

**COMMUNITY BOARD #14  
VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING  
MAY 4, 2021**

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**PRESENT**

Audrey Amsterdam-Handy, Mark Anaya, Gabrielle Bennett, Yaakov Berger, Lailah Boyd, Natasha Carter, John Cori, Eric Diaz, Dr. Gerald David, Ahmad Edwards, Noreen Ellis, Jack Epter, Temina Feldman, Jaden Gabb, Eugenia Gibson, Yitzchok Goldstein, D. Brian Heffernan, Felicia Johnson, Kelly Brian, Paul King, Maggie Larkins, Betty Leon, Denise Lopesti, Rosalyn Mason, John McCambridge, Isa Mitchell, Sonia Moise, Helen Montero, Al Moore, Dolores Orr, Dr. Harold Paez, Linda Plummer, David Rood-Ojalvo, Karen Sloan-Payne, Chris Tedesco, Jose Velez, Wanda Warden

**ABSENT**

Giselle Carter, Louis Caucig, Andrea Colon, Rosemarie Duggan-Gulston, Joanne Fogarty, Randy Hall, Tamara Jacobs, Annette Lord-Cohen, Ife Maijeh, Nancy Martinez, Eugene Pasternak, Lisa Williams

**GUESTS**

Malik Sanders-rep of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Irene Dougherty rep of Assembly member Stacey Pheffer-Amato, Sandee Doremus rep of State Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr., Democratic District Leader Lew Simon

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**MINUTES FROM April 2021**

The Chair announced the minutes will be reviewed at the June meeting.

**CORRESPONDANCE**

Letter was sent to Nicole Garcia, Queens DOT Commissioner from Community Board #14. Letter stated that Community Board #14 has no objection to the placement of new signs to allow for parking on the north of Rockaway Freeway from Beach 80<sup>th</sup> to 84<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the dog park but prohibiting overnight parking from 10:00pm to 6:00am.

**REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER** - District Manager, Jonathan

Gaska reported that we are entering mosquito season and the office will take locations of standing water including vacant lots that can breed mosquitos. The office will report the locations to the Department of Health and 311.

The City is allowing Street Activity permits now that the weather is getting warmer. The permit application process is done online and has to be submitted 60 days in advance of the event. The office does request a

petition of signatures/addresses including phone #s of 75% of the block being requested to be closed. The office will call the numbers to verify that person lives on the block and supports the street closure. The application fee is less than \$23 and the applicant would need a debit/credit. The website for the permits is NYC Street Activity Permits.

Mr. Gaska reminded everyone at the previous board meeting that DOT would be presenting to the Transportation Committee the results of a holistic study that they conducted from the Nassau County Line along Seagirt Blvd. to Beach Channel Drive.

### **ELECTED OFFICIAL CALL IN**

#### **ASSEMBLY MEMBER STACEY PHEFFER-AMATO**

Irene Dougherty—rep for Assembly member Pheffer-Amato reported that the E-Waste drop off event has been very successful and has been extended until May 7, 2021. The office drop off location is 95-16 Rockaway Beach Blvd., 9:00am to 5:00pm. Also, an Offshore Wind information session is going to be held tomorrow starting at 6:00pm. For more information please call 718-945-9550.

#### **STATE SENATOR JOSEPH ADDABBO JR.**

Sandee Doremus—rep for Senator Joseph Addabbo reported that the office is also conducting a recycling event and already had a recycling event with the NYC Dep. of Sanitation. The Paper Shredding Recycling Event is being Co-Hosted with Assembly member Stacey Pheffer-Amato's office on June 6, 2021 at St. Camilla from 10am to 12am. For more information please call the office at 718-318-0702.

#### **QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT DONOVAN RICHARDS**

Malik Sanders rep for QBP Richards reported that there are going to be several trainings scheduled for the new and reappointed board members. A Bike Jamboree has been set for May 15, 2021 at Queens Borough Hall and all are invited to attend.

Malik Sanders advised that there has been press and social media requests for assistance to get sunken barges removed for private property and therefore please be informed that Brittney Scott is leading the investigation and working in conjunction with the appropriate agencies to get the barges removed and so far it seems to be a federal issue. Those with questions regarding the can reach out to Mrs. Scott at [bscott@queensbp.org](mailto:bscott@queensbp.org).

**PUBLIC SPEAKING** – The Chair opened the floor for public speaking. Those who signed up to speak were recognized and heard. The Chair closed public speaking.

**GUEST SPEAKER**

**NYC Cultural Affair –Percent for Art**

David Mandel, Community Liaison for Percent for Art Program announced that they will be creating some art work for the new fire house located at 116-11 Beach Channel Drive, Rockaway Park. The Percent for Art program is requesting the Board's assistance to inquire if there are any local artist that would be eligible or interested in participating in the program.

Mr. Mandel stated that the Art program has a panel process that takes place in 2 different meetings. The first meeting involves looking at a bunch of artists together to select finalists. The second meeting involves reviewing the finalist's proposals to select one proposal together. Therefore the Art program is also requesting the board's assistance in identifying community residents to act as panelists. The program is requiring that the panelist have some knowledge of contemporary art and good standing with the community.

**HOUSING & LAND-USE COMMITTEE**

Al Moore, Chair of the committee reported that a virtual meeting was held on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 @ 7PM. The first agenda item for discussion was regarding: C-210148-ZMQ - Zoning map amendment at 133 Beach 116 Street, Block#16226, Lot#25 and Block#16226, Lots#12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 changing zoning from R7/C1-3 to a R7A/C2-4 to facilitate the development of physical cultural establishment (Orange Theory Gym).

Elyse Foladare representing the client explained that the zoning amendment being requested is to permit Orange Theory Gym to occupy retail space on the ground floor of a new residential building at 133 Beach 116 St with 108 parking spaces. Currently gyms can only operate in a C2-4 zone. NYC Planning is currently in the process of changing that restriction but not in time for Orange Theory to open and operate.

The zoning change will include not only 133 Beach 116 Street but also all properties on the west side of B 116 St, with the exception of the property on the SW corner @ Rockaway Beach Blvd (former bank site).

After the committee discussed the zoning amendment, John Cori made the motion for the committee to support the zoning map amendment proposed for 133 Beach 116 Street for the Orange Theory Gym. Denise Lopresti seconded the motion.

Brian Heffernan proposed an amendment to the motion that was not accepted by the maker of motion (John Cori). The motion to oppose the amendment was carried by a vote of 5 Yes and 4 abstentions.

Motion by Brian Heffernan to extend C2-4 zoning to the eastside of Beach 116 St from boardwalk to Rockaway Beach Blvd and SW corner property @ Rockaway Beach Blvd. There was no second to the motion. End of committee report on this item.

**PUBLIC HEARING** – The Chair opened the floor for a public hearing regarding C-210148-ZMQ -zoning map amendment at 133 Beach 116 Street Changing zoning from R7/C1-3 to a R7A/C2-4 to facilitate the development of physical cultural establishment. No one signed up to speak. The Chair closed the public hearing.

The Committee's motion is for the board to support the committee's recommendation to approve C-210148-ZMQ -Zoning map amendment at 133 Beach 116 Street, Block#16226, Lot#25 and Block#16226, Lots#12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 changing zoning from R7/C1-3 to a R7A/C2-4 to facilitate the development of physical cultural establishment Orange Theory Gym. The motion carried with a roll call vote of 38 YES , 1 NO and 0 ABSTAINED.

The second agenda item for committee discussion was regarding C-200230-ZMQ; 299231-ZRQ Zoning map amendment at Beach Channel Drive & 454 Beach 67 St. Block#16040, Lots#12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 & Block#16041, Lot# 6.

Richard Lobel Attorney representing the client Battalion Church of God. (Rev. Cockfield) The proposed action to change from an R4 zoning district to an R6 district-south of Beach Channel Drive between Beach 66 Street and Beach 67 Street and rezoning an unattached lot at Beach 68 St. Proposing to build a 9 story affordable 84 unit residence for seniors and 11 story building to include a charter school, community facility and house of worship.

**Residential Building** will house formally homeless seniors capable of independent living at 50% AMI. There will be central laundry room adjacent to a lounge/gathering area. There will be a garden for resident use and storage. There will be only 9 parking spots. 60% of units will be studios and 40% will be one bedroom, with a two bedroom apt for onsite superintendent for a total of 84 units.

**School Building** will be 11 stories with 6 parking spots. It was noted while there was a rendering, the school design is undetermined at this time and

construction will not begin for at least 2 years. Additionally, it will be a Charter School and the operator has not yet been selected. In addition to the church's property, the nursing home across the street will also be included in this up zoning.

Following power point presentation, Rev. Cockfield advised the Committee that outreach to surrounding residential neighborhood was done and has a petition with 28 signatures of support from residents on the 400 block of Beach 67 St and Beach 68 St. The Committee requested that the applicant submit petitions of support to the CB#14 office. The Committee and applicant discussed questions/concerns regarding petitions: 1) asked why no signatures from residents on Beach 66 St? Response- Beach 66 Street houses occupied by renters. 2) Asked if in the explanation of project to those signing for support of the project that it was explained that in addition the up zoning of the church's properties, it included the up zoning of the nursing home across the street. Response – Residents were not advised 3) applicant was asked to be sure all who signed the petition are notified of the May 4, 2021 CB meeting.

Councilmember Selvena Brooks-Powers asked for explanation as to why the Nursing Home was included in this up zoning since while it is non-conforming, it is grandfathered. Richard Lobel advised that the nursing home was not on the original application submitted to City Planning but at a meeting with City Planning, applicant was asked to include Nursing Home.

Concerns expressed:

- 1) **Parking** – only 6 spots for the school and 9 spots for residence is insufficient and will negatively impact surrounding community. Church parking lot will be eliminated, and church members will be parking on surrounding streets during church services/events.
- 2) **School** – what assurances do we have that without an operator at this time and construction 2 years away, that it will in fact be a school. Why a school and not just senior housing? Response, Church's commitment to education.
- 3) **No Rockaway Resident preference** – because some of the funding is Federal money, resident preference is not permitted.
- 4) **Mosquitoes and Flooding** – Although there is outdoor seating for seniors mosquitoes will make it impossible for seniors to take advantage. Meeting the current flood prevention requirements, will not protect the building or residents from the current challenges of Jamaica Bay.
- 5) **Knowing all the building already going on in Rockaway, what does this project bring that we are not already getting** - Response: need for senior housing.

- 6) **Up zoning of the Nursing Home property**- only became a part of application at request of City Planning and sets up the potential for a high rise building to replace the existing building.

The Committee discussed the responses from the applicant. Felicia Johnson made the motion for the committee to oppose the up zoning of C-200230-ZMQ; 299231-ZRQ zoning map amendment at Beach Channel Drive & 454 Beach 67 St. Block#16040, Lots#12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 & Block#16041, Lot# 6 from R4 to R6 because the nursing home was added to the application creating the potential for high density in a 1/2 family house community and parking concerns previously expressed to the applicant has not been addressed. The motion was seconded by Wanda Warden. The motion passed by unanimous vote. End of Committee Report on this item.

**PUBLIC HEARING** The Chair opened the floor for a public hearing regarding C-200230-ZMQ; 299231-ZRQ Zoning map amendment at Beach Channel Drive & 454 Beach 67 St. Block#16040, Lots#12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 & Block#16041, Lot# 6.

The Chair closed the public hearing.

The Committee's motion for the board is to oppose the up zoning of C-200230-ZMQ; 299231-ZRQ zoning map amendment at Beach Channel Drive & 454 Beach 67 St. Block#16040, Lots#12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 & Block#16041, Lot# 6 from R4 to R6 because the nursing home was added to the application creating the potential for high density in a 1/2 family house community and parking concerns previously expressed to the applicant has not been addressed.

Felicia Johnson made an amendment to the motion to remove the nursing home up zoning from the application and approve the zoning amendment for Beach Channel Drive and 454 Beach 67 Street. The motion carried with a vote of 26 Yes, 13 No and 1 Abstained.

The Third agenda item for discussion was regarding Citywide Text Amendment – Zoning for Accessibility – Dept. of City Planning (Hallah Saleh). To make transit system more accessible by working with developers to make more room for installation of elevators for subway access.

In Summary this text amendment is intended for R9 –R10 district in which new development projects in very close proximity to a subway station would be given easement right within a building to provide access to subway elevators. In exchange for this easement, the developer could be granted up

to 20% increase in FAR. Public comment deadline is June 14<sup>th</sup>. The Land Use Committee will discuss further at their June meeting.

### **PARKS & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Jose Velez Co, -Chair of the Committee reported that a meeting was held on April 27, 2021. The first agenda for discussion was regarding the Board Channel American Fields Capital Reconstruction project -\$3,000,000 funded by Council Speaker Johnson and Council member Eric Ulrich

The Project goals are regarding a creation of resilient design that is mindful of flooding and storm water issues, and create a natural turf field.

Currently this is an asphalt field that is subject to flooding, it is located on the southern tip of Board Channel & sits between two tidal wetlands. It is subject to City and State regulations & must also adhere to the 150-foot buffer zone.

The new design must handle the flooding & the storm water drainage issue. This new design would be a natural turf field (all of the asphalt being removed) with Little League ball field and no pitcher's mound, allowing the field to be used for other sports. A new mesh would be installed around the field with an extended fence. Shade trees would be installed along the parking lot. There would also be shade & flowering trees at the main entrances with a small seating area to create a welcoming space. The plan includes adding new bike racks, adding garbage cans at the improved dugouts, a drinking fountain, a bottle filler, more benches and additional shade trees behind the backstop. Additional trees would be placed on the site to handle flooding and drainage issues.

The committee is concerned that there are no bathrooms in the project.

The local civic is in support of the project but has requested bleachers and also at the main entrance lighting. Parks will look into bleachers but there is not enough funding for lighting at the main entrance.

A motion was made to accept the project as proposal with the addition of bleachers. The motion passed.

The second agenda item for discussion was regarding Rockaway Beach Bazaar presented two proposals for satellite concessions.

Alexander Han, Sophia Filippone: Revenue Div. & Concession Unit, Aaron Broudo of Rockaway Beach Bazaar, Lido Beach Butlers and Surf Tribe.

**Lido Beach Butlers** would rent out cabanas, beach chairs, umbrellas and games (with a possibility of food delivery from beach concessioners down the road). This would be app based and equipment could be ordered prior to arriving at the beach, upon arrival Lido Beach Butlers would bring the equipment to the beach. Equipment would be stored in a container located between the boardwalk and the 108<sup>th</sup> street hockey rink.

**Surf Tribe** would be providing surfboard rentals. Initially from a 10 x 10 ft. tent located on the beach, they are not starting with a container and would only use a container for storage if needed, it would also be located between the boardwalk and the 108<sup>th</sup> street hockey rink.

The concerns of the committee were regarding:

- Does the agreement allow the concessioners to use parkland for satellite concessions? Yes it does.
- It appears that the two overlapping civics were not contacted regarding these proposals, in previous conversations the local civics had requested that containers not be used along Shore Front Parkway.
- What's to prevent other vendors from using containers along SFP, are the concessioners and the sub-licensees insured should the containers damage property in a Super Storm Sandy-like event.
- Will the containers block the Rockies access to their container? No, the Rockies container is on the Beach 109 street side of the rink. The Rockies have not gotten their permit in which permits have been delayed due to Covid, but last week the Parks Dept. was given permission to approve permits for sports.
- Containers should be painted with artwork. Can a truck or van be used to house the equipment instead? What effect would these proposals have on the pedestrian traffic along Beach 108 Street?
- Were local business contacted regarding these proposals? Yes. These concessions will operate only within this area.

Eric Peterson said that container placement would be subject to review and feedback from the community. The expected redesign of Beach 108 Street should help with the pedestrian flow and traffic.

A motion was made that shipping containers not be used on the Beach or Shore Front Parkway for storage or commercial purposes, the motion failed.

The Parks & Public Safety Committee was not satisfied with the process to select the vendor for the Beach 108 Street - Beach 110 Street site and the Board opposed the placement of the container in regards to the for profit surfboard rental vendor.



Aaron was asked if Rockaway Beach Bazaar was in conversation with previous concessioners to have them stay as sub-licensees, and he said that they were.

The Parks & Public Safety committee made motion to support the proposed Broad Channel American Field reconstruction project and the request that bleachers be provided for \$3 Million in which funding was provided by City Council Speaker Cory Johnson and City Councilman Eric Ulrich. The motion carried by a vote in favor of the motion and 5 abstained.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

-John McCambridge suggested that something needs to be done about Parks Dept. securing the containers. The Chairs requested that Jonathan send a letter to the Parks Dept.

-Dr. Harold Paez announced that if members remember last year the board voted to include as a capital item for adding additional school seats for gifted and talented. Now there are 2 proposed Bills, The first is Assembly Bill A4083 by State Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr. requiring that DOE provide funding for additional seats for gifted and talented and Senate Bill S3445. The Chair expressed that the information be sent to Jonathan and he would reach out to members and mass email list suggesting that they support the Bills.

Respectfully Submitted By: M. Dunning