

**COMMUNITY BOARD # 14
VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 9, 2021**

PRESENT

Audrey Amsterdam-Handy, Mark Anaya, Lailah Boyd, Giselle Carter, Natasha Carter, Louis Caucig, John Cori, Dr. Gerald David, Rosemarie Duggan-Gulston, Ahmad Edwards, Noreen Ellis, Jack Epter, Yitzchok Goldstone, Felicia Johnson, Betty Leon, Denise Lopresti, Annette Lord-Cohen Nancy Martinez, John McCambridge, Daniel Mundy, Dolores Orr, Dr. Harold Paez, David Rood-Ojalvo, Karen Sloan-Payne, Chris Tedesco, Jose Velez, Wanda Warden, Lisa Williams

ABSENT

Gabrielle Bennett, Yaakov Berger, Andrea Colon, Eric Diaz, Temina Feldman, Joanne Fogarty, Jaden Gabb, Eugenia Gibson, Randy Hall, D. Brian Heffernan, Tamara Jacobs, Kelly Brian, Paul Kin, Maggie Larkins, , Ife Maijeh, Rosalyn Mason, Isa Mitchell, Sonia Moise, Helen Montero, Al Moore, Eugene Pasternak, Linda Plummer,

GUESTS

Ciara Donley – Rep. City Councilman Eric Ulrich, Dan Brown-Rep. Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, Sandee Deremus - Rep. State Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr., Maura Avington – Rep. State Assembly Member Stacey Amato-Pheffer, Victoria Garvey – Rep. Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Karl Valere-Rep. Assembly Member Khalel Anderson, Kevin Parris – Rep. Housing Preservation & Development, Lida Alijabar – Rep. Housing Preservation & Development, Mr. Azaroff – Rep. Rockaway United

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15pm.

The Chair reminded the Board that this meeting will begin with the completion of the agenda from the October 12, 2021 board meeting since meeting was adjourned at 10pm without completing the agenda.

Transportation Committee

Chris Tedesco, Committee Chair reported that a meeting was held on October 6, 2021. The agenda item for discussion was regarding NYC Department of Transportation’s presentation of Seagirt Blvd. The scope of the project is Seagirt Boulevard from Beach 35th Street to Beach 9th Street.

Mr. Tedesco reported that the presentation was already emailed out to board members and the public and was presented to the committee as a “Bike lane Project” that includes increased safety measures for pedestrian crossings, traffic calming, and the creation of bike lanes on both east and westbound directions. DOT used data from the past 7 years showing reckless driving patterns, excessive speeding, injuries and fatalities, and unsafe street crossing conditions throughout the corridor.

Main Points included:

- Improvements to median to improve pedestrian crossing safety, creating of bibs at intersections to give pedestrians/drivers better sightlines.
- Creation of left turn bays at: Crest Rd, Beach 20th, Beach 13th street., no new turn signals will be installed at new left turn bays.
- We will lose a total of 72 parking spaces between. Beach 35th St. & Beach 9th St. and one lane of traffic in each direction to accommodate a bike lane and buffering.

Some of the committee concerns expressed involved the presentation lacked details on many key points, and had an overall weak and incomplete nature. DOT claimed to have “worked closely” with the transportation committee during their Access to Opportunity study conducted by Laura MacNeil, but other than one scoping meeting in 2018, nobody on the committee recalled anything resembling “working closely.” Several committee members pointed out that losing 72 parking spaces is unacceptable.

Committee members acknowledged the need for pedestrian safety improvements as well as the need to curb speeding drivers, but felt the plan lacks the real needs of the community, and missed the mark on several points including:

- 1 – An existing bus layover bet 20th & 21st St. often block a lane of traffic.
- 2 - Omission of left turn signals and no commitment to fix the lane alignment issue at Camp Rd and Seagirt Blvd. Left turn bay back-ups that will result in two lanes of traffic into one lane during peak hours
- 3 - No mention of evacuation plans, signs, routes, or markings, and no mention of St John's hospital
- 4 – Omitting details for intersection at Seagirt/Rockaway Freeway/ Beach 35th/Beach Channel Drive., which the committee specifically requested DOT to study and make recommendations.

The committee also questioned the need for dedicated bike lanes in this corridor and had doubts that it would be widely used. The presentation did not require any motions or recommendations. DOT said they would present to the full board in the near future and seemed willing to take committee recommendations into consideration for a revised plan. The committee requested that DOT come back to the committee to meet before presenting to the board at a later date.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 12, 2021

CORRESPONDANCE WAS READ AS FOLLOWS:

Jonathan Gaska, District Manager announced that the CB#14 office was notified from HPD and Archer Development Team (developers of the demolished Peninsula Hospital site), that the 1st building for construction will be at 5323 Beach Channel Drive, which will be 17 stories and includes 194 units. The AMI's will be between 30 & 60 percent of the income levels

which is about \$20,000 to \$90,000 yearly income to be eligible for an apt. The notification did not have a construction start date.

The Chair stated that the notice infers 50% of eligibility goes to Rockaway residents as promised and the office will reach out to HPD to confirm this application/lottery process.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Chair announced that Lew Simon passed away on Saturday and asked for a moment of silence. There was already an Interfaith Thanksgiving event planned with West End Temple and St. Francis DeSalles Church for Monday November 22, 2021. Now a memorial service for Lew Simon has been included in the services.

BOARD ELECTION

The Chair informed the board members that procedures are still being worked out on how the members will hold board elections since the meetings are virtual. The board's by-laws states that in November, a nominating committee is formed, and Dr. Gerald David has agreed to Chair the committee, members of the committee is being finalized. Then at the December meeting the committee will present their proposed slate of officers for the board election that will take place in January. In December once the slate is presented, nominations will be accepted from the floor by any board member for any of the Executive Board positions.

According to the bylaws, in order to be considered a candidate, you must have been on the board for at least one year and have 75% good attendance. Also, since the elections are by open signed ballot by each member and our meetings virtual it is not clear how the board would hold election for officers. Additionally, Jonathan has already reached out to Queens Borough Hall legal counsel for the proper protocol and guidance.

The Executive Board positions that are up for election are the following:

Chair – Dolores Orr

1st Vice Chair – Al Moore

2nd Vice Chair – Dan Mundy

3rd Vice Chair – Felicia Johnson

4th Vice Chair- Betty Leon

Secretary/ Treasurer – Jose Velez

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER

Jonathan Gaska, District Manager asked everyone to honor our veterans on Veterans Day.

The NYC Department of Sanitation has announced that agency will only be able to do (1) Yard & Leaf Pick-Up this fall. Homeowners have to put yard waste and leaves in a paper bag, sanitation does have some large paper bags or items can be placed in an unlined garbage can. Also, NYC DOS is accepting applications for workers to help with snow removal. You can apply by going to the NYC DOS website.

Jonathan Gaska shared that Lew Simon was a great advocate for all of Rockaway. He will always be known for being the “King of Petitions” as in he would spend hours out in the community getting signatures for those looking to run for public office. He will be missed.

ELECTED OFFICIAL REPORT

STATE SENATOR JOSEPH ADDABBO JR.

Sandee Doremus reported that Lew Simon will be missed and on November 14, 2021 from 3pm to 5pm there will be a celebration of life for Lew Simon at the Hockey Rink at Beach 108 Street all are invited to attend.

CITY COUNCILMAN ERIC ULRICH

Ciara Donely expressed sadness regarding the passing of Lew Simon. Councilmember Ulrich expressed that he will miss working on community issues with Lew. The office continues Covid testing on Tuesdays 11:00am to 7:00pm.

QUEENS DISTRICT ATTORNEY MELINDA KATZ

Dan Brown reported that all are invited to attend in person and live stream Veteran’s Day observance ceremony in partnership with Queens Borough President Donovan Richards on November 10, 2021 at 11:00am at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Elmhurst Park. More information is available by logging onto queensda.org.

ASSEMBLY MEMBER STACY PHEFFER-AMATO

Maura Avington reported that the office is getting ready to be back in session in Albany beginning in January. Information regarding upcoming events and mobile office hours will be sent out to all.

QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT DONOVAN RICHARDS

Victoria Garvey introduced herself as Planner in Development office at QBH and is filling for Malik Sanders.

GUEST SPEAKER

100TH POLICE PRECINCT

Board Chair congratulated D.I. Fabara on his recent promotion.

Deputy Inspector Carlos Fabara of the 100th Police Precinct updated that board on stats for a 20-day period which is over all major crime down 25% as in down in 6 of the 7 major crime categories for the year and for the 20 day period.

The precinct hired (2) new Precinct Greeters who will be the 1st people that you will see when you walk into the precinct. The function of the greeter is to improve your experience when entering the precinct, help you with an in a timely fashion and improve customer service.

Recently search warrants were issued and 6 guns were recovered from suspects in a 20 day period.

100th POLICE PRECINCT-COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

P.O. Victor Boamah and P.O. Lauren Haber introduced themselves as the new community affairs officers at the precinct.

PUBLIC SPEAKING – The Chair opened the floor for public speaking. Two (2) people signed up to speak. All were recognized and heard. The Chair closed public speaking.

INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

1. HPD - Re: Updates on Edgemere Resilient Community Plan

Kevin Parris, Director for Queens and Staten Island team of HPD. Mr. Parris explained that some of the strategies of the plan included protecting the neighborhood from flooding, maintaining a low density field and encouraging resilient development where appropriate.

One of the recommendations of the plan was for HPD to investigate the creation of a CLT in Edgemere and the efforts are moving in a positive manor. HPD released a RFEI for a CLT Partner and currently reviewing all of the proposals that have been submitted.

HPD is also in the final stages of entering into several ULURP actions that will help implement the strategies that came out of the plan. Therefore the zoning map and zoning tax amendments that will limit development of vulnerable areas closest to the bay are needed and allows for some modest residential and retail development that lies closer to transit availability. There will also be a special coastal risk district that has been proposed for those sites that are going to be in specific areas as well as being up zoned. Additionally, HPD will be seeking the Board's approval for some of the development sites and the urban renewal plan will be amended as needed.

The Chair requested that HPD provide the Board with the number of units being built in the community under HPD and HPD's notes from community engagement meetings that had occurred since Super Storm Sandy.

2. Rockaway United – Re: Update on Comm. Mobility Plan/Micro Grid

Professor Azaroff advised that he and the team has presented to the board before and the team has been doing a study in the Rockaways and would like to provide an update

which involves the team focusing on awareness of transportation, mobility and infrastructure. The project is the Lily Pad Neighborhood Mobility Hub and received a grant from NSF to focus on vulnerabilities parts in the Rockaways as part of a planning and feasibility study.

The project engages the NYCHA to prototype a mobility hub. The team conducted preliminary impacts assessment study of a group of 6 microgrids proportionately located on the Peninsula. The selection of these sites is based on the first response facilities, commercial amenities, and public services. The early results of the study demonstrated its efficiency, resilience and a subsequent study focused on the technical and economic feasibility assessment in integrating renewable energy showed that microgrids can cost effectively support renewable energy.

3. Queens Public Library (QPL)– Re: Update on new Far Rockaway Library Construction

Luisa Benedetto, Manager of Government Affairs for Queens Public Libraries expressed thanks to all the elected officials for funding the new Far Rockaway Library. Jonathan Gaska reminded everyone that the funding started with past Queens Borough President Helen Marshall and along with CB#14 Chairperson Dolores Orr was going to suggest naming the new library in her honor but Mrs. Benedetto already inquired and verbally advised CB14 that the policy of QPL does not allow libraries to be named after people.

Felicia Johnson suggested that perhaps a room/section within the library be dedicated in Helen Marshall's honor. Ms. Benedetto will inquire on CB14 behalf and advise.

Mrs. Benedetto explained that when the pandemic started in March 2020 all 66 libraries were closed and people were allowed access to the library vast digital collection. Ebooks and audio books along with other library material was available. Some branches started doing virtual programs which was on social media. Currently operations are back to normal whereas people are allowed sit inside libraries and use computers etc., visitors must wear a mask.

Anna Robinson, Project Manager at NYC Dept. of Design & Construction for the new Far Rockaway Library gave an updated power point presentation which was emailed out to board members last week. Mrs. Robinson reported that the construction timeline for the completed library is as follows:

- Currently the atrium and the installation of sky lights are being worked on.
- The new library construction should be completed by spring of 2022, which does include punch list and signing off on the construction.
- Early summer of 2022 the building will be turned over to the QPL to be fitted for furniture and other necessary items, which can take up to 6 months.

The chair announced that according to the board's by-laws, no new business after 10:00pm therefore meeting is adjourned and Happy Thanksgiving to all.

Respectfully Submitted By: M. Dunning