



COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

46-11 104th Street

Corona, New York 11368-2882

Telephone: 718-760-3142 Fax: 718-760-5971

E-mail: qn04@cb.nyc.gov

Donovan Richards
Queens Borough President

Marialena Giampino
Chairperson

Ebony Young
Deputy Borough President

Christian Cassagnol
District Manager

March 8, 2022

COMMUNITY BOARD ATTENDANCE:

Board Members Attending:

Marialena Giampino
Chaio-Chung Chen
Michelle Dunston
Ari Espinal
Leanne G-Bowley
Vincent Laucella
Carol Machulski
Sunil Mahat
Patricia Martin
Sylvia Martin
Matthew McElroy
Rovenia McGowan
Jose Morillo
Edgar Moya

Sandra Munoz
Gurdip Singh Narula
G. Oliver
Georgina Oliver
Alexandra Owens
Shrima Pandey
Alexa Ponce
Lindsay Quartini
Ashley Reed
Cristian Romero
Clara Salas
Alton Derrick Smith
Dewan Tarek
Marcello Testa
Louis Walker
Minwen Yang

Board Members Absent:

Andy Chen
Lynda Coral
Lorena Diaz
Kristen Gonzalez
Lara Gregory
Deependra Lama
James Lisa
Salvatore Lombardo
Ruby Muhammad

Purushottam Panthee
Brian Ramirez
Oscar Rios
A. Redd Sevilla
Urgen Sherpa
Gregory Spock
Dechen Tsering
Yilin Wang
May Yu

ATTENDING:

Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager
Margaret Silletti, CB4 Community Coordinator
Christina Long, CB4 Community Associate
Council Member Francisco Moya
Assembly Member Brian Barnwell
Kyle Salcido, Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office
Michelle Luna, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Office
Samantha, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz's Office
Berenice Navarrete-Perez, Council Member Francisco Moya's Office
Chanel Martinez, Council Member Shekar Krishnan
Detective David Saponieri, 110 Police Precinct
Richard David, Queens Director, Con Edison
Andres Ledesma, Queens Community Affairs, Con Edison
Le-Tis Williams, FDNY Community Affairs
Marius Calin – Design Project Engine 287
Irma Fontaine, Chief Architect, FDNY
Jeremy Brooks, Assistant Commissioner of Facilities Management
Scott Borchert, Consulting Engineer
Ronnelle Reilly, Architect

COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: On Line via Webex

I. Chairperson Marialena Giampino called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. Vote on Minutes from the February 8, 2022 Meeting

Since a quorum was not present, a vote could not be taken on the minutes.

III. Chairperson's Report

Board Chair Marialena Giampino wished all women Happy International Women's Day which is today and praised all women celebrating the amazing achievements of women. March holidays were also mentioned.

At this point, the Board Chair announced she had attended the Borough Board's virtual budget hearing on March 7 where people were advocating for funding. Although there were many applicants, the Board Chair could not stay until the end of the meeting, but the District Manager was in attendance to testify for funding for Community Board 4.

Next month new members will be added to the Board and are needed since there are issues currently with poor committee attendance. Committee members are not responding and not attending meetings which is worrisome. Because the need is so great, usually committees are chosen in September but because of the poor attendance, new members will be assigned immediately to committees and in September the normal process will be followed.

Next, the Board Chair announced the Executive Board has slots to fill, such as the Treasurer (Lucy Schilero's passing) and an At Large Director as a result Kristen Gonzalez will be resigning her position. Accordingly, a Nominating Committee must be chosen with four members serving on the committee. Board Chair Marialena Giampino chose herself and First vice Chair Ashley Reed, who accepted the nomination. Next, the Board Chair opened the floor for two more nominations. She explained in the next 30 days the Committee will meet and next month a report will be presented where the full Board will vote on the candidates for the open slots.

Health Committee Chair Clara Salas nominated Public Safety Committee Co-Chair Georgina Oliver, who accepted the nomination.

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula nominated Board Member Sandra Munoz, who accepted the nomination.

Board Member Sandra Munoz suggested Parliamentarian Lou Walker serve on the Nominating Committee.

However, Board Chair Marialena Giampino commented Lou Walker had expressed an interest in serving on the Executive Board.

When asked if he accepted the nomination, Board Member Louis Walker stated it may be a conflict to serve.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino agreed and said Board Member Lou Walker is also the Board's Parliamentarian and part of the Executive Board and had shown interest in the Executive Board's At-Large Director slot.

Next, Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula nominated Deependra Lama who was absent.

Since there were four people nominated and who accepted the nominations, Board Chair Marialena Giampino closed the floor to other nominations.

Before concluding, the Board Chair announced the Board office will send out an e-mail to the full Board asking if anyone is interested in the positions.

Lastly, the Board Chair pointed out there is so much great information in the Board's emails and recaps while mentioning the Department of City Planning Equitable Development Data Tool and said sessions are available on how to use the tool. Also mentioned were training workshops for Community Board members such as ULURP training. Furthermore, Congresswoman Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez is requesting feedback on the naming of the Jackson Heights and Corona Post Offices. Additionally in the recap were family and youth services, adult education, and ESL classes that can be shared with family and friends and to enlist others to join the Board's email list to receive emails.

IV. District Manager's Report

District Manager Christian Cassagnol reported on Josephine Caminiti Playground on 102 Street. A virtual scoping meeting will be held tomorrow (March 9) at 6:00 p.m. Parks Department contacted the District Manager because the RSVP replies were extremely low being in the single digits which included his reply and the Parks Committee Chair. All were invited to attend via Zoom. He said people complain when a park does not look the way it should or about benches or why the shrubby is the way it is. The process is that the public states what it wants and to RSVP to the link. Link will be shared and to check the flyer which was sent out yesterday. Subsequently, two weeks after a parks scoping meeting there is a survey on the Parks website, if you missed the scoping meeting, to present your opinions. With generous funding from Councilman Francisco Moya, changes will be made to the Park.

Next, District Manager Cassagnol reported he testified on the Board's discretionary funding requests. Community Boards operate differently. We know what our needs are but he testifying will not get a precinct any faster than if he had not attended. It was treated the way a not-for profit would be treated i.e. as an opportunity to get funding for ourselves. Funding was requested for youth fairs, Board branding (items we cannot afford using the Board's budget since we do not have the funds). He is requesting money from both the City Council Members and the Borough President to help out with community events, community affairs, dog licensing events etc. In past years, the Board was able to hold community events thanks to discretionary funding and he is optimistic for a favorable response from the City Council and the Borough President. Also, he put much emphasis on the Board's community gardens, specifically, Sparrow's Nest which has been forgotten and deserves more.

Next, the Board received the Budget Register known as the Capital Expense/Needs Statement, which the committees worked on a few months ago. Responses were received from OMB, the Mayor's Office and other city agencies. Thirty days after receiving the document, the Board can respond to the Mayor's Office such as *we love the park but we want to see more of this*. The District Manager had already been in contact with the Committee Chairs who are actively reviewing the Budget Register with the District Manager and committee members may get involved if they choose. A response is due in about a week or so about how we feel about those budget items.

Next, District Manager Cassagnol spoke about committee attendance which is a major issue. By not joining fellow Board members, the Board is making it difficult for city agencies. For example, it is not fair a guest is planned such as doctors from Elmhurst Hospital and only one committee member is present. If you want to join a committee, don't be on it because you have to. Find out what the committee activity is such as does it meet every month like Public Safety or does the committee meet only when a project must be reviewed. Do they meet in the evenings, or on a day that you have a commitment? Don't join that committee and take it into consideration when joining a committee. A committee schedule is available for your review so that attendance does not become a reason. Agencies are expressing reluctance that no one showed last time so why should we come again. Please be active on your current committee if scheduling is not an issue.

The two presentations tonight entail a major Con Edison project. However to avoid redundancy on questions, please read your mailing because Environmental Chair Carol Machulski had provided the major questions that were asked to Con Edison the night of the Environmental Committee meeting so that those questions do not have to be asked again. If a question is repeated, the District Manager will respond that had already been asked and move on. One presentation tonight had gone through Committee: the other had not.

Next, District Manager Cassagnol read a statement from John Wang, Director of the Queens Night Market, on some issues the Night Market was facing:

Dear CB4:

Sorry if this statement runs long. Unfortunately, I am not able to announce good news—at least not yet. We are facing the very real possibility that the Queens Night Market might not come back this year. We have been facing tremendous headwinds. When some of the challenges began emerging a few months ago, we submitted a proposal to the Parks Department to move the event to the Unisphere as a free to attend public amenity. Despite a tremendous outpouring of support from local stakeholders from countless city, state, and federal elected officials and from hundreds of vendors showcased, the proposal was blocked at the last minute by politics. I am not one to air dirty laundry in the public so I do not want to provide any specifics about what we were facing in this forum at least not before the ink has dried, but as you may know the Queens Night Market aspires to be New York City's most affordable, diverse, and welcoming community event. We have welcomed nearly two million New Yorkers, launched over 300 brand new businesses NYC and represent over 90 countries through our vendors and their food.

Last year, we came to represent the safe outdoor reprieve from pandemic fatigue for New Yorkers across all five boroughs.

We have grown together over the last eight years. In the early years, I came to CB4 to pitch my ideas, plead my case and sometimes even to apologize for any inconvenience we caused. But by and large since 2017, I have come to the Board meetings with good news and new community initiatives and always with the utmost respect and the best of intentions. I have seen so many of you at the Queens Night Market over the years and have made many great friends on the Board.

We are exploring a few final options before we make an official announcement one way or the other about this year's event and of course I will provide you with an update at the next month's Board meeting. I am always available to provide more information and to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you again for your time, consideration, partnerships and friendships over the years.

Sincerely,

John Wang

Executive Director of the Queens Night Market

V. Open Session #1/Board Member Attendance (Statements will be limited to two (2) minutes

Board Chair Marialena Giampino took the roll call.

Chaio-Chung Chen – In attendance

Andy Chen – Absent

Lynda Coral – Absent

Lorena Diaz – Absent

Michelle Dunston – In attendance

Ari Espinal – In attendance

Leeanne G-Bowley – In attendance

Marialena Giampino – In attendance

Kristen Gonzalez – Absent

Lara Gregory – Absent

Deependra Lama – Absent

Vincent Laucella – In attendance

James Lisa – Absent

Salvatore Lombardo – Absent

Carol Machulski – In attendance

Sunil Mahat – In attendance

Pat Martin – In attendance

Sylvia Martin – In attendance

Matthew McElroy – In attendance

He commented the Queens Night Market is a great asset and beautiful event which highlights our diversity beautifully and would be a dreadful shame if they were unable to operate.

Rovenia McGowan – In attendance

Jose Morillo – In attendance

Edgar Moya – In attendance

Ruby Muhammad – Absent

Sandra Munoz – In attendance

She commented the Queens Night Market has been amazing since its opening and attracted so many people in the middle of a pandemic which speaks volumes of how much Queens and especially our community benefits from the Queens Night Market including the vendors and attendees and she urged all to support the Queens Night Market.

Gurdip Singh Narula – In attendance

G. Oliver – In attendance

Georgina Oliver – In attendance

She thanked the Community Board for the beautiful fruit basket sent to her and family on the passing of her young sister.

Alexandra Owens – In attendance

She commented she had the pleasure of working with John Wang when he held workshops at LaGuardia Community College and has seen the Night Market grow from a tiny happening to a huge event which is accessible to all, not just privileged folks. The \$5 inexpensive price allows all to come. It would be a shame to lose the Queens Night Market. It's a nice fun family activity that anyone can enjoy.

Shrima Pandey – In attendance

Purushottam Panthee – Absent

Alexa Ponce – In attendance

Lindsay Quartini – In attendance

Brian Ramirez – Absent

Ashley Reed- In attendance

Oscar Rios – Absent

Cristian Romero – In attendance

Clara Salas – In attendance

A. Redd Sevilla – Absent

Urgen Sherpa – Absent

Alton Derrick Smith – In attendance

He expressed support for the Queens Night Market. It has been very enjoyable.

Gregory Spock – Absent

Dewan Tarek – In attendance

Marcello Testa – In attendance

Dechen Tsering – Absent

Louis Walker – In attendance

He commented deceased Board Member Lucy Schilero's service was very nice but, unfortunately, only six Board Members were in church. No one from the Mayor's Office or Borough President's Office was attending. Lucy Schilero was a Board Member who served on the Board for 32 years and did so much should have had more representation. Board Member Lou Walker felt badly for her family because they know what she did for the community and he further commented the family probably expected many more people to attend the service.

Consumer Affairs Chair Michelle Dunston responded elected officials came to the two day wake which is why they were not at the church.

Discussion ensued.

However, Board Member Louis Walker clarified he was talking about the actual service the next day.

More discussion ensued.

At this point, the Board Chair resumed the roll call:

Yilin Wang – Absent

Minwen Yang – In attendance

Expressed support for the Queens Night Market

May Yu – Absent

Since a quorum was now present the vote on the minutes was taken.

VI. VOTE: Minutes February 8, 2022 meeting.

Health Committee Chair Clara Salas made a motion, seconded by Board Member Sandra Munoz, to **approve** the minutes.

Before the vote was taken, Transportation Chair Matthew McElroy made a correction: Under the Transportation Committee report, line 4, reference is made to business but the word should be buses.

Since there were none opposed or abstentions, the motion passed with the added correction.

VII. Report from Elected Officials

A list was provided to the Board Chair of the elected officials present, noting Council Member Francisco Moya was personally in attendance.

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol spoke about the Queens Night Market and emphasized John Wang had not yet come fully public with the issues. We have not seen any of the major plans on what the move really entails. John Wang has been invited to the Parks Committee but, unfortunately, timing is not possible and he was unable to do so. If the Community Board does support the Queens Night Market, the matter would first go through the Board's Parks Committee and then to the full Board.

A process is followed before the Board can comment.

To show support for the Queens Night Market, please do so by reaching out to your local elected officials or speak to John Wang who will inform you how to go about it.

As a Board, we are not technically qualified as yet to get involved because nothing has been publicized to make any official statement.

Subsequently, Board Chair Marialena Giampino called on the representative from Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office.

NOTE: Board Members and Elected Officials acknowledged National Women's Day to all the women celebrating the event.

House of Representatives

Grace Meng

Kyle Salcido presented the following updates from the Congresswoman's office:

Congresswoman Grace Meng will host an active threat training for places of worship which is following on the success of her non-profit security grant program workshop held in February. This training will feature experts from the Community Security Initiative, a joint program of the United Jewish Appeal Federation of New York and the Jewish Community Relations Council

Thursday, March 10, Kew Gardens, NY. Mr. Salcido will put his email and the RSVP email in the chat so that you may reach out to him for more information or respond to the RSVP.

In terms of legislation, Congresswoman Meng has voted to increase aid to veterans exposed to burn pits because of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq which were huge issues facing veterans as they returned home. The Honoring Our Pact Act HR 3967 was voted on by the Congresswoman. This legislation increases health care and disability benefits for veterans who are exposed to the burn pits heavily used in Iraq and Afghanistan. This Bill also covers Vietnam veterans exposed to chemical Agent Orange and other such chemical weapons during the Vietnam War.

In addition, the Congresswoman called on the Senate Minority Leader to move forward common sense gun reform legislation. Two major gun reform bills which are the Bipartisan Background Checks Act HR8 and the Enhanced Background Checks Act HR 1446. Congresswoman Meng is urging the Senate to push these Bills to a vote so they may be sent to the President's desk to be signed into law.

Also, the Congresswoman attended the State of the Union address with the daughter of an Anti-Asian hate crime victim as her virtual guest and is working to pass anti-Asian hate legislation federally as well as working with the Mayor and city officials to curb the terrible increase in hate crimes our city has faced over the past few years.

Very importantly, Congresswoman Grace Meng stands in solidarity with Ukrainian people as they suffer the unprovoked and unjustified Russian invasion and the premediated act of war and the outrageous breach of international law which is a direct violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and autonomy and an attack on the Ukrainian people's right to democracy and freedom.

Congresswoman Meng commends the Biden's administration's decisive actions along with our allies and partners to impose crippling economic sanctions on Russia and supports reinforcing our commitment to provide support and assistance to Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. As Vice Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on state and foreign operations, she will continue to support robust funding for economic security assistance to Ukraine as well as measures to block assistance to any country that takes action to violate Ukraine's territorial integrity or national security.

At this point, Council Member Francisco Moya addressed the Board and reported with the pandemic coming to an end, it is important to look out for each other especially in Community Board 4 where it was the epicenter of the pandemic. Heading into the month of March, which is the second anniversary of Covid-19, to remember how much our community had suffered and to look back on matters we have to correct so that we never have to go through it again. Adequate resources must be provided to our community so that the city views us as a priority. As far as people being vaccinated in our community, the number is at 80% and its important people continue to stay vigilant.

Tomorrow, a scoping meeting will be held for the renovation of Josephine Caminiti Park at 102 Street and Corona Avenue. Major investments have been made in the parks in the district. Last year, the Council had directed \$5 million in funding for renovations for our parks. Working with the Parks and Police Departments as well as the Dept. of Homeless Services to help with problems that have overrun our city parks. With the homeless population to ensure they are provided with services because there is a human aspect to this problem since those people may have fallen on hard times or addiction. Funding has been added for Breaking Ground to be in this neighborhood seven days a week to reach out to those who may need help with addiction but also we do not want to lose focus how to improve our parks with more lighting and more beautification. Community input is essential so that families and children can enjoy the parks with the pandemic ending. Additional lighting by Council Member Moya has been added to the parks both in Corona and the parks in Community Board 3. Ways to beautify our parks and make them more user friendly are needed. Staff Member Berenice will provide the link in which you can join the zoom tomorrow at 6:00 p.m. All were urged to provide input for the Josephine Caminiti Park as well as at the upcoming scoping meetings for William F. Moore Park and Park of the Americas.

Next, Council Member Moya talked about a pending liquor license for Tony's Pizzeria on 104 Street/46 Avenue. It was a great place to go as a family restaurant and hold family events on the second floor. Always a family establishment when they first came to get a liquor license several years ago, it was a very small bar that didn't hold more than 25 people on the side. No one stayed past 1 a.m. and the establishment was well maintained.

The owner has now moved out and has been renting the property for the last year to new occupants noting major incidents (17) in the establishment. Last year, incidents ranged from petty larceny to fighting outside. Because of the illegal activities, this establishment was on the cover of the *New York Post*. During the pandemic, the operators were illegally using the second floor promoting it on social media as hookah bars and have not been good neighbors. Although Council Member Moya had met with the operators, they wanted to keep it as an establishment. They were issued an automatic renewal last month. Council Member Moya met with the Chair of the State Liquor Authority who stated there was not a problem before so that the SLA automatically renewed the liquor license. However, Council Member Moya said the problem was the establishment was operating illegally by the operators who are renting it using the owner's liquor license which was not transferable but the renters were operating under it and conducting business illegally. Council Member Moya also noted the business is open until 4 a.m. They are using the side entrance, which is on the residential side of the block. Multiple complaints from neighbors and many complaints from homeowners finding people passed out in front of their homes were received.

Council Member Moya questioned why is a bouncer needed on the side of the door if the restaurant is only for family events.

Supporting small businesses is key, but it should not come at the cost of quality of life or public safety.

Council Member Moya stated it is critical these folks are held accountable for not operating a proper establishment within our community. The music can be heard coming from the establishment on Friday and Saturday nights and there are fights outside the restaurant. Conversations with the NYPD were also held.

Their liquor license was put on pause last month after it was issued again. Now the establishment is not coming back as Tony's Pizzeria but for liquor licenses under two different names—same people, same establishment that wants a full liquor license. One is California Corporation full liquor license at 45-18 104 Street the front of the actual pizzeria and El Marco Bar Corporation full liquor license is for the side of the residential street at 102-56 46 Avenue.

Council Member Moya said there is no reason a family run restaurant who wants to serve liquor should be open until 4 a.m.

This establishment has not cooperated with the Council Member's office. Reports have been given to the Board on complaints at the restaurant.

As a result, we can make a difference to have establishments that will cooperate and work with the community and be part of our community not detrimental to quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Council Member Moya had rejected their application and had written a letter to the State Liquor Authority asking for a denial on the liquor license.

House of Representatives

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Michelle Luna reported the office is closely monitoring the developments in Ukraine. The Congresswoman is supportive of welcoming Ukrainian and all refugees and pursuing targeted economic sanctions on Putin. If you or anyone you know has relatives in Ukraine or have an opinion on the conflict, please reach out to Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's office and the casework team is ready to assist.

A House vote should take place tomorrow on the 2022 omnibus appropriations package that would fund ten community projects including \$3 million for obstetrical inpatient facilities renovation at Elmhurst Hospital, \$96,150 for telehealth technology upgrade for Urban Health Plan at Plaza del Sol Community Family Center, \$225 thousand for the creation of family support counselors at Queens Community House.

Additionally, there is still time to share your suggestions for the post office renaming of the Corona and East Elmhurst Post Offices. After valuable input from the community in support of keeping the Jackson Heights Post Office named after the Manfred's. All relevant information in the chat.

NYS Assembly

Catalina Cruz

Samantha reported the Assembly Member sent her condolences on the passing of Lucy Schilero to the Board and the family of Lucy Schilero.

In the past, some of the community events held were on immigration such as Know Your Rights with Council Member Francisco Moya and the Mayor's Office of Immigration Affairs. For small businesses, rapid test distributions were provided to over 30 small businesses in Jackson Heights, Elmhurst and Corona.

Also, a fire safety Town Hall was held with the fire education safety unit and four vaccination clinics at PS 19 were held where more than 1,000 vaccines were provided.

At the moment, there are no specific upcoming events; however, if there any events scheduled, details will be provided.

The Assembly Member's office is working on the state budget prioritizing funding for our community including the MTA, healthcare access, and small business support post pandemic and food and security issues.

Some of the issues the district office is currently working on are DOL cases and reporting with the EWF (Excluded Workers Fund). Many residents in our community were scammed out of their money mostly from their pre-pay cards. Residents are assisted in filling out the form authorization to make a police report to open an investigation.

Public assistance issues handled in the office are food stamps, NYCHA, HEAP, the one-shot deal Medicaid and also appointments are made for the ID NYC.

Meetings were held with the Dept. of Homeless Services, the Dept. of Health, and the Mayor's Office on how to address the homeless encampments in various parts of the district in a humane and respectful way to our community residents.

In a second upcoming meeting with the Mayor's Office a plan of action will be proposed.

If you have any ideas for community projects or legislation thoughts the Assemblywoman can support through funding, please reach out to her office.

NYC Mayor's Office

Maria reported there were no updates but if there is anything anyone would like to discuss, please contact her.

NYC Council

Francisco Moya

Berenice Navarrete-Perez reported donations are being collected in the district office on March 10. Stop by to donate sealed canned goods and sealed dry pet food, new clothing, toys and toiletries for the Ukraine refugees.

Also, a scoping meeting with the Parks Dept. is scheduled for tomorrow for Josephine Caminiti Park.

Testing sites in our district posted in the chat.

Queens Borough President

Kat Brezler gave special thanks to Staff Member Christina Long for her recap emails. Condolences were given to Board Members Georgina and G. Oliver on their loss.

Upcoming events at the Queens Borough President's office include a virtual Queens Parent Advisory Board meeting on March 9 at 6:00 p.m. The Queens Borough President's calendared events can be found at queensbp.org/calendar.

Moreover, a Women's History Conference will be held on March 10.

On April 20, the Queens Borough President's Office will be organizing a cannabis conference. Since Community Boards are advisory on state liquor licenses, the Boards will also be part of the cannabis process for licenses. Rules and regulations from the Office of

Cannabis Management have not been officially given yet. The Queens Borough President's Office will provide details as they become available.

The cannabis conference will be hosted in the evening at Borough Hall.

At this point, Detective Dave Saponieri reported everyone should monitor their bank account and credit card statements because a large increase is seen in scams especially the Department of Labor con. Keep pertinent information to yourself and change passwords. Don't leave valuables in your car as there has been an increase in theft from vehicles.

VIII. Presentation: Dana Linton, Queens Regional and Community Affairs, Con Edison

--Reliable Clean City Project

With the aid of a slide presentation, Richard David, Queens Director at Con Edison, partnering with Andres Ledesma as part of the Queens Community Affairs team filling in for colleague Dana Linton, who is the primary Community Board 4 representative addressed the Board.

The Reliable Clean City Project is a major infrastructure investment to prepare energy grids for a reliable future. Prior to this Board meeting, a meeting was held with District Manager Christian Cassagnol and the Environmental Committee. Members of the media please contact the Con Edison team where a referral will be made to Con Edison's media office to answer questions.

Con Edison has made a commitment consistent with the state's goal to get customers in Queens and across New York City 100% clean power by 2040 and investing \$800 million in three new transmission lines. The one in Queens costs \$275 million from the \$800 million. The other lines will be in Brooklyn and Staten Island and will be on stream by 2025. These projects collectively will address reliability, as gas turbine generators (Peaker plants) (turbo-generators) in Astoria will be retired.

The route is about 6.5 miles which starts in Long Island City at Vernon Boulevard and 35th Avenue. Richard David pointed out the projected transmission route. It will go down and then up on 12th Street, down 31st Avenue, down to 54th Street, down to 32 Avenue, down Junction Blvd. which is in Community Board 4 where Con Edison has its Corona substation.

Timeline– The project is currently underway. Construction started in January and more of a visible construction presence as spring arrives around April and certainly in the summer. Much of the work is done concurrently so that installation, trenching, and cabling will be seen throughout the route.

Attempting to get the project commissioned by the spring of 2023, there is much work ahead mentioning the work had already started. So far, not many issues had been encountered. Outreach will be done.

During Construction – Mr. David spoke about what residents can expect who live along the route of the project. There will be construction noise during normal work hours. Normal construction times are generally from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. In certain hours outside of Community Board 4 weekend or night construction may occur and in some areas there will be 24 hour construction so that this project can be commissioned and also to ensure there is a reliable electric supply by next year.

Mr. David explained safety is Con Edison's #1 priority. Flaggers will be seen along the traffic route, noting there will be a temporary reduction in parking spaces if construction is being done in a parking area. Buses and bicycles will also be re-routed. Coordinating with both the Department of Transportation and Metropolitan Transit Authority to ensure the public is not inconvenienced unnecessarily.

Moreover, construction cones and pedestrian guards will be in place. Overnight construction equipment will allow crews to mobilize quickly the next day.

Community Outreach – It is important neighbors along the route of the project are aware of the project. Signage has been erected and approximately 80,000 emails sent and staggering those emails based on the construction schedule. Contact information for customers who have provided it and newspapers advertisements will be included about the project in local and multi-lingual ethnic newspapers as well as local and city wide papers.

Also, direct mailings will be sent to 16,000 residents along the route. When specific construction work is planned, a work notification will be sent to a radius of people living in that area.

Moreover, elected officials will be contacted to send materials to their offices; and flyers given to people on the street as they wait for the bus or at their grocery store. Outreach will be done in three languages English, Spanish and Mandarin. Also included are QR codes which will route you to Con Edison's web page.

The Reliable Clean City Project has been set up on the Con Ed website. Go to coned.com/clean-city where much of tonight's information is available in addition to a list of frequently asked questions. This information can be found on Con Edison's website and social media so people can be reached to celebrate this historic undertaking underway.

Con Edison is making a bold investment in Queens to deliver clean energy and committed to see that all communities along the route have clean and renewable power from non-fossil fuel sources.

Community Outreach – This slide listed all the sources Con Edison had engaged such as Community Boards, schools, businesses, elected officials, government agencies etc.

Con Edison has already met with every elected official or attempted to share information. Tours will be conducted as the project matures.

We're here to help – If you have questions, route those questions to District Manager Christian Cassagnol and he will coordinate with Dana Linton for answers.

At this point, Mr. David took questions from the Board.

From the chat, ULURP/Zoning Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith asked what impact will the hydro fracking for gas have in the underground water upstate New York.

Mr. David did not know the answer. He further commented that is not related to any angle that Con Edison is presenting tonight on either gas or water and explained Con Edison is trying to get away from any fossil fuels and wants to prepare the energy infrastructure grid to accept renewable power from a variety of sources from hydropower to wind power to solar power and to get it done by 2040. Hydro fracking would not fit into the equation.

Board Member Chaio-Chung Chen asked when Con Edison is finished collecting all its expenses after two/three years will customer costs go down.

Mr. David responded while undertaking these projects there is a level of affordability for all customers. In the long term, projects like these will have a natural average cost that results in a reduction. However, there is usually an increased upfront cost. Con Edison is estimating it will spend \$275 million for Queens and intends to have its investment spread out over many years. Unclear how many years it would be but the intent is for it to be as long as possible to limit the direct impact to customers.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino inquired if there are delays will the public be notified that the project has been extended and its timeframe.

Mr. David replied yes and through direct mailings and emails it is not a one-time process. Con Edison will send regular updates, and communication will be in many ways. Also the Con Edison representatives will return to the Board to share information. So far, Con Edison is on schedule, however, if there is a change Con Edison will provide updates on why delays were encountered.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino asked about the environmental studies done on this project.

Richard David answered he was not aware of an environmental study done on this project, however, if one were done it would be sent to the Board Chair. These projects are regulated by the Public Service Commission of the state and provided an in-depth explanation.

More questions from the public were answered.

Before concluding, Mr., Andres Ledesma commented this project is part of a larger scale project that will ensure the entire system and New York City is 100% renewable and there is a zero carbon footprint. This is a shift in the way Con Edison approaches infrastructure projects apart from the marketing and communication with direct customers. The impact of the project will be enormous and Con Edison will continue until it meets the 2040 goals.

At this point, Assembly Member Brian Barnwell addressed the Board. Assembly Member Barnwell talked about how developers come before the Board to propose affordable housing developments and to up-zone their project. Speaking about the ULURP process, it's been very frustrating and explained although Community Boards may work with some developers, affordability seemingly gets ignored. Projects move forward and no one is listening to the communities. Assembly Member Barnwell had introduced legislation last year which would mandate, although the legislation has not yet passed, that if a developer wants to alter or rezone property that applicant offers units that are 80% and higher of the local zip codes AMI. If they do not get the Board's approval, the project cannot move forward. The theory behind the legislation was when the Community Board recommends changes or alterations the developers just talk about what they are going to do but never discuss secondary improvements like infrastructure, trains, sewers, and schools etc. City, state and federal government are so far behind with regard to infrastructure, but hopefully it will change in the coming years. If developers express they are going to make improvements to the community, the Community Board should be able to hold developers accountable and have final and binding power over the issue.

Board Member Sandra Munoz expressed thanks to Assembly Member Barnwell for legislation to protect communities. Before concluding, Assembly Member Barnwell spoke about another Bill he sponsored. If developers build luxury developments and get a property tax break based on affordable housing (which is not affordable) those rates offered are double the price of residents' incomes. The Assembly Member's Bill would provide affordability levels to be based on the average income levels of people who live in the area. Right now, the current formula allows developers to offer affordable housing rates that are set not only by the area where you live but all New York City, Westchester, Putnam and Rockland counties which causes it to be far higher than the AMI of the neighborhood where the affordable housing is being developed. As an example if the average income level for Woodside for a family of three is \$60,000, the average AMI for all New York City plus Rockland Count, Putnam County, and Westchester would double that level. As a result those affordable units are offered at \$100,000+ which is the baseline number and not at the fifty/sixty thousand dollars initially quoted. This can lead to residents of those neighborhoods being unable to continue living there. Assembly Member Barnwell will email those legislations to share with the Board.

Council Member Shekar Krishnan

Chanel Martinez, Community Affairs Coordinator, reported the Lunar New Year celebration was a very successful and vibrant celebration and appreciated the community's support.

The Council Member's office has been hosting tax prep webinars with the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection in English, Spanish, Bengali and Mandarin acknowledging DCWP.s partnership.

Call Council Member Krishnan's office at 929-293-0206 or email krishnan@council.nyc.gov for assistance.

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol commented although the Council Member's office had much community support, the Community Board was not reached out to on this event. In the past whenever Council Members held an event within the district, the Community Board was informed whether for co-sponsorship or flyers or to help out with community feedback or to share the news. If the event is held within our district or one of our parks, the Community Board would love to be part of it. While speaking to the Council Member's staff and chief of staff, we have yet to meet with the Council Member. It is understandable the Council Member has been having a lot of meetings and is very busy, however, we are still at the bottom of the list and the District Manager has yet to get a meeting with the Council Member. The District Manager said the Board is looking to meet with Council Member Krishnan, especially now since more new Board members are coming on and also pointed out it is budget session and if there is any one time the Community Board should be a top priority to meet, it should be now. The District Manager requested to please get the word back to the Council Member.

IX. Presentation: Le-Tis Williams, Borough Manager, FDNY Community Affairs

--FDNY Engine 287 Design Project: Discussion on the conceptual vision for the new E287 building (86-53 Grand Avenue, Elmhurst, NY)

Le-Tis Williams stated she will not be giving the presentation, however, Irma Fontaine, Chief Architect at the Fire Department, and Jeremy Books, Assistant Commissioner of Facilities Management would present the proposal.

If there are any questions after the presentation, please call or send an email to her and she will continue to coordinate any issues or concerns that arise after the presentation.

Subsequently, it was announced Scott Borchert, Consulting Engineer, and also Ronnette Reilly, Architect, for the project would present the proposal.

Also in attendance Marius Calin.

With the aid of a slide presentation, Scott Borchert explained Engine Company 287 in Elmhurst was recently damaged by construction in the adjacent empty lot which was the cause for severe structural damage to the fire station. It was determined that instead of rehabilitating a structure that is over 100 years old, which would have come at a great expense, a new building would be the best use of city money to keep the fire station location, which is needed to serve the public and school in the vicinity while noting this is a very high density neighborhood. It needs the fire station to remain operational and so as not to rehabilitate a structure that will almost immediately be obsolete again. The recommendation was to build a new structure on the same lot to a very close similar footprint. The renderings show roughly what the building envelope is and how it relates to the existing lot. Approximately, it is the same footprint on the lot and will be a five-story building facing Grand Avenue and will continue to serve the community with a double station which is a fire engine and ladder company and the façade was pointed out.

The visual impact of the fire station to the neighborhood was indicated and the importance that it is a triple company is very important to the safety of the immediate community, to the entire fabric of the FDNY, and is an essential facility for the borough.

At this point, Irma Fontaine added the Battalion is there and it is an important fire station. Construction will occur in place of the damaged building.

Scott Borchert echoed it is a very important building as it is a triple station. Looking from Seabury Street, it is the best view of the front façade of the building, and pointed out the future building will be an officious, warm façade.

Next, the slide displayed Grand Avenue which shows the façade has a little variation but continues to emphasize the Fire Department's presence in the building.

Next, the slide shown faces Queens Boulevard on Grand Avenue.

This concluded the presentation of the exterior of the building.

At this point, questions or comments were taken from the Board.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino commented the façade of the building looks like red doors and some type of screen questioning what type of design that is.

Irma Fontaine responded it is still in the conceptual phase right now. The façade is not 100% worked out. The purpose for them to come before the Community Board is to ask for a letter of support. The building of the existing fire station is damaged. The design is

progressing well and it is under an emergency declaration. Approval to work under an emergency declaration was given so that the existing building can be replaced. Although it is a bit early in the design phase, however, the design phase is an expedited design phase. What you see is conceptual -- red doors of any fire department/ any FDNY fire station or EMS station. There will be screening because this is a south facing building and consideration was given to the energy load on the building facing south. It is in the early phases.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino commented architecture on the current fire house is very grand and asked if there was any way to preserve it. She was aware the properties in front of and on the side are very problematic with the construction but she was not aware what's currently going on there, however, it has been on-going for years and expressed it's sad to see this has happened to the firehouse. This is problematic for Community Board 4 because there are issues like this with developers. The Board Chair asked is there any way to incorporate the façade what is there currently. She was aware the structure itself had to be upgraded but it's a very classic look that has been there for a long time and is the fabric of an historic community.

Irma Fontaine replied the existing building won't be able to be preserved, therefore, the façade cannot be preserved. Discussions and design meetings were held to see if the façade can be designed so that there is some continuity between what is there now and what will be there.

The question was raised in the chat. Is this a landmark?

Scott Borchert responded no. It is not landmarked or on any city, state, or federal register. It is an older station that looks like others.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino commented it is an Elmhurst landmark. She continued there are cases where people were able to save facades or incorporate some of the detailing into salvaging sections of the building.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino asked what the process is now.

Le-Tis Williams stated if there are no objections to the presentation, a letter of support is needed so that the design team can go further with the design while keeping in mind the Board's concerns and hopefully to keep the continuity of the design within the area.

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith commented it's a 100 year old building and it seems as if some of it should be saved. Is there any way to do so?

In answer to the questions, Jeremy Brooks, Fire Department Assistant Commissioner, reported unfortunately there is no part of the building that can be saved because the building is in such bad condition with what the adjacent property owner did. The only solution is to knock the building down and start fresh, He wished there was a better option but it has been on-going for almost a year. It is unfortunate that this has to occur. It was agreed it is a beautiful building that sets the tone for the neighborhood and the culture of the neighborhood, but it is unfortunate this has to happen. Unfortunately, this is the option available. Right now, plans are to expedite it so that there is fire protection in the same area where it is currently in.

As president of Elmhurst History and Cemetery Preservation Society, Board Chair Marialena Giampino commented there are elements that can be salvaged such as cornices or other aspects of the façade, for example, the Elmhurst Library where old brick was used for part of the façade.

Jeremy Brooks replied it will definitely be looked into what can be incorporated or what is definitely salvageable for the design or for some type of mural on the building to represent the former structure.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino maintained in her opinion the fire station pays great homage not only to the building's history but also to the community as well.

Board Member Leeanne G. Bowley who works in preservation noted when the Chair had some concerns, there seemed to be some flippancy and as a preservationist knows that you can salvage parts. This conversation should be had and appreciates the Board Chair bringing it up.

Irma Fontaine apologized and said no flippancy was intended. Jeremy Brooks and herself were expressing the building had received so much damage that the façade cannot be saved. There are elements in the demolition process that may be preserved and incorporated into the new building and will be looked at. Certainly concerns raised were not dismissed.

Health Committee Chair Clara Salas inquired while the fire house is under construction, which firehouse would cover our area.

The response was when the firehouse is demolished, the fire company will be relocated within a one mile radius of the existing fire house. The site acquisition has yet to be determined and is in process with the city.

Health Committee Chair Clara Salas asked will the Board be notified of the firehouse location and will it be in Maspeth?

The response was it would be the same fire company that is the #287 building but will be in a different temporary location.

Health Committee Chair Clara Salas mentioned other site locations such as Queens Boulevard/Sunnyside.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino questioned although the fire company would still be operational, will you let the Board know the location.

The response was yes.

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula said since the façade is in a bad condition but if the foundation is good, can some type of piling to make another pillar be used to support the whole building instead of demolishing the building. Maybe the piling could be used in a couple of areas and add a new lintel to keep the building safe. Is it possible?

Jeremy Brooks responded the damage is so extensive that the foundation is the problem.

Discussion ensued about the foundation and building.

Because damage is so extensive to the foundation, the fire truck has to be kept outside because the station cannot handle the load of such a vehicle. Underpinning would not do the job because the damage is massive and the station is not fully useable.

More discussion ensued about signage and the red doors.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino questioned the construction on the side and front on a new building and asked what the guarantee is it would not happen again.

The response was you cannot guarantee that future construction will keep buildings safe, but no construction should cause damage to the adjacent buildings and this was an exception to the rule in the city. It is possible that something could happen, but the design team and the FDNY are taking all possible precautions to construct a building that will be a good neighbor and not do the same thing to the adjacent property. They are aware construction to the adjacent buildings is a serious undertaking. The building is designed to last for decades and built to be robust, strong, and a good neighbor.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino asked does the FDNY have a picture of the existing conditions to share.

The response was yes said Irma Fontaine but it was not readily available. She will send it to Le-Tis Williams to forward it to the Board.

A question was raised, what is the plan for the upper floors since it is expanded to two floors of five stories?

Irma Fontaine explained the building that currently exists is a little over 8,000 square feet and was designed for the Fire Department's use when the horse and buggy were used. It does not ensure the Fire Department's needs and does not fit the program for a 21st Century fire station. As a result, the new building will be larger since the fire program has grown over the past 100 years.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino recapped the design team is looking for a letter of support from the Community Board noting photos of the conditions would have been helpful to the presentation. She expressed concern about the construction, noting the two properties, and it could happen again. The Board Chair noted the historical preservation component does not seem to be on the agenda, stating the community will lose some of its architectural history.

Board Member Sandra Munoz inquired can the presenters come back with more information and to table the subject matter. She felt there was not enough information and the presenters architecturally did not present any plans for what was shown. Furthermore, she expressed that she did not know what the Board was supporting except for the building of a new fire station. More information is needed.

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula suggested to take opinions from the structural engineer to give complete details whether the building can be demolished or kept as is and what is the status of the adjacent building meaning will it be safe or not. Architects make a design for a new building but cannot offer the same opinion as a structural engineer if the building is safe or not.

Transportation Committee Chair Matt McElroy strongly seconded the comments of Board Member Sandra Munoz. The desirable parts of the presentation are expanding the space in such a way that it provides better service and meets the needs of the community. The concern is about losing something maybe we do have to lose. However, let's look at the report, visit the site, and talk about it. He pointed out the fire service is essential and not delay bringing it back to the site. He reiterated let's take a look at and understand what we are doing with a view toward either defending the existing facade (if technically possible) or putting effort and money into something in the new building reminiscent of the existing building, while noting there were no windows. One window was shown on the slide and he pointed out people may be sleeping there at night.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino agreed the community should know complete information and no one had reached out to the Board beforehand and some information was left out.

Health Committee Chair Clara Salas said it was her impression that the building is already condemned and had been for several months and the staff will be moved to another location probably to the firehouse on Queens Blvd. The building is unsafe for the staff to work there and may collapse. It is important to receive the report but probably in two months the staff will be relocated to the firehouse on Queens Blvd and will share the space while the new building is under construction.

The response was the intent is not to relocate any of the fire companies from that building to the one on Queens Boulevard or other places outside of a one mile area where the current fire station is but to keep it within the community area. Secondly, he proposed a site visit to the fire station. Members of the Board can visit the fire station. The building is in bad condition and fire trucks have been parked outside; only the members are in the building. The longer we wait, the longer this occurs. If there is an issue with the design to incorporate more of the historical aspect of the building. He suggested a letter of support for the upcoming work and then come back in the future with a better/different design element which can be discussed from some of the suggestions brought up.

Ronnette Riley, Architect, said the facade is peppered with windows, not just one window. The windows are behind a solar shading system of vertical fins. There are windows in every room that someone is sleeping in. Her practice does much historic preservation work and the building to the left of the fire house has no historic merit and the building to the right will be a very contemporary building, noting it is not on an historical block. The fire house building is a special building and much time was spent discussing it, noting this is a unique building but is not an historical facade on the street.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino stated Elmhurst and Corona loses its history every day which is talked about all the time.

Ronnette Riley said to save the facade does not work financially, structurally, aesthetically, or programmatically with the Fire Department's needs and implored the Board to support the letter and they would come back to the Board as the design develops. To be on a fast track so that the community can get their full service firehouse as quickly as possible is important.

At this point, Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula suggested to obtain the structural engineer's report indicating whether the building is safe or not. If the Board votes the building is safe, it becomes the Board's responsibility. Either the piling can be done but it is important to get more information from the structural engineer if the facade can be saved. If the structural engineer said yes. It would be his responsibility.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino directed her next question to the District Manager asking about a timeframe.

District Manager Cassagnol referred the question of the timeframe to the presenters.

The response was to have the design completed in the fall so that the construction can proceed. Two weeks ago it was submitted to the Public Design Commission who requires support from the community for community support for the project, not necessarily for the design as yet, but to introduce the Board what the plans are for the site.

District Manager Cassagnol asked about a second letter provided on the actual design. For example, the form letter would state the Community Board understands the emergency for it to happen and it is acceptable to proceed; but at what point can the Board ask for a second stage to address the concerns of the Board Members. The main fear is that the project is rushed past the Board and it does not have the chance to discuss it. More information was requested.

The response was the letter of support for the project would be appreciated and the presenters could report again before the Board, probably in May, when there would be a better grasp how to connect the existing facade elements with the new building.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol inquired if this requires a public hearing for the local community or does the Community Board have the final say since it is not very often a firehouse is renovated.

The response was this is a unique circumstance since an emergency declaration was issued because of the severity of the project.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino called out if the ULURP and/or Transportation Committees would want to get involved since the project did not go to committees. Do the committees want reports such as reports from the structural engineer etc.?

ULURP/Zoning Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith said our infrastructures are weak and must be expanded everything with our infrastructure has to improved. Agencies are creating designs but our community will have no character which is a concern. It is recognized the Fire Department is in a bind and the Board acknowledges this project requires work which can be approved, but it will not support the design until more information is given. Support is given in that it has to expand and work needs to be done because of the need for the Fire Department in the community, but the design will not be supported unless more information is submitted.

Transportation Chair Matthew McElroy suggested the Board write a letter supporting the speed and the project to bring it up to date but it must be specified in the support letter that the Board is very concerned about the current design with the added wording this is the way the community loses its history including although we are not an historic district, each historically significant building in our Community Board that we lose is gone. Also to add the Board requests the presenters to return to work with us to carefully look whether it's possible to preserve a significant portion of the façade to some extent. If not, what suggestions are there to reflect back on the existing building?

District Manager Christian Cassagnol agreed with the Transportation Chair's remarks and stated this is an emergency declaration and must be acted upon in agreement to move forward with the project and all concerns in the letter would be addressed with details and bullet points. The letter will request we are looking forward to continue working with the presenters when the design is considered and to bring it back to the Board for further consideration.

Furthermore, the District Manager stated the project would not be blocked, but not to pass on the Board's misgivings.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino said the Community Board should be involved in neighborhood preservation and how to honor the history of a community and feedback given.

Board Member Sandra Munoz said it is important to see the designs as they progress.

District Manager Cassagnol said the letter would be presented to the Board for review before it was sent out.

Discussion ensued. However, Board Chair Marialena Giampino remarked if the agenda item went through committee, this would not have happened. It is an issue because everyone has questions and wants to be heard.

At this point, Transportation Chair Matthew McElroy made a motion, seconded by Board Member Sandra Munoz, to send a letter of support to the Public Design Commission or the Fire Department that clearly sets forth the Board's support for the service and updating the capacity but equally our very serious concerns about the impact of the loss of a historic building and the Board's desire that effort and money be put into retaining as much of the fire station as possible.

The Board Chair called out if any Board Member was opposed or abstentions to the motion.

Before the vote, Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula said if the foundation is very weak means they cannot build the structure. Any building that has a weak structure would have to be rebuilt again. Otherwise, repeated problems will occur. More information is needed from the structural engineer that the building is safe and for the Board to accept the engineer's report.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino said to also include in the support letter the building safety even if it's a new building.

Returning to the motion on the floor since there were none opposed or abstentions, the motion passed.

IX. Report and Vote Transportation Committee

--Livery Base License Renewal – Republic Car Service (93-04 Corona Avenue)

Transportation Committee Chair Matthew McElroy reported the committee met on February 15 with a quorum present and a high turnout. On the agenda was the base license renewal for Republica Taxi & Limousine (93-04 Corona Avenue) that operates as a base station as a car service. Cars are owned by drivers. A representative was present at the committee meeting and the police have no record of problems at the site. It was discussed with the representative the problem of assaults or crimes against the drivers. The representative stated there had not been any in their company. After a good conversation with the representative, the committee unanimously **approved** the renewal of their existing license.

Therefore, Transportation Chair Matthew McElroy made a motion, seconded by Board Member Sylvia Martin, to **approve** the base license renewal for Republica Taxi & Limousine.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino called out if there were any opposed or abstentions. Since there were none, the motion passed.

Further, Transportation Committee Chair Matt McElroy gave his committee report and provided the following updates on:

Outstanding issues with the Department of Transportation who were reviewing and finding solutions for the following new developments:

Problems with taxis standing in the bike lane waiting for passengers at 74 Street/Broadway south side of the subway station. A new taxi stand had been approved on the opposite corner (east side of Broadway) which may resolve the problem, installation by the spring.

Next, the committee had requested DOT look at the speeding problem on National Street/102 Street between 44 and Corona Avenues. As a result, a new traffic light has been approved at 44th Avenue and National Street, however, it will take several months for installation.

At Baxter Avenue/41 Avenue, near the hospital, approval was given for the LPI (Leading Pedestrian Indicator)—where for a couple of seconds cars have the red light in all directions so that pedestrians have a few seconds of a green walk sign to get into the crosswalk. This LPI was approved, installed and operational now.

At 97th Street/40th Avenue an All-Way Stop Sign had been approved.

At 43rd Avenue/Hampton Street, where 91st Place meets, a system is in place where all the traffic lights are red giving enough time for pedestrians to cross the streets in every direction.

New All Way Stop signs at 102 Street/ 41 Avenue, 43 Avenue/99 Street, and at 41 Avenue/ 98 Street.

Not presented at the committee but received since then, bike lanes on Queens Boulevard, along with a couple of other Queens's locations but not in Board 4, will receive additional protection with concrete jersey barriers instead of the flexible plastic posts that pop up and down from 73rd Street to Yellowstone Blvd in Rego Park/Forest Hills.

Next item on the committee's agenda was a discussion on Reeder Street north of Queens Boulevard. The Forte Prep School, a local school, was concerned about traffic congestion and dangers to the children in the morning and afternoon when children are arriving and leaving the school. The school felt the street should be one-way instead of two-way and the matter was referred to the Department of Transportation for review and recommendation.

Next, a lengthy meeting was held with the MTA citing a new bus plan that is upcoming by spring which will be reviewed by the Committee and the Board.

Next, the Interborough Express, which is very preliminary, was discussed. Much information about it is on the internet and if there are any questions, to see him.

Next, subway safety was discussed including gates on the platform. The Police Department, psychological services, and social workers were included for a pilot to install platform gates on the No. 7 train platform at Times square, the E train platform at Sutphin Blvd., Jamaica, and at the Third Avenue/14th Street stop on the Manhattan L train.

Big news! There will be a station renovation on the Roosevelt Avenue stations at 82 Street, 103 Street, and 111 Street. The N or W train in Astoria the stations were rebuilt and made them vastly more attractive. Regarding the stations that will be addressed while they will not be made ADA accessible, the platforms will be widened so that the crowding at the end of day will be lessened.

Next, ADA at Woodhaven Boulevard station on the Queens Blvd. at the Queens Mall will receive an ADA elevator soon. The RFP for the contract will go out later this year and the MTA has established a goal of no more than two stations from an elevator. For example, if you are at 103 Street without an elevator, you are no more than two stations from Junction Boulevard with an elevator.

In conclusion, a short discussion was held with the MTA on bus signage which is moving forward with the Department of Transportation.

X. Report & Vote: Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee

--State Liquor Authority Applications

Board Staff Member Christina Long presented the following liquor license applications:

NYS LIQUOR AURRHORIY LICENSES

March 2022

NEW TEMPORARY PERMOIT APPLICANTS

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

El Marco Bar Corp.	102-57 46 Avenue Corona, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider	New & Temp.
California Corp.	45-18 104 Street Corona, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider	New
Palladium Bar & Lounge Corp.	111-34 Roosevelt Avenue Corona, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider	New & Temp.
Nuevo Don Francisco Restaurant	40-56 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider	New & Temp.
Linda Azoguenita Bakery Rest. Inc.	51-01 108 Street Corona, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider	New & Temp.
Rincon Cafetero Inc.	54-01 99 Street Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider	Temp.
Antoineta's Restaurant Corp.	98-53 Corona Avenue Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider	New

RENEWAL APPLICANTS

<u>Establishment's Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>License Type</u>
China Cocina Inc.	103-10 Roosevelt Avenue Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
El Diamante Boulevard Bar Corp.	42-18 Junction Blvd. Corona, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
Chiflez Corp.	95-02 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson heights, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
NY El Diamante Corp.	90-18 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372	Liquor, Wine, Beer & cider

Christina Long reported on the denials:

New Applicants – #7 -- Rincon Cafetero Inc.

Applicant did not attend committee meeting. As a general rule, the committee tends to deny new applicants who do not attend.

Renewal Applicants – two applicants are approved but pending for them to submit a written letter agreeing to certain measures to improve safety issues they have had within the community such as increasing security, decreasing operating hours etc. The committee voted to approve as long as they submitted letters. One applicant had done so, the other applicant we are still waiting on.

However the Board can vote now and hold approval until the letter is received.

Renewal Applicants:

#2 – El Diamante Boulevard Bar Corp.

#4 NY El Diamante Corp.

The rest of the applicants were approved with the exception of #2 El Marco Bar Corp. and #3 California Corp. A decision on those applicants was tabled to let the full Board decide.

It was recommended to vote on the applicants initially presented and then have a separate discussion regarding El Marco Bar Corp. and California Corp.

Board Member Sandra Munoz made a motion, seconded by Transportation Chair Matthew McElroy, to **approve** the committee's report as presented.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino called out if there were any opposed or abstentions. Since there were none, the motion passed.

Discussion ensued on the two applications Council Member Moya discussed earlier.

Christina Long explained there are two applicants for the same building that have separate entrances –one on 104 Street and the other on 46 Avenue which is the former location of Tony's Pizzeria that was discussed partially last month when they attempted to renew Tony's Pizzeria license. The original license was listed under Tony's Pizzeria. Currently, the establishment is now applying for two separate liquor licenses. One for the front part on 104 Street where the pizzeria was; the second on the 46 Avenue side where the family dining room was before.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino questioned can the Board just say no.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol responded yes and in our letter state the Community Board voted to deny due to the following issues and cite the reasons. He did note, however, it is two businesses involved. Although both are under the same building, they are two separate licenses with two separate letters.

The Board can deny the applications and cite its reasons. Ultimately, the SLA will have the final say. The establishment does not have the backing of Council Member Moya.

Discussion ensued.

Board Member Vincent Laucella commented given the history of the past they were operating through the pandemic. He inquired is it the same people operating it or two different people.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol clarified there are two different applicants and it is a very large venue—the front and the back. This main entrance is along 104 Street. The second part was the bar with the dining room having the ability to go upstairs to the second floor. Now, it has been split into two with two different licenses. One towards the back of place or what used to be his formal dining room (separate applicant) from the one in the front operating as the pizzeria. The fear is both can use the upstairs room creating noise etc. Both have different plans and different owners and principles but both are under the same roof. Two different owners, two different names, two separate places under the same roof.

Accordingly, the District Manager recommended they should not be treated as the same license but rather two separate ones. Obviously, he did not feel comfortable putting both establishments on the same letter.

Board Member Edgar Moya agreed with writing two separate letters for the establishments but proposed **denying** both establishments. Living on the street and knowing who is there and operations in the past, they have not been a good neighbor. It was recommended not to issue liquor licenses to both establishments.

Board Member Edgar Moya made a motion, seconded by Public Safety Committee Co-Chair Georgina Oliver, to write two letters to the SLA to **deny** both licenses.

Subsequently, Board Chair Marialena Giampino called out if there were any opposed or abstentions. Since there were none, motion passed.

XI. Committee Reports

Consumer Affairs

Committee Chair Michelle Dunston reported a meeting was held on January 17 and said the committee meetings will now be held every third Monday. A meeting is coming up this month on March 21. Also, she had enlisted four businesses to sign up for the Board's Newsletter. Before concluding, she reported Lefrak City Tenants Association and Lefrak City Management teamed up with Council Member Moya to donate food and clothes to the Ukrainian refugees today, March 8, and tomorrow, March 9, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and March 10 the drive will be at Council Member Moya's office. Donations will be sent out Saturday, March 11. Find more information on their website lcta.info.

Environmental

Environmental Committee Chair Carol Machulski reported the Environmental Committee met March 8. Dr. G. had tendered her resignation as vice chair on the committee and it was decided not to replace her since it is at the end of the term.

Next, was the responses received from city agencies to the FY 2023 Needs Statement. The committee has forwarded its responses to the district manager. No report for the February 23 QSWAB meeting since the Environmental Committee was meeting with Dana Linton and her team for a presentation of Con Edison's Reliable Clean City Project the same night. The next QSWAB meeting is March 23.

Lastly, Con Edison's Reliable Clean City Project was presented at the committee meeting and will be presented at the March 8 Board meeting. Many questions were asked of the presenters and more importantly along with the answers, which were added to the February Board minutes. At the March 8 Board meeting, the full Board will hear the presentation and ask further questions.

Health & Human Services

Committee Chair Clara Salas reported the first successful committee meeting was held January 24 on Elmhurst Hospital. The presenters gave an excellent presentation. Committee Member Sunil Mahat was in attendance. Since there is a lack of attendance at the Health Committee meetings, she will wait until May to hold a meeting when new members are appointed to the Board. May 23 is planned for the next committee meeting with the new members and a quorum present. Much work is expended to plan an agenda and members do not attend. When a quorum is present, she will be very happy to hold a meeting. In the meantime, it is a waste of time because of the lack of membership citing only one person attends.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino replied she is aware of Ms. Salas' concerns and it is a problem. If members did not renew their membership, most likely they will not be members of the Board. The Board Chair will reach out to members not participating and when the new members come on board, they immediately will be assigned to committees.

Parks, Cultural Affairs & Historical Preservation

Committee Chair Ashley Reed reported the committee did not meet last month, however, an informal discussion was held regarding the Queens Night Market. She was optimistic to meet with John Wang sometime this month and that he will be able to give the committee more details regarding his plans. Following this meeting, a recommendation will be presented to the Board.

Accordingly, the Parks Committee Chair emphasized the scoping meeting scheduled for tomorrow. Many times individuals have ideas and suggestions but do not voice them. All were urged to attend and will include the link to RSVP for the March 9 scoping meeting for the Josephine Caminiti Park.

ULURP/Zoning

Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith verbalized the ADA commencing at Woodhaven Blvd is an accomplishment the Board needs to be proud of. The Board worked on a text amendment one long night for the subway, noting the ADA was not cited to have an elevator at Woodhaven/Queens Blvd. which is one of the busiest sites. For the Department of Transportation to honor its word and start the ADA at Woodhaven Blvd. is a great achievement for Community Board 4.

Next, Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported a discussion was held about the survey for Good Urban Design. The firehouse and Con Edison's presentations indicates a good urban plan is needed. The survey the Board filled out, which was sent to 9 million New Yorkers, was unclear how the responses would be handled. From 900,000 surveyed responses, how would it be handled? An alternative would be working with Community Boards. The Board needs to write to City Planning specifying the survey is appreciated but a good urban design is essential to address our community's needs. A perfect example is the discussion tonight on the fire house. The fire station was built 100 years ago. Although everything will expand, we do need to maintain the character of our neighborhoods.

Hurricane Sandy and the pandemic showed we do not have the infrastructure. We have to build more hospitals, fire stations etc. and do not want haphazard buildings built because the neighborhoods would be a mess. Good urban design is essential to our community. A letter should be written to City Planning requesting an independent urban planner come into our area and work on the needs of the community.

The other part of Con Edison's presentation is the environmental study which an urban planner would look at including the historical significance as well as the environmental impact for our community. How is it possible for our air to be better? What about our water? If fracking occurs, all the cracking will be underneath the water.

Regulations are needed, such as in 197a, for an urban plan to come to Community Board 4.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino responded community involvement is needed. Because of the pandemic, community involvement had not been included and the Board had not received reports nor notified of upcoming projects. She also mentioned Assembly Member Brian Barnwell should be included as he can enact legislation on the subject matter mentioned.

At this point, ULURP Chair Alton Derrick Smith continued his report and stated during the discussion about a good urban design, the matter arose certain homeowners had received letters from realtors that may have been discriminatory or about problems selling their homes. He reported that information can be sent to New York State at www.dosny.gov.

If the practice is widespread, a cease and desist order can be obtained and a cease and desist zone can be created for the particular area to prevent homeowners from receiving annoying and discriminatory material and solicitation notices.

Youth Services

Committee Chair Sylvia Martin reported the committee did not meet in February, however, a meeting is planned March 24. Since the pandemic guidelines have relaxed somewhat, youth activities will be reviewed.

Before adjourning, District Manager Christian Cassagnol was optimistic the Board will acquire funding requested from the council members and the borough president.

Meanwhile, Governor Hochul instituted an emergency declaration for open meetings will likely expire March 15 which means the Board will meet in person if the emergency declaration is not extended.

If at all possible, he advised all committees not meet for the month of March because meeting guidelines are constantly changing whereby questions arise such as: do we mask or not mask, mask at the office or does the public mask coming to the office and to prepare for in-person meetings.

The District Manager had begun looking at meeting venues, namely, Italian Charities as a possibility.

Since there were no further issues, Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula made a motion, seconded by Consumer Affairs Chair Michelle Dunston, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.