



## COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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**Melinda Katz**  
Borough President

**Louis Walker**  
Chairperson

**Melva Miller**  
Deputy Borough President

**Christian Cassagnol**  
District Manager

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December 8, 2015

### COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

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

I. Chairperson Louis Walker opened the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

II. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

A moment of silence was observed for National Pearl Harbor Day.

III. Executive Secretary Lucy Schilero took the roll call. A quorum was present.

#### IV. **VOTE: Minutes of November 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

Board Member Priscilla Carrow made a motion, seconded by Board Member Alirio Orduna, to **approve** the minutes.

By a voice vote, the Board voted 27 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

#### V. **REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

Upcoming construction sites were to be announced, which will be done over a period of time. Chairperson Walker turned the floor over to District Manager Cassagnol to provide those sites. Over the course of two years, major construction projects are planned for key locations in the district. Those projects are:

- DEP Project, which was presented to the Environmental/Parks Committee, entails easing the water flow into Flushing Bay. It is a two year closure, evening work only, for the Horace Harding Expressway and 108 Street, December 31, 2015; projected to be completed March 31, 2018.
- Nighttime work only Sunday through Friday 10 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., Saturday and Sunday 12:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. if required.
- And, 108 Street and 43 Avenue
- Work to be done 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Nighttime work as necessary

He noted the Horace Harding Expressway project will have only one lane open in each direction. The pipeline that runs along the Horace Harding Expressway goes down 108 Street. 108 Street and 43 Avenue will also have one lane closure in each direction.

Simultaneously, the next project is scheduled for the same timeline as the above mentioned projects. The Roosevelt Avenue Bridge will undergo major construction. While the Bridge is not in our district, it will impact on our Board. Major concerns were expressed with DEP and DOT not only about everyday traffic, but also about major events that are scheduled such as Citifield and USTA. This is also a two year project beginning in January, 2016. Over the course of the next few months, we will be in constant contact with DEP, DOT, and NYPD.

Queens Borough Hall will send letters the first week in January to those Board members whose term expires March 31, 2016.

At this point, Board Member Judy D'Andrea commented on the upcoming construction. This past summer residents were held prisoners with events at Citified, USTA, Hall of Science. The viable exit through the Park was closed. When events are in progress, you cannot cut through the Park to get to the Grand Central Parkway behind the Hall of Science. There is no way in and no way out. It was impossible to travel because of the traffic, which was horrendous. During the construction phase, will Traffic Agents be available to help with the traffic, she asked.

District Manager Cassagnol responded realistically speaking DOT does not take into consideration the amounts of events held in Corona. A meeting will be held with the Board's Environmental/Parks and Transportation Committees very soon. Not enough research is done by the agencies when issuing permits, said the District Manager.

Discussion ensued.

## **VI. REPORT OF THE LEGISLATORS**

Assembly Member Francisco Moya addressed the Board. He invited all to the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting Ceremony, Wednesday, December 9, 6:30 p.m., 104 Street and 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Corona, NY. The celebration features music and Christmas caroling, hot drinks, and Special Guests. This year, Assembly Member Moya received funding for holiday street lights on 104 Street to Corona Avenue (from 46 Avenue). Showcasing the businesses and promoting our community, it will also beautify the area.

Next, Assembly Member Moya announced Governor Cuomo has signed the Assembly Member's Curbstoning legislation into law.

Subsequently, he talked about his Foodbank Bill, which allows farmers from upstate New York who have excess products to be able to donate to foodbanks in the city to help those going hungry. As an incentive, those farmers would get tax breaks. Upstate farmers would be able to contribute to our foodbanks, which would help

our residents in need to get access to quality food. The Bill passed the State Legislature and is on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature.

Next, Michael Mallon, representing Council Member Daniel Dromm's office reported on the following events:

*Caroling, A Reading of A Visit From St. Nicholas And Holiday Tree Lighting!* Wednesday, December 9, 5 pm to 6 pm. At CC Moore Homestead Playground

*Holiday Open House*, Thursday, December 17, from 5 pm-7pm, 37-32 75<sup>th</sup> Street, Jackson Heights, NY (Council Member Dromm's Office).

He also reported on hosting two collections. *Books Through Bars*, a nonprofit organization, is collecting soft covered books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and nonfiction. Those books are donated to incarcerated individuals because it is very important to educate individuals. Not only will your donation help this population but also the organization.

Also, the Council Member's office is collecting toys which will be distributed to children in need. Bring your donation to the Annual Open House or drop by the office or at the legislative office at 250 Broadway in Manhattan.

Next, Alexander Bennett, representing U. S. Rep. Grace Meng's office, reported President Obama signed the Transportation Bill into law. This Bill funds roads, bridges, highways and mass transit systems. Congresswoman Meng's provisions include the following:

- Legislation to improve school bus safety
- Legislation to improve the performance of child car seats
- Legislation to address privacy protections in driveless car

These measures will go a long way towards saving children's lives, preventing future tragedies and ensuring that privacy protections are addressed for future driving technologies said Congresswoman Meng. These measures were attached to the \$325 billion Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act.

Next, Adam Chen representing Public Advocate Letitia James' office, reported on a rally on West 68<sup>th</sup> Street on Sunday to demand TD Bank stop doing business with gun makers. TD Bank lent nearly \$280 million to Smith & Wesson, the same manufacturer that made guns used in the San Bernardino mass shooting that left 14 dead and 21 wounded.

Subsequently, he reported Public Advocate Letitia James released the 2015 "Worst Landlords Watch list". It contains a list of the City's most corrupt landlords: the watch list includes data from HPD and DOB.

Next, Barbara Jackson, representing U. S Rep. Joseph Crowley's office, reported on the Annual Holiday Party. This year, the party was moved from Studio 1 to Cavo, 42-18 31 Street, Astoria, NY. Please RSVP to the invitation. Call 718-779-1400. The party will be held on Sunday, December 13, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

At this point, Chairperson Louis Walker reported several organizations have requested the ability to be able to rent Flushing Meadows-Corona Park for their events. This would entail promoters to fence off the Park since it is paid admission. As a result, the community would not have access to the Park during those events. The Parks Commissioner was asked about this at the December 7 Borough Board meeting.

He responded there is a possibility that it is being considered. Promoters would repair any damage done to the Park but it is not the issue. Obviously, if one concert is permitted others will follow. We would have to see how this will proceed, but it is not good news for us commented Chairperson Walker.

Board Member Alirio Orduna asked if this could be stopped.

Chairperson Walker replied, no. Ultimately, the City administration will probably have the last word. If it is determined there is a financial benefit to the City of New York, it will happen.

Board Member Judy D'Andrea commented this is parkland that should be open access and noted it is public land for people to use free of charge. The same argument which prohibits any non-park use of parkland at Citifield can now be used for Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

Chairperson Walker responded in a section of Central Park it is done all the time. It would probably be a section in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park as well.

Discussion ensued.

Board Member Clara Salas said according to recent news articles, the Borough President opposes this proposal. She also spoke about Central Park vs. Flushing Meadows-Corona Park in terms of appropriating the Park for private events. The Board must have a voice in this matter because it is our Park. Our taxes are used to maintain the Park.

Chairperson Walker brought up congestion pricing. How is it that Queens and Brooklyn residents will be paying \$5 to travel to Manhattan below 96<sup>th</sup> Street? In exchange for that, there is a possibility the tolls will be lowered on the other bridges. Suppose you do not use those other bridges?

Board Member Judy D'Andrea said the events in Central Park are free. She had attended many events and they are all free.

Board Member Lucy Schilero said, "We've lost our park, literally lost it and it's going to get worse."

Board Member James Lisa said because they are so new City Council Members do not understand what have happened with Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. After the World's Fair ended, there was an agreement made by the World's Fair that the parkland would go back to the City of New York and our community as parkland. The only events that can be held there are the ones that can be done in parkland for the people, not for renting it. He spoke about the USTA and private uses of the park. This is park land given back to the Parks Department. He does not believe the City of New York has the right to rent this parkland, unless it is voted on by the people. More investigation is needed and letters written.

At this point, Board Member James Lisa made a motion, seconded by Board Member Judy D'Andrea, to write to city officials regarding not renting or closing Flushing Meadows-Corona Park for private events.

By a voice vote, the Board voted 27 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

More discussion ensued.

## VII. GUEST SPEAKER

### United States Tennis Association (USTA)

*--Update on USTA Programs and Initiatives*

With the aid of a power point presentation, Chris and Kathleen representing the United States Tennis Association (USTA), presented the following commitments of the organization.

*Some initiatives were:*

Ticket outreach

Works with Council Member Julissa Ferreras

Partners with Al Perna Foundation for Kids

Free Tennis for children on the weekends

*Quarterly Presentation – Fall 2015 Newsletter*

Offers school graduations on USTA premises

2015 Job Fairs – First priority given to local Queens's residents

Queens Day – August 26, 2015

Casting Call

Anthem Singer for Queens

Community Events – Boy Scouts to the 110 Precinct

District 21 summer event

Trophy tour – Partnering with the Queens Zoo

Fridays Under The 7 at Corona Plaza

Acing Autism

Queens Day – August 26, 2015

Queens Zoo Exhibit

Returning the Love with a group from Elmcors

Arthur Ashe Kids Day – 2,500 tickets were distributed to local community organizations

U. S. Open – Attendance reached 700,000. Every single night session was sold out. Highest average attendance in U. S. history.

Connects with local Queens Businesses - Hotels utilized during the U. S. Open.

Opening Night Ceremonies

Louis Armstrong Stadium – Filled to capacity

Vista of the Unisphere as seen on ESPN.

Boardwalk Entrance

Year 'Round Tennis Activities

Summer Camps – Over 500 local kids came out, mentioning other institutions that partnered with them.

Ten & Under Project ACES – Year 'round during the school year

National Tennis Center Programs

Chris reported the roof is being worked on which is on schedule for completion before this year's event. Diagrams were displayed as well as an aerial view

Working on Grandstand & South Campus – to be completed before this year's event

Louis Armstrong Stadium – It has physically reached the end of its useful life. After this year’s event, the stadium will come down to be replaced by a new Louis Armstrong Stadium. New construction will have 14,000 seats. More details provided on the site.

At this point, Board Members were given the opportunity to ask questions.

Board Member James Lisa inquired the USTA will be involved with an alliance. Why can’t the alliance send a letter to the City of New York expressing they don’t want these events to happen in the Park?

Chris responded he does not serve on the alliance. However, he will bring the request back to the organization.

Subsequently, Board Member Lisa said the Corona zip code is 11368. Why does USTA use a different zip code in its commercials?

Chris responded ESPN that does their broadcasting and was informed USTA is located in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

Board Member Jim Lisa continued commercials state when people are going to see tennis, they are going to Flushing.

Board Member Judy D’Andrea brought up the bridge into the Park, by the Queens Museum. The stadium is practically in the roadbed of the walkway. Also, the traffic is a major issue when USTA is in session.

Discussion ensued,

Subsequently, Board Member A. Redd Sevilla commended USTA for their community involvement. To keep the Board informed, he requested USTA let us know in 2016 a calendar of their plans in the community to give the Board input. Community outreach is essential. Second, can USTA’s successes be tied to the local neighborhoods of Corona and Elmhurst, instead of all of Queens?

Chris suggested signing up for their Newsletter. It has information on all events.

## **VIII. REPORT AND VOTE: ULURP COMMITTEE**

### **A. 75-28 Queens Boulevard – BSA Calendar No. 229-84BZ**

**Application (i) for an extension of time to obtain a certificate of occupancy (ii) to re-open and amend Resolution in respect of BSA Calendar No. 229-84BZ a change in ownership from Bally Total Fitness to 24 Hour Fitness, Inc. The Application also includes the replacement of accessory business signs to reflect the 24 Hour Fitness logo.**

ULURP Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported the Committee met on two applications. The first application he mentioned was Bally’s Total Fitness, now known as 24 Hour Fitness. This is a simple amendment. The amendment is to change the name from Bally’s Total Fitness to 24 Hour Fitness, which does not mean the operation will be open 24 hours. It is in theory only. The concept is you think about working out 24 hours. The hours of operation will remain the same as Bally’s Total Fitness.

The Committee voted to **approve** the application for the name change and replacement of the accessory business signs.

Board Member Sandra Munoz commented the concept that 24 hour Fitness will adhere to Bally’s hours is an illusion. Eventually, it will be open 24 hours because everywhere else that chain is open 24 hours.

Chairperson Walker stated some of the clubs are open 24 hours, not all. Some gyms are open regular hours.

ULURP Chair Alton Derrick Smith stated the applicant is not proposing to undertake any changes to the existing hours of operation. The hours will remain the same as Bally's Total Fitness.

At this point, Mr. Jeremiah Candreva, Partner, Troutman Sanders LLP, the attorney for Bally's Total Fitness explained they recently emerged out of bankruptcy and sold some its divested interest in its health clubs. This is one of them sold to 24 Hour Fitness. 24 Hour Fitness is a national company based in California. It has 400 locations throughout the United States with over 4 million members. Even though there are locations that are 24 Hour Fitness, but not in the City of New York. In the City of New York, PCE's (Physical Culture Establishment) are under the jurisdiction of the NYC Board of Standards & Appeals. The BSA does not permit PCE's to operate on a 24 hour basis, including this establishment. The location is not changing its hours of operation. None of the locations that 24 Hour Fitness took over from Bally's Total Fitness is changing their hours of operation.

If anyone were to propose a change in hours of operation or to operate the club not in a manner that is contrary to the Board's conditions, the club could lose its Board approval. Without Board approval, they cannot operate legally in the City of New York.

Before the vote, Mr. Candreva explained the cosmetic changes made to the exterior of the property by Bally's Total Fitness. As far as the interior, he could not comment.

At this point, Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula made a motion, seconded by Board Member Clara Salas, to **approve** the name change to 24 Hour Fitness also to include the replacement of accessory business signs to reflect the 24 Hour Fitness logo.

By a voice vote, the Board voted 27 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

#### **B. 421-a Partial Tax Exemption Application For A New Construction**

##### **Building Location Information:**

**81-03 57 Avenue, 81-05 57 Avenue, 81-07 52 Avenue, 81-09 57 Avenue, 81-11 57 Avenue, 81-15 57 Avenue, 81-17 57 Avenue**

**Applicant: 57 Elmhurst Holdings, LLC**

**Anton Mourtil**

Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported since there was no representation at the ULURP/Zoning meeting, the Committee recommended to **deny** the application. The denial was based on the lack of representation by the applicant at the ULURP/Zoning Committee meeting as well as the Board meeting.

Board Member Priscilla Carrow made a motion, seconded by Board Member Eduardo Medrano-Salas, to **deny** the application.

By a voice vote, the Board voted 27 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

#### **IX. PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE – Report and Vote**

Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported on the following SLA applications:

#### **NYS LIQUOR AUTHORITY LICENSES**

##### **NEW APPLICANTS**

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Establishment's Address</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Two Good Rustic House, LTD Wine and Beer Only	51-08 108 Street Corona, NY	Approved
Q4 Lounge Corp. <i>La Maldita Primavera</i> Liquor, Wine and Beer	40-06 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY	Denied
Needs to correct 30 Day Notice to reflect proper floor usage. Needs to update C of O to reflect that 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor is being used as part of the restaurant, and not as a storage space (have DOB do an inspection to certify).		
LTC Restaurant Inc. Liquor, Wine and Beer	104-30 Roosevelt Avenue Corona, NY	Denied
Deny for full liquor based history if the location, but approve for wine and beer, with the stipulation that they operate without issue for a year, will revisit the issue.		

### RENEWAL APPLICANTS

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Establishment's Address</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Nepali Kitchen Inc. <i>Himalyan Yak Restaurant</i> Liquor, Wine and Beer	72-20 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372	Approved

### ALTERATION

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Establishment's Address</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Hornado Ecuatoriano Corp. <i>Sal y Pimienta Restaurant</i> Liquor, Wine and Beer	81-10 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Approved

### CORPORATE CHANGE

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Establishment's Address</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Hornado Ecuatoriano Corp. Sal y Pimienta Restaurant Liquor, Wine and Beer	81-10 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Approved

At this point, Board Member Georgina Oliver made a motion, seconded by Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula, to approve the Committee's report as presented.

By a voice vote, the Board voted 27 in favor, 0 opposed with 0 abstentions.

## X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

*Consumer Affairs*

No Report said Committee Chair Erica Cruz.



## **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS (cont'd)**

### *Environmental/Parks*

Environmental Committee Chair Giancarlo Castano reported the Committee met to discuss the upcoming major construction projects in the district. Regarding the project on 108 Street, the Committee met with the Department of Environmental Protection.

### *Health*

Committee Chair Sal Lombardo reported a meeting is planned. A presentation is scheduled by Ave McCracken, Transitional Services New York, for January.

### *Transportation*

No Report said Committee Chair Joseph DiMartino

### *Postal*

No Report. Committee Chair not in attendance.

### *Youth*

Board Member Christian Romero, the new Youth Chair, reported he was an intern at the Community Board 4 office, attended Board meetings: watching, learning and participating. Now he is moving forward as Chair of the Committee to reach out to the youth population to do the same as he did. Asking around, some of the youth do not know what a Community Board is. A meeting has not been planned yet, but he is looking forward to meeting with the Committee members.

District Manager Cassagnol added Christian Romero is the youngest Board Member in the city (correction: Queens).

Before moving on to the agenda's Public Forum segment, Chairperson Walker stated the public was given 3 minutes to speak.

## **XI. PUBLIC FORUM**

Chen, Chaio-Ching reported on area problems and repairs.

Board Member Clara Sales reported the Community Education Council will have Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina, on Thursday, December 10, at P. S. 58, 6:00 p.m., Maspeth, to present the new educational plans for this year.

She commended Council Member Daniel Dromm for expediting the cleanup on the Broadway/Queens Blvd. area. He secured the funding and agencies for the cleanup.

Next, Jose Serrano, an employee of the Queens Museum of Art, who introduced a group of immigrant women who wished to make a statement regarding 111 Street.

The women will address the Board in Spanish, but their sentiments will be translated in English.

The group is comprised of 150 immigrant women who live in Corona.

The group was asking to make 111 Street safer for cyclists and pedestrians. In July, 2014 they learned about the re-design of the streets to make them safer, which is a key priority in our neighborhood. For 111 Street to save lives and improve the quality of life in this neighborhood, they would like to see more crosswalks, pedestrian islands, and to reduce the crossing distance.

It is also a great importance to create a bicycle lane where they do not feel afraid to ride their bicycles with their children and, at the same time, to better connect Flushing Meadows-Corona Park with other neighborhoods in

northwest Queens. They are asking their allies to commit to support them. This is our neighborhood. Our voice counts.

(The full statement was read to the Board in its entirety.)

Next, Jacqueline Oregal from the Central Queens Forest Hills, NY, announced their programming which ranges from early childhood to early adulthood. She spoke about a new program, Healthy Families, specifically targeting individuals and families that live in Corona and Elmhurst. Free support services and referrals to receive information about medical, social, educational, vocational, and housing benefits. Some of the support services include ESL and GED classes, medical training certification, work readiness training, to name a few.

At this point, Chairperson Walker stated in lieu of the impending construction on 108 Street and the possibility of Flushing Meadows-Corona Park being rented out, the Department of Transportation needs to do another study to make sure what needs to be done on 111 Street.

When the bike lanes were proposed, none of this impending construction was commencing.

There being no further business, Board member Priscilla Carrow made a motion, seconded by Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

The Board's Annual Holiday Party followed and a good time was had by all!