



COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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Helen Marshall
Borough President

Louis Walker
Chairperson

Barry Grodenchik
Deputy Borough President
Director of Community Boards

COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

DATE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: VFW POST 150
51-11 108 STREET
CORONA, NY

I. Chairperson Louis Walker opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

II. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

A moment of silence was observed for the victims of 9/11.

At this point, First Vice Chair Patricia Terranova took the roll call. A quorum was present.

Next, Mr. Barry Grodenchik, Deputy Borough President, addressed the Board. Deputy Borough President Grodenchik recognized Mrs. Catherine Moore for her hard work and dedication, also mentioning her untiring efforts in her work with the domestic violence victims of Queens County.

The Chair was also thanked for remembering the victims of 9/11.

It is never an easy day. Although 11 years have passed, the victims will never be forgotten, said Mr. Grodenchik.

Following his introduction, Deputy Borough Grodenchik presented service awards to the following Board Members:

10 Year Service Award – Laraine Donohue

Before presenting the award to Ms. Donohue, Mr. Grodenchik read the inscription.

Each time the service award was presented to a Board recipient, Mr. Grodenchik read the inscription. He felt it is important to read the inscription because each person is unique and their achievements and contributions to the Boards are also special.

Next, Mr. Peter Mangannaro received a 10 Year Service Award.

Next, Ms. Georgina Oliver received a 15 Year Service Award.

Next, Ms. Ann Pfoser Darby received a 25 Year Service Award.

At this point, photographs were taken of the honorees.

III. REPORT OF THE LEGISLATORS

Next, Assembly Member Francisco Moya addressed the Board. He congratulated the honorees for their tremendous and invaluable service to the community. The entire Board was congratulated for their efforts as well.

Assembly Member Moya reported on the mobile services his office provides to the community. Constituent services were brought out to the community because people work and it is difficult to come to the district office. In this way, services are accessible for the entire community.

Not only this year, redistricting will occur and many of the districts have changed. Assembly Member Moya explained he covers more territory in Corona. The boundaries are from Roosevelt Avenue south to P.S. 14 around Otis Avenue. In Elmhurst, the boundary is Queens Blvd. (near the Elks Club). For more information, call his office. Equally important, the Primary will be held on Thursday, September 13, and it is vital to know your polling site.

Discussion ensued on the new re-districting lines.

At this point, Ms. Barbara Jackson was called upon to provide more information.

Assembly Member Moya continued a special session of the Assembly may be held in November. The minimum wage issue had been passed in the Assembly. Now, the Senate needs to vote on it. An increase in wages is needed for the residents of the State of New York.

Additionally, working with other elected officials, A Free Back to School & Children's Health Fair will be held on Saturday, September 15, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the intersection of Denman Street and Elmhurst Avenue. Flyers were available.

Next, Assembly Member Moya addressed the on-going problem of For Sale cars with no license plates and out of state plates parked all over our streets. Meetings were held with the Commanders of the 110 & 115 Precincts and a tour was conducted of the entire. It was noted the same cell phone telephone number is written on the majority of those cars. The owner will be warned to get the cars off the street. If not, twice a month a big sweep will be done of all those cars in the area. Cars will be towed with flat bed trucks and current fines increased. Call his office and give them locations of For Sale cars.

Next, the Corona Lions Club was commended for their work on graffiti removal. Working together we can clean up the neighborhood. We must support the Corona Lions and their initiatives because it is a critical component to keep our neighborhood looking clean. People recognize we are taking a real interest in quality of life issues, he reported.

Next, the SLA Bill was mentioned. The Assembly has been working hard to curb issues faced with many of the Bars. The Bill overwhelmingly passed the Assembly and now passes to the Senate for action.

Board Member Tony Moreno commended the action taken and commented those For Sale cars have been a blight on the neighborhoods for many years.

In conclusion, Assembly Member Moya said, “We all live here and we want to make sure we have the same services as other neighborhoods get. We don’t deserve anything less than what everybody else gets”.

Next, Mr. Bruce Eiber representing Council Member Karen Koslowitz, reported any landlord/tenant problems call the office 718-544-8800. Tuesday nights an attorney is on staff to answer questions.

Next, Ms. Emily Paez, representing Senator Jose Peralta’s office, announced the following: Congratulations were extended to the Board honorees for their service awards.

- Saturday, September 15, Back to School Event, Intersection of Denman Street & Elmhurst Avenue
- 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Co-Sponsored with NYS Assembly Members Michael Den Dekker and Francisco Moya and
- Partnering With Other Community Organizations
- Free School Supplies
- Entertainment - Giveaways
- Face Painting, Raffles and More
- First Come First Serve Basis

- Saturday, September 15 at 1:00 p.m.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Auditorium
- 310 West 43 Street
- New York, NY
- Central American Culture and Heritage
- To commemorate the 191st Anniversary of Central America’s Independence

- Working with Parker Jewish Institute on an Elder Abuse workshop scheduled for Tuesday, September 18, 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. at Queens Center Mall, Conference Room Learning objectives to be addressed are:
 - Aging and the Dynamics of Elder Abuse
 - What to do if you suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation
 - Who to call if you suspect abuse?

Next, Louise Emanuel, representing Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry’s office, reported through redistricting the Assembly Member now has as part of his district the Arts & Business High School (105-25 Horace Harding Expressway). The school is in need of a gym. Discussions are on-going about the condemnation of a gas station near the school. The Assembly Member is in agreement with the idea of a gym, but justification is still being looked at for the condemnation of the gas station. A letter will be sent to Community Board 4, the SCA, and the Chancellor with more details.

Board Member Judy D’Andrea commented how can the SCA build and design a high school without a gymnasium. She added when new schools are built no provisions are made for gyms, full lunch rooms or auditoriums.

It’s ridiculous!

Board Member Tony Moreno suggested constructing a gymnasium on the roof of the school.

More suggestions were presented by the Board members where a gymnasium might be placed on school property.

Discussion ensued.

Regarding Newtown High School, because of consistently low achievement, it was scheduled for closure and renamed, to try to make smaller schools and upgraded. However, since then an injunction had been passed, Teachers and staff removed before May 16, it still stands. Those after May 16 will have the opportunity to re-apply for their jobs.

Further discussions are scheduled at Queens Borough Hall.

Next, Christina Long, representing Council Member Julissa Ferreras reported:

- Corona Plaza opened last week. The community has helped out in keeping the Plaza clean. Everyone is enjoying the Plaza immensely.
- A Flu Shot Clinic, partnering with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, is planned for September 25, at Corona Senior Center, 108-78 Roosevelt Avenue from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Free to the Public. - Available to everyone 18 and older.
- The Deferred Action – for above 16 years of age but no more than 30 years of age, youth can get papers to work. Not for citizenship. A Free informational forum will be held at Langston Hughes Library, September 25, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Immigration lawyers will be present to explain the process and fill out forms.

IV. VOTE: Minutes of June 12, 2012 Meeting

Ms. Laraine Donohue made a motion, seconded by Ms. Myrna Littlewort, to accept the minutes of the June 12, 2012 meeting.

By a voice vote, the Board voted 36 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

V. REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson Louis Walker welcomed everyone back from summer recess. The selection process for the District Manager's position will start on Wednesday, September 12. The Executive Board will review approximately 50 resumes. It will be a lengthy process and candidate selection will not be ready until mid-October.

Additionally, Robert Rothschild, a member of the Executive Board and an applicant for the position will be temporarily replaced on the Executive Board by Ms. Laraine Donohue.

Since Mrs. Roseann Geiger, an Executive Board member, will not be able to attend the upcoming meetings of the Executive Board due to personal reasons; she will be temporarily replaced by Mr. Derrick Smith.

VI. CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Committee Chair George Onuorah reported on a request for Cabaret License for MJU Group Inc—DBA Seven One Ocho at 77-14 Queens Blvd., Elmhurst, NY.

Mr. Onuorah identified the location on Queens Blvd., across from the Pan American hotel. The previous establishment was called Nuves. Mr. Mastromihalis is the owner of the proposed business. Mr. Onuorah was invited inside the establishment where some work was still in progress. The space has occupancy for 148

persons. There is a bar area as you walk in on the right side, an open area that may serve as a dance floor. The proposed hours of operation are 8:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m., 5 days a week.

As far as parking and security is concerned, Mr. Mastromihalis reported he would try to obtain the vacant lot from Pan Am to start a valet service and add cameras both inside and out the property.

Board Member Judy D'Andrea asked what was on the property previously. Mr. Mastromihaus answered Nuves, which operated as a cabaret.

Board Member Laraine Donohue asked about the hours of operation. The response was 8:00 p.m. to 4 a.m.

At this point, Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero reported many problems had occurred with Nuves, the previous establishment, and it took a long time to close it down. It had been the site of illegal activity and a shooting.

Mr. Mastromihaus took over the lease from the previous owner. More details were reported to the Board.

She also added this new owner had been affected by Nuves. Moreover, there were broken beer bottles strewn about.

Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero emphasized the Board is very adamant in maintaining stability and cleanliness in that area. She had spoken to the owner and told him, "We are not going to let him get away with things. She had the backing of the full Board on this."

No history of problems reported with this owner.

Board Member Patricia Terranova brought up the fact that although Mr. Mastromihaus stated he would oversee the operation, he could not be present every day while the business was operational until 4:00 a.m. The same problems that occurred with Nueves would happen again with this business.

How can he ensure those problems would not occur again she asked.

Mr. Mastromihaus responded better security would be in place and described his plans for security at the new establishment.

Next, Board Member A. Redd Sevilla said what is needed is a facility for youth. The School District is overcrowded, and in his opinion, the last thing needed is a cabaret. Similar establishments such as "Play" and "Exotics", are in very close proximity and the hours of operation are not suitable to our youth. Moreover, how will this establishment invest in our community?

Mr. Mastromihaus responded he owns the auto repair shop directly behind the proposed establishment and had been at his location nine to ten years.

If youth wanted to learn about auto repair, he volunteered his services.

Mr. Sevilla suggested opening a restaurant instead. Reiterating there was a past history of problems with the previous establishment, this proposal is not a smooth transition. As an alternative, he also suggested a youth center.

Mr. Mastromihaus responded he hoped to open as a night club eventually shifting it to a restaurant.

Board Member Clara Salas asked how many feet was Nueves away from the school? It was brought up Nueves was too close to the school. The attorney responded it had already been licensed by the SLA and the Dept. of Consumer Affairs. For this proposed establishment, a new application is pending before the SLA.

As a point of information, Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero reported many times people open a restaurant and then turns it into a cabaret.

Board Member James Lisa brought up the issue of parking. As the area is overcrowded, parking is our biggest problem. Since the C of O is for 148 patrons, an influx of cars would be coming into the area. Although there is planned parking for thirty cars, where would other cars park?

Board member Rovenia McGowan asked about security provisions. Mr. Mastromihaus reported 4 guards inside, and 2 on the outside. Maximum capacity 148 persons.

Board Member Redd Sevilla cited the 51st Street Academy and I.S. 5 is in very close proximity to the proposed establishment and across the Blvd. is P. S. 7.

Board Member Clara Salas about the possibility of moving the auto repair shop into that location. Mr. Mastromihaus responded it is not feasible because of the economy. Business is not the same.

Committee Chair George Onuorah reported based on his observations and the fact the owner is willing to support the community and participate in youth programs, the Committee recommended **approval** of the application.

Therefore, a motion was made to Mr. George Onuorah to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Stephen Castro.

At this point, Chairperson Louis Walker called the question.

A roll call vote was taken. To vote yes is to approve the motion, to vote no is to deny it, explained Chairperson Walker.

The result of the vote was 15 in favor, 14 opposed, with 7 abstentions. Motion **failed to pass** due to the combined No and abstention votes.

An abstention vote is counted as a no vote according to the City Charter.

Before the Committee Reports, Chairperson Louis Walker called for a brief recess.

Chairperson Walker resumed the meeting at 8.50 p.m.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Parks

First Vice Chair Patricia Terranova presented the Committee report. She reported Committee Chair Al Perna had many on-going discussions with the Parks Dept, and more personnel will be deployed to clean up the parks. Everything is fine.

Health

No Report. Committee Chair not in attendance.

Youth

Chairperson Clara Salas reported newspaper clippings were on hand about 16 Queens Schools still in danger of closing, and a rezoning meeting is planned for September 12 at 7:00 p.m. regarding rezoning possibilities for IS 61 in an effort to alleviate overcrowding.

A Youth Committee meeting may be called in October. Notices will be sent out.

Public Safety

Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported the July, August, and September applications were voted on as part of the summer agenda, noting there is a 30 day time frame. Committee members were thanked for their hard work.

At this point, it was duly noted some Board members had left early. Discussion ensued and suggestions made about leaving early.

Chairperson Walker said one person notified him they needed to leave early.

Mr. Stephen Castro said members that need to leave early should advise the Chair a day prior, unless it is an emergency. Subsequently, Chairperson Walker said the Board meets ten times a year, yet members who had missed 7 meetings were re-appointed. Discussion ensued.

Board Member Miriam Levenson said the Board had a provision in its bylaws about missing 3 meetings.

At this point, the Committee reports resumed.

Environmental

No Report. Committee Chair not in attendance.

ULURP & Zoning

No Report. Committee Chair Miriam Levenson reported no meeting was held.

Postal

No report. Committee Chair not in attendance.

Under this segment, Board member Lucy Schilero reported problems with mail delivery. When the regular carrier is not on duty, mail is not delivered properly. Important mail had been mis-delivered by substitutes to other addresses, many letters were delivered blocks away. The mail is left at a house where it was improperly delivered and not returned, causing a lot of problems. No one is returning the mail to the mailman. The mail box, as well as mail slots, remains full of mail or mail may be sitting on the floor. Ms. Schilero had to go door to door to hunt down her mail. This has been going on for months.

Transportation

Committee Chair Joseph DiMartino thanked Senator Peralta, Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry, Assembly Member Francisco Moya, and Council Members Julissa Ferreras, and Daniel Dromm for the implementation of Corona Plaza.

Next, he mentioned the Sunshine Fund. The money is used for the holiday party or to send flowers/sympathy basket in time of bereavement. See him later to contribute to the Fund.

Subsequently, Mr. Moreno complimented Mr. DiMartino on his handling of the Sunshine Fund.

Next, Mrs. Rovenia McGowan complimented the opening of Corona Plaza. She also said some chairs were missing from the Plaza.

As a tribute to former District Manager Richard Italiano, she requested a plaque be placed at Corona Plaza in his honor for the countless number of hours he worked on this project.

Next, Board member Salvatore Lombardo announced a free health screening on Tuesday, September 18,

3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., in front of his pharmacy at 106-07 Corona Avenue, Corona, NY. Tests include blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, and hemoglobin A1c. Great opportunity for those who do not have health insurance!

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM

Ms. Jin Xiu Chen, Asian Americans for Equality a 38-year old non profit community organization, reported on smoke free housing.

There are no safe levels to second hand smoke. It does not matter if it is breathed in for a minute or years. It is harmful for your body. And there are about 4,000 chemicals in second hand smoke and 50 of them are known to cause cancer. Because of those known facts, smoke free housing is vital.

For example in a multi-dwelling apartment building, if your neighbor smokes and you don't, the chances of exposure are very high. Smoke travels within the house. Think about your family and friends. If smoking is prohibited in beaches and parks, why not in places where we live? Smoke free housing is supported by the public and saves money for the property owner.

The Board's support was requested in this endeavor.

Next, Mr. Alfonso Buffa, community resident, addressed the Board regarding problems in the community. In particular, the triangle which intersects Broadway, 73 Street, and Roosevelt Avenue. Cleanliness is a major issue.

For example, people selling food under the elevated line contribute to the litter, rodent, and pigeon problems.

One person, in particular, is giving food away to people who in turn are leaving this food behind. Subsequently, this food attracts rats and pigeons to the area, which is a constant problem. He had requested that someone talk to the person distributing the food. Since this concern was presented to the Board in the past, he was requesting an update and inquired if anyone had talked to the person dispensing the food.

Discussion ensued.

Chairperson Louis Walker responded this location is in Board 3. Mr. Buffa said he is on the border of Community Boards 3 and 4 and although the problem is in Board 3, people are throwing food onto his sidewalk, which is in Board 4.

Suggestions to Mr. Buffa included calling the Department of Health or 311. When an agency is called, an address is required. Without an address, it cannot be acted upon, noted Mr. Buffa.

Next, Mr. Francisco Moreta addressed the Board about a business owner who rents a room every week and is open until three or four in the morning, partying with loud music disturbing area residents. *The Scorpion* at 108-45 Corona Avenue is a disturbance in the area. Now, the same owner had opened another business across the street. A petition was presented to the Board regarding *Carchiofini II*, which stays open until three or four in the morning. Not only does his establishment generate excessive noise (loud music and voices) but also patrons damage property and urinate on parked cars. The Board's help is needed.

Separately, a small petition was received with ten names regarding sewage problems. This will be forwarded to the proper agency. Denman Street is the area in question. Problems occurred when new sewer lines were installed.

Since there was no further business, Ms. Laraine Donohue made a motion, seconded by Mr. Alirio Orduna to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.