



COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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Donovan Richards
Queens Borough President

Marialena Giampino
Chairperson

Ebony Young
Deputy Borough President

Christian Cassagnol
District Manager

January 11, 2022

COMMUNITY BOARD ATTENDANCE

Board Members Attending:

Marialena Giampino
Chaio-Chung Chen
Lynda Coral
Lorena Diaz
Michelle Dunston
Ari Espinal
Leeanne G-Bowley
Kristen Gonzalez
Lara Gregory
Deependra Lama
Vincent Laucella
Salvatore Lombardo
Carol Machulski
Sunil Mahat
Patricia Martin
Sylvia Martin
Matthew McElroy
Jose Morillo

Ruby Muhammad
Sandra Munoz
Gurdip Singh Narula
G. Oliver
Georgina Oliver
Alexandra Owens
Shrima Pandey
Purushottam Panthee
Lindsay Quartini
Ashley Reed
Cristian Romero
Clara Salas
Lucy Schilero
A. Redd Sevilla
Urgen Sherpa
Alton Derrick Smith
Marcello Testa
Louis Walker
Minwen Yang

Board Members Absent:

Andy Chen
James Lisa
Rovenia McGowan
Edgar Moya
Alexa Ponce
Brian Ramirez

Oscar Rios
Gregory Spock
Dewan Tarek
Dechen Tsering
Yilin Wang
May Yu

ATTENDING:

Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager
Margaret Silletti, CB4 Community Coordinator
Christina Long, CB4 Community Associate
Detective Dave Saponieri, 110 Police Precinct
Kyle Salcido, Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office
Berenice Navarrete-Perez, Council Member Francisco Moya's Office
Kat Brezler, Queens Borough President's Office
James Mongeluzo, NYC Comptroller's Office
Helen Arteaga-Landaverde, CEO of Elmhurst Hospital

COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, January 11, 2022

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: On Line via Webex

I. At 7:05 p.m. discussion ensued about rain gardens before the opening of the meeting.

Environmental Chair Carol Machulski asked if anyone read the Comptroller's audit on rain gardens. She had read the report and stated it was pertinent to the Environmental Committee. She had asked the District Manager to send the report to all members of the Board, noting it would have been advantageous if the report was received before the Needs Statement was finalized.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino stated since the rain gardens first came to the Board it was questioned how they would be maintained. Maintenance has been a problem ever since.

Environmental Chair Carol Machulski responded the first 20 pages of the report had information on upkeep.

However, rain gardens are not being maintained said the Board Chair. Also, she had taken locations of unkempt rain gardens and reported them to the Board office. It was advised to get locations in need of maintenance and send them to the Board office.

Accordingly, Environmental Chair Carol Machulski reported the two agencies responsible for the upkeep of the rain gardens are Department of Design and Construction(DDC) ensure the plants and trees are thriving and if not to correct the situation. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) should take over from DDC when plants and trees are stabilized and to ensure they are thriving, which has not happened.

The Board's priority on the Expense budget is #36 where more staffing was requested on the maintenance of the rain gardens. DDC is not performing maintenance and passed it off to DEP. The report entails 65 pages where photos are included. Complaints have ranged from garbage in the rain gardens to dead plants.

Chair Marialena Giampino commented it is a citywide issue.

Records should be kept when planting is done, including maintenance but none are. Acquiring more staff will not solve the problem said Environmental Chair Carol Machulski. If the audit was received prior to submitting the Needs Statement, the narrative for #36 may have been changed.

Discussion ensued.

At this point, Board Member Sal Lombardo commented as a property owner of buildings on Corona Avenue rain gardens have to be checked every day. He had met a staff member at DEP who was very nice and did a very good job cleaning the rain gardens. He spoke about the garbage thrown in them and noted the rain gardens could be cleaned at 9:00 a.m., but at 11:00 a.m. you will see garbage again. Property owners do have to help out in keeping them clean.

Transportation Committee Chair Matt McElroy asked does the property owner have any responsibility to the rain garden.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino responded no and provided further explanation.

Environmental Chair Carol Machulski added the purpose of the rain gardens is to absorb excess water mentioning Hurricane Ida, pointing out they would not work if they are not effective.

Furthermore, District Manager Christian Cassagnol reported it is not the homeowner's responsibility although many homeowners are being summonsed for not keeping them clean. If anyone does receive a summons on a rain garden, contact the Board office.

At this point, Board Chairperson Marialena Giampino officially opened the meeting.

II. Vote: Minutes December 14, 2021

Environmental Committee Chair Carol Machulski made a motion, seconded by Health And Human Services Chair Clara Salas, to **approve** the minutes.

Since there were none opposed or abstentions, motion passed.

III. Chairperson's Report

Board Chair Marialena Giampino had attended the Boro Board meeting last night and reported there were two representatives from the NYC Health & Hospitals Corporation (HHC) who discussed Covid testing sites/vaccines and the omicron surge in Queens. They are monitoring the situation citywide and providing additional testing sites especially in Elmhurst to lessen the effect on Elmhurst Hospital. Newtown High School had opened as a testing site among other locations. She had noted more testing sites are needed in Corona. Because testing sites are to be spread evenly, more sites cannot be given to Corona. The situation will be monitored if there are more spikes for more testing to be done. If anyone is aware of a location/building that would like to partner with HHC, you can offer the site as a NYC testing site (there is no payment). If you need a testing site, you can find one on line and the same with a vaccine location at NYC Health& Hospitals.org/covid19testing sites.

Additionally, there was a guest speaker from the Department of City Planning who spoke about urban design. The Dept. of City Planning is gathering input from communities all over New York City on how they feel about their neighborhood and surroundings. Good urban planning benefits all in the community. The survey will be available end of February. Go online and complete the survey about your neighborhood. For the February 2022 Community Board meeting, the Board Chair will request a presentation. The survey will be used for future recommendations, zoning and text amendments

Next, the Queens Borough President had posted online applications to apply for Community Board membership. Go to the website and fill out the form. If you are a renewing CB4 Board member, you will need to re-apply on the website.

The following Board Members must reapply:

Chaio-Chung Chen

Yi Chen

Lorena Diaz

Kristen Gonzalez

Carol Machulski

Sunil Mahat

Patricia Martin

Matthew McElroy

Gurdip Narula

Alexandra Owens

Alexa Ponce

Oscar Rios

Lucy Schilero

Alton Derrick Smith

Dewan Tarek

Marcello Testa

Louis Walker

All were urged to reapply to renew Board membership for the next two years.

Subsequently, a virtual meeting of the Executive Board is planned for February 1 at 6:30 p.m. A meeting notice and agenda will be sent.

IV. District Manager's Report

District Manager Christian Cassagnol reported Staff Member Christina Long received a promotion to Community Associate.

Next, he reported on the Elmhurst Post Office that was closed due to flooding. After four months of closure, the Post Office has reopened. All were thanked for their support.

Next, he congratulated Board members who serve on the CERT Team. Tonight those team members are being honored by New York City Emergency Management for their excellent work over the last year. Those members are:

CERT Team Queens Division 2

Lucy Schilero
Georgina Oliver
G. Oliver
Ruby Muhammad
Ashley Reed

Subsequently, he spoke about the audit regarding the Board's website, minutes etc. to ensure the Board was transparent. While a few infractions were received, overall the Board did very well. All other Boards did well in their own right and issues were very minor.

The Board office is somewhat open as the staff is on a staggered schedule: one staff member is on site three days per week; and the other five days per week. Walk-ins/members of the public are not accepted. If assistance is needed, call the office for a virtual call or by appointment only at the office.

V. Open Session #1/Board Member Attendance (Statements will be limited to two minutes)

Board Chair Marialena Giampino took the roll call:

Chaio-Chung Chen – In attendance

Andy Chen – Absent

Lynda Coral – In attendance

Lorena Diaz – In attendance

Michelle Dunston – In attendance

Ari Espinal – In attendance

Leeanne G-Bowley – In attendance

Kristen Gonzalez – In attendance

Lara Gregory – In attendance

Deependra Lama – In attendance

Vincent Laucella – In attendance

James Lisa – Absent

Salvatore Lombardo – In attendance

Carol Machulski – In attendance

Sunil Mahat – In attendance

Patricia Martin – In attendance

Sylvia Martin – In attendance

Matthew McElroy – In attendance

Rovenia McGowan – Absent

Jose Morillo – In Attendance

Edgar Moya – Absent

Ruby Muhammad – In attendance

Sandra Munoz – In attendance

Gurdip Singh Narula – In attendance

G. Oliver – In attendance

Georgina Oliver – In attendance

Alexandra Owens – In attendance

She shared she is on staff at Con Edison and working on their website and mobile website design.

Shrima Pandey – In attendance

Purushottam Panthee – In attendance

Alexa Ponce – Absent

Lindsay Quartini – In attendance

Brian Ramirez – Absent

Ashley Reed – In attendance

Oscar Rios – Absent

Cristian Romero – In attendance

Clara Salas – In attendance

Lucy Schilero – In attendance

A. Redd Sevilla – In attendance

He commented he had a visit at Elmhurst Hospital and the staff were fantastic. He felt welcomed and warm; a great experience.

Urgen Sherpa – In attendance

Alton Derrick Smith – In attendance

Gregory Spock – Absent
Dewan Tarek – Absent
Marcello Testa – In attendance
Dechen Tsering – Absent
Louis Walker – In attendance

He commented he may not reapply to the Board.

Yilin Wang - Absent
Minwen Yang – In attendance

She commented she visited Elmhurst Hospital today and gave her a very warm welcome and a care package. The staff at the hospital was thanked.

May Yu - Absent

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino announced a quorum was present.

VI. Report from Elected Officials

-Federal

-State

-City

Senate

Charles E. Schumer

No report. No representative present

Kristen Gilibrand

No report. No representative present

House of Representatives

Grace Meng

Kyle Salcido from the Congresswoman's office reported along with the opening of the Elmhurst Post Office, the FEMA Disaster Relief aid application ended on January 4. However, individuals from Queens County have a 60-day grace period to submit a late application, but for that late application the applicant must submit a letter to FEMA that explains the extenuating circumstances that prevented them from applying. Applicants have 60 days from receiving their initial decision in order to submit an appeal.

Constituents who need assistance either in their initial application or with appeals can contact the Congresswoman's office for assistance.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

No report. No representative present.

NYS Assembly

Brian Barnwell

No report. No representative present.

Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas

No report. No representative present.

Jeffrion Aubry

No report. No representative present.

Catalina Cruz

No report. No representative present.

NYS Senate

Michael Gianaris

No report. No representative present.

Jessica Ramos

No report. No representative present.

Toby Ann Stavisky

No report. No representative present.

NYC Mayor's Office

No report. No representative present.

NYC Council

Francisco Moya

Berenice Navarrete-Perez reported during the month of December there were multiple toy distributions in the district. Around 2,000 toys were given out to children and schools in the area. Although Covid cases have risen, during Three Kings Day many local schools were visited.

Council Member Moya is sponsoring testing and vaccination sites in the district. One site is located at William F. Moore Park, 107-06 Corona Avenue, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday PCR and rapid testing done for four and up. Additionally, at the First Baptist Church, 100-10 Astoria Boulevard, from Monday to Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson vaccines available. Additional sites will be posted in the chat.

Accordingly, Parks is coordinating a community input meeting for Park of the Americas reconstruction of the basketball courts and the comfort stations on January 26, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. Information posted in the chat.

Meanwhile, any organization that wishes to apply for discretionary funding for FY2023 must submit a Council application. Website will be posted to apply. Deadline is Tuesday, February 22.

Office information will also be posted on social media. Call the office at 718-651-1917 if you have any questions.

Shekar Krishnan

No report. No representative present.

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

Kat Brezler congratulated the CERT Team. Also, information was forwarded to the Board about a scholarship available as well as National Grid's HEAP program (Home Energy Assistance Program). This will be a very brutal winter with increasing energy prices and residents should access all resources available.

Renewal Community Board applications for 2022-2024 are due February 16, 2022.

Upcoming events can be seen on queensbp.org/ calendar such as a webinar on January 13 at 1:00 p.m. - Aging in Place - and also a Cannabis webinar January 25 at 5:30 p.m. about expungements ceiling and licensure.

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz

No report. No representative present.

NYC Comptroller

Due to technical difficulties, James Mongeluzo could not present a report.

NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams

No report. Representative not present.

At this point, Detective David Saponieri, 110 Police Precinct, reported on a large increase in grand larcenies. This pattern is seen throughout the city. It is a Department of Labor scam. People have been issued preloaded credit cards or debit cards with money on it.

Those cards were issued to people who were not able to reap benefits from the pandemic. Somehow, they are being scammed either through the ATM machine or their bank accounts. Large numbers of those reports have been registered. There were over 200 reports in the 28-day period and 300 reports registered in the last 28-day period.

With holiday shopping, review your statements to ensure there were no unauthorized charges. Be careful with online sales where you are coaxed to enter your personal information.

Additionally, there has been an increase in robberies, especially after midnight. If you are traveling stay in well-lit areas, walk with a friend, keep personal belongings tight to your body, and don't walk with your cell phone. Pay attention to your surroundings.

He spoke about Roosevelt Avenue around 74 Street to 82 Street and surrounding blocks where two homicides were reported for this 28-day period. One at Lefrak City, 57 Avenue and 97 Street, which was a shooting. The victim passed away.

Most recently, there was a domestic violence stabbing between two brothers on 74 Street. The brother passed away.

Accordingly, traffic safety initiatives for temp tags and altered plates are in place. In addition, the problem of illegally parked cars is being addressed plus working with some new companies to get those cars towed and off the street to free up parking for residents.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino asked about a follow up on Moore Homestead Park concerning groups playing loud music and dancing.

Detective Saponieri replied Police patrol the Park a few times during the day. When up close to those little Bluetooth speakers, the noise level does not seem unreasonable, however, he was unclear how it is traveling to the residents. It was brought to the attention of the Parks Department. More frequent checks were done also. And, the morning sector has been doing directed patrols there. Maybe, a new process will be implemented where a sound permit is required.

Next, Detective Saponieri spoke about a homeless encampment in the area of Barnwell/Albion Avenues/Queens Blvd. and the TD Bank. A cleanup was done on December 27 where four shopping carts were removed, plus all property, tents and equipment. It resembled a street mechanic working out of the street. However, the Precinct obtained a garage for him and a job.

VII. Speaker: Helen Arteaga-Landaverde, CEO - Elmhurst Hospital Updates and Upcoming Projects at Elmhurst Hospital

CEO Helen Arteaga-Landaverde reported Elmhurst Hospital does not see the pandemic going back to another wave, however, with omicron appearing in the hospital's emergency management mode and all the lessons learned in wave I and wave II were taken into consideration. More innovation was initiated and different levels of the surge plan were implemented. There was a plan for a trigger of volume x and a trigger of volume b and c and d. There were different levels depending on how much volume entered the hospital through the Emergency Room or Admissions. Although, the hospital is full, patients are still being seen. Luckily, all the Covid positive patients admitted are not that sick meaning vaccines and boosters are working. The virus is not as lethal as it was in wave 1. Currently, Elmhurst Hospital Covid positive patients are not in ICU meaning they are not in critical care. Mostly, any patient who tests positive for Covid is discharged on day five/six. For the patients in the hospital who are positive, 50% are unvaccinated. Those unvaccinated patients are still affected at a higher rate than those who are vaccinated.

Moreover, the hospital has additional beds in different units to accommodate the extra overload of patients. The Emergency Room had increased nursing staff, provider staff, and provider coverage overall. On a given day, if the hospital was managing 200 patients a day, now there is 350 patients. Staff has been supplemented to match those increased needs.

Similarly, testing and vaccines were increased. Prior, appointments only were taken because of the increased flow, but now the hospital is doing about 500 vaccines a day and able to take walk-ins.

Although testing units were overwhelmed, the hospital was able to pivot much of the outpatient services to testing because testing was doing over 1600 tests per day. Now, 1200 patients a day are seen in testing.

At this point, CEO Helen Arteaga-Landaverde thanked her team who were able to pivot. To manage in a small area over a thousand patients per day and testing patients who are scared while answering many questions, the nursing team has been beyond amazing. The emergency team as well as the emergency room were like rock stars. Personally, she has seen how much the hospital has done to not only help the community stay healthy and keep it safe, but also for her personally when she contracted Covid and was treated in the Emergency Room that saved her life.

In conclusion, Elmhurst Hospital is standing strong not only for each other, but also for the community and is ready for whatever comes through the hospital's doors.

As CEO and leader, she could not be more proud of the staff and the work they are performing.

Furthermore, the hospital is functioning and surgeries are being performed. Regular admissions are ongoing. People who are sick such as heart attack patients or those having babies still come to the hospital. Those services have not stopped.

At this point, CEO Helen Arteaga-Landaverde took questions.

Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero asked how is the blood supply for Elmhurst.

CEO Helen Arteaga-Landaverde said blood supplies are safe and there is enough blood for anyone who needs it. In the past, there was a blood donation center, however, it was closed down because not enough people donated blood. Also, the hospital wanted to move all current resources to the New York Blood Donor Program.

Before concluding, CEO Helen Arteaga-Landaverde provided her phone number should need assistance. Call her at 917-670-0180.

Board Member Louis Walker asked regarding the Covid test, if you test positive on the rapid test should the PCR test be taken to confirm the results.

CEO Helen Arteaga-Landaverde responded it depends on your current position. Usually a take home test or rapid test if it is positive, you probably have Covid. However, most jobs and most organizations want the PCR test to get the special code to get paid through your job. Code 17 is the hospital's code. If your job has a special code, your sick time is covered. But, it does depend on the different organizations.

Board Member Alexandra Owens commended the hospital on handling the crowds, and ensuring the line kept moving and flowing while she was at the hospital for Covid testing. An amazing job!

Consumer Affairs Chair Michelle Dunston commented Governor Kathy Hochul would put in the Bill to give health care workers \$3,000 and also to help pay for some of their medical bills. Health care workers are so deserving of those funds she continued.

Report & Vote: Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee
--State Liquor Authority Applications

Public Safety Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported the January 4 meeting could not be held due to Covid. Sixty-three or more officers were out sick from the 110 Precinct, and ½ of the firefighters out from the Fire Department, and also EMT's were not on duty. Therefore, the committee could not meet and postponed the meeting to January 18 to review the liquor license applications. By that time, information should be available.

Public Safety Committee Chair Lucy Schilero asked the Board when the committee meets on January 18 to review and vote on the applications a letter will be sent out to each Board Member with the vote. Hopefully, the Board will accept the committee's recommendation. This approach is needed because no reports could be obtained on the applicants. In this way, the Board is aware of the applications presented for January.

Discussion ensued.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol clarified the licenses currently on the docket expire at the end of January. Because the committee meets on the 18th, where the vote/recommendation is made, the full Board will be informed immediately thereafter and have until the end of the week to comment. A full copy of the committee's entire vote and discussion (leaving the Board 4 to 5 days to discuss it) will be sent to the members. If nothing is heard by late Friday or early Monday morning, the Board's decision will be sent to the SLA. He noted the Board's decision will stand whether it came from a committee or the full Board as long as it is on Board letterhead and pertinent details provided.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino called for a motion and a vote taken.

Board Member Sandra Munoz made a motion, seconded by Board Member Louis Walker, that Board members will have until the end of week to comment and if no one responds; a letter will be sent to the SLA that the Board had voted on the applications. Since there were none opposed or abstentions, the motion passed.

Following the vote, Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero reported there were long lines of people to take the test for Covid. She had visited City MD on Junction Blvd, but they were shut down for three days. However Assembly Member Catalina Cruz opened her office for 3 to 4 days and had a line wrapped around the block. She commended Assembly Member Cruz for her support to the community.

NYS LIQUOR AUTHORITY LICENSES

January 2022

NEW APPLICANTS

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Establishment's Address</u>	<u>License Type</u>
82-63 Bakery Corp.	82-63 Broadway Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

Nuevo Don Francisco Rest. Inc.	40-46 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
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RENEWAL APLICANTS

El Mordisco Sport Bar Rest. Corp.	85-14 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
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Coatzingo Enterprises Inc. <i>California Spots Bar</i>	82-18 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372	Liquor, Wine Beer & Cider
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Boca Juniors Steakhouse LLC	81-08 Queens Blvd. Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
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Editas Bar & Restaurant Inc.	85-10/12 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
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Brenmac Tavern <i>Grand Stand</i>	85-25 Grand Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
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CORPORATE CHANGE

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Establishment's Address</u>	<u>License Type</u>
Ginger Dollar Sushi Inc. <i>Tomo Japanese Cafe</i>	89-14 Queens Blvd. Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider

VIII. Committee Reports

Consumer Affairs

Consumer Affairs Chair Michelle Dunston reported the first meeting is on January 17 at 6:00 p.m. She was aware it is Martin Luther King's birthday and a small tribute will be dedicated to him. The Committee must meet noting the current health issues. An email will be sent out with an agenda mentioning merchants coming aboard to be members of Community Board 4's Newsletters.

At this point, Board Member Pat Martin asked when the Consumer Affairs Committee meets, it is brought to the attention of the Committee the problem with Walgreens on 99 Street. It closes at 6:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, which it is not sufficient for the community.

Committee Chair Michelle Dunston responded it is on the agenda.

Discussion ensued.

Environmental

Committee Chair Carol Machulski reported QSWAB met December 15 and was expecting Mr. Hoyle from the Department of Sanitation. Although he was not able to attend, he sent a representative to discuss curbside compost program. Although nothing was done, the representative said he would take questions from the audience, relay those questions to Mr. Hoyle and at the next meeting which is January 28, the answers to those questions would be given.

The second speaker at QSWAB was Ryan Carson who spoke about the Bottle Bill at 40. This Bill established the return of certain plastic bottles for a five cent refund which was established 40 years ago and proved effective. Now, the Bill will be modernized by expanding the deposit amount to ten cents and expanding the types of bottles to be refunded. For example, wine, liquor, or non-carbonated beverages.

Lastly, the Committee Chair reported on the Comptroller's audit on the rain gardens. Number 36 of the Board's Needs Statement requests more funding and staff to maintain those rain gardens. Two city agencies are involved in the care and maintenance of rain

gardens: the Department of Design & Construction (DDC) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). However, it is DDC's responsibility for building and maintaining those gardens for a certain period stipulated in the contract. But, it seems the contract is not being adhered to. In the report, a number of ways are enumerated that the agency is not following the contract such as not meeting deadlines for completing the rain gardens. Consequently, information on what's been completed and what has been ready to transfer to DEP is wrong and concluded this is what's wrong with the program. In theory, the program should construct those gardens to absorb the extra rainfall. Certainly if it were true, it would have eliminated the disastrous flooding caused by Hurricane Ida.

Consumer Affairs Committee Chair Michelle Dunston added the Lefrak City Tenants Association had adopted two rain gardens on Junction Boulevard but has not received the authority to oversee those rain gardens.

Discussion ensued.

Health & Human Services

Committee Chair Clara Salas reported the next committee meeting is Monday, January 27, at 7:00 p.m. Via Webex. All were urged to attend. Presenters include Dr. Maurice Policar/Dr. Tina Cheng. Please bring all questions on testing, the virus, and the variant to the meeting.

She added another variant may be coming and what steps to take to prevent becoming infected will be addressed.

Also questions about boosters and their effectiveness will be discussed. Before concluding, the Committee Chair emphasized how important this meeting is to gain facts and present questions with again stressing the importance for everyone to attend.

Parks, Cultural Affairs & Historical Preservation

Committee Chair Ashley Reed reported a committee meeting is planned in two weeks to review its vision for the upcoming year and also to re-emphasize the scoping meeting for Park of the Americas. A community input visioning meeting is scheduled for January 26 via zoom. All were encouraged to attend and submit ideas for the Park. The link will be posted for registering.

Transportation

Committee Chair Matthew McElroy reported the Committee met December 21, 2021 with a representative from the Department of Transportation to review many issues. It was a very good conversation. Many items remain under the auspices of DOT, however, some of the other items need Community Board input. A meeting is scheduled for January 18 at 6:00 p.m. On the agenda is those issues plus the Board's priorities for the coming year.

ULURP & Zoning

Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported the Committee will meet on January 25 at 7:00 p.m. where a presentation will be given by a new company on Community Land Trust Project. This is to help communities consolidate vacant or dilapidated lots with foundations that have been there for decades and to convert them into housing in New York City.

Youth Services

Committee Chair Sylvia Martin reported usually the committee meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, so the next regularly meeting is January 27. The committee's vision for 2022 will be discussed.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino urged all to attend their respective committee meetings. Committee Chairs work hard to set up meetings, formulating agendas, and acquiring speakers. It is important for everyone to participate.

VIII. Open Session #2

Board Chair Marialena Giampino called on Board Members to speak or ask questions.

Health & Human Services Committee Chair Clara Salas asked for an update on the Elmhurst Post Office. She had heard there were plans to close the Elmhurst Post Office, which would leave Elmhurst without a Post Office.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol will read the response stating the Post Office will remain open from Congresswoman Grace Meng.

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula asked, as a result of the recent Bronx fire, everyone should check their smoke detectors. Change batteries if needed. Do not leave space heaters unattended because many people leave the heaters unattended which can cause a fire. Now, 19 people have lost their lives in the Bronx fire. It is a tragic incidence.

Also, he asked about the renewal form for the Community Board membership. Will it be sent?

Board Chair Marialena Giampino responded the form is on the Borough President's website. It's a link and if you like, the Board office can send it to you.

At this point, District Manager Cassagnol read the January 6 press release about the reopening on January 3 of the Elmhurst Post Office and it will again be able to provide residents with much needed services people rely on.

Next, on the topic of Covid testing Board Member Alexandra Owens informed the Board she went to Newtown High School, a Covid testing center, on December 30 for Covid testing. It took about eight days for test results to come back after reaching out to a local Council Member. She was unsure if the same delay is being experienced by others on getting results back and noted Bio-Reference Laboratories was having many issues and asked if this should be investigated further.

Discussion ensued regarding the timeframe to receive test results.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino provided contact information to Board Member Alexandra Owens on the issue.

Since there were no further issues, Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula made a motion, seconded by Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.