



## COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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**Donovan Richards**

Queens Borough President

**Louis Walker**

Chairperson

**Christian Cassagnol**

District Manager

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December 8, 2020

### COMMUNITY BOARD ATTENDANCE

#### Board Members Attending:

Louis Walker  
Lucy Cerezo Scully  
Chaio-Chung Chen  
Andy Chen  
Lynda Coral  
David Chong  
Lorena Diaz  
Michelle Dunston  
Ari Espinal  
Marialena Giampino  
Kristen Gonzalez  
Carol Machulski  
Patricia Martin

Matthew McElroy  
Alexandra Owens  
Ashley Reed  
Cristian Romero  
Clara Salas  
Lucy Schilero  
A. Redd Sevilla  
Alton Derrick Smith  
Gregory Spock  
Minwen Yang

#### Board Members Absent:

Vincent Laucella  
James Lisa  
Salvatore Lombardo  
Sunil Mahat  
Sylvia Martin  
Rovenia McGowan  
Edgar Moya  
Ruby Muhammed  
Sandra Munoz  
Gurdip Singh Narula

Georgina Oliver  
Alexa Ponce  
Rupinder Raj  
Oscar Rios  
Neil Roman  
Fernando Ruiz  
Dewan Tarek  
Marcello Testa  
Izaida Valcarcel  
Rosa Wong

**Attending:**

Hon. Donovan Richards, Queens Borough President  
Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager  
Margaret Silletti, CB4 Community Coordinator  
Christina Long, CB4 Community Assistant  
Cristian Romero, Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office  
Alexandra Owens, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz's office  
Jessica Schabowski, NYC Mayor's Office  
Berenice Navarrete-Perez, Council Member Francisco Moya's Office  
Kelly Wu, Council Member Daniel Dromm's Office  
Elaine Sam, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's Office  
Elizabeth, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz's Office  
Diwakar Gupta & Nancy Lee Paul, Nasir Khanzada Consulting Engineers  
Kathi Ko, NYC Dept. of City Planning  
Gayle Mandaro, NYC School Construction Authority  
Philip Montgomery, Dept. of City Planning

NOTE: During the Board's virtual meetings, it may be difficult to determine Board members or legislator representatives or guests who were present if they were not actively engaged or participating in the dialogue or visually seen. Please notify the Board office if you were in attendance at any meeting and not marked present.

**COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING**

**DATE: Tuesday, December 8, 2020**

**TIME: 7:00 P.M.**

**PLACE: Online Via Webex**

**1. Call to Order**

Chairperson Louis Walker opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

**2. Chairperson's Report**

Chairperson Louis Walker announced this is his last meeting as Chairperson for Community Board 4. He will remain a Board Member until the end of his term. He expressed optimism the new Board Chair Marialena Giampino and the new Executive Board will support the Board in its efforts. Out of all the city agencies Chair Walker had dealings with, the one that bothered him the most was the Department of Transportation. Aside from the bike lanes that are not in the right places, motorized bikes and scooters are now in use. Chair Walker was informed the bike lanes would go all the way to Queens Boulevard to Hillside Avenue, which was not done. The bike lanes stop at Yellowstone Boulevard. He explained he could not imagine the bike lanes going through Forest Hills, Kew Gardens, taking up parking spaces. From the plans he had seen, the bike lanes will never reach Queens Boulevard. Although there will be bike lanes, in some cases, they will not be on Queens Boulevard. The bike lanes for Queens Boulevard may never happen, he concluded.

**3. District Manager's Report**

District Manager Christian Cassagnol thanked Chairperson Louis Walker for his many years of service and dedication to the Board. He supported his idea there is a very strong pro-active Executive Committee assisting the new Chair. On behalf of himself and the staff, Community Board 4 could not be where it is without his leadership.

District Manager Cassagnol reported on the Tree Lighting in Elmhurst, which was very well attended and honored by Assembly Member Catalina Cruz and several community members who also joined.

**4. Open Session #1**

Chairperson Louis Walker called on the following Board Members:

Lucy Cerezo-Scully – Thanked Chair Walker for his years of service and mentioned Chair Walker's use of the gavel at Board meetings. It was an honor to serve with him on the Board.

Chaio-Chung Chen – No comment

Andy Chen – No comment

David Chong – No comment

Lynda Coral – No comment

Lorena Diaz – No comment

Michelle Dunston – Thanked Chair Walker for his service and he will be missed.

Aridia Espinal – Thanked Chair Louis Walker for his service. It was a pleasure serving on the Board under his administration.

Marialena Giampino – Thanked Chair Louis Walker for his service. He will be missed as Chairperson.

Kristen Gonzalez – Thanked Chair Walker for his years of service especially since completing her first term on the Board. Learning from him and being part of the Board under his leadership is great.

Vincent Laucella – Not in attendance

James Lisa – Not in attendance

Salvatore Lombardo – Not in attendance

Carol Machulski – Inquired if there are any stats of homeless persons residing in the district.

Chair Walker responded he was unsure and it would have to be researched.

Board Member Carol Machulski reported this summer she had seen one man camped out for quite a while on a fire hydrant at 57 Avenue and 99 Street; then he was gone.

Also, someone is using the doorway of the Walgreen's at Broadway and Corona Avenue living in a popup tent in the doorway. It turned out it was a popup storage facility.

District Manager Cassagnol explained there is Project HOPE Count where results can be obtained for 2020. The statistics would probably come not from the Dept. of Homeless Services but rather from Breaking Ground, which has its own operation. Furthermore, he explained he and Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock did a walk thru of a section in Elmhurst and were devastated to see the people living in the streets.

Discussion ensued between her and the District Manager.

Furthermore, Board Member Carol Machulski said the Dept. of Sanitation is preparing trucks out for the winter and said she had observed trucks with their plows on in preparation of snow storms.

Sunil Mahat – Not in attendance

Patricia Martin – When she first came on the Board, it was a fiery Board and Chair Walker was banging the gavel and calling for order. Chair Walker will be missed; he has given the greatest service to the Board that any leader could.

Sylvia Martin – Not in attendance

Matt McElroy – Thanked Chair Walker for his service and commented on his leadership at Board meetings. He agreed with Chair Walker on his previous statement about the bike lanes and provided details.

Rovenia McGowan – Not in attendance

Edgar Moya – Not in attendance

Ruby Muhammad – Not in attendance

Sandra Munoz – Not in attendance

Gurdip Singh Narula – Not in attendance

Georgina Oliver – Not in attendance

Alexandra Owens – Thanked Chair Walker for his service, it was a pleasure working with him.

Alexa Ponce – Not in attendance

Rupinder Raj – Not in attendance

Ashley Reed – Thanked Chair Walker for his years of service, his guidance, and wisdom; he will be missed.

Oscar Rios – Not in attendance

Neil Roman – Not in attendance

Cristian Romero – No comment

Fernando Ruiz – Not in attendance

Clara Salas – Thanked Chair Walker for his service; he will be missed.

Lucy Schilero – She and Chair Walker go back many years and have much knowledge between them. Their knowledge can be a great help to those coming in now and for him to stay on as a Board Member. All his work and patience is greatly appreciated. It takes those qualities when serving as Chair.

A. Redd Sevilla – Thanked Chair Walker for his service; it is appreciated and as well his energy. He mentioned the use of the gavel by Chair Walker citing the Chair would not let a meeting get out of hand and noted it is important there is a strong presence that kept meetings moving.

As an observation/suggestion, to no longer start off with crime statistics; never a fan of this. Perhaps in the coming months, we can start off with service statistics. Each can share and celebrate someone’s service in the past month as a way of highlighting our neighborhoods. As an example, he celebrated Board Member Gregory Spock and District Manager Christian Cassagnol for walking through the streets and noting the homeless condition. Further examples of how the neighborhood can be highlighted were given.

Alton Derrick Smith – Thanks does not seem to be enough for Chair Walker for all his years of service and dedication. He agreed with Board Member A. Redd Sevilla’s statement about highlighting the neighborhoods.

Gregory Spock – Thanked Chair Walker for his leadership on the Board; it was done with silent grace.

He reported he sees a massive disconnect between city agencies and the Community Board. He cited a recent example of pedestrian safety and mentioned the intersection of 79 Street & 41 Avenue by the Elmhurst Hospital which has seen more and more traffic-- People lining up for the COVID-19 testing. There is no clear signage for vehicles and cited a personal example. Almost three years later, nothing has been done. Standard responses from city response are we’ll look into it, we will find something. Answers are needed now.

Lastly, he thanked the Board Members for their service and is honored to serve as Parks Chair and Director At Large.

Dewan Tarek – Not in attendance

Marcello Testa – Not in attendance

Izaida Valcarcel – Not in attendance

Louis Walker – No comment

Rosa Wong – Not in attendance

Minwen Yang – No comment

## **5. Reports from Elected Officials**

### **Senate**

#### **Charles E. Schumer**

No report. No representative present.

#### **Kristen Gilibrand**

No report. No representative present.

### **House of Representatives**

#### **Grace Meng**

Board Member Cristian Romero reported the office is available as COVID-19 cases increase and the office is easily accessible to assist constituents.

#### **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**

District Manager Christian Cassagnol read the following update from the Congresswoman’s Office:

Good evening Members and Leadership of Community Board 4,

Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez sends you Season’s Greetings and wishing you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season.

As for community updates, Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez hosted her monthly Town Hall on November 12. She shared the most recent guidance of the city and state on COVID-19 and took questions from constituents. If you missed the event, you can watch the recording on their YouTube page at repaoc and there is a link which will be shared

The December Town Hall will be held December 17 at 6:30 p.m. A term in review will be offered and then the Congresswoman will take questions from participants to join the upcoming Town Hall. Register via the link that will be provided.

Prior to Thanksgiving, the Congresswoman recognized on the floor of Congress the Centennial of the Jewish Center of Jackson Heights. We are proud of their long history of service to our Jewish Americans and wider Queens Community. If you would like to see her remarks, you may see them on YouTube at [repaoc](#).

This week she is expected to honor the Queens County Council of Veterans of Foreign War for the Centennial. If you know of other institutions or individuals that recommend for recognition, please reach out via email at [michellediane.hernandez@mail.house.gov](mailto:michellediane.hernandez@mail.house.gov).

Legislative Update: Last week a bipartisan group of senators released a new COVID Relief Package which Speaker Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Schumer have since endorsed. It includes an additional \$300 per week in unemployment benefits, small business aid and funding for local governments and vaccine distribution.

Last week in a financial service committee hearing the Congresswoman also urged the release of \$175 billion in relief loans.

Congress has already approved small businesses and states. For the remainder of the legislative session, Congress will focus on passing a defense spending bill and government funding bill.

As for constituent services, this is their final statement. The office continues to assist constituents with Federal casework. The staff continues to work from home and continue to accept cases at the website [ocasio-cortez.house.gov](https://ocasio-cortez.house.gov) or by phone at 718-662-5970.

Notifications about upcoming events through the mailing list will be sent out. If you aren't signed up for the mailing do so via the link.

### **NYS Assembly**

#### **Brian Barnwell**

No report. No representative present.

#### **Michael DenDekkar**

No report. No representative present.

At this point, Assembly Member elect Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas is excited to serve as Assembly Member for the 34 AD, which includes Jackson Heights, E. Elmhurst, Corona and Woodside. She takes office officially January 6, 2021. With her team, she looks forward to working with Community Board 4 and to be a part of activities in the community.

Before concluding, Chair Louis Walker was thanked for his many years of service and District Manager Christian Cassagnol for his leadership.

#### **Jeffrion Aubry**

No report. No representative present.

#### **Catalina Cruz**

Board Member Alexandra Owens announced flu shots will be given at the office Thursday, between 10:00 a.m. and 12 Noon.

Community cleanups will be continued sometime in January. Volunteers will help constituents draft their resumes.

The office is happy to help with concerns or questions.

### **NYS Senate**

#### **Michael Gianaris**

No report. No representative present.

#### **Jessica Ramos**

No report. No representative present.

#### **Toby Ann Stavisky**

No report. Representative not present.

### **NYC Mayor's Office**

Jessica Schabowski reported the Mayor announced the NYC LMI Storefront Loan via the Department of Small Business Services targeting certain low to moderate income in 11368 and 11373 zip codes. The applications can be submitted starting December 14. This includes the eligibility to apply for a zero interest loan up to \$100,000. The criteria for businesses is that they employ between two and ninety nine employees and have had business operations since or before January 1, 2018. For more information, go to [nyc.gov/storefront](https://nyc.gov/storefront) loan.

Secondly, she highlighted the fact there is an increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations throughout New York City. Over the summer when COVID-19 cases were higher, the city had announced its plan to maintain a 90-day stockpile of PPE. One hundred and fifty pieces have been amassed to maintain that stockpile.

The Department of Health Commissioner had issued an advisory for adults over 65 and people with underlying health conditions to limit their activities outside the home and avoid public spaces gatherings as we are looking at presumably the last of this pandemic.

Working with the state in discussions how to roll out the COVID-19 vaccines, which now have been approved by the FDA. The first Pfizer shipment should arrive as early as December 15. If the Moderna vaccine is approved, the shipment will arrive on December 22. The population with the greatest need such as high risk health care workers, nursing home residents and staff, and the 27 neighborhoods that were most deeply affected by COVID-19 including Corona and those who live in public housing will receive those first doses. Ultra-cold storage and special freezers will be needed to support the vaccine rollout. The city-wide immunization registry will monitor inventory and administration to ensure everyone receives both doses. Before concluding, she asked to please not travel this holiday season to minimize the spread.

At this point, Chair Louis Walker asked will New York City not demand that employees of various city agencies such as Police, EMS, and Fire Department will not demand taking the vaccine once it is available.

Jessica Schabowski responded at this time no.

### **NYC Council**

#### **Francisco Moya**

Berenice Navarrete-Perez reported on November 21 the Council Member's office kicked off a turkey giveaway event in E. Elmhurst and it was the first in collaboration with multiple organizations at the local and city level. In total, there were four events and about 1,000 turkeys were given out.

Also a flu shot event with Elmhurst Hospital and First Baptist Church was held.

Yesterday, a Tree Lighting Ceremony with Al Perna, President, of the 110 Community Council, was conducted.

Further, this past weekend there was an unveiling of the festive winter installation which was created by a local artist with the Ecuadorian Civic Committee of New York, located at William F. Moore Park. Unfortunately, it was vandalized over the weekend, however, it is now being repaired. It's a wonderful spectacle to see.

In conclusion, she announced upcoming events such as a toy distribution. Please check social media for details.

#### **Daniel Dromm**

Kelly Wu reported the Council Member's office hosted a Tree Lighting Ceremony earlier today in partnership with Assembly Member Catalina Cruz. There was a good turnout.

Also, the office will continue to provide legal services for the community such as general legal service and immigration. The next session for general and immigration is Wednesday and Thursday December 16 and 17. Appointments are available for a 30-minute free consultation. Please reach out to the office if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Office of the Queens Borough President**

New Queens Borough President Donovan Richards acknowledged Chair Louis Walker for all the great work he did as Chair which can be a thankless job. Chair Walker was thanked for his service to the Board.

Thanks were also extended to District Manager Christian Cassagnol and a welcome given to the new Board Members. Congratulations were also given to the new Board Chair Marialena Giampino.

Borough President Richards made mention of the challenging year we have had and looks forward to a better 2021.

There are many challenges that need to be addressed when we look at the disparities, in particular, that have been exacerbated primarily in communities of color. Much work needs to be done.

The Borough President will be touring Elmhurst and other hospitals tomorrow to ensure our hospitals and institutions have the PPE they need. Whatever capital funds is accessible, we will use to strengthen institutions across Queens as we move ahead.

Queens Borough President Richards is looking forward to a partnership with the Board. Although we may not agree on certain issues, most importantly, we will sit and figure out a path ahead helpful to our community and is looking forward to working with the Board.

A Job Fair was reported for tomorrow, which is the 12<sup>th</sup> one, at 2:00 p.m. Please RSVP at [queensbp.org](http://queensbp.org).

Acting Borough President Sharon Lee was thanked for her hard work to ensure that our communities and borough could move forward. It was a seamless transition. Much was put in place because we worked very closely to ensure the functions of the office would not be interrupted during the transition.

Borough President Richards is looking forward to the work ahead citing there is a lot of work to do, and may we all do it together.

### **NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer**

Elaine Sam reported the Comptroller's office and Better Balance are surveying New Yorkers about flexibility in the workplace, noting the survey will be closed out soon. The survey is available in English and Spanish on the Comptroller's website. It was sent to all

Queens Community Boards. She requested the Board send out the survey again or go to the Comptroller's website and fill it out. The survey will allow the Comptroller's Office to understand how New Yorkers relationship to work and family are changing because COVID-19 has upended the experience of work. It also tracks the outcomes of new protections codified in city and state law. The survey data is very important because it will help identify policy recommendations.

**NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams**

No report. No representative present.

At this point, Chair Louis Walker wished all a Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa, Happy New Year and any other holiday celebrated.

**Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz**

Elizabeth reported this past Saturday, Queens DA Melinda Katz joined by the NYPD hosted the Gun Buy Back Event in Astoria.

Forty-four guns were taken off the streets.

Also during the pandemic domestic violence increased. If your family or friends are experiencing abuse, call the helpline at 718-286-4410 to be connected to an Assistant District Attorney.

At this point, Board Member Gregory Spock reported on the recent walk thru with the liaison for Breaking Ground and noted they do not refer to the homeless population as homeless but rather as their clients. How we talk and address issues sets the tone for a helping and problem solving mentality which is what's it's all about. Walking around the district largely to focus on parks related issues and noted at the time CC Moore Park was not open. Yet, there was construction fencing as people observed there was a large number of clients around the park on the south side and in numerous parks in the area. There was one individual Breaking Ground had worked with for ten years and finally found that person housing. With the pandemic and rising costs of living, legislation relating to evictions is in limbo and also how it relates to assistance with unemployment.

Board Member Gregory Spock said to approach the situation with an attitude of learning before judgement is passed on those individuals because it could very easily affect anyone.

At this point, Chair Louis Walker turned the meeting over to First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino to continue the meeting.

**7. Presentation**

Nasir Khanzada Consulting Engineers

BSA Application: 2019-299-BZ

82-11 Queens Blvd.

Request to alter building, convert auto repair shop to convenience store for signage, new dispenser layout, new canopy, and new trash enclosure location.

Diwakar Gupta and Nancy Lee Paul presented the application. With the aid of screen sharing, Mr. Gupta explained the plans are to convert the auto repair shop into convenience store. Many changes will be done to the site along with acquiring a new Certificate of Occupancy.

Currently the building is an auto repair shop. The building would be changed into a convenience store and cut back. Now there are two dispensers that would be replaced with a new dispenser layout with a total of four dispensers. The old tanks would be removed and replaced with new underground gasoline storage tanks. Also a new canopy would be installed. Presently, there's no canopy at the site. Signs would be put up on the side of the canopy in front of the store and a sign put at the corner of the lot/Queens Boulevard and 51 Avenue would be changed. Three new planting areas would be installed.

The next slide showed the proposed layout for the new convenience store as well as the front elevation. The building will be a little bit larger than the existing building and will probably be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At this point, Mr. Gupta recapped the proposed changes to the site.

Subsequently, Board Members were polled for questions or concerns.

Alexandra Owens – No questions

In the interest of time since there were other presenters on the agenda, District Manager Cassagnol suggested if Board Members do not want to be called and do not have questions or do not have much to say and know how to use zoom, go to the chat for questions.

Staff Member Christina Long read the following from each Board Member:

Ari Espinal – No questions

Ashley Reed – No questions



At this point, First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino reported the UULRP/Zoning Committee did review the proposal and added the application is pretty straight forward. It looks like a good thing for the community. The Committee was not able to vote because of a lack of quorum, however, the Committee was in agreement it would benefit the community.

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith was called for questions. He explained this application is pretty straight forward. In terms of violations the current application is to renew the permit that had expired, which the only item was pending in terms of violations. Notices were sent out to the community and there was no opposition to the proposal.

Next, Staff Member Christina Long called on Board Member Chaio-Chung Chen for questions on the application. No opinion was given by Board Member Chen.

Board Member Clara Salas  
No questions

Board Member Gregory Spock  
Regarding the difference in gallons, specifically 30,000 gallons versus the 12,000 existing is there any environmental impact? Obviously, anything underground causes some sort of environmental concern.

Mr. Gupta explained these are new double walled fiberglass tanks that have a sensor in between the two walls that give an alarm if there's leakage from the inside tank into that space which is one warning and also there are a number of mechanisms that are built into the whole system for the environmental impact. It's a fully approved system through the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Fire Department. One of the reasons for installing large tanks was there are more dispensers and having big trucks unload multiple times, such as with the smaller tanks, obstructs the whole site and is more difficult.

Board Member Lucy Schilero  
Is it the same owners as a few years back, she questioned.  
Mr. Gupta responded it is the same owners; they have owned it for at least ten years.

First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino  
No questions

Board Member Michelle Dunston  
No questions. It would be a great improvement.

Board Member Minwen Yang  
No questions

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla  
No questions

Board Member Sunil Mahat  
No questions

This concluded the questions segment for the Board Members. The next agenda item was presented to the Board.

## **8. Presentation**

Kathi Ko, NYC Dept. of City Planning  
Zoning for Coastal Flood Resiliency Plan

With the aid of screen sharing, Kathi Ko explained the proposal updates the zoning resolution, in particular Article 6 Chapter 4. While the bulk of the zoning text would apply only in the city's current and future floodplain, one central goal is to address resiliency and recovery needs citywide. There's a set of provision that would apply to all community districts, not CB4 is quite landlocked and largely does not exist within the floodplain. The presentation would focus on those provisions that impact citywide and present a background on the overall project. While there are many sources of flooding that pose issues in the city. Coastal floods of coastal storms present the most significant flood risk in terms of compromising human safety, property damage and business disruption. While analyzing the city's coastal risk, they are focusing on the area that FEMA designates as the high risk flood zone which is the area that has a one percent chance of being flooded every year.

In 2012, Hurricane Sandy showed a more widespread event that went well beyond the one percent chance risk of flooding. Close to half of those properties are technically classified at a moderate risk of flooding or having a 0.2 percent of flooding. With climate change, the floodplain will continue to expand. By the 2050's, today's moderate risk flood zone will be high risk for flooding and area today is home to almost a million New Yorkers.

This proposal builds on two zoning text amendments that were put in place shortly after Hurricane Sandy to help coastal neighborhoods recover and rebuild. Since then, DCP's conducted research and outreach which revealed many issues that communities are still facing as they try to prepare their buildings for flooding and other future risks.

The current proposal includes provisions that would make the zoning relief granted to coastal communities after Hurricane Sandy permanent. Also, it expands these allowances and offers additional relief to community's further inland.

The proposal addresses four overarching goals for long term resiliency that came out of DCP's outreach and research which were identified in the illustrations presented.

First there is an expansion of the applicability of zoning relief options to buildings that are not only in the high flood risk zone but also in the moderate risk flood zone. This expansion would reach the neighborhoods where higher flood risk is expected in the future.

Second, there is a set of provisions for buildings to be constructed to resiliency standards that go beyond the current level of flood risks such as constructing their occupiable spaces at a higher elevation.

Third, options for property owners in the floodplain to invest in small changes to their building over time such as raising mechanical equipment out of the basement without being required to raise or fully flood proof the structure which can be very expensive.

Finally, there's a goal set of providing provisions that apply to the entire city that would help recover more efficiently than the city was able to after Hurricane Sandy. It would be no matter what type of disaster it was or the parts of the city that was hit and further explained those provisions in Goal 4: Power Systems, Accessibility, Vulnerable Populations, and Disaster Recovery.

At this point, Kathi Ko reiterated Community Board 4 is largely outside the 1 percent and 0.2 percent floodplains, and explained it is a landlocked district. Accordingly, slides were presented on land that's within the floodplain.

Indeed, resolution regulations can slow the response needed for a disaster. This proposal would make certain recovery provisions available to be used quickly following future disasters. Some of the provisions would be implemented now to address COVID-19 pandemic and its associated economic effects. Currently immediately following a disaster, the Mayor can issue an emergency order to temporarily remove certain obstacles to facilitate recovery efforts that are needed. However that process is limited depending on the type of disaster which may not be enough time to address the regulations that hinder long term recovery.

The proposal would include a series of disaster recovery provisions that could be made available through a text amendment when a disaster occurs. Applicable recovery provisions would be selected based on the issues caused by the disaster and would be available for a time set at the time of the text amendment. The provisions could be limited to designated recovery areas based on the disasters impacts and recovery plans. In other words it could be more tailored specific to that particular disaster.

The set of provisions that could be made available or drawn from lessons learned for Hurricane Sandy as well as the current pandemic. Shown also was relief that was put in place temporarily after Hurricane Sandy and the current proposed menu of relief options for future disasters. Examples of rules in the menu include modifications to the damage and destruction thresholds to allow the reconstruction of non-complying buildings and non-conforming uses and rules that could allow uses in zoning districts that were not typically permitted on a temporary basis.

Accordingly, more details were presented by Kathi Ko on the proposal.

In conclusion, Kathi Ko said this plan is being referred out to all Community Boards and the City Council in the ULURP process. Community Boards are asked to submit the recommendations to the City Planning Commission by December 28. There is more information about the project as well as an annotated version of the proposed zoning text on the Department of City Planning's website. Please contact her if you need more information, additional documents, a summary, or FAQ to help with the Board's decision.

At this point, district Manager Christian Cassagnol asked for a further explanation where do we stand on this item and what we're supposed to do as a Board.

Kathi Ko said this is a non-ULURP but it is still referred out to Community Boards. In districts more heavily affected by coastal floods and disasters, it is strongly recommended those Boards submit a vote. However there are city-wide implications of this proposed text. The Board can vote and submit it. There was some talk about providing a letter from the Board. It's up to the Board how they would want to express the vote.

As an option, District Manager Cassagnol stated while the Board did not give a formalized vote, the following questions or concerns were brought up. The Board could acknowledge questions asked and even give support.

At this point, Staff Member Christina Long announced a quorum was no longer present.

Staff Member Christina Long called on the following Board Members for questions/concerns:

Alexandra Owens  
No questions

Alton Derick Smith  
No questions. However Board Member Alton Derrick Smith commented this was not an application were able to view fully under ULURP. Unfortunately by the time it was received, there was not enough time to hear the full presentation. So far, it does seem to be straight forward and asked does this have any effect on Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

Kathi Ko responded no because these provisions largely affect buildings and/or permitted obstructions or regulatory hurdles for recovery relief. The Park is in the flood zone, but this would not impact the Park.

Ari Espinal  
No questions

Ashley Reed  
No questions

Chaio-Chung Chen  
No questions

Clara Salas  
No questions

David Chong  
No questions

Gregory Spock  
No questions

Kristen Gonzalez  
No questions

Lorena Diaz  
No questions

Lucy Schilero  
No questions

Lynda Coral  
No questions

Matt McElroy  
The changes to building regulations that allow power storage units of a moderate size and also found as non-obstructive ramps and lifts, do those apply only in the flood plain or the 1 or 0.2 percent danger area or is that city-wide.

Kathi Ko responded it would affect properties in 0.2 percent flood plain that wouldn't be allowed to do so today, but these are all optional. No one is obligated to make these changes.

Board Member Matt McElroy asked if you are outside the flood plain entirely, are you able to avail yourself of those provisions.

Kathi Ko replied it depends on the zoning district you are in. This text allows for more flexibility and the capability of doing so.

Michelle Dunston  
No questions

Minwen Yang  
No questions

Pat Martin  
No questions

A. Redd Sevilla  
No questions

Sunil Mahat  
No questions

#### **9. Discussion – 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue Demapping**

In The Matter Of an application submitted by The New York City School Construction Authority pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for an amendment to the City Map involving the elimination of the northerly 15 feet of 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue between Junction Boulevard and National Street the adjustment of grades and block dimensions necessitated thereby including authorization for any acquisition or disposition of real property related thereto in Community District 4, Borough of Queens, in accordance with Map No. 5022 dated May 26, 2015 and signed by the Borough President.

With the aid of screen sharing, Gayle Mandaro, Senior Director for Government and Community Relations, NYC School Construction Authority, discussed the proposed amendment to the city maps to accommodate the two public schools PS 315 and IS 311 that were constructed in 2015 and 2016. The two schools are located in the Corona community along 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Junction Boulevard and National Street. They are approximately six blocks south of the MTA 7 train and about one block north of the Long Island Railroad.

The two schools were constructed under the Department of Education's five year capital plan for fiscal years 2010 to 2014. The schools were constructed to address the capacity needs at the primary and intermediate school levels in District 24 specifically in the Corona area.

The schools were constructed on city-owned land which included parts of 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the city map identified but never built out as a street. Several other buildings constructed before the schools are also built within the mapped areas and the undeveloped portions of 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The city map amendment will reconfigure 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue to remove the street designation from the areas within which the schools and other buildings are located and conform the city map to the long standing existing conditions.

At this point, Ms. Mandaro turned the presentation over to colleague Philip Montgomery, Chief Engineer, Department of City Planning, who will describe the more technical aspects of the city map amendment.

Mr. Montgomery explained the subject portion of 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue was officially mapped in or around 1910 and was never built to its fully mapped width to 45 feet. It is currently built with an 18' wide travel way, 1 10' wide sidewalk of the north side and no sidewalk on the south side, which abuts a retailing wall for the Long Island Railroad. When the schools were constructed, the sidewalk in front of them were widened from five feet to its current ten ft. width. The street is open to one-way westbound traffic and has curbside parking on the north. While the street is built to only 28 feet, it is shown in the city map it has 45 feet wide. In this action, the 45 ft. map dimension would be narrowed to 30 feet, but no change in the built condition along this street is proposed. This action only makes the city map match the current built condition.

Next, a photo was shown looking west on 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue with IS 311.

The next slide looking east on 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue between the two schools.

More slides were shown to the Board of the site.

At this point, Staff Member Christina Long called on the following Board Members for questions/concerns:

Alexandra Owens

Board Member Alexandra Owens asked is demapping removing it from the city map.

Mr. Montgomery responded yes it is removing the map street lines from the city map and making it match the built condition.

Will it have an implication on parking asked Board Member Alexandra Owens?

Mr. Montgomery responded the map is being changed to match the existing conditions.

Alton Derrick Smith

Board Member Alton Derrick Smith had no questions and added this application did not come before the ULURP Committee for discussion, however, it does look straightforward. It's taking something built in 1910 and bringing it up to what's there now.

Andy Chen

No questions.

Ari Espinal

No questions

Ashley Reed

No questions

Chaio-Chung Chen

No response

Clara Salas

No questions

David Chong

No questions

Gregory Spock

No questions

Lorena Diaz

No questions

Lucy Cerezo-Scully

No questions

Lucy Schilero

Board Member Lucy Schilero asked will this future demapping affect zoning in that area?

Mr. Montgomery replied no. The city map change will not affect zoning.

Lynda Coral

Board Member Lynda Coral inquired what kind of impact the Demapping would have on traffic.

Gayle Mandaro replied it should not have any impact on traffic as it is correcting a condition, not changing it, and it is codifying it on the city maps.

Board Member Lynda Coral continued there is no construction that will change that street in any way.

Gayle Mandaro responded no it is just amending the map to reflect the current as built conditions.

Marialena Giampino

First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino asked why wasn't the application submitted prior when the construction was built. What is the reasoning for doing it now?

Gayle Mandaro responded it appears that there may have been some misunderstanding of where the mapped lines were at the time. There was a public review before construction of the two buildings. It seems as if all parties assumed since it was city owned land that it was part and parcel of the same development sites. It was missed and it is being corrected now to ensure accurate records are in the city files.

It was city owned land that they assigned jurisdiction to the School Construction Authority (SCA) to construct two much needed schools at the time. It was an oversight; people presumed this street had been already mapped. In fact, it was learned after the fact it was not and they are trying to correct it now.

First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino inquired if the SCA was planning to build more schools.

Gayle Mandaro responded the schools are open since 2015 and 2016. It's not in the current plan and the SCA is not making the application to enable any development. This application is made to close out and finalize both schools and get final close-up documentation from the Department of Buildings. Clients at City Planning will help finish the process and close it out.

Matthew McElroy

Board Member Matthew McElroy said it seems like a fine idea; if a vote were taken he would be in favor of the application.

However, he urged City Planning to look at the length of the avenue all the way to 114 Street. When the Transportation Committee looked at the bus plan a year ago, which came from the Transit Authority, buses were turning on to 44 Avenue. Based on the map, not knowing how narrow the actual street is, he suggested correcting the map all the way to 114 Street.

Michelle Dunston

No questions

Minwen Yang

No questions

Pat Martin

No questions

A. Redd Sevilla

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla asked does this set some kind of negative precedent for unconscientious builders to build how they see fit and then demap later on to fit actual conditions.

Gayle Mandaro responded that is not the case. She said this was city-owned land already and it was reassigned for construction of very much needed schools. She believed it was a miscommunication among the various parties. It wasn't private citizens. It was city agencies involved and the application is before the Board to correct what they thought was already corrected.

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla continued if all say no, it remains as an inconsistency between reality and city mapping.

Gayle Mandaro added it would also prevent closing out the project.

Sunil Mahat

No questions.

Carol Machulski

No questions

At this point, Staff Member Christina Long announced a Board member had asked if Board Members could get a digital copy of the presentation to be distributed to the Board later.

Mr. Montgomery agreed to the request.

Subsequently, First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino asked a question posed by Board Member Lynda Coral if the entire street is demapped, will this affect other properties on the street that are not city owned to do construction more than what is allowed.

Gayle Mandaro responded the application only covers the as-built conditions of the two schools and a few other buildings that predate the construction of the schools.

Mr. Montgomery added there are several other private property owners that the mapped street encroaches on their private property so it removes the cloud from their property because they could no longer expand into; this is a benefit for property owners as well.

## 10. Committee Reports

### *Consumer Affairs*

Committee Chair Alexandra Owens did not give a report.

### *Environmental*

No response from Committee Chair

### *Health*

Committee Chair Ashley Reed reported the Committee met last week and had a presentation from the New York City Test and Trace Corps and learned about the different methods of testing and testing options available. Also presented was how we can get involved if we ever decided to run our own testing site in the future. All Committee members were in attendance.

### *Parks*

Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock reported he had asked Janice Melnick for more transparency on Flushing Meadow-Corona Park, since we never learn about events until the groundbreaking or the day of. One particular event was in the news and he spoke about Phase One of the capital project. They adaptively turned the reflecting pool into a fountain. Unfortunately, it is winterized right now and look forward to it the spring of 2021.

Next, he reported on the leaf giveaway compost/demo on December 19. We have advocated for it in terms of both environmental education and connection to community gardens. It is a strong positive for our neighborhood in terms of getting people to understand composting and why it is important.

Further, there are continued stewardship events this winter. Log on to [alliancefmcp.org](http://alliancefmcp.org) for more information.

Next, he gave a recap of the latest Community Advisory Board meeting for Flushing Meadows-Corona Park.

A Special Thank You was given to the Parks Committee Members who attended the CAB meeting. Also thanked were several community people who had attended the Parks Committee meeting. A discussion involved issues in the Park and how to address those issues.

Subsequently, he mentioned the disconnect between city agencies and the public and he is working very hard to get answers and not being afraid to ask tough questions relating to why we are not getting answers.

Accordingly, the parks are seeing many tree lightings right now and he urged all to support those ceremonies while practicing social distancing and wearing masks.

Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock commented there are people coming to the Park with their children and not wearing masks. As adults we have to lead by example.

Meanwhile, a Parks Committee meeting is planned in December.

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol spoke about the leaf composting mentioning it's a two-fold event. Coordinating with Latisa Williams, Deputy Administrator, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, a composting event is planned where the leaves can be used in a positive way. What they would like to do is take a substantial amount of the Park's leaves and drop them off at the local community gardens with the intention of teaching the public and community how to use leaves for compost. The Board area consists of two very active community gardens. Both located in Corona: The Corona Taxpayers Garden on 102 Street/52 Avenue and Sparrow's Nest Community Garden by Louis Simeone Park. He spoke about the composting event scheduled for December 19 between 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. X amount of leaves along with bags will be dropped off at each gardens. Pamphlets will be handed out as well as a small demonstration given.

District Manager Cassagnol also mentioned the lack of response by the Parks Department and provided information about a community garden on Van Cleef and West Side Avenue and gave a background description on this garden in Corona.

He commented we would like leaves to be dropped off at that future community garden as well for the event on the 19th.

### *Transportation*

Committee Chair Lynda Coral reported the Transportation Committee met this week to discuss the street co-naming in honor of Jim Galloway for 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 99<sup>th</sup> Street. The Committee heard from one of the community members who proposed the street co-naming who provided a history and the community activism Jim Galloway was involved in. A vote was taken and the Committee recommended the street co-naming.

Second, the Committee discussed the renewal of the base license for NY Mexicana who completed the Committee's survey and answered questions posed by the Committee. The Committee voted to recommend the approval of the renewal. The base does have a license, however, they were moving locations.

As an update, Committee Chair Lynda Coral responded to Board Member Gregory Spock's inquiry about 41 Avenue and 78 Street. A response was received from the Department of Transportation and the response was read to the Board.

As a suggestion, she asked about establishing a small working group perhaps in the next meeting. Anyone who would like to join to further discuss how to continue the conversation with the Department of Transportation.

Also, a report was given from the Department of Transportation on Whitney Avenue and Judge Street. Transportation Chair Lynda Coral said we also can have continued conversations on this location.

At this point, Board Member Matthew McElroy added Board Member Gregory Spock's concern is 79 Street and the Department of Transportation was looking at 78 Street. Getting together to discuss the matter and contacting the Department of Transportation is reasonable. A conversation should take place, but not at the Board meeting rather in a smaller group.

*Public Safety*

Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported the Committee meeting was held December 1. The CERT Teams throughout the city were distributing PPEs at the yellow and orange zone areas and are continuing to do so.

Since the police officers could not attend the committee meeting Committee Chair Lucy Schilero asked the following questions:

Did any of the officers or staff contract COVID-19 since it is the second wave of the virus. As of now, none were affected.

Also, locations that were not abiding by the COVID-19 rules were given to the Police department. Cocoa Restaurant located at 4015 Junction Boulevard, Corona, and the Music Box at 74 Street, Elmhurst, were both closed by the Sheriff's Department for overcrowding. Patrons were sharing beers, marijuana, and hookahs and the capacity was over 75 people. Unfortunately, they may reopen again since they may or may not pay the fines and are fighting the charges.

Next, she asked about the Roosevelt Avenue Task Force. They worked jointly at 82 Street and Roosevelt Avenue. Some of the difficult problems are prostitution and she was optimistic the Task Force will cover other areas along Roosevelt Avenue.

Subsequently, she asked what it costs to give out summonses, specifically, the dollar amount for social distancing or noise complaints, however, the response was unclear. The cost is added as a small amount when they work with the State Liquor Authority, the Health Department, or Consumer Affairs.

Next, Committee Chair Lucy Schilero asked are establishments paying the summonses. She had noticed at court the summonses are not that high. Businesses fight the summonses and the same violation occurs all over again.

Meanwhile, she had inquired about the graffiti materials. The Precinct is very low on supplies and are asking the Board's help again. If any of the legislators are in attendance tonight, please assist.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol and Board Member Clara Salas were thanked for their help with the murals.

Moreover, extra funding for the Precinct is needed for supplies to fight graffiti.

Another questions asked was about getting the highway safety unit in for e-bikes, specifically, enforcement. All the details were not received as yet, but hopefully at the next meeting it can be discussed.

At his point, Committee Chair Lucy Schilero presented the liquor license applications.

The following liquor licenses were presented at the Public Safety Committee meeting:

**NYS LIQUOR AUTHORITY LICENSES**  
**DECEMBER 2020**

**NEW APPLICANTS**

<b><u>Establishment's Name</u></b>	<b><u>Establishment's Address</u></b>	<b><u>License Type</u></b>
Bully Tri State Igloo Catering Corp.	40-12 104 Street Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
Bella Pizza Coffee Bar Corp.	40-06 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider



**RENEWAL APPLICANTS**

<b><u>Establishment's Name</u></b>	<b><u>Establishment's Address</u></b>	<b><u>License Type</u></b>
7951 Albion LLC <i>Club Amadeus</i>	79-51 Albion Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
Rakuzen Elmhurst Inc.	89-23 Queens Blvd. Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
La Esquina Criolla Rest. Inc.	94-67 Corona Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
Chef Guo	83-29 Broadway Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider

**METHOD OF OPERATION CHANGE**

<b><u>Establishment's Name</u></b>	<b><u>Establishment's Address</u></b>	<b><u>License Type</u></b>
Pico de Gallo Inc.	82-12 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

**ALTERATION**

<b><u>Establishment's Name</u></b>	<b><u>Establishment's Address</u></b>	<b><u>License Type</u></b>
Pico de Gallo Inc.	82-12 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported when the outdoor cafes open, owners must understand they cannot break the rules when it comes to COVID-19, noting establishments have. It was emphasized to think about the community they are working in since it is a predominately residential community. Complaints for noise and non-compliance are still high.

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol explained he is aware the Precinct needs funding for paint and will be in contact with P.O. David Saponieri to use some of the funds we have to provide the paint.

In addition, we are advocating for a graffiti replacement project instead of the Community Board giving paint to the Precinct every year where it serves as a canvas for more graffiti.

Meanwhile, we are continuing with the mural project and ran into a small issue where some of the supplies are backordered.

However the artist is in school right now and was not ready to start. We have reached out to the art supply store to give replacements for the items that were on backorder. Once we begin, it will be the start of the mural replacement project.

In conclusion, he had already contacted the Precinct and is waiting for a list of supplies needed.

**ULURP/Zoning**

Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported the three applications presented tonight were straight forward. In addition, there was a fourth item tabled from the last meeting, which was the landmark status application to preserve the house at 88-28 43 Avenue, Elmhurst, NY.

The floor was turned over to First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino for background history on the house.

First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino reported the Janta-Polczynska house is located in Elmhurst and it came before the Board two months ago for a street co-naming and a letter of recommendation was sent to the City Council to co-name the street for Alexander and Valentina Janta-Polczynska two Polish nationals who were World War II heroes. Valentina was ahead of her time in that she saved so many lives by announcing to Poland about the concentration camps.

It's a very historic site to the Polish American community recognizing its Polish history. No landmark exists in New York City that is directly related to the holocaust. The Elmhurst History and Preservation Cemeteries Society submitted a landmark application and is asking for support on the landmark status.

Therefore, Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith explained a letter of recommendation is needed for the four applications, which included the previous three applications presented to the Board, commenting they were straightforward and questions were asked.

Discussion ensued about a letter of recommendation or a vote. It was noted there was no quorum present.

District Manager Cassagnol commented with no quorum it's a gray area. We can ask right now if there are any questions or concerns and the letter would reflect while there was no quorum, those present were in favor; but again it's a very gray area. He stated he did not know but the lack of a quorum was a real issue for the Board with the other agenda items as well. He added the Board cannot formally vote on the street co-naming for Jim Galloway.

Subsequently, First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino inquired can any of the items be moved to the next meeting and do they have a time frame.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol responded with the exception of the 44 Avenue demapping, the other items can be brought up at the next meeting. The street co-naming for Jim Galloway can be held as the City Council votes twice per year and does not have to be rushed. The only item that needs an immediate recommendation is the 44 Avenue demapping which will be presented to the Borough President within the next week or so.

At this point, ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith explained there is a deadline on the BSA application because it cannot move forward unless the Board submits a recommendation.

Discussion ensued.

Subsequently, First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino said the Board can table the other items to the next meeting such as the Janta House if it is not going to count, why make a recommendation.. But anything that must be voted on tonight, a recommendation should be done.

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith said to put the Janta House on the agenda for next month because there is no immediate deadline.

For the other items, do a letter of recommendation on 82-11 Queens Blvd. although he commented he was unsure if the BSA would accept a letter from the Board that does not have a quorum. However, the applicant can contact the Board and let us know if they are willing to wait until there is a full quorum for a letter with the Board's approval.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol reiterated there was no roll call vote but questions were taken from the Board Members, noting we are treading on uncharted waters.

Board Member Lucy Schilero suggested to write the letter to include the application was presented to the Board and the majority present was in favor of the proposed use.

More discussion ensued.

As a result, ULURP Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported:

The zoning for the Coastal Flood Resiliency and the 44 Avenue demapping, do a letter of recommendation to the BSA. The applicant would be aware if the BSA does not accept the Board's letter, the applicant can come back and will have to wait until the next Board meeting for a vote. The January 2021 CB agenda also would include the Janta House.

First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino inquired about the street co-naming for James Galloway to be brought up at the next Board meeting.

District Manager Cassagnol replied the Board can wait on that item because the City Council does not take a vote until April and October 2021.

### ***Youth***

Committee Chair not in attendance. No Report.

District Manager Cassagnol reported the Committee did meet and is trying to bring the artist group to the community for therapeutic art camps. A presentation was given to the Committee from the group Artists Making Changes. We are waiting to hear from them for a start date on the workshop.

There being no further business, First Vice Chair Marialena Giampino adjourned the meeting at 9:40 p.m.