



## Community Board No. 5

Borough of Queens  
Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale  
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Vincent Arcuri, Jr.  
*Chairperson*

Gary Giordano  
*District Manager*

### Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting

March 8, 2023

#### Board Members Present

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Jessica Boiardi; Eric Butkiewicz; Rachel Caracci; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Nickolas Cuttonaro; Derek Evers; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoeffler; Paul A. Kerzner; Maryann Lattanzio; Diego Leclery; Edward Lettau; Katherine Masi; 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; Gyanal Thapa; Patrick J. Trinchese; Michaeline Von Drathen; Maryanna Zero

#### Board Members Absent

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Antonetta Binanti; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Robert Cermeli; Maria de la Cruz; Brian Dooley; Steven Fiedler; Eileen Moloney; April Narsasian; Barbara Toscano; Jasmine Valle

#### ELECTED OFFICIALS and STAFF

Tianna Armstrong – US Representative Grace Meng, 6<sup>th</sup> C.D.  
Johnathan Betancourt – US Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7<sup>th</sup> C.D.  
John D'Angelo - Joseph P. Addabbo – NYS Senator, 15<sup>th</sup> SD  
Kevin Wisniewski – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28<sup>th</sup> AD  
Jolly Patel – NYS Assembly Member Steven Raga, 30<sup>th</sup> AD  
Melissa Villalobos - NYS Assembly Member Juan Ardila, 37<sup>th</sup> AD  
Vjola Isufaj – NYS Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar, 38<sup>th</sup> AD  
Daniel Lewis - Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

#### STAFF

Gary Giordano, District Manager-CB5Q  
John Maier, CB5Q Staff

Walter Sanchez, the First Vice-Chair of the Board, announced that, in the Chairperson's absence, he will conduct tonight's Board Meeting. He called the meeting to order at 7:31pm, following a Salute to the Flag. He explained that Vincent Arcuri, our Board Chairperson, is still recuperating at home from an extended illness.

Mr. Sanchez welcomed Board Members, local elected officials and members of the public to attend tonight's in person Board Meeting. He said that this meeting is also being livestreamed via Zoom where anyone can watch this meeting in progress or afterward, by clicking on the link that's posted on our CB5Q Homepage at [www.nyc.gov/qnscb5](http://www.nyc.gov/qnscb5).

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He requested a Moment of Silence to mark the passing of former Board Member Cathie Sumsky earlier this week. He said that Cathie was a long-time resident of Middle Village, and a very dedicated Board Member who represented Middle Village.  
He announced the first order of business as:

**PRESENTATION RE: Change in Times When Refuse Should be Put Out for Collection  
By Joseph Ottomanelli, Community Affairs – NYC Dept. of Sanitation**

Joseph Ottomanelli, of the Dept. of Sanitation's Community Affairs Office, announced that household waste setout times will change on April 1<sup>st</sup>, from **4 PM to 6 PM for trash placed in secured containers, and from 4 PM to 8 PM for bags left directly curbside in front of local residences**. He said that as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, commercial establishment will be permitted to discard trash, recyclables or compost material that is placed in containers at the curb within an hour of closing time, but if it's put into bags, the new setout time is after 8PM only. He said that this new rule is being implemented to reduce the time that trash, recycling, and curbside composting will sit on sidewalks and city streets will be cleaner. There will be a one-month grace period in which businesses and residents will receive written warnings until May 1, 2023. In closing, he said that more information about the new waste setout times is available on the City's website at [nyc.gov/SetoutTimes](https://nyc.gov/SetoutTimes).

Lee Rottenberg, a Board Member, commented that it would make more sense to require that all containers that are used to store garbage and are visible on the sidewalk to be completely covered and rodent-proof. He said that rodents eat household garbage that's stored on the sidewalk, whether at the curb or alongside a building. He also asked when Compost Collection will begin this year. Mr. Ottomanelli replied that Compost Collections will resume in Queens on Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup> and it will be picked up on the same schedule as your recycling collection. He said that the best way to get rid of rodents is to reduce their food source by putting your compost materials into brown bins and separating it from other household trash.

Theodore Renz, a Board Member and Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, said that this new schedule for setting out trash for collection is going to be a burden on local shop owners who close their stores at 6pm or 7pm daily. He asked if a merchant puts a bundle of cardboard at the curb at 6pm, would they get a summons? Mr. Ottomanelli replied that he'd ask his supervisor for further clarification on that question.

Patrick Trinchese, a Board Member, asked what the fines would be for homeowners who put their garbage out for collection in uncovered receptacles. He also asked if the Department of Sanitation will be responsible for putting the lids back on garbage cans that have been put at the curb for collection? Mr. Ottomanelli replied that he will speak with his supervisor about this issue.

Peggy O'Kane, a Board Member, said that recycling materials sit out at the curb for days before it's collected every time that a holiday falls on the recycling collection day. She said that doesn't help to promote a cleaner City. Mr. Ottomanelli replied that missed collections on holidays is a logistical problem that still needs to be resolved.

Lee Rottenberg, a Board Member, said that he hasn't lost any garbage can covers since he began tying the covers onto his garbage cans.

Paul Kerzner, a Board Member, asked what time residents should put out their garbage for collection on a Holiday schedule. Mr. Ottomanelli said that all household garbage should be put out at the curb for collection no earlier than 8PM, and no later than 12 Midnight on Holidays.

As there were no further comments on the presentation, Mr. Sanchez introduced the next Item of Business on the Board Agenda as:

**PRESENTATION RE: Queens Memory Project sponsored by the Queens Public Library**  
**By Meral Agish, Community Coordinator**

Meral Agish informed everyone about the Queens Public Library's [Queens Memory Project](#) that involves researching the people behind the hundreds of named places in Queens – streets, monuments, schools, parks, and buildings, a project that seeks to enrich and enshrine the many individuals who made a major contribution to our borough's history. She said that to-date, they've collected over 1,000 oral histories from Queens residents. She said that anyone connected to Queens in some way is welcome to participate in all kinds of archival activities, including digitizing old photographs, or working on a community cookbook with a focus on recipes, photos and stories connected to Ridgewood. Every contributor will receive printed copies of the cookbook once it is published later this year, and the book will also be available to borrow at the Queens Public Library. She welcomed anyone who's interested in participating in this project online to use [this submission form](#) to share any recipes, stories, or photos they'd like to include in the book.

In addition, Ms. Agish announced the creation of a new [Queens Name Explorer map](#) with a total of 1,300 places that are already catalogued, based on the database files of the City and State. She encouraged local residents to help them to share memories and photos of the person honored with a public naming by adding background information, an anecdote, remembrance and/or photograph, to this site by clicking the blue "Add/Edit" button in the top right-hand corner of this webpage. In closing, she distributed postcards about this project, and pointed out that there's a QR code on the front that can be scanned and displayed on any cell phone.

For more information, she asked anyone interested in participating in this project to please contact their team at [queensmemory@queenslibrary.org](mailto:queensmemory@queenslibrary.org). Ms. Agish also provided her work phone and email address at: [meral.agish@queenslibrary.org](mailto:meral.agish@queenslibrary.org), or (718) 990-8532.

**PUBLIC FORUM**

Carol Benevic-Bradley, a member of the Friends of the Ridgewood Library, gave a brief overview of various programs and services available at the Ridgewood Public Library, located at 20-12 Madison Street, corner of Forest Avenue. She said that this month, they will host events that include an Animals Live Workshop to teach children how to safely handle animals; a Women's History Month celebration; a Sounds of Spring Event of Classical Music, Mixed Media Workshops, and a 5 Part Series on Early Childhood Development (Toddler's Learning Series).

For more information, please visit <https://www.queenslibrary.org/calendar/friends-of-ridgewood-library>, or send an email to [friends@queenslibrary.org](mailto:friends@queenslibrary.org).

Paul Kerzner, a Board Member and Chairman of the Greater Ridgewood Restoration Corporation, requested letters of support from residents and homeowners of our Community Board 5 Queens area, to extend the boundaries of City Landmark Designated areas in Ridgewood. Maps were distributed to show all the existing blocks which have already received landmark designation, as well as the proposed areas where this designation is sought. He pointed out that there are 2982 buildings that have already been identified as part of one of the ten largest Federal and State Historic Districts in the country, in addition to being designated as City Landmark Districts.

He said that he began volunteering to work on this project in 1983, and there are still a lot more properties that would qualify for inclusion in the overall Landmark District. He welcomed volunteers for this project to contact him for more information, after the Board Meeting.

Mr. Sanchez congratulated him on his 50 years of voluntary service to our Community Board.

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District Manager Gary Giordano read the following statement from a local resident into the record:

“My name is Dolores Bachmann. I am a resident of Liberty Park and, even though I am 88 years old, I am an active bus rider.

If you live in Liberty Park and you want to go to Wyckoff Heights Hospital, the Ridgewood Library, Fresh Pond Road, Forest Avenue, or the Wyckoff Avenue train stations, you need the B-13 Bus. If you want to go to Jamaica Avenue, Franklin K Lane High School, or the Gateway Mall, you need the B-13 Bus.

Now, the Transit Authority wants to eliminate B-13 Service along Cooper Avenue. Residents of Liberty Park who are accustomed to use this bus will now have to walk down to Myrtle Avenue. This is a hardship for the many senior citizens and handicapped people who live in my neighborhood, not to mention an inconvenience in bad weather.

Perhaps someone from the Transit Authority would like to walk from 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Myrtle Avenue – in the rain, the summer heat, the winter cold. Maybe they make enough money to be able to afford a \$10 or \$20 cab ride rather than a \$2.75 bus fare, or senior fare of \$1.35. And don't tell me to ride a bike? I'm 88! And my senior neighbors are not going to be riding bikes either. But without reliable bus service, how are we going to be able to shop, to visit doctors, go to Wyckoff Heights Hospital for tests, visit friends, go to church, or the library, connect with further transit for longer trips, or do any of the multitude of things that we rely on the B-13 for?

In addition, we hear that the TA is planning to stop service on the Q-39 Bus south of Myrtle Avenue. These two actions will deprive a large area of public transit options. Not only Liberty Park, but all of Glendale, from Cypress Hills Street to Cypress Avenue, from 80<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Myrtle Avenue, will be a transit desert. Queens already has enough transit deserts – why create another one?

This Plan may look good on paper, but the TA has not considered the welfare of the people who will be affected by their plan. The Transit Authority must rethink their options and provide safe, affordable – and better – bus service for our neighborhood.”

Mr. Sanchez thanked everyone for their input at tonight's Board Meeting.

## Minutes

Mr. Sanchez asked Board members if they had received and reviewed the minutes from last month's Board Meeting that was conducted on February 8, 2023. Mr. Sanchez accepted a motion from Walter Clayton seconded by Katarzina Syta, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was adopted by acclamation.

## Chairperson's Report

### Walter Sanchez, First Vice-Chairperson

Mr. Sanchez said that he looks forward to meeting in person on a continuing basis from now on, provided there's no serious outbreak involving new variants of the Coronavirus. He said that he hoped everyone remembered to go online to renew their Board membership, if their 2-year term is up in 2023.

Introducing the next Item on the Board Agenda, Mr. Sanchez read aloud the following list of applications for alcoholic beverage licenses and renewals in the Board 5 area:

## Liquor, Wine & Beer License and Renewal Applications

### *New Liquor License Applications*

- 1) \* **Gas Gas NYC Inc.** d/b/a **TBD** 59-36 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385 – R
- 2) \* **Cocina Mama Rosa, LLC** 689 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385 – R
- 3) **Brisa De El Juna Corp.** d/b/a **TBD** 913 Wyckoff Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385 - B/T

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***Liquor License Renewal Applications***

- 1) **Taqueria Kermes Inc.** 66-36 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385 - R
- 2) **The Ridgewood Ale House Inc.** 57-38 Myrtle Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385 - R
- 3) **B & B Espresso Bar Inc.** 66-07 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385 - B/T
- 4) Minderbinder Enterprise LLC d/b/a **Milo's Yard** 564 Seneca Avenue, Ridgewood, NY 11385 – B/T

***New Wine, Beer & Cider License Applications***

- 1) Eurotwist, LLC d/b/a **Muu Moo Foods** 60-54 Fresh Pond Road, Maspeth, NY 11378 – R

***Wine, Beer & Cider Renewal Applications***

- 1) **Zenith Thai Inc.** 70-02 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, NY 11385 - R

***New Beer & Cider License Applications***

None Reported

***Beer & Cider Renewal Applications***

None Reported

\* *Also Seeking a Temporary Retail Permit -- Information about the Temporary Retail Permits can be found on the SLA Website at <https://sla.ny.gov/node/13981>.*

***B/T = Bar/Tavern; CA = Catering; CL = Club; R = Restaurant***

Mr. Sanchez opened the floor to questions and comments from Board Members.

Staff Member John Maier explained that anyone issued a Temporary Retail Permit is permitted to sell alcoholic beverages until their full license application is approved, which can take months to process.

**DEMOLITION NOTICES**

Mr. Maier reported that the Board received no demolition notices since last month's Board Meeting.

Mr. Sanchez recognized members of the press who were present: Elijah Hamilton of the **Times Newsweekly**, and Iryna Shkurhan of the **Glendale Register**.

**STATEMENTS from LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS**

On behalf of Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Daniel Lewis announced that new candidates for Board Membership will be notified of their appointment(s) no later than April 1st, this year.

He announced that the State of the Borough address will be delivered by the Queens Borough President at 10AM in the Queens Museum on Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. He welcomed Board Members to attend this annual event. He also welcomed everyone to celebrate Bangladesh Independence Day next Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 8pm in Queens Borough Hall, at 120-55 Queens Blvd, in Kew Gardens.

He said that their annual Women's Health Fair is scheduled to take place from 6pm to 8pm on Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> in the Helen Marshal Cultural Center in Queens Borough Hall. He advised everyone to RSVP for all the above-scheduled events at [www.queensbp.org/RSVP](http://www.queensbp.org/RSVP).

On behalf of U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, Johnathan Betancourt thanked Board Members for their public service on this Board. He reported that, last month, the Congresswoman introduced the Landlord Accountability Act which is a Bill that would amend the Fair Housing Act to ban discrimination against tenants who have rental vouchers. He also said that the proposed Bill stipulates a schedule of fines to be levied, in the amount of \$100,000 per month, for every month that property owners are found to deliberately "warehouse" a rental apartment by refusing to rent habitable units in their buildings to eligible tenants.

Regarding the recent spike in fires started by Lithium-ion batteries in electric bikes and other micro-mobility vehicles in the Congresswoman's District, he reported that there were two more residential

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fires, in the district, during the past month that were sparked by e-bikes powered by IM batteries exploding into flames. He said that these fires damaged two homes and left one tenant in critical condition. In response, the Congresswoman wrote a letter to the Consumer Product Safety Commission urging them to crack down on the sale and use of these IM batteries in Electric Vehicles. He said that the Congresswoman continues to work with her colleagues in Congress to amend the financially injurious provisions of Medicare Advantage Healthcare coverage on retirees and disabled citizens.

Lastly, in response to the excessive amount of air pollution that is reportedly coming from the Fresh Pond Rail Yard in Glendale, he said that the Congresswoman wrote a letter to Assistant U.S. Attorney General Todd Kim to express her satisfaction with the recent Consent Decree in the case of the United States v. Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services et al. He quoted from the letter as follows:

“The ongoing use of diesel-powered locomotives is unacceptable, given the well-documented health concerns related to exposure to diesel particulate matter. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), exposure to diesel exhaust can worsen heart and lung disease and is linked to major health issues, such as asthma and respiratory illnesses, which often result in multiple hospitalizations and sometimes premature death.

As you know, as part of the settlement, Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services Inc. agreed to upgrade its locomotive fleet to comply with the Clean Air Act pollution control requirements. This settlement also requires the destruction of 88 outdated locomotives and confirms that replacements adhere to EPA emission standards. The Consent Decree also imposes a \$1.35 Million civil penalty. Genesee & Wyoming Railroad Services Inc. estimates it will spend approximately \$42 Million to comply with this Consent Decree.

Therefore, I urge you to fully exercise your authority to ensure that the implementation of this Consent Decree is swift and responsible. I further encourage you to look into any additional possibilities to mitigate the negative impact of these diesel-powered locomotives on public health.”

In closing, he pointed out that the Appropriations process has just begun in Congress. This year, there are more restrictions placed on what the Congresswoman is allowed to submit for Community Projects, including funding for local health care clinics. The deadline to submit requests for funding will be in the next 2 to 3 weeks, much earlier than usual.

In response to a question from the floor about the specific guidelines in the proposed Landlord Accountability Act, Mr. Betancourt referred them to the proposed legislation which is posted on [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov).

Katherine Masi, a Board Member, asked for assistance to enforce existing laws regarding the storage of electronic vehicles. She said that there's a site in Glendale where anywhere from 20 to 30 E-bikes are stored behind a small home that is adjacent to a local school. He invited her to speak with him after the Board Meeting to discuss it further. He welcomed calls for more information or assistance to their office at (718) 599-3658.

On behalf of US Representative Grace Meng, Tianna Armstrong announced that their office is hosting a Passport Application Event next Sunday, March 19<sup>th</sup> from 10AM to 3PM in the Jackson Heights Post Office at 78-02 37th Avenue in Queens.

Regarding the recent rash of mail theft in their District, Ms. Armstrong said that the Congresswoman has written to the US Postal Service to request reductions in the time that mail is left in drop boxes, additional safety locks on these boxes, and increased transparency when mail has been stolen from the designated recipients. She said that there's an ongoing investigation of this situation by Postal Police. Lastly, she announced that the Congresswoman will hold mobile office hours on Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 92-10 Roosevelt Avenue, in the Jackson Heights office of Make the Road.

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Mr. Sanchez asked what's being done to help anyone who's a victim of mail fraud. Ms. Armstrong replied that the US Postal Service has opened up a portal website that enables staff to request an investigation of each incident of mail theft for anyone who visits their office. She said that this is a serious problem citywide.

On behalf of State Senator Addabbo, John D'Angelo said that the Senator sends his regards to everyone. He said that the Senator's up in Albany this week, working on Budget negotiations for the next fiscal year, beginning on April 1<sup>st</sup>. He welcomed everyone to join in their grand opening celebration of their new District Office location at 84-16 Jamaica Avenue in Woodhaven, from 10am to 2pm this Saturday. Regarding upcoming events that the Senator is sponsoring, he said that there will be a MetroCard Van stationed in front of their new District Office in Woodhaven from 10am to 2pm on Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, so that constituents may apply in person for a new MetroCard to be issued to them. He also announced that between 1pm and 2pm on Wednesday, April 5, representatives of the NYC Dept. of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP) will provide FREE Tax Preparation services for local constituents at 66-85 73 Place, in their Middle Village office.

He announced that two recycling events are planned in the district this Spring:

- 1) from 10am to 1pm, on Saturday, April 15th, Senator Addabbo will host a paper shredding and clothing donation event inside Atlas Park on Cooper Avenue in Glendale, and
- 2) from 10am to 2pm on Sunday, May 7th, in the Forest Park Bandshell parking lot, which is co-sponsored by Assemblywoman Rajkumar.

In closing, he welcomed calls for more information about these events to his office: (718) 497-1630.

On behalf of Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, Kevin Wisniewski stated that the Assemblyman is up in Albany working on budget negotiations with his colleagues in the State Assembly. He said that the Assemblyman is proud to announce the expanded Child Care subsidies that cover an additional 400,000 children in day care programs throughout the State, saving families up to \$20,000 per year in childcare costs. In addition, he said that the Assemblyman is advocating for increased investment in Prevention Services for families in crisis, with the goal of keeping families together and keeping children out of the foster care system. The Assemblyman also seeks an additional \$15 Million for non-public school safety grants, full funding for the Asian American and Pacific Islander Equity budget, and funds for local programs, such as, the Queens Community House, Common Point, and the Queens Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Wisniewski thanked volunteers who participated in a series of community cleanups last year in Middle Village, Ridgewood, Rego Park, Forest Hills and Maspeth. He said that they plan additional cleanups in the coming year.

Katherine Masi, a Board Member, asked if Glendale could be included in the round of community cleanups being planned. For more information on legislative or local issues, he invited everyone to contact their office at 718-263-5595.

On behalf of the newly elected State Assembly Member Steven Raga, Jolly Patel introduced herself as the Director of Community Relations in his office which covers the 30<sup>th</sup> Assembly District. She said that the Assemblyman is up in Albany during budget negotiations this week. She announced that their office provides application filing assistance to senior citizen homeowners who are eligible to apply for STAR tax exemptions, as well as the Disabled Homeowners Exemption, until this year's deadline, on Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. She advised that appointments are required and may be arranged by calling their office at 55-19 69 Street, in Maspeth at (718) 651-3185.

She also announced that their office will soon host another Citizens Committee Micro-Grant Information Session on Zoom for small groups, non-profits, a small business, or community group to learn about



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applying for micro-grants that are typically about \$3,000. She advised anyone interested in attending to call their office in advance at (718) 651-3185.

Lastly, she said that the Assemblyman will host a Women's History Month Awards ceremony on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:30pm to 4:30pm at the Elmhurst Public Library. All are welcome.

On behalf of State Assembly Member Juan Ardila, Melissa Villalobos said that the Assemblyman sends his regards from Albany. She informed everyone that he recently sponsored new legislation regarding worker safety that was adopted by the Labor Committee and sent to the full Assembly for consideration. In addition, she said that their office is sponsoring a Clothing Drive for low-income families in their District, which covers a portion of Ridgewood and Maspeth. She said that there are two drop-off sites in Ridgewood at: 1) Topos Bookstore and Coffee Shop on the corner of Woodward Avenue at Cornelia Street, and 2) The Ridgewood Y at 64-01 Catalpa Avenue, opposite the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct. In closing, she said that they look forward to working with this Board and welcomed calls for information or assistance at their office at 45-10 Skillman Avenue in Sunnyside, at (718) 784-3194.

On behalf of Assembly Member Jennifer Rajkumar, Vjola Isufaj reported that the Assemblywoman is also working on the annual budget negotiations that are taking place in Albany now. She wished everyone a Happy International Women's Day.

She informed everyone that the Assemblywoman supports new legislation that would mandate paid family leave for those who've suffered the loss of a baby through stillbirth. The Assemblywoman also supports new legislation to authorize the use of survey lens cameras to combat illegal dumping in areas which are commonly known as dump sites. Another piece of legislation that the Assemblywoman fully supports is a Bill that mandates hard covers on freight rail cars because they're used to transport construction debris and municipal waste through mostly residential areas in our State.

Ms. Isufaj also announced that their office will sponsor a paper shredding event on Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, from 10am to 2pm, and an E-Waste Event on Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, from 10am to 2pm, in the Forest Park Bandshell area. In closing, she welcomed constituents to contact their office by calling (718) 805-0950 for more information or assistance.

## **District Manager's Report**

**Gary Giordano**

The District Manager informed everyone that there is an ongoing investigation of the large fire that burned down a building on the corner of Metropolitan Avenue at Aubrey Avenue, in Glendale, earlier today. Kathy Masi said that several firefighters were injured on site and sent to the hospital. In addition, he reported that there was a power outage in Middle Village last night in the area bordered by 69 Place and 75 Place, from Metropolitan Avenue to Juniper Boulevard South, apparently due to frayed electric wires getting overheated.

At the request of the District Manager, Maryann Lattanzio announced that there are two new Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCO) whose beat includes Maspeth. She said that their first Build-a-Block Meeting is scheduled to be held at 7pm on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> in Martin Luther High School, on Maspeth Avenue at 60 Street. She encouraged Maspeth residents to attend the meeting to meet and greet the Police Officers who are assigned to cover their neighborhood.

Regarding street resurfacing requests, the District Manager said that there are several major thoroughfares in the Board area that need to be resurfaced in the coming year, including Myrtle Avenue in Glendale, Fresh Pond Road from Eliot Avenue to Flushing Avenue, and Seneca Avenue, particularly in the vicinity of DeKalb Avenue, in Ridgewood. He welcomed additional requests for resurfacing on local streets to be called into the Board Office at (718) 366-1834.



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In closing, he said that certain portions of Glendale, Maspeth and Ridgewood will be included in an air pollution monitoring project, where you have a lot of truck and freight rail traffic. He said that the construction and demolition debris that is being transported by rail through this community is covered only by a plastic mesh screen, at best. What is needed is to containerize it, or put tight-fitting lids over it, to ensure that gypsum and other debris dust doesn't float into the air that we breathe.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Liquor License and Cannabis Committee**

##### **Maryann Lattanzio**

As Acting Committee Chairperson, Maryann Lattanzio reported that the Committee met on Zoom at 7pm on Monday, March 6th. She said that at the Committee Meeting, the Members discussed the licensing process that is followed by establishments where alcoholic beverages are served to their patrons on-premises. She said that at their Meeting, the District Manager informed Committee Members that the State Liquor Authority (SLA) requires all applicants for new liquor licenses and/or renewals to give at least 30 days prior notice to their local Community Board before submitting their liquor, wine, beer and/or cider application for the SLA's review.

Ms. Lattanzio said that, based on their discussion, the Committee considers the illegal sale of cannabis products to be a public safety and public health hazard. And, as such, she said that the Committee recommends that local law enforcement and other appropriate agencies should inspect any local businesses where cannabis products are reportedly being sold without proper authorization, and take steps to enforce the law, including issuing summonses, confiscating any illegal products on-premises, and where warranted, padlocking the business. She read the following recommendation:

"There are too many business locations where cannabis is being sold without a license in New York City. Currently, only three licenses have been issued for legal cannabis sales in our City. More needs to be done to reduce the problem of these illegal cannabis sales, considering that:

- Cannabis is being sold illegally, which includes that which can be smoked and cannabis that is in candy or other consumable products, can cause illness when an unregulated and untested product is being sold and consumed.
- The stores where cannabis is being sold illegally are a significant crime target, where the store can certainly be targeted by criminals who know that the store has a significant amount of cash and cannabis product on hand. Cannabis sales are overwhelmingly cash sales. Store owners are very unlikely to accept debit or credit card payments for cannabis, when cannabis is not legal on a national level.

We strongly recommend that more be done by the Mayor, the Police Department and other agencies in cooperation, to have store owners and others illegally selling cannabis products adequately fined and that their cannabis products be confiscated. The store should be closed by agencies of the City of New York, and the State of New York if compliance with the law is not met after a modest time period to comply."

She also read the other part of the Committee's recommendation which is to recommend that Community Boards are given at least 60 days, after receiving notification of a cannabis sale application, to submit comments and recommendations regarding the application.

Paul Kerzner, a Board Member, requested that the Committee's recommendation regarding fines and confiscation be amended to refer specifically to District 5, Queens, instead of the entire City.

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Derek Evers, a Board Member, said that shutting down all of the stores that sell Cannabis products may lead to a black market in these types of products. He pointed out that 4 years ago, the New York State Legislature passed a law to legalize the sale of cannabis but there are only 3 licensed shops in the City, as yet.

Eric Butkiewicz, a Board Member, said that if we were having this conversation about liquor licenses, we wouldn't even get this far because the location would be shut down. He said the point of legalizing the sale of cannabis is so that there is a regulatory framework, and those laws aren't being applied like would be the case with liquor.

Lee Rottenberg, a Board Member, said that illegal sales of cannabis products is the equivalent of selling moonshine, which is not condoned because you have no idea what's in it.

Diego Leclery, a Board Member, said that to equate alcohol with cannabis is a bit of a stretch. He said alcohol consumption has been a much more destructive force than cannabis for the past 100 years in this country.

After a general discussion of the issue, Kathy Masi, a Board Member, said she thinks the resolution proposed needs to go back to Committee, and that part of the resolution needs to encourage the authorities to move these matters forward.

Fred Haller, a Board Member, said that the sale of illegal cannabis is a big problem, and the sale of cannabis needs to be regulated. He said that cannabis edibles are often very strong and can cause an overdose, especially for children and for animals.

Derek Evers, a Board Member, asked if anyone knew when a Cannabis License is expected to be issued in our Board area.

Edward Lettau, a Board Member and Committee Member, recommended that at the very least, the Board should vote on the portion of the Committee resolution, recommending that Community Boards be given at least 60 days to submit comments and recommendations regarding an application for the sale of cannabis in their district.

Maryann Lattanzio agreed to amend the recommendation, as proposed.

Gary Giordano, the District Manager, explained that the State Liquor Authority does not tell Community Boards that they have to submit their comments within 30 days. He said it would be ridiculous for a municipality to have less than 60 days to review and comment on matters such as this.

Mr. Sanchez requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee recommendation, as amended. As there was no further discussion of the recommendation, a Roll Call vote on the amended resolution passed unanimously by a vote of – 31 – in favor; - 0 – opposed; - 0 – abstentions; and – 0 – not voting.

## **Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee**

### **Eric Butkiewicz**

Eric Butkiewicz reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> in the Board Office to discuss the proposed changes to local Bus Routes in our Board area, as well as to review the status of the Citi Bike installations and traffic safety requests in our Board area.

He said that unfortunately James Bonner, the president of the NY and Atlantic Railway, was unavailable to meet with the Committee last month to discuss complaints about excessive noise from freight rail operations and other problems with freight rail operations.

He also reported that the B13 and B38 bus routes are slated for changes, according to the MTA's proposed maps in the revised Bus Network Redesign plans. The District Manager sent a letter addressed to the MTA/NYC Transit stating the Committee's concerns about the reduction of bus service for local residents in Glendale and Ridgewood. He said that the Committee also expressed concerns about changes in the location of Bus Stops to minimize the disruption in the flow of traffic.

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He encouraged everyone to visit the MTA's website to see the proposed changes in the Queens and Brooklyn Bus Route Redesign project at <https://new.mta.info/project/queens-bus-network-redesign>. There's a section on the website where you can Click on the screen to enter your opinion about all the proposed changes, he said. Regarding the status of Citi Bike stations to be installed in our Board area, he said that the Committee is investigating problem locations that are reported to the Board Office and forwarding comments to the Dept. of Transportation as needed. He thanked everyone for their input on this project.

In addition, the Committee continues to review new traffic safety requests for signals, signs or traffic calming measures on local streets at every meeting.

In closing, he announced that the next Committee Meeting will be conducted in person at 7:30pm, on Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> in the Board 5 Office. In the meantime, he asked that anyone with any traffic safety concerns and pedestrian safety requests to please forward them to the Board Office so the Committee can review them.

In closing, Mr. Sanchez announced that the next full Board Meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:30pm, on Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. He said the Meeting will be conducted in person, if possible.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Sanchez adjourned the Board Meeting on a motion from the floor at 9:03pm.