

**COMMUNITY BOARD #14
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 10, 2019**

**KKNIGHTS OF COLOMBUS
333 BEACH 90 STREETS
ROCKAWAY BEACH, NY 11693**

PRESENT

Khaleel Anderson, Dr. Gerald David, Mordechai Dicker, Noreen Ellis, Temina Feldman, Eugenia Gibson, D. Brian Heffernan Felicia Johnson, Paul King, Betty Leon, Ife Maijeh, Desiree Maple, Nancy Martinez, John McCambridge, Sonia Moise, Al Moore, Daniel Mundy, Dolores Orr, Dr. Harold Paez, Isaac Parsee, Edward Pastore Sr., Dr. Eli Shapiro, Linda Plummer, Karen Sloan-Payne, Chris Tedesco, Michael Tubridy, Jose Velez, Wanda Warden, Tyrone Worsley

ABSENT

Audrey Amsterdam-Handy Louis Caucig, Stephen Cooper, John Cori, Ahmad Edwards, Yitzchok Goldstein, Tamara Jacobs, Denise Lopestri-Neibel, Annette Lord-Cohen, Rosalyn Mason, Alicia Mazyck, Helen Montero, Ellen O'Reilly Eugene Pasternak, Edwin Williams

GUESTS

Dan Brown – Rep. Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Dekendra Dazzell - Rep. State Senator James Sanders Jr., Robby Schwach – Rep. City Councilman Eric Ulrich, Democratic District Leader Lew Simon, Malik Sanders – Rep. City Councilman Donovan Richards, NYC Police Officer Jones – Rep. 100th Police Precinct

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:25pm. The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CORRESPONDANCE

Letter dated November 6, 2019 was sent to Mayor De Blasio from Community Board #14. Letter stated that the Board's Education and Youth Services Committee unanimously voted in favor of requesting funding for an magnet high and middle school on the east end of the Peninsula.

Letter dated December 11, 2019 was sent to Governor Cuomo from Community Board #14. Letter stated that Board voted unanimously to request that you sign Assembly-5767 and Senate 4165 to assure the preservation and protection of Jamaica Bay.

MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 12, 2019

Dan Mundy made the motion for the Board to accept the November 12, 2019 minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Dr. Gerald David. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion. 3 Abstained.

MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 23, 2019

Dan Mundy made the motion for the Board to accept the October 23, 2019 minutes with the corrections. The motion was seconded Noreen Ellis. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion. 3 Abstained.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Chair reminded everyone that Mayor De Blasio and City Councilman Donovan Richards, at the Mayor's Town Hall meeting held at PS 42 earlier this year, promised the creation of a Gifted and Talented Program on the Rockaway Peninsula.

- holding a meeting next Tuesday to discuss how the summer went but Community Board #14 was not invited.

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER

District Manager, Jonathan Gaska wished everyone happy holidays.

Mr. Gaska announced that earlier today OEM and DEP contacted the Community Board to report that there was a water main break at Beach 19 Street and Seagirt Blvd., resulting in no water at St. John's Hospital and other locations around Beach 20th Street, Beach 19 Street, Wavecrest Apartments, schools in the immediate area and Mott Avenue. At last report there was no time as to when the problem would be fixed.

Felicia Johnson advised she has been informed that the water was restored for St. Johns Hospital.

Al Moore stated it was his understanding that the hospital is supposed to have back up water storage tanks.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: The Chair opened the floor for public speaking at 7:35pm. 12 people signed up to speak. They all were recognized and heard. The Chair closed public speaking 8:08pm.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Jose Velez, Chair of the Committee reported that a meeting was held on December 5th, 2019. Mr. Velez reported that he contacted all of the currently elected members of the executive board and inquired if they were interested in continuing to serve in their current elected position if nominated by the committee. All responded yes.

Listed below is a list of those members contacted:

Dolores Orr - Chair

Al Moore - 1st Vice Chair
Dan Mundy - 2nd Vice Chair
Felicia Johnson - 3rd Vice Chair
Isaac Parsee - 4th Vice Chair
Betty Leon - Secretary/Treasurer

The committee discussed the current slate and recommend that this slate be put forth to community board.

The Chair opened the floor for nominations for each of the Executive Board positions. There being no nominations for any of the positions from the floor, the Chair closed the nominations. The Chair stated that in accordance with the By-laws a vote for the slate of officers presented by the Nominating Committee will take place at the January 2020 Board meeting.

YOUTH SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Harold Paez, Co-Chair of the Committee reported that a meeting was held on Wednesday, November 13th, 2019. A quorum was present. The first agenda item discussed was regarding the following updates:

1. National Assessment of Educational Progress: A Common Measure of Student Achievement.
2. Success Academy Schools in Queens are having a difficult time finding suitable middle school space for students moving on from their K-5 schools. The DOE announced that they found a middle school space for Success Academy students from elementary schools in Queens (including Success Academy Far Rockaway), in the former Our Lady's Catholic Academy in South Ozone Park. The Success Academy rejected the proposed space as too small and outdated for their growing needs.

The November Committee meeting focused on Special Education resources in NYC public schools. Our committee has received frequent requests from parents throughout Rockaway for more information on Special Education resources. Family Guide to Special Education Services: <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/family-guide-to-special-education-school-age-services-english>

Our Guest speakers: Ms. Desiree Carrington, Administrator of Special Education & Ms. Barbara Wedderburn-Simpson, Dir. of Special Education

The following topics were discussed:

- 1- What is an IEP (Individualized Education Program)?
- 2- What determines District 75 placement versus local school placement for a child with special needs?

3- Autism Spectrum programs available to students in Rockaway, including ASD-NEST, ASD-Horizon programs and District 75 programs.

The ***ASD-NEST*** program serves students with autism in a classroom with general education students.

The ***ASD-Horizon*** program serves a maximum of eight students with autism in a Special Class (SC). The class is taught by one special education teacher and one classroom paraprofessional.

District 75 programs for ASD students are aimed at those students with academic abilities significantly below grade level, with severe language deficits and significant delays in peer interaction. Student -Teacher ratios are typically 6:1 with 1 or more paras in classrooms.

ASD-NEST program in Rockaway: Channel View School for Research

ASD-Horizon program in Rockaway: none available, the closest is PS 41 in Bayside, Queens

District 75 schools in Rockaway: PS253, PS 43, Beach Channel Campus, St. John's Residence for Boys, PS 256Queens (new Dist. 75 dedicated school facility on B135th Street, Belle Harbor)

4- Resources available to parents with regard to requesting a neuropsychological assessment? Are these assessments only offered through the DOE or are assessments through independent third parties available? It was stated that there are plans for expansion of these important programs into more Rockaway schools, and that they should have more information by spring of 2020.

The committee meeting continued with an informational presentation by:

Queens Law Associates Director of Youth Services, Mr. Brandon Jeffries.

Mr. Jeffries discussed the Rockaway youth outreach services being provided by the QLA organization. He described the services as Pre-emptive and Preventive aimed at engaging at risk youth in programs and discussions to emphasize positive growth decisions.

Some of the program offerings include: Legal services including Youth Justice Court program, Peer-based tutoring, Job Readiness programs, A Domestic violence center as part of the Women's Group, Housing assistance, Young Adult Leadership Corps and Work Readiness programs. Mr. Jeffries pointed out an important initiative that Queens Law Associates has been working on with the St. John's School for Boys. A school and residence which has been a part of our committee discussions throughout the past year.

Mr. Alfonso Smith, Youth Initiatives Lead Advisor, NYC Commission on Human Rights stopped by to introduce himself to the community and to offer the assistance of his office in relation to violations of individual freedoms and rights in NYC as required by the Human Rights Law, Title 8 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, and with educating the

public and encouraging positive community relations. The Law prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations. His contact number is: (718) 722-3131, e-mail address-smith@cchr.nyc.gov.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Chris Tedesco Chair of the Committee reported that a meeting was held on November 25, 2019. A quorum was not present.

Agenda items discussed were the following:

1. Queensrail - Rick Horan - presentation outlining the long anticipated MTA Rockaway Branch Study, which will was completed last year was only recently released. The QueensLink website contains wealth of information about the history, study, and potential uses of the abandoned tracks. The MTA study offered two possibilities for reactivating the line; as part of the LIRR main line, or as part of NYC Transit system. QueensRail officially supports the subway option as their first choice, because of the estimated 47,000 riders per day vs the LIRR option which would service an estimated 11,000 riders per day. The rail reactivation study estimated the costs to be \$6.7 Billion for the LIRR option, and \$8.1 Billion for the subway option.

2. Town Hall with Andy Byford from NYC Transit. There is a tentatively scheduled town hall meeting in Rockaway with NYC Transit president Andy Byford in March. In an effort to help confirm this event, the committee recommends that CB14 send a letter to Mr. Byford's office requesting a date, location, and confirmation for the event. Mr. Byford made a verbal commitment to Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer-Amato over a year ago.

Updates on various projects, studies and issues:

Bike Lanes in Broad Channel:

Following the death of a biker in October 2019 on CBB at East 4th Rd in Broad Channel, DOT is working with the Broad Channel Civic Association on several possibilities to address biker safety on CBB in Broad Channel.

UPDATE from Broad Channel Civic (12/7/19): **A motion was made and passed unanimously to support the DOT proposal.**

There was also a lot of commentary on the need for a traffic light at 1st road.

Ferry Ridership:

Through September, average ridership on the Rockaway route is up 23% this year over last year. Weekday AM/PM peaks have seen 12% growth in this time period, and summer weekends have seen explosive growth, up 54% over last year.

Downtown Far Rockaway Pilot Shuttle:

The Downtown Far Rockaway Shuttle Bus Pilot (summer 2019) was largely similar to the winter pilot in 2017/2018. Despite comprehensive outreach efforts and summer weather, we only saw an average of 34 people per day (with ~3 during AM and PM peak trips, 0-1 people during off-peak trips). Comparatively, we saw an average of 31 people per day during the winter pilot. 75% of surveyed riders indicated they would still take the ferry if the pilot shuttle bus was not available. (Note that the A-train is, in most cases, faster than a shuttle to the ferry from downtown Far Rockaway. This may be a contributing factor to low shuttle bus ridership.)

Parking signage at Scholars Academy:

Principal O'Connell got in touch at the beginning of the school year about an ongoing issue with school zone parking on BCD between Seaside and B104. Only half of that block is designated as a 7-4 school zone, but buses use the entire block. DOT replaced what they called "missing signs" but the problem remains unresolved.

Seagirt @ Camp Rd/Beach 26th:

DOT's Geometric Design unit recently approved the plan to adjust markings here to improve crossing Camp Rd/B 26 St on Seagirt in both directions. These will likely be installed in the spring, as it's beginning to get too cold to install new markings now.

Beach 60/61/Larkin Street Conversions:

No updates at this time with regard to the conversion, however speed humps were installed at the end of November on B 61 Street. Likely summer 2020 for conversions

Parking under the El/Rockaway Freeway:

Gerry Romski from ABTS: They do not (yet) own 62-67, still in the hands of HPD, and hoping it will be conveyed in 2020. It will become parking once conveyed. 73-77, the area behind the Y is still being discussed with the YMCA and the City. A section of that stretch is being used for parking by Bethel AME Church. They have the rights to that area for parking. 59-62 is being studied by DOT for possible re-opening of the eastbound lanes. There are no plans for any changes in the foreseeable future for Rockaway Freeway east of 59th street.

Other projects:

RBB between 114 & 116 is still on schedule for completion by summer 2020
RBB between 73rd and 84th is still on schedule for completion by summer 2020

Board Old/New Business regarding Transportation:

Concern of proposed temporary layover for Q22 on Beach 20th Street

MTA is phasing out posted schedules for Q22 bus stops. Senator Sander's office is attempting to distribute printed schedules, with a focus on senior housing facilities.

Question about the new bus lane markings in the 60's – there is no signage for when the lanes are in effect, and the Q52 doesn't run during the overnight hours.

- Khaleel Anderson made a motion for the board to send a letter to EDC requesting a full accounting of Far Rockaway Shuttle Program from start to finish including the community outreach plan/ ridership numbers and reason for ending the program. The motion was seconded by Sonia Moise. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

- Sonia Moise requested an update on painted direction lanes at Rockaway Freeway and Beach 32 Street. Jonathan expressed that he would follow up with DOT but he believes they have to do a study first and it could take 8 months.

Beach Channel/Rockaway Beach Blvd. from Beach 72 Street.

- Al Moore requested an updated on the widening of Rockaway Beach Blvd/Edgemere Avenue from Beach 62 Street to Beach 32 Street. Jonathan advised he would look into the issue but he believes that the developer for Arverne East would be required to widen the road.

-Issac Parsee made the motion for the letter to MTA Town Hall include the request for longer new A trains or the number of trains be increased. The motioned was seconded by Chris Tedesco. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

-Karen Sloan Payne made the motion for the board to send a letter to OEM and DOT requesting an updated evacuation plan for the Peninsula due to the narrowing of streets by bike lanes, closed sections of the Rockaway Freeway and an increase in population. The motion was seconded by Khaleel Anderson. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

-Nancy Martinez requested past documents relating to the closing of lanes under the Rockaway Freeway. The Chair directed Jonathan to search for those documents.

-Wanda Warden made a motion for the Board to send a letter to the MTA/TriBoro Bus Division requesting additional Q113 and Q114 Buses.

The motion was seconded by Isaac Parsee. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion.

PARKS AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Jose Velez Co-Chair of the Committee reported that the following agenda items were discussed:

Nameoke Park Capital Presentation:

Presented by Nat Harris of Quennell, Rothschild & Partners, with Diane Drier of Queens Capital Projects.

The site was previously owned by Sanitation Dept. It is outside of the 500-year flood zone, at the corner of Nameoke and Augustina. Design is based on scoping meeting held with community. It is a small lot, only 100 ft. by 140 ft. This is the only park within a 5-minute walk of Downtown Far Rockaway. Park includes play areas (for ages 2-5 and 6-12). there will be safety ground covering, ground water spray feature, climbing rock elements, adult fitness, a plaza which includes sitting area with shade & sitting area with gaming tables, comfort station, addition seating in playground area. Three oak trees on the current site will be kept, additional trees to be planted along with native shrubs and vegetation

Questions: Lighting, hours of operations, is there a dog area, where soil samples done, how many benches, what is being done to ensure the park is a safe space.

There not being a quorum of committee members, a consensus of the members present is to recommend that the design be approved by the Community Board.

-Isaac Parsee stated he has been informed by the surrounding churches and concerned residents that there should be a reduction in the numbers of benches in the proposed park design to prevent vagrants from hanging out in the park. Also that the Park be named Agustina Park. The Chair advised Isaac to direct those community groups and residents to submit their concern and request in writing to the Community Board.

The Parks and Public Safety Committee recommend that the Board support the presented design for the proposed park to be developed at the corner of Augustina Avenue and Nameoke Street. The motion carried by a hand vote in favor of the motion. 2 Abstained.

PS 104/Westbourne Playground Synthetic Turf Discussion:

Presented by SCA Bryan McGinn and Mark Morrison Landscape architect Martin, Irene Papadopoulos/Parks Capital Inter-Agency Coordinator. As part of Downtown Far Rockaway rezoning, \$1.3 million has been allocated to renovate this area, located at Beach 25th St. & Mott Ave. The

property technically belongs to the DOE but jointly maintained by the Park Dept. and the SCA. They met with the h Principal and the School Leadership Team (SLT) and this is the design that they requested. At the strong request of the Principal and the SLT the baseball field elements & the larger asphalt area is being eliminated due to non-use. It was felt that a synthetic turf multi use field would be more useful for the students and community. The new field would include a running track, four basketball shooting stations, seating would be provided, native planting & tree planting, permeable pavers are also being used, and there is currently no flooding issue. The Principal, S LT and the Parents Association all approved the current design.

Questions: Is park accessible to the public, what are the hours, what was the community engagement, what other sports can be played beside soccer & football on this field, no goal posts for football, , what is the current utilization of the space during non-school hours, why can't the baseball field be converted from asphalt to grass/dirt. What is the cost of the field Can a baseball field be added to the current design? Will there be additional seating, can additional outreach be made to the community.

The Committee did not have a quorum but polling of the members present showed 3 in favor of design, 3 abstentions, 1 no. The Chair went the board for questions/discussion on the motion and it was decided to table until local civics were informed of the proposed design and they provided feedback on the proposed design.

Parks Committee Old/New Business - Joe Hartigan went to RFP presentation for concessions, he took issue with the fact that whoever won the contract would be responsible for maintaining the roof and structure. So he submitted some questions regarding what was done with the money collected previously, also how the AOCE project will affect concessions during installation.

Old/New Business

Board members requested that Jonathan look into and provide additional details/information on the following issues:

- a) money regarding the concessions
- b) parking for shoppers once the Q22 bus stop is relocated temporally on Beach 20 St.
- c) Traffic being backed up on Mott Avenue and Beach 20 Street.

The motion was made and second to adjourn the meeting 9:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted By: M. Dunning