

GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 23, 2016

Deliverance Baptist Church
227-11 Linden Boulevard
Cambria Heights, NY

Attendance

Present:

Isa Avery; Terence Banks; Corey Bearak; Bryan Block; Jacqueline Campbell; Daisy Carew; Tanya Cruz; Bess DeBetham; James Delaney; Terryl Ebony DeMendonca; Samuel Elliott; Lorraine Gittens-Bridges; Robert Glover; Felice Hannah; Richard Hellenbrecht; Fay Hill; Vernal Holder; Bonnie Huie; Rhonda Kontner; Jonathan Logan; Marcia O'Brien; Michael O'Keefe; Tameka Pierre-Louis; Celeste Powers; Nagassar Ramgarib; Anup Ramnauth ; Peter Richards; Ashok Satkalmi; Sanu Thomas; Wilson Thomas; Clive Williams; Jerry Wind

Absent:

Angela Augugliaro; Alain Berrouet; Verdell Boncoeur; Kyle Bragg; Delroy Dawkins; Charles Farruggia; Seymour Finkelstein; Edward Harap; Mohamood Ishmael; Antony Kuncheria (E); Davon Lomax; Kangela Moore; Mathew Thomas; Pritpal Singh Walia; Derrick Warmington; Jackie Wilson

The Board Chair called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

The Board Chair took the roll call.

The Chair reported that Antony Kuncheria's brother-in-law had passed away. He also reported that Board Member Daisy Carew was in a car accident, but was feeling better.

April 2016 Meeting Minutes

The Board Chair asked for a motion to approve the Minutes from the April meeting. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes.

The Chairman's Report

The Board Chair reported on the events he had attended since the previous month's General Board meeting. A motion was made to accept the Board Chair's Report; it was seconded and unanimously approved.

District Manager's Report

The DM stated his written report was included in The Sentinel package. He also went through the package of enclosures document-by-document; he spoke about the lapel pin all members received, he then spoke briefly about the rationale of why certain speakers were invited to present at the General Board meetings. A motion was made to accept the DM's Report, seconded and unanimously accepted.

Elected Officials

Council Member Donovan Richards spoke:

- He supports the Rosedale Library ULURP – he wants to expand it as soon as possible. He has put \$1M into its remodeling his first term in office. He is pushing to get both 6-day and possible 7-day service at libraries.
- His office has rolled out 20-25 new [public] garbage cans around the district.
- He has allocated \$2M to District 29 schools
- He has allocated monies to the PS 195 Rosedale Playground
- He spoke of the DOT Traffic Study on Springfield Gardens and the public hearing that will be held in that community
- Habitat for Humanity housing – these were turned over to them by NYCHA via RFP. They do local seminars on affordable home ownership so young people can learn...
- As Chair of the City Council Environmental Protection Committee, \$1.5 B (over 10 years) and \$783M in this year's budget (thank you Mayor de Blasio) has been allocated to flood remediation
- The Mayor has put up \$70M for the new 116 Precinct; and the [present] Satellite Precinct land will be turned into a community center.

Council Member Barry Grodenchik spoke:

- He thanks those who have worked – some for 4 decades – on trying to get this precinct. He promises to stay on top of NYPD to push the completion of this project.

Council Members Richards and Grodenchik present a cake to the Board Chair and Board Member Bess de Betham celebrating the announcement of the Mayoral allocation for the 116 Precinct! A picture moment ensues...

Presentations

Matt Dunbar, Vice President of Government Relations & Advocacy, Habitat for Humanity, spoke:

- The organization has started Phase II single family homes, working with volunteers including some of the local elected officials including Council Members Miller, Richards and Deputy Borough President Melva Miller
- He thanked the community for their support of Phase I
- They are excited to get started on the next phase
- They want to partner on “getting the word out” to bring more people from the local community into the process to become first time home buyers
- And as someone who is legally blind, he still can volunteer to work on these Habitat work site

Tara , the Senior Project Manager, distributed a PowerPoint [hand out].

- They want to complete rehabilitating 500 homes by 2020.
- Served over 380 families; over 6,000 volunteers
- They want to build partnerships – with community, government, and NYS mortgage authorities (banks)

BM Wilson Thomas asked how a contractor could be recommended.

BM Terrance Banks asked if they could bring a homeowner who successfully went through this process to come and speak to the Community Board to speak about the experience.

Question: What is the income level for someone to qualify as an applicant for one of these homes?

Elected Officials (2)

Queens Borough President Melinda Katz spoke:

- You are always a Community Board Member even when you just walk around the neighborhood...and she thanked Board Members for serving as volunteers
- She brought some of her staff to work on rehabilitating a house for Habitat
- On June 22, 2016, there will be an awards ceremony for Board Members having 10 or more years of service
- She acknowledged the new Board appointees
- Queens is a borough of families; and Queens is the only borough in the city that uses “Town, NY” as their address. As such, her office is promoting tourism, creating a better infrastructure for families to stay in place

- She is happy about the 116 Precinct announcement, a proud about the hard work and commitment some Community Board 13 members had in making this a reality
- She has issued a statement against the Karen Peolos Project [applause]; any building must be consistent with the community it resides; and as the former Chair of the City Council Land Use Committee, she was part of the creation of thousands of housing units - but it must be responsive to the community
- The New Visions Charter School that DOE is attempting to co-locate in PS 109- she asked for the vote to be postponed – the Borough President’s representative said that the DOE needs to speak to the community...the negotiations are ongoing
- She is working with the Community Board on the multiple “truck issues”
- She was appointed to the Redesign Commission at JFK; and is very pleased about the upcoming TWA Flight Center Hotel
- She has allocated \$385K for the façade of the Queens Village Library – rebuilding libraries is important
- Allocation PS 133 park and the Glen Oaks Playground
- With the veterans’ community, she will be attending the Laurelton Memorial Day Parade; and she secured the funding for the installation of a flagpole at the Veterans Triangle on 225 Street and the North Conduit
- The Annual Queens Borough President’s Memorial Day Ceremony will be held on May 26, 2016 in the Veterans’ Memorial Garden in front of Queens Borough Hall
- There will be “Only In Queens Summer Festival” at Flushing Meadows Corona Park on Sunday, June 26, 2016
- She will also be attending the Rosedale Memorial Day Parade

Q&A:

Q: Where is there information on the redevelopment of downtown Jamaica?

A: The BP’s Office has put \$150M into the “Jamaica Now Plan;” and the Jamaica corridor is the first area of Queens with [public] WIFI. This starts August 1, 2016.

Presentations (2)

Department of Transportation, Craig Chin spoke about sidewalks/sidewalk violations:

- A sidewalk violation comes in a certified letter stating that the homeowner has 45 days to fix the condition. There will be a sketch showing where the condition is located. This Notice of Violation is a lien on the property.

- This can be contested. This defect can be contested triggering a re-inspection with that result being final.
- Sidewalk flags marked with an "X" means that it is non-accessible, the city will pay for the repair.
- The homeowner can do the work, or can wait for the city to fix it when the city contract is within the community board. The letter will indicate the square footage [which determines cost].
- Expedited contract Program – for an extra charge, the city will expedite sidewalk repair pursuant to a violation.
- All properties without fixing the violation, they get lumped into a contract by the city and they will be repaired when it comes to the community.

Q: BM Rich Hellenbrecht: What about curbs and handicapped curb cuts? A: The city is responsible for curbs. DOT has put in a request for funding for curbs. Put in a 311 request.

Q: BM Jonathan Logan asked about violation amounts. A: Surveys indicate conditions. It depends on trip hazards and square footage.

BM Vernal Holder wants inspectors to be considerate of handicapped residents, t let the homeowners know when the work is being done. DDC has a unit that is responsible for this notification.

Q: BM Jim Delaney wants to know why there is a permit fee for a city-caused violation like a tree root uplifting a sidewalk. A: When the permit is filed call 311 and say you want a permit inspection dismissal. Give them the permit number, an inspector comes out to inspect the property, and if it clear, a letter is sent to the County Clerk's Office and the lien is removed.

A: Any markings with an "X" are the city's responsibility.

BM Bess de Betham asks how long it would take the city to come out and repair your sidewalk? A: 3-5 years.

BM Terence Banks requests a follow-up on this issue.

Department of Parks– Joseph Kocul, Deputy Director, Queens Forestry:

- Their mission is to protect, preserve and maintain city trees in the right-of-way
- There are emergency contracts in place for after storms (over 100 crews on call)
- They are in contact with other with agencies through the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for weather events
- They do inspections with mobile devices
- The priorities: life and safety (blocked streets) for quality of life

- For uprooted trees, they work with DDC
- Tree pruning – a section of each community board once every 5 years. They can respond to hazardous conditions via 311 (12-15 crews can be deployed).
- Trees & Sidewalk Program – routed through 311; request to be enrolled; get a rating between 1->100 (the higher the rating, the quicker the repair)
- Residential Tree Maintenance – inspectors sent out to inspect; They defer to Con Edison if primary and secondary wires for pruning.
- A dead tree is removed within 30 days.
- Stump Removal – call 311 and ask for a new tree. There is an active stump removal contract which is not request based. Stumps up to 36' in diameter can be removed.

Q: Board Chair asks how is the determination of what makes a tree dead made? A: by an expert. Even healthy trees can fall during extreme weather conditions.

BM Tanya Cruz asks about the removal of trimmed bushes put into a bundle. A: Started with the Asian long-horn beetle was discovered. This not the highest priority.

Q: BM Jackie Campbell asked about tree roots and her sewer pipes. A: The city will not remove the tree. Tree roots seek out water. The sewer line must be deep enough for code.

BM Celeste Powers commented that after an inspection and determination of an unhealthy tree, the tree is removed in 30 days unless there is a Con Ed issue. A tree fell on her house after 3 calls were on file. And there was no storm or rain. BM Jim Delaney reported on a tree having to be cut down because a contractor accidentally cut the roots. Another tree was intentionally vandalized by a contractor. A: Parks legal goes after contractors. The size of the tree gives it an assessed value.

State Committeeman Leroy Manuel asked what is done with heavy limbs when trees are cut down? He was concerned because of what happened at his house. A: Safety is Parks/Forestry primary concern.

A follow-up meeting with forestry is requested.

Public Hearing

ULURP Item Number 164228 PPO

Land Use Chair Rich Hellenbrecht gives a recap of the Public Hearing held at St. Clare's Catholic Academy regarding the Rosedale Library ULURP item.

A motion was made to approve the ULURP Item, and seconded.

A roll call vote tallied, 30 yes, 0 No, 1 abstention.

April Meeting Minutes

A motion was made accept the Minutes as presented, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Committee Reports

Youth & Education: Co-Chair Rhonda Kontner spoke about the June 4 Seminar being held at Emblem Health Center. A pre-event meeting will be held on May 31. They need volunteers to assist.

She reported on MS 109 rallies; and how the community is waiting for a decision from the DOE on the co-location.

She attended a wonderful workshop at Springfield Gardens High School sponsored by Assembly woman Alicia Hyndman and State Senator Leroy Comrie. Unfortunately, it was sparsely attended.

Co-Chair Terence Banks has raised \$250 for a local Step Team.

Transportation

Committee Chair Bess de Betham reports:

- You should call 311 before calling the Community Board to get a tracking number.
- Getting a left-turn signal or a STOP sign can take at least a year.
- Under "Vision Zero", no sign showing means a 25mph speed limit.
- June 9 at 7:00 pm is the third Public Hearing on the Springfield Gardens JFK Traffic Study.
- Under PlaNYC, the new street lights have LED bulbs.
- The DM added that there are now cameras on the top of DOT cars in school zones that can catch motorists who speed.

BM Jonathan Logan wants inspection of the equipment.

Health

Co-Chair Bonnie Huie reports:

- Members of the community are now attending the meetings.
- The committee is trying to develop a "Mission Statement".
- The long-term Plan is to have a workshop.

- Requests suggestions from the public on what the community wants.

Parks & Environment

Co-Chair Peter Richards reports:

- The earlier presentation [by Forestry] covered many issues discussed in the committee meeting.
- Last year Commissioner Silver came and took pictures; he requested that he return to Community Board 13.
- There will be a summer tour of all of the parks within the Community Board given by Joe Block.

Nominating Committee

BM Sanu Thomas stated he was reaching out to any Board Member who are interested as serving as an officer.

Public Speaking Time

BM Rhonda Kontner said she read the Bylaws and the nomination process was improperly done. BM Bonnie Huie and BM Jim Delaney stated that the committee had already met. They acknowledged that it was a legitimate concern given to the floor

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark McMillan
District Manager
Queens Community Board 13