



Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale
61-23 Myrtle Avenue • Glendale, NY 11385
Tel (718) 366-1834 Fax (718) 417-5799
E-mail: qn05@cb.nyc.gov
www.NYC.gov/qnscb5



Vincent Arcuri, Jr.
Chairperson

Gary Giordano
District Manager

Minutes of Remote Community Board 5 Public Meeting October 12, 2022

Board Members Present

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Antonetta Binanti; Adam Bloom; Jessica Boiardi; Eric Butkiewicz; Rachel Caracci; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Derek Evers; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Fred T. Haller; Richard Huber; Maryann Lattanzio; Diego Leclery; Edward Lettau; Patricia Maltezos; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O'Kane; Michael O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Melissa Rebecca; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Dennis Stephan; Katarzyna Syta; Patrick J. Trinchese; Jasmine Valle; Maryanna Zero

Board Members Absent

Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Nickolas Cuttonaro; Maria de la Cruz; Brian Dooley; Fred Hoefflerle; Paul A. Kerzner; Marcin Nadgorski; April Narsasian; Catherine Sumsy; Gyanal Thapa; Barbara Toscano; Michaeline Von Drathen

ELECTED OFFICIALS and STAFF

Joseph P. Addabbo – NYS Senator, 15th SD, with Office Manager John D'Angelo
Jenifer Rajkumar – NYS Assembly Member, 38th AD
John Perricone – Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
Kevin Wisniewski – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
James Mongeluzo – NYC Comptroller Brad Lander
Craig Caruana – NYC Council Member Robert Holden, 30th CD
Statement from Hon. Grace Meng, 6th C.D., submitted by Jonathan Arias

STAFF

Gary Giordano, District Manager-CB5Q
John Maier and Catherine O'Leary, CB5Q Staff

GUESTS

Allie Gumas - DSNY Leaf Composting and Curbside Program, Bureau of Recycling and Sustainability
44 Beaver Street, NY, NY 10004
Diwakar Gupta - Nasir J. Khanzada, LLC, Consulting Engineers, 181-24 Hillside Ave, Jamaica, NY 11432
Jessica Meditz - reporter for The Queens Ledger
Bill Wood - reporter for The Glendale Register

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Vincent Arcuri, the Board Chairperson, welcomed everyone to join the meeting, including everyone who's watching it being livestreamed via Zoom. Members of the public can view this meeting while in progress, by clicking on this You Tube link: <https://youtu.be/jcPYMy6jsf8>. This link will also be posted on our CB5Q Homepage at www.nyc.gov/qnscb5 where it can be viewed at any time.

He announced that anyone wishing to address the Board during the Public Forum portion of the meeting is asked to either sign up to speak before the Board Meeting begins or submit a typed statement to our Community Board 5 Office In person or via email to qn05@cb.nyc.gov no later than 2pm on the day of our Meeting so it could be read into the record.

Following the Salute to the Flag led by Donald Passantino at 7:35pm, the Board Chairperson announced the first item on the Board Agenda:

PUBLIC HEARING RE: BSA APPLICATION NO. 867-55-BZ for 66-15 BORDEN AVENUE

IN THE MATTER OF an Application to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals, by Nasir J. Khanzada, Structural Engineer, on behalf of Manny Kumar, owner of record, to amend a prior BSA variance approval, to alter a lawfully established gas station by rearranging and adding one new dispenser, enlarging the canopy, removing three (3) 4,000-gallon underground fuel storage tanks and replacing them with two (2) new 12,000-gallon underground fuel storage tanks for the gasoline service station at 66-15 Borden Avenue (Block: 2394; Lot:8) in Maspeth, Queens, NY 11378, in an R4-1 Zoning District.

Diwakar Gupta, of Nasir J. Khanzada LLC, gave a power point presentation on this application to amend the prior variance that was issued by the BSA in 2019, as he spoke about the application as outlined above. He described the property as being a triangular-shaped lot, located on the north side of the Queens Midtown Expressway Service Road, bounded by Clinton Avenue and Borden Avenue, in Maspeth.

He explained that the original BSA variance for this property was issued in 1956. He said that in 2019, the BSA approved their building alteration plans to convert the existing auto repair shop into a convenience store; enlarge the structure to accommodate a new ADA-compliant comfort station; install new landscaping in 3 different locations on this property: behind the store, along Clinton Avenue, and on the southeast corner of this property, and install new signage on this lot.

He said that their client, Manny Kumar, the property owner, is now seeking to amend the zoning variance in order to permit:

- The installation of 4 new gas dispensers under a new enlarged canopy in place of the 3 existing gasoline dispensers;
- Removal of 3 existing 4,000-gallon tanks underground on the east side of the lot, and replace them with 2 new underground 12,000-gallon fuel storage tanks alongside Clinton Avenue;
- Revision of the layout of 8 existing parking spaces, by creating 5 new spaces as approved by BSA in 2019, and adding one new ADA-compliant parking space near the new ADA-compliant comfort station, for a total of 6 parking spaces;
- Legalization of the self-service car wash on the corner of Clinton Avenue;
- Installation of a new 30' curb cut on Borden Avenue, and
- Creation of a new entrance to convenience store at grade level

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments.

Walter Sanchez, Chairperson of the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee, explained that the public has three opportunities to comment on this application locally: during this Public Hearing, next month's Board Meeting; and the Queens Borough President's Public Hearing that will follow soon afterward.

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He asked Mr. Gupta about the hours of operation of the convenience store. He replied that the convenience store will remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Maryann Lattanzio questioned whether there's enough room to maneuver around the additional gasoline dispenser that's adjacent to the self-service car wash on this lot. Mr. Gupta replied that he doesn't expect there to be a problem.

In response to a question from the floor, Mr. Gupta said that he expects construction to be complete within 3 to 6 months after the variance has been granted next Spring.

Walter Clayton asked if they've made any provisions to inspect the underground soil at the gas station for any gas leaks. Mr. Gupta replied that there will be inspections before and after the construction work is performed, in compliance with State and Federal regulations.

Patrick Trinchese asked if their plans include the installation of a dry well to drain the water runoff from the car wash. Mr. Gupta replied in the affirmative.

In response to a question from Bob Cermeli about the number of parking spaces on this lot, Mr. Gupta replied that they are required to provide a minimum of 5 parking spaces, but there will be a total of 6 parking spaces available for patrons.

Edward Lettau asked if there would be a charging station for electric vehicles at this station. Mr. Gupta replied that they have no plans to install one there.

Michael O'Kane asked if the Department of Transportation has already approved the proposed 30' curb cut on Borden Avenue. Mr. Gupta replied that it has been approved by DOT.

As there were no further questions or comments from the floor, the Board Chairperson closed the public hearing and announced the next Item on the Agenda as:

PUBLIC HEARING RE: BSA APPLICATION NO. 575-37-BZ for 60-93 FLUSHING AVENUE

IN THE MATTER OF an Application to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals, by Nasir J. Khanzada, Structural Engineer, on behalf of Mike Singh, the owner of record, requesting an extension of the term of variance, which expired on 2/14/2018, for a ten year period, to cut back the auto repair shop and convert it to a convenience store, to remove kiosks, to replace two (2) dispensers with four (4) new dispensers, to replace two (2) 4,000-gallon gas tanks with two (2) new 12,000-gallon tanks, install a new canopy, replace one (1) curb cut with two (2) new curb cuts, to revise signage, and to create a new parking layout and new landscaping, for the gasoline service station at **60-93 Flushing Avenue** (Block: 2697; Lot: 51) in Maspeth, Queens, NY 11378 in a C1-3/R5B Zoning District.

Diwakar Gupta, of Nasir J. Khanzada LLC, gave a power point presentation on this application to request an extension of the 10-year term variance, which expired on 2/14/2018, for a 10-year period.

He described this property as a triangular-shaped corner lot that is located between Flushing Avenue on the south, 58 Avenue on the north, and 61 Street on the east, in Maspeth.

Mr. Gupta explained that his client seeks a zoning variance to permit the alteration of the existing auto repair shop on this lot, by converting a portion of it into a convenience store with an ADA-compliant comfort station and changing the configuration of this gasoline service station by increasing the building's width along the 58 Avenue side of this lot.

He said that, in addition, his client seeks permission to upgrade the gasoline service station, as outlined above, by replacing the 2 existing gasoline dispensers and concrete pads with 4 new dispensers under a new overhead canopy, in conjunction with replacing the 2 existing 4,000-gallon underground storage tanks with 2 new 12,000-gallon underground storage tanks.

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He also pointed out that the proposed plans include the installation of new illuminated canopy signs, as well as revisions to 2 existing non-illuminated gas station signs, and replacing 2 existing illuminated price signs and 2 sign poles.

In closing, he said that other proposed improvements on this site include:

- removal of the two existing kiosks;
- replacing the existing 35' curb cut with the installation of 2 new 30' curb cuts on the Flushing Avenue side of this lot;
- creating 2 new parking spaces on this lot, including one ADA-compliant parking space; and
- creating 2 new landscaped areas on both the northeast and southwest corners of this lot.

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments.

Walter Sanchez asked why the owner is making such extensive upgrades to this property now, by removing and replacing the underground storage tanks, and so forth. Mr. Gupta replied that the old gasoline tanks tend to leak and spill, much more than the new tanks. He said that it's advisable to replace them before they develop any leaks. He also said that the new gasoline storage tanks provide a much larger storage capacity, so most stations will only need one delivery per month, instead of once a week.

The Board Chairperson pointed out that the new illuminated **GasTrac** signage should not be directed toward residential property.

Jasmine Valle asked if the proposed plans include a change in the egress from this gas station. Mr. Gupta replied that it does. She also asked if two parking spaces on this lot are adequate to accommodate their patrons. He said that two parking spaces are considered adequate for a gasoline station of this size.

Fred Haller asked how long has the current owner, Mike Singh, owned this site. Mr. Gupta replied that he's owned this service station for two or three years now.

PUBLIC FORUM

Allie Gumas, Outreach Coordinator for the Dept. of Sanitation's Composting Program, announced that as of last week, all Queens residents can participate in Curbside Composting. She said that all residential buildings – single- and multi-family homes and apartment buildings of all sizes – now receive weekly Curbside Composting collection. She reminded everyone that their compost collection day is the same as their recycling day.

Ms. Gumas thanked everyone who's been participating in this program by setting out leaf and yard waste, food scraps, and food-soiled paper each week on their recycling day.

She said that anyone who doesn't have a brown bin could use any type of bin with a lid on it. And, she said that it's okay to line your composting bin with a clear plastic bag and put food scraps into any kind of bag, since the Dept. of Sanitation uses de-bagging technology at the compost site to keep plastic out of the finished compost. She explained that lining your composting bin keeps your bin clean and makes it easier for Sanitation workers to empty your bin.

Ms. Gumas reminded everyone to compost all leaf and yard waste, like leaves, flowers, twigs, grass clippings, as well as all food waste and food-soiled paper, including everything from fruit and vegetable scraps to meat, bones and shells, moldy cheese, leftovers, napkins, paper towels, or uncoated paper plates. And she advised everyone **not** to put into your compost bin: 1) Household trash including: diapers and hygienic products, animal waste, wrappers and packaging, foam products); or 2) Recyclables including: metal, glass, rigid plastic, beverage cartons, clean paper, cardboard. To learn more about composting, please go to: nyc.gov/CurbsideComposting or call 311, she said.

She advised everyone that starting in the last week of December, the Dept. of Sanitation will suspend the composting program for 3 months while snow operations take precedence.

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Ms. Gumas was on hand after the meeting ended, to answer questions and distribute compost bags, decals, and flyers to everyone.

Felix J. Torres, a local resident, and former Peace Officer for the Dept. of Education, said that he had to retire from his job after being assaulted on the job. He said that he has a claim for lost wages that's pending against the City in the amount of \$300,000, which he hasn't been able to collect since his employment ended on April 10, 1986. He requested that the Board give him some guidance on how to resolve his case. The Board Chairperson asked him to call the Board Office at (718) 366-1834 to set up an appointment to meet with the District Manager about his situation.

Richard Huber, a Board Member, complained about the noise caused by construction work on the roof of PS/IS 119. He said that work crews start work every day after 3pm and keep working until 12 Midnight. He asked if their work permit could be limited to allow them to work only until 10pm instead of 12 Midnight. The Board Chairperson asked staff to inquire about it.

Chairperson's Report

Vincent Arcuri Jr.

The Board Chairperson asked that all Board members introduce themselves at tonight's Board Meeting for the benefit of this year's newly-appointed Board Members, and directed Staff Member John Maier to take attendance. He also introduced the Board staff to everyone present.

Minutes

The Board Chairperson asked Board members if they had received and reviewed the minutes from last month's Board Meeting which was conducted on September 14th, 2022. As there were no objections, he accepted a motion from Katherine Masi, seconded by Walter Clayton, to approve the minutes as submitted. The minutes were adopted by acclamation.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

State Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar said that one of her top priorities is to improve public safety for her constituents and she recently met with Deputy Mayor Phil Banks to discuss the increased number of hate crimes that have occurred in her district this year. She said that she's held several public events to express the community's solidarity with the victims and their families, one of which Mayor Adams attended last month.

In addition, she said that there's been a steady uptick in domestic violence complaints since 2021, when there was a combined total of 4,200 domestic violence complaints filed in the 102, 104 and 106 Precincts. In response to this spike in domestic violence incidents, she said that her office will co-sponsor a forum at 11am, next Wednesday, October 19th, on domestic violence and disability employment with S:US, a nonprofit organization that operates shelters for domestic violence victims and provides job training, employment opportunities, and other supports and services for people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. This free event will be hosted on the web. For more information on this event, she welcomed calls to her office at (718) 805-0950.

The Assembly Member also reported that she met recently with NYC Dept. of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez to address community concerns about several dangerous traffic intersections in her district, including the intersection of Cooper Avenue at Cypress Avenue. She said that she's happy to report that the DOT Commissioner recently notified her that DOT will implement traffic calming measures to improve pedestrian safety at this intersection very soon.

The Assembly Member said that she's also working to improve pedestrian access to Highland Park.

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In closing, the Assembly Member reported that during the first week of this school year, her office distributed over 500 free book bags and school supplies to local school children in need. She wished everyone a Happy Diwali celebration.

State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo thanked the Board Members for their volunteer efforts on behalf of their communities. He informed everyone that he just learned about conditions inside the Cooper Avenue Homeless Shelter in Glendale where staff have been making repeated calls to 9-1-1, due to the aggressive behavior of some clients, as well as incidents of drug overdoses. He said that he'll seek additional State funding that would enable the 104th Police Precinct to provide a rapid response to these crisis situations.

In keeping with the spirit of October being Domestic Violence Awareness Month, he announced that on Wednesday, October 19th, at 11am, his office will partner with Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz's Office and State Assembly Member Rajkumar to offer a free workshop to highlight resources and services that are available for domestic violence victims. He said that the goal of this workshop is to convince victims of domestic violence that they do not have to suffer in silence, they are not alone, and that we're here to help. He said this event will be livestreamed and posted on Facebook, and he advised everyone to RSVP by going to: www.queensda.org/special-events.

Senator Addabbo also announced that he will hold Mobile Office Hours next Wednesday, October 19th at 5pm in the Queens Public Library, located at 92-24 Rockaway Boulevard, in South Ozone Park. In addition, the Senator welcomed anyone interested to attend their Fall Job Fair at Resorts World NYC at 110-00 Rockaway Boulevard, in South Ozone Park on Friday, November 18th, from 10am to 2pm. He said that there's free parking available in the lot that's directly across the street from the Casino entrance. He said that this event will take place indoors and is wheelchair accessible.

On behalf of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, John Perricone introduced himself as the new Community Liaison for Community Board 5. He said that as a lifelong resident of our Board area, he's familiar with most of the Board's top priorities and concerns.

He announced that the Queens Borough President is partnering with St. John's University to host their annual Italian Heritage and Culture Ceremony to celebrate Italian and Italian-American Nobel Laureates, at 6:30pm on next Wednesday night, October 20th in the D'Angelo Center Ballroom on their Campus. He advised Board Members who are interested in attending this event to RSVP, by registering on the Queens Borough President's website at www.Queensbp.org/RSVP.

Mr. Perricone also announced that this year, the Queens Borough President initiated the One Million More Trees by 2030 Initiative and welcomes Queens residents to submit requests for new tree plantings in open spaces to his office by applying online at: bit.ly/queenstreets.

Mr. Perricone welcomed everyone to participate in the Borough President's upcoming Job Recruitment and Veterans Resource Fair from 10am to 3pm on Thursday, October 20th in the Gym of the Elmcot Youth & Adult Activities, at 33-16 108 Street, in Corona. He said that representatives from a wide range of agencies, local businesses, and community organizations will meet with Queens residents regarding their job offerings. He said that representatives of resource providers will also be there, including CUNY's Office of Veterans Affairs, NYC Dept. of Finance, NYC Dept. of Small Business Services, NYC Dept. of Veterans Services, and the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs. He said that anyone who is interested in attending this event must register first on the Queens Borough President's website at www.Queensbp.org/RSVP.

In closing, he welcomed parents along with their school-aged children, to attend tomorrow night's Parent Advisory Board Meeting and High School Fair from 5pm to 8pm in the Helen Marshall Cultural Center in Queens Borough Hall. He said that during the High School Fair, representatives from numerous local public high schools will provide literature about their programs, offer overviews of their admissions

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criteria, and answer admissions questions. He said that RSVP is required, by registering on the Queens Borough President's website at www.Queensbp.org/RSVP.

On behalf of City Council Member Robert Holden, Craig Caruana reported that their office received many complaints about streets and basements of private homes that were flooded during the most recent rainstorms. He said that the Council Member has requested meetings with the Commissioners of several City agencies, especially the Departments of Buildings, Environmental Protection, and Transportation, to tour the district and recommend what measures must be taken to alleviate these flooding conditions. For example, he pointed out that after National Grid crews recently paved over a grassy area in Middle Village, it was inundated with rainwater runoff, and they were directed to restore the grass there.

Regarding the Cooper Avenue Homeless Shelter, Mr. Caruana said that their office has received reports of heavy drug abuse by clients in the shelter. In response to this situation, Council Member Holden is sponsoring a Bill to amend the City's Administrative Code to require that the Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene report the number of referrals to assisted outpatient treatment programs from a given location, in compliance with Kendra's Law. In addition, Council Member Holden has introduced a Resolution in the City Council, seeking the support of the State Legislature and Governor, to amend the State's Criminal Procedure Law, regarding setting bail for defendants who pose a threat to public safety. Mr. Caruana also reported that the Council Member opposes the elimination of a lane of traffic on the Queens Midtown Expressway Service Road in the vicinity of 71 Street in Maspeth, because it's creating traffic congestion that backs up for blocks there.

In closing, he reported that the Council Member secured funding for two major capital improvement projects in local parks in his district this year, in Juniper Valley Park and Mafera Park.

On behalf of City Comptroller Brad Lander, James Mongeluso, Community Liaison for Queens, informed everyone that earlier this month, the Comptroller met with State Attorney General Letitia James and workers, who are members of 32BJ SEIU, to announce a settlement to return more than \$723,000 in unpaid wages and benefits to 24 workers, as well as \$1.8 million Dollars in penalties to the city and state. He welcomed workers, who were employed on City-funded worksites like public schools, subway stations, City streets and parks, and who believe that our office has collected unpaid prevailing wages from their employers, should check the Comptroller's unclaimed wages mobile-friendly website or send any inquiries via email to laborlaw@comptroller.nyc.gov.

Mr. Mongeluso also reported that the Comptroller is working toward comprehensive property tax reform in the City because our property tax system is notoriously opaque, confusing, and inequitable. He welcomed calls for more information about their Petition requesting reform of the City's property tax system to his work number at (646) 689-6509.

On behalf of State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, Kevin Wisniewski thanked all the Board Members for volunteering their time and efforts to improve the quality of life in their communities. He said that this year, the Assembly Member has secured \$100 Million for infrastructure projects in his district, especially expenditures that include sewers and catch basins.

He announced that their office is sponsoring a community cleanup, along both sides of Metropolitan Avenue, between 78 Street and 73 Place, in Middle Village, at 10am on Saturday morning, November 5th. He welcomed volunteers to contact his office at (718) 263-5595.

The District Manager read aloud a statement from Congress Member Grace Meng's office, as follows: "My name is Jonathan Arias, and I am the District Special Assistant to Congresswoman Grace Meng. I have attended the last two board meetings and I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words.

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From September's Board Meeting, I recognized the importance to prioritize local sewers, such as Cooper Avenue Underpass, as they cannot handle the amount of rain. I know the City needs to be able to accommodate extreme weather events to protect our communities, especially with winter approaching. Our office continues to coordinate with City Hall and the Governor's Office, to bring immediate support needed to families experiencing flooding. Additionally, Congresswoman Grace continues to work to ensure that the federal infrastructure dollars that she helped secure for New York are being used to make the upgrades necessary to modernize the borough's stormwater infrastructure.

In terms of safety for our community, Congresswoman Grace helped pass 4 critical Public Safety Bills in the House of Representatives. These Bills would provide law enforcement with the tools they need to prevent crime and serve justice, while also improving training and accountability measures. It will help send mental health professionals to respond to mental health crises in our communities and invest in evidence-based community violence intervention initiatives.

I am grateful for the opportunity to listen and hear from our community directly. I will be frequently attending Community Board 5 Board Meetings and I am excited to do anything I can to help. If there are any questions, please reach out to me at Jonathan.arias@mail.house.gov."

The Board Chairperson read aloud the list of Liquor License notifications that were received at the Board Office since last month's Board Meeting, as follows:

Liquor, Wine & Beer License and Renewal Applications

New Liquor License Applications

- 1) ** **Bridie's Grill Room Inc.**; 64-54/56 Dry Harbor Rd., Middle Village, NY 11379
- 2) ** **702 Seneca Bar LLC** d/b/a **TBD**; 702 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 3) ** **Gas Gas NYC Inc.**; 57-36 Myrtle Ave., Ridgewood, NY 11385

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) **Julia's Beer and Wine Bar LLC**; 818 Woodward Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 2) O'Reilly's Daughter Inc. d/b/a **Yer Man's Irish Pub** 70-26 88 St., Glendale, NY 11385
- 3) 6517 Freshpond Corp. d/b/a **Rustico** 65-17 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385
- 4) Time Tequila Bar Café Corp. d/b/a **Time Tequila Bar Café** 675A Seneca Ave., Ridgewood NY 11385

New Wine, Beer & Cider License Applications

- 1) ** Inner Visions LLC d/b/a **Honey Moon Coffee Shop** 517 Onderdonk Ave., Ridgewood, NY 11385

Wine, Beer & Cider Renewals

None Reported

Other Notifications

- 1) * **Fajitas Sunrise Restaurant Corp.** 59-24 Myrtle Ave., Ridgewood, NY 11385 (LWB&C)
- 2) * **Eagles Café & Bar Corp.** 68-69 Fresh Pond Rd., Ridgewood, NY 11385 (LWB&C)

*** Corporate Change**

** **Seeking a Temporary Retail Permit** -- Information about the Temporary Retail Permits can be found on the SLA Website at: <https://sla.ny.gov/node/1398>

(B&C): Beer & Cider – (WB&C): Wine, Beer & Cider – (LWB&C): Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments from Board Members. As there was no discussion, he announced that there were no Demolition Notices received at the Board 5 Office since last month's Meeting.

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The Board Chairperson gave the floor to Gary Giordano, the District Manager, to present the Executive Committee's recommendations regarding the Board's Capital and Expense Budget Priorities for FY 2024, as follows:

Discussion and Vote on Executive Committee's Recommendations Re: Capital and Expense Budget Priorities of CB5Q for FY 2024

The District Manager said that 45 Board Members participated in this year's Budget Survey Results. He read aloud the Board's Top Ten Capital Budget Priorities, and asked Board Members to refer to their printed copies of the Budget Survey Results that were distributed to each of them at tonight's Board Meeting to review the rest of the FY 2024 Capital Budget recommendations.

The District Manager pointed out that the Executive Committee recommends the Budget Survey Results, as tabulated, for the Board's FY 2024 Capital Budget Priorities.

CB5 Queens FY 2024 Capital Projects Survey Results

| RANK | PROJECT REQUESTED |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | Redesign and Reconstruct Sewer System in Portions of CB5Q Area Having Worst Flooding Problems |
| 2 | Provide Stormwater Runoff Mitigation |
| 3 | Correct Cooper Avenue Underpass Flooding, Reconstruct LIRR and 71st Avenue Bridge Abutments Above Cooper Avenue Underpass, and Paint the LIRR Bridge |
| 4 | Make Capital Improvements to Improve Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety on Grand Avenue at 69th Street, at Grand Avenue/LIE East Bound Service Road, and at the 69 Street/LIE Service Roads Intersections |
| 5 | Reconstruct Deteriorated Catch Basins and Provide New Catch Basins in the CB5Q Area |
| 6 | Reconstruct Palmetto Street from St. Nicholas Ave. to Seneca Ave., and from Onderdonk Ave to Forest Ave |
| 7 | Reconstruct Sewer, Sidewalks, Curbs and Pedestrian Ramps along Myrtle Avenue, from Fresh Pond Road To Wyckoff Avenue |
| 8 | Reconstruct Wyckoff Avenue, from Flushing Avenue to Cooper Avenue |
| 9 | Continue Comprehensive Study of the Sewer System, in the CB5Q Area and Throughout Queens County, Considering Flooding Problems and Anticipated Future Growth |
| 10 | Replace Existing Bridge on Grand Ave over Newtown Creek in Maspeth |

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments.

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Lee Rottenberg said that a new bridge over the Newtown Creek is sorely needed and asked how long it would take to build it. The District Manager replied that this project is still in the design phase.

Robert Cermeli commented that in past years, our Board always recommended school construction projects among the Top Ten Capital Budget Items because School District 24 was the most overcrowded school district in the entire City. He asked if more classrooms will be needed in our district now that there's some discussion of reducing class sizes in local public schools.

Walter Sanchez asked what is needed to correct the Cooper Avenue Underpass flooding every time it rains. The District Manager replied that a new pumping station that won't shut down during heavy downpours is needed there. Richard Huber commented that water is pumped into a system that's overloaded with stormwater runoff. He said that a large capacity holding tank for the excess runoff is needed, so the water that gets pumped out of the Underpass has somewhere to go, other than back onto the street.

Derek Evers commented that flood mitigation is a top priority for this Board. He asked why funding for Parks isn't one of the top priorities, now that COVID19 isn't a public health threat anymore. The District Manager replied that most of the funding for Parks projects is allocated by local elected officials and the Borough President. The Board Chairperson replied that he should attend the next Parks Services Committee Meeting and bring along a list of Parks projects that he thinks are needed.

As there were no further comments, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the Executive Committee's FY 2024 Capital Budget Priorities recommendations, which carried unanimously by a vote of - 36 – in favor; - 0 – opposed; -0 – abstentions; and – 0 – not voting.

Regarding the Executive Committee's recommendations for the Board's Expense Budget Priorities for FY 2024, the District Manager pointed out that the list of 25 Expense Budget Priorities remains the same as last year's list.

The District Manager read aloud a list of the Top Ten Expense Budget Priorities, as recommended by the Executive Committee, as follows:

- 1 Assign Additional Personnel for the 104th Police Precinct Patrol Force
- 2 Provide Field Workers for Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations
- 3 Hire Inspectors and Plan Examiners, in Sufficient Numbers, to Cope with Illegal Uses of Property and Questionable Construction
- 4 Provide Sanitation Department Cleaning Personnel, to Clean Illegal Dumping and for Litter Basket Collections
- 5 Provide Funding for Educational and Recreational Programs, for Children and Teens
- 6 Provide Funding for Fire Department Services
- 7 Provide Needed Services for Senior Citizens
- 8 Provide More Frequent Garbage and Recycling Pick-up for Schools and Institutions
- 9 Allocate Funds for the Operation and Enhancement of the Division of Forestry in Queens
- 10 Provide Sufficient Personnel for Traffic Safety Inspections, Sign Installations, Pavement Markings and Sign Manufacturing

As there was no further discussion on the matter, Dmytro Fedkowskyj made a motion to accept the Executive Committee's recommendations, as submitted, and the motion was seconded by Walter Clayton. The Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the motion to accept the Executive Committee's Expense Budget recommendations for FY 2024, which carried unanimously by a vote of –36– In favor; - 0 – opposed; -0 – abstentions; and – 0 – not voting.

District Manager's Report

Gary Giordano

The District Manager urged everyone to participate in the Dept. of Sanitation's Organics Composting Program now that it's been reinstated. He informed everyone that 30% of the City's waste stream is

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made up of organic composting material and estimated that the City spends a total of \$400 Million a year to export household garbage from our streets. He pointed out the pile of compost that he throws out each week weighs a lot more than the rest of his household trash.

Regarding the City's water supply, he asked everyone to conserve water as much as possible. He pointed out that our reservoirs are currently at 69.7% capacity, instead of 77.9% capacity, as would be expected at this time of year. He asked everyone to conserve water now so we can avoid facing drastic drought restriction measures in the future.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation Services Committee & Public Transit Services Committee

Eric Butkiewicz

Eric Butkiewicz reported that the Committee met in the Board 5 Office at 7:30pm on Tuesday, September 27 to discuss the status of capital projects in our area. Regarding the Wyckoff Avenue Reconstruction Project, he said that work on this project cannot proceed until the tenants of properties in the vicinity of the Wolff-Alport site, south of Wyckoff Avenue, are relocated.

He said that construction of the new Grand Avenue Bridge is scheduled to begin in FY 2026. The Committee is looking forward to meeting with representatives of Community Board 6, in Brooklyn, and the NYC DOT Bureau of Bridges in the Spring of 2023 to discuss how to maintain traffic flow during construction and how it will impact the surrounding community.

Regarding the MTA-NYCT's rehabilitation of the M-train structure, he reported that the contractor is painting the structure on Palmetto Street, between St. Nicholas Avenue and Cypress Avenue.

Regarding the Queens Bus Network Redesign, he said that Transit Authority representatives held several outreach meetings with Queens residents during the Summer to prepare a Draft Plan for community input later this year.

Regarding DOT's milling and repaving of streets in our Board area, he said that resurfacing crews will concentrate on local streets in Maspeth and Middle Village this year. He said that there are a few ponding conditions on Eliot Avenue that he hopes the resurfacing crews will correct.

Regarding traffic safety issues and requests, he said that the Committee supports:

- 1) a request to install a red light camera at the intersection of 69 Place and Juniper Valley Road; and
- 2) a request to install a No Trucks sign on Stanhope Street at Seneca Avenue, in Ridgewood.

However, he said that the Committee does not support a request for a One-Way conversion of Penelope Avenue, because it's a Bus Route.

Regarding the current bike lane routes in our Board area, he reported that the Committee is concerned about the current situation and feels that it's unsafe. They plan to follow up on this issue to find better solutions to the existing pattern.

Regarding the new Entrance to Forest Park in Glendale, he said that it's a beautiful trail. He said that it's unsafe because no guard rails were installed along the trail to protect pedestrians from vehicles travelling to the Jackie Robinson Parkway entrance.

In closing, he welcomed anyone interested in joining the Committee to contact the Board Office by calling (718) 366-1834.

Zoning and Land Use Review Committee

Walter Sanchez

Walter Sanchez reported that he met with the new Commissioner of the Department of Buildings recently. He said that he was happy to find out that the public is welcome to meet with plan examiners in Queens Borough Hall at 120-55 Queen Boulevard, on Tuesdays between 4pm and 7pm, to ask any questions that they may have regarding their building plans or construction that's currently underway. He announced that the Committee will meet in the Board 5 Office either the first or second week of November to review and discuss the two applications that were presented at tonight's Board Meeting.

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Eileen Moloney asked what building restrictions apply to a corner house on her block, where the owner built a 2-story addition onto the rear of his house, eliminating the rear yard area. She said that she didn't see any Work Permits posted on the construction fence. Mr. Sanchez advised her to visit the Dept. of Buildings in Queens any Tuesday afternoon between 4pm and 7pm to ask about those building alteration plans. With respect to zoning regulations, he pointed out that corner lots are more buildable than adjacent lots in the middle of a block.

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that the contractor is almost finished working on the Reconstruction of the Soccer/Football Field and Running Track in Juniper Valley Park. He said that new exercise equipment has been installed, new lines have been painted for football and soccer games, and new grass has been planted. He said that the grass will have to be cut twice before this area will be reopened to the public. The official completion date is December 31, 2022, he said.

Mr. Fiedler announced that the new entrance to Forest Park, off Union Turnpike, was completed over the Summer, and it is beautiful. He cautioned everyone to be careful walking on the pathway there, because there's no physical barrier between drivers entering or leaving Jackie Robinson Parkway and the pedestrian path.

Kathy Masi asked what capital improvements are planned or underway in local parks in Ridgewood. The District Manager replied that several parks in Ridgewood are currently in the design phase, or have been redesigned, including Phase 1 of the Reconstruction of Starr Playground on Onderdonk Avenue which was just completed. He said that all new lighting and playground equipment was installed in a portion of that playground that's been open to the public all Summer. He said that work on Phase 2 of this project is slated to begin very soon, when new basketball courts and amenities will be installed. In addition, he said that both Phases 1 and 2 of the Reconstruction of Evergreen Park, which is adjacent to PS 68 School on St. Felix Avenue, were completed last year, and the park has been open to the public all year. He said that Phase 3 of this project involves the redesign of the asphalt ballfield area where several different play areas will be created to better meet the needs of the school population there. He said that there are plans to redesign the entire playground in Benninger Park, on Madison Street off Fresh Pond Road, by expanding the play area, installing 2 sets of swings, adding another park entrance, and installing a new basketball court, planting areas, spray showers, and a drinking fountain. The contract for this project has not been awarded yet.

Old Business

Kathy Masi informed everyone that earlier tonight, she attended the Community Advisory Board Meeting for the Cooper Avenue Homeless Shelter and discovered that there's a big problem with their operation, namely, that there have been 1,092 9-1-1 emergency calls for assistance related to conditions at this shelter. She said that it's been placing a serious strain on resources at the 104th Police Precinct in responding to emergency situations there, which amounts to 3 or more times per day at times. She also said that there's reportedly been fights between the residents using box cutters; that they've caused problems in the vicinity of PS/IS 119, which is nearby; and the shelter residents often appear to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

Ms. Masi said that Westhab, the not-for-profit organization that runs this shelter, should be audited by the City because they've been awarded millions of dollars to provide adequate security and counseling for the homeless residents, but their security system is entirely inadequate and unsafe, and there's no counselor on site.

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Maryann Lattanzio suggested that these issues should be addressed by the Ad Hoc Committee for the Homeless. The Board Chairperson said the Executive Committee would take the matter under advisement.

Lee Rottenberg recommended that Ms. Masi should attend the next meeting of the 104th Precinct Community Council, at 8pm on October 19th, in St. Margaret's School on 80 Street, in Middle Village, to bring these issues to their attention, as well.

Walter Sanchez addressed a matter that was tabled during last month's Board Meeting. He said that the Board should take action with respect to the notification received last month from **Hush Bar** at 70-10 Grand Avenue, in Maspeth, about their plans to extend their hours of operation. After a brief discussion of the issue, Mr. Sanchez made a motion, which was seconded by Walter Clayton, to authorize the District Manager to send a letter of objection to the State Liquor Authority regarding their plans to extend the hours of operation because their establishment is located in such close proximity to so many local residents who live either nearby and/or in the adjoining properties of this business. As there were no further comments on this motion, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on it, which carried unanimously by a vote of – 35 – in favor; - 0 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and – 0 – not voting.

New Business

Fred Haller welcomed everyone to participated in the 52nd Annual Glendale Kiwanis Halloween Day Parade from McDonald's Parking Lot at 70 Street on Myrtle Avenue, to 65 Street on Myrtle Avenue, ending with a costume judging contest giveaways for all participants. He said this event kicks off at 7pm on Monday, October 31st.

Lee Rottenberg welcomed everyone to join this year's Trunk or Treat Celebration in Juniper Valley Park at 80 Street, on Saturday afternoon, October 29th. He said that Council Member Holden is sponsoring this annual event.

Maryann Lattanzio welcomed everyone to march in the annual Maspeth Lions Halloween Ragamuffin Parade on Grand Avenue from 65 Street to 69 Street in Maspeth, starting at 7pm on Monday, October 31st.

Vincent Arcuri announced that all are welcome to participate in this year's Queens Veterans Day Parade on Metropolitan Avenue from 80 Street to 68 Street on Sunday, November 13th, starting at 12 Noon. He said that a Commemoration Ceremony will be held in Christ the King Regional High School at the end of the Parade. For more information, contact the parade committee at QVDPCommittee@gmail.com.

Eileen Moloney raised a complaint about the noise that's generated overnight from 11:30pm to 6:30am daily by freight trains that travel to and from the Fresh Pond Railyard, in Glendale. She asked the Board for the contact information of the community advocate who spoke about this situation at prior Board Meetings. Peggy O'Kane said that she was a member of CURES (Civics United for Railroad Environmental Solutions) and she would relay this complaint to Mary Parisen, one of the co-founders of CURES. The Board Chairperson replied that he has been well aware of the problem because he lives near the railyard and he hears the noise, too. He said that Board staff will contact the yard master about this issue tomorrow. He reminded Board Members that they can call the Board office during regular business hours to report their complaints to staff.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Board Chairperson adjourned the Board Meeting at 9:55pm on a motion from the floor.