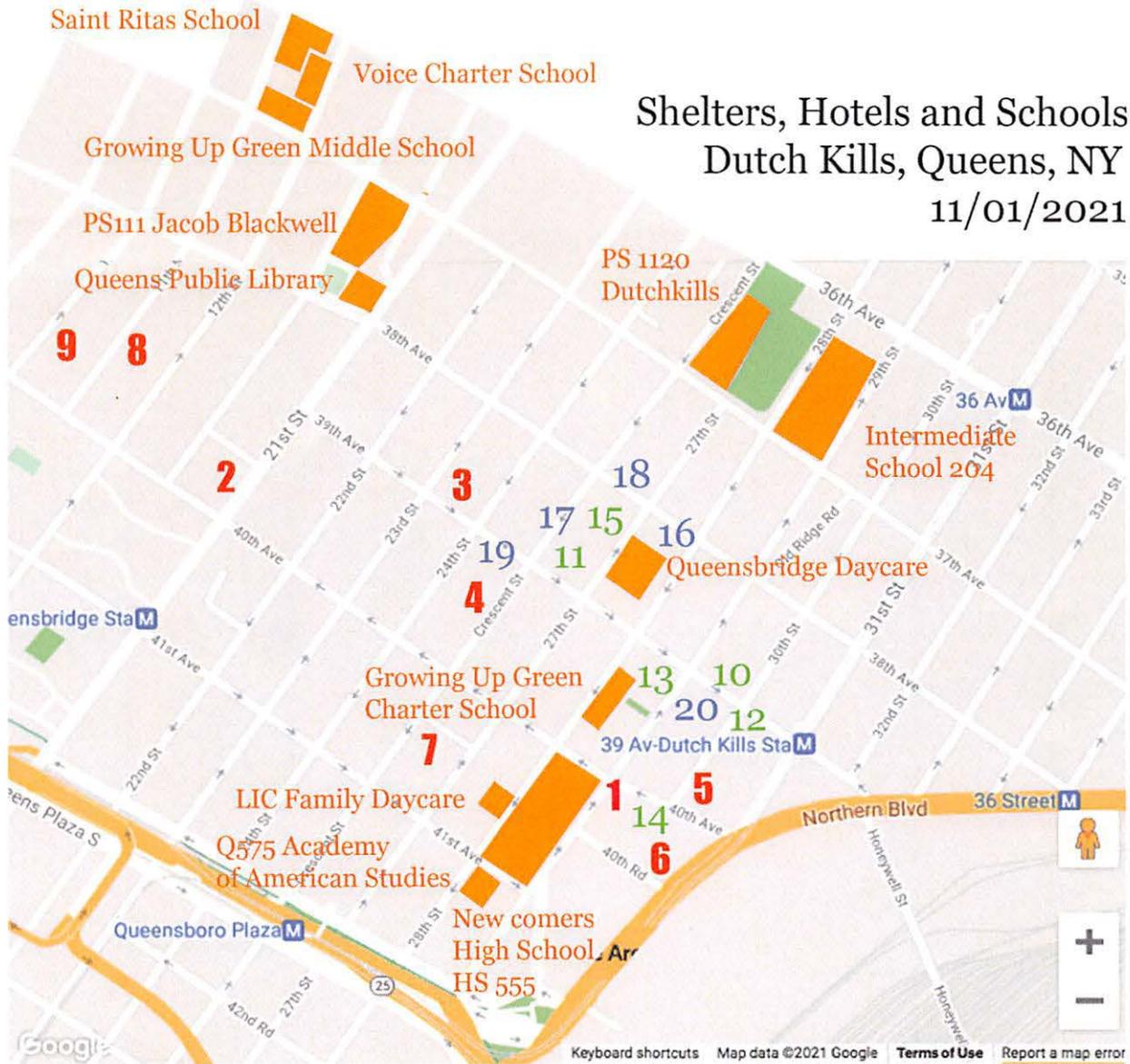
# THANK YOU

*William H Jorgenson*

Chief, Housing Worker Protection Bureau  
Queens District Attorney's Office  
80-02 Kew Gardens Road,  
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

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DA Helpline: (718) 286-6673



## 9 Active Shelters

- |                             |       |              |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------|
| <b>1</b> Pam's -Verve hotel | 40-03 | 29th st.     |
| <b>2</b> Best Western Plus  | 39-34 | 21th st.     |
| <b>3</b> Lotus Blu Inn      | 23-15 | 39th ave.    |
| <b>4</b> Royal Stay Inn     | 38-30 | Crescent st. |
| <b>5</b> Quality Inn        | 30-03 | 40th ave.    |
| <b>6</b> Fairfield Inn      | 29-27 | 40th rd.     |
| <b>7</b> LIC Plaza Hotel    | 40-36 | 27th st.     |
| <b>8</b> Howard Johnson     | 38-61 | 12th st.     |
| <b>9</b> Windgate hotel     | 38-70 | 12th st.     |

## 6 Working hotels

- |                           |       |           |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|
| <b>10</b> Hotel Vetiver   | 29-11 | 39th ave. |
| <b>11</b> Vista LIC hotel | 27-05 | 39th ave. |
| <b>12</b> Home 2 suites   | 39-06 | 30th st.  |
| <b>13</b> Nesva           | 39-12 | 29th st.  |
| <b>14</b> Micro hotel     | 29-13 | 40th ave. |
| <b>15</b> Boro            | 38-28 | 27th st.  |

## 5 Empty hotels

- |                        |       |           |
|------------------------|-------|-----------|
| <b>16</b> Newton hotel | 38-30 | 28th st.  |
| <b>17</b> new hotel    | 39-35 | 27th ave  |
| <b>18</b> new hotel    | 38-25 | 28th st.  |
| <b>19</b> new hotel    | 25-16 | 39th ave. |
| <b>20</b> Holiday Inn  | 39-05 | 29th st.  |



**Verve Hotel / Pam's place**

Women's shelter  
for substance abuse and  
mental illness

**Fairfield Inn**

Halfway house  
sex offenders  
from Bikers

FAIRFIELD  
INN & SUITES

Schools

**Quality Inn**

Women's shelter