



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 Community Board 5 Public Meeting

September 13, 2023

Board Members Present

Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Carol Benovic-Bradley; Antonetta Binanti; Jessica Boiardi; Eric Butkiewicz; Rachel Caracci; Maritza Carmona; Robert Cermeli; Ethan Chan; Deepak Chaudhari; Salvatore Crifasi; Patricia Crowley; Daniel De Brucker; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Dorie Figliola; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoeffler; Maryann Lattanzio; Diego Leclery; Edward Lettau; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Melissa Rebecca; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Lily Scarabino; Dennis Stephan; Katarzyna Syta; Barbara Toscano; Jasmine Valle; Brandon Zwagerman

Board Members Absent

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Michael Byc; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Nickolas Cuttonaro; Derek Evers; ; Paul A. Kerzner; April Narsasian; Michael O'Kane; Michael Porcelli; Kenneth Rehberger; Walter H. Sanchez; Gyanal Thapa; Patrick Trinchese; Maryanna Zero

ELECTED OFFICIALS and STAFF

NYS Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar, 38th AD and Chief of Staff Vjola Isufaj
NYC Council Member Robert Holden, 30th CD
Kate Boehme – Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz
Clare Collins – Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
Johnathan Betancourt – U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7th C.D.
John D'Angelo - NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, 15th SD
Maria Valdez – NY State Senator Julia Salazar, 18th SD
Kevin Wisniewski – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
Dolma Lama – NYS Assembly Member Steven Raga, 30th AD
Melissa Villalobos – NYS Assembly Member Juan Ardila, 37th AD
Juan Mayancela – NYC Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez, 34th CD

STAFF

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

GUESTS

Todd Dale – Rothkrug, Rothkrug & Spector LLP, 55 Watermill Lane-Suite 200, Great Neck, NY 11021

Vincent Arcuri, the Board Chairperson, welcomed everyone to tonight's Board Meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:37pm, following a Salute to the Flag. He said that this Meeting is also being

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

livestreamed on YouTube, and anyone can watch this meeting at their convenience, by clicking on the link that's posted on our CB5Q Homepage at www.nyc.gov/qnscb5.

The Board Chairperson announced the first Order of Business as:

PUBLIC HEARING RE: THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 CAPITAL AND EXPENSE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, AS IT CONCERNS THE COMMUNITIES OF DISTRICT 5, QUEENS

Theodore M. Renz, a Board Member and Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District and Ridgewood Local Development Corporation, testified on behalf of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, by requesting the Board's support for a new Capital Improvement Project for Myrtle Avenue in Ridgewood, as a high priority for Fiscal Year 2025, as follows:

"The last time Myrtle Avenue in Ridgewood between Wyckoff Avenue/Palmetto Street & Fresh Pond Road was included for a major capital project was in 1983 and 1984. At that time, the project, under the New York City Commercial Revitalization Program, included major improvements to the shopping corridor, including the following:

- New concrete sidewalks with decorative brick pavers building line to curbside, new street trees and new steel faced curbing; and
- Creation of three pedestrian plazas:
 - 1). At Woodbine Street/St. Nicholas Avenue/Myrtle Avenue, now known as Venditti Square named for NYPD Detective Anthony Venditti, who was shot and killed in the line of duty in January of 1986;
 - 2). The Ridgewood Memorial Triangle (named for the Veterans of WW1) at Myrtle Avenue/Putnam Avenue/Cypress Avenue; and
 - 3). The Times Triangle, now known as Clemens Triangle (named for the former owner of the Ridgewood Times).

Over the years, other improvements have included the installation of Historic M Poles, World's Fair benches along various curbside locations and in the plaza areas, Historic Marker signs along the Avenue and in Plazas, Historic Marker signs on M-Poles, a new Pedestrian Plaza at 71st Avenue, Myrtle Avenue and Stephen Street, as well as a new raised planting area at the northwest corner of Myrtle and Catalpa Avenues.

Many of these improvements, particularly the brick pavers imbedded in the sidewalk, have seriously deteriorated causing tripping hazards and unsafe conditions for pedestrians. This has also resulted in a number of lawsuits, in many cases also naming the BID, which has resulted in higher insurance premiums for the BID.

While there are a number of very important projects for this Board to support, we kindly ask for your continued support for this important improvement project.

Myrtle Avenue in Ridgewood is a major comparison-shopping corridor serving the Greater Ridgewood area, including Ridgewood, Glendale, Middle Village, Maspeth, in Queens and Ridgewood/Bushwick in Brooklyn, and beyond. Along this corridor, there are approximately 345 retail and service establishments.

The improvements we are asking for may include but are not limited to new sidewalks without brick pavers, new curbs, new Historic M-Poles on side streets, removal of all Belgium blocks from over 300 tree pits, additional benches and other amenities. Since the last project only included a repaved street bed, it may be wise to consider a total reconstruction project, including new water and sewer lines, as well as upgrades to utilities.

We also want to thank the NYC Department of Transportation for making improvements over the past two years by installing new pedestrian access ramps at many intersections within the Myrtle Avenue BID. We support the continuation of this project until all intersections are upgraded.

We also want to thank former Assembly Member Catherine Nolan for providing a \$450,000 State Grant to install new Historic M-Poles on the side streets within the Myrtle Avenue Business

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

Improvement District. These funds will be channeled through New York City's Department of Transportation for the implementation of this project. We also want to thank the New York City Department of Business Services, and Mayor Adams and the City Council for providing grants to the Myrtle Avenue BID in last fiscal year's budget of the City of New York. With last year's grant money, we were able to refurbish our 22 Historic Marker signs on our Historic M-Poles, and repair and restore three Historic Information signs at the Clemens Triangle, Ridgewood Memorial Triangle, and the Myrtle/Wyckoff Transit Hub. Thank you again for your support."

John Maier, a CB5 Staff Member and Ridgewood resident, said that he's testifying as a Ridgewood resident to request the addition of a Multi-Use Access Path to Highland Park along Vermont Place at the Ridgewood Reservoir to the Board's list of Capital Budget Priorities for FY 2025. He explained that currently, access to the Park and Reservoir from Cypress Avenue, heading southbound on Vermont Place, is a dangerous combination of paved and unpaved paths that too often conflict with Jackie Robinson Parkway ramps, instead of providing a welcoming path for pedestrians and cyclists to access some of the premier park space in our community.

He said that the existing sidewalks on both sides of Vermont Place, south of the Jackie Robinson Parkway, are narrow old asphalt pavement that don't serve those with disabilities and are in need of upgrade and replacement. While there is a narrow continuous sidewalk on the west side of Vermont Place, the sidewalk on the east side of Vermont Place turns into a dirt path, just north of the Jackie Robinson Parkway Overpass, that leads pedestrians to the westbound access ramp of the parkway. He said the time is long past that we should have a capital plan to add a contemporary multi-use path along Vermont Place that provides families and neighbors a safe and welcoming passage into Highland Park and the Ridgewood Reservoir, from Cypress Avenue. In closing, he said: "Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I would be glad to share more information if needed by the Board, to formulate and add this Capital Project request to the FY 2025 priorities list."

Margaret O'Kane, a Board Member, spoke on behalf of the Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association, where she serves as Secretary. She requested increased funding for the Dept. of Health's Rodent Abatement Program in the Ridgewood area. She said that, over the past year, rodent infestation in Ridgewood has become a constant source of complaint at their civic association meetings. She said that, for example, her neighbors report seeing rats coming out of the Rain Gardens on her block, where the grass is overgrown and provides harborage for rats.

The Board Chairperson thanked everyone for their input and closed the Public Hearing. He announced the next Item of Business on the Agenda as:

PUBLIC FORUM

Paul Pogozelski, president of the Middle Village Players Roller Hockey League, thanked everyone who volunteered to help him start up this new Roller Hockey League to give youth an opportunity to join a local sports league that's based in Juniper Valley Park. He said that they officially opened their season on Saturday and thanked local volunteers who sponsored the event. He welcomed anyone interested in joining this league to contact him via email at middlevillageroller@gmail.com.

Katie Stromme, a representative of NYC H2O and resident of Glendale, requested the Board's support for a protected bike lane that's wide enough to provide safer pedestrian and cyclist access to the Ridgewood Reservoir, particularly from Cypress Avenue and Vermont Place. She said that cyclists often ride on the sidewalks on Vermont Place because the driving lanes are unsafe. As a volunteer for NYC H2O, she's toured the Ridgewood Reservoir with groups of school children and walked along the dilapidated foot path that's virtually impassable to cyclists.

Public Hearing Re: BSA Cal No. 716-82 BZ - 16-14 Weirfield Street, in Ridgewood

In the matter of an application to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals by Rothkrug, Rothkrug and Spector, LLP, for an Extension of Term of a previously approved Variance (§72-21) which permitted the incorporation of a vacant building into an existing development (previously under Cal. No. 252-07 BZ), and the construction of a 1-story addition in the rear of the building, thereby creating a single building, to be utilized as a not for profit institution with sleeping accommodations, Use Group 3, which expired on February 11, 2023; Waiver of the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedures. M1 4D Zoning District.

On behalf of the Outreach House, the nonprofit organization that operates out of 16-14 Weirfield Street, Todd Dale of Rothkrug, Rothkrug and Spector, LLC, addressed the Board to request a 20-year extension of the term variance for this site, as described above.

He said that the property is a 3-story residential building with a cellar, that has a floor area of 16,500 sq. ft. on a 7,500 sq. ft. lot. that is located about 90 feet north of Wyckoff Avenue. He said that since 1982, when they had originally applied for a zoning variance, the Zoning District has been changed from an M1-1 to an M1-4D Zoning District, on a block that includes warehouses, residential and commercial uses, and a local public school at the Cypress Avenue end of the block.

He described Outreach House as an organization dedicated to providing quality, life-changing drug and alcohol abuse treatment, as well as training services for families and individuals in the local community. He said that the Certificate of Occupancy for this residential facility permits a maximum of 30 beds for NYC adolescents and teens between the ages of 12 and 18 years of age, in addition to sleeping accommodations for supervisory staff on site, offices, meeting rooms, and a cafeteria where meals are provided for residents and staff.

Mr. Dale said that, pursuant to the prior zoning variance that was granted in 2003, his client was permitted to add the adjoining vacant residential building on the north side of the existing site to their site. It allowed them to expand the footprint of their building from the prior 50' width of the site to the present 75' wide building from property line to property line on this site. As he spoke, he distributed photos and floor plans of this site. He said that they have no further plans to expand or change their operations.

The Board Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments.

Lily Scarabino, a Board Member, asked who owns this property. Mr. Dale replied that The Queens Outreach Project, a not-for-profit corporation, holds the title to the entire site.

Salvatore Crifasi, a Board Member, asked how is it that this facility is required to seek a Zoning Variance in this case, but no one sought a Zoning Variance to create a homeless shelter in a vacant factory building on Cooper Avenue a few years ago. Mr. Dale replied that he wasn't familiar with that site. The Board Chairperson replied that this question doesn't pertain to this site. He said that's a different matter and should be discussed at a later time tonight.

As there were no further questions or comments on this subject, the Board Chairperson closed the Public Hearing and referred the matter to the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee for consideration.

Chairperson's Report

The Board Chairperson took attendance of Board Members who were present.

Liquor, Wine and Beer License Applications and Renewals

Mr. Arcuri requested that anyone who has any concerns about any new or existing establishments, to report them to the Board Office so the information could be forwarded to the proper authorities. He read aloud the list of Liquor License Applications and Renewals, which was distributed to all Board Members.

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

New Liquor Licenses

- 1) Omatoya Inc. d/b/a **TBD**, 64-15 Grand Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R] *
- 2) Driftwood NYC Inc. d/b/a **TBD**, 70-11 Grand Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R] *
- 3) **The Cage Restaurant Inc.**, 60-59 Myrtle Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R] * and **
- 4) Pomodoro Inc. d/b/a **Joe & John's Pizzeria**, 59-08/10 Myrtle Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R] * and ***
- 5) **Jumpin Jack Flash LLC**; 64-18 Fresh Pond Rd, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T] *
- 6) **Rumba Y Sazon Bar Corp.**, 71-24 Fresh Pond Rd, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T] *

Liquor License Renewals

- 1) **East Coast Burgers Inc.**, 53-21 Metropolitan Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]
- 2) **The City Diner Corp.**, 65-35 Grand Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R]
- 3) Knights Ridge LLC d/b/a **TV Eye**, 1647 Weirfield St, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]
- 4) C & Q On Myrtle Inc. d/b/a **Celtic Gasthaus**, 64-04 Myrtle Ave, Glendale, NY 11385 [R]
- 5) Teedee's Tavern d/b/a **Dromore West**, 64-31 Cooper Ave, Glendale, NY 11385 [B/T]
- 6) NY George's Catering Corp. d/b/a **Mama Pio**, 53-05 65th Pl, Store #1, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R]
- 7) Bad Old Days LLC d/b/a **The Bad Old Days**, 1684 Woodbine St, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]
- 8) Bozena Olcan d/b/a **I.O. Café**, 793 Fairview Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]

New Wine, Beer & Cider

- 1) **XOXO Kitchen & Bakery Inc**, 883 Cypress Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]
- 2) **Sushi Yoshi Ridgewood Inc.** 65-07 Fresh Pond Rd, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]
- 3) **El Buen Sabor Restaurant Corp.** 1070 Cypress Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]

Wine, Beer & Cider Renewals

- 1) **La Flor del Paraiso Restaurant Corp** 1715 Cornelia St, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]
- 2) Janus New York d/b/a **Billy's Marketplace** 870 Cypress Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]
- 3) **Maca Restaurant Corp.** 62-12 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park, NY 11374 [R]

Other Notifications

- 1) Coche Payaso, LLC d/b/a **Bar Freda**, 801 Seneca Ave., Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]
Regarding a Corporate Change.

- * *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>.*
 - ** *Originally sent 30 Day Notice in March of 2022, but didn't file with the SLA in time so this is a new 30 Day Notice to reset the clock.*
 - *** *Originally sent 30 Day Notice in January of 2023, this new 30 Day Notice resets the clock.*
- [B/T] = Bar/Tavern , [CA] = Catering , [CL] = Club , [R] = Restaurant

Sal Crifasi, a Board Member, asked for an update on what action, if any, the State Liquor Authority has taken with respect to any of the Board's recommendations or objections to these establishments. The Board Chairperson replied that this question would be addressed later on at tonight's Meeting during the Committee Report.

There were no Demolition or Construction Notifications received by the Board Staff since our last Board Meeting.

The Board Chairperson recognized local elected officials who were present and invited them to address the Board, as follows:

STATEMENTS from LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

On behalf of **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards**, Clare Collins, our Community Board Liaison, informed everyone about the series of meetings, known as Borough Hall on Your Block, where the Borough President was available to meet and greet residents all over Queens. In addition, she said that this Summer, their office conducted a variety of events that were open to the public, including workshops for seniors, a youth summit, a Town Hall Meeting, a bike giveaway, and many others. Ms. Collins invited everyone to attend the upcoming Climate Expo Event, from 3pm to 7pm on September 20th, in Queens Borough Hall, at 120-55 Queens Boulevard, in Kew Gardens.

On behalf of **Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez**, Johnathan Betancourt reported that last week, the Congresswoman brought Amit Bose, the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration, to Ridgewood to tour the rail yards and discuss issues about the freight rail routes with local elected officials, residents and representatives of the NY & Atlantic Railway and the CSX Railway. He said that their meeting was very productive, and the Congresswoman looks forward to working with all the concerned parties to ensure that railroads in her District are both safe and sustainable. In addition, he reported that the Congresswoman met with Martin Gruenberg, Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), last week to discuss the ramifications of this year's collapse of Signature Bank and the massive portfolio of single and multi-family home mortgages that were actually acquired by the FDIC as a result of the bankruptcy. He said that housing advocates were on hand to discuss the need for affordable housing in New York City, and to open up a dialogue with him to ensure the preservation of affordable homes throughout the City.

Regarding new eligibility requirements for Medicaid that are now in effect, he said that last month, their office hosted a virtual briefing on this topic with State Department of Health staff to inform the community about these recent changes. He said that New York State recently resumed eligibility reviews and renewals for Medicaid recipients, which means they must take action to renew their eligibility for health insurance now.

City Council Member Robert Holden said that it's nice to attend a Board Meeting again, after having served on the Board for 30 years. He congratulated both Mr. Arcuri for his many years of service on this Board, and Paul Kerzner for having served as a Board Member for over 50 years. He also congratulated Barbara Toscano on being conferred the honorable title of Cavalieri. He said that it's the Italian equivalent of a Knighthood in Great Britain.

The Council Member informed everyone, that this year, he sponsored a Bill which was passed into law, enabling police to tow away vehicles that are parked in front of fire hydrants in the City of New York. He pointed out that the 104th Precinct has towed away a total of 373 vehicles so far this year. He encouraged everyone to report vehicles to 311 that are parked in a crosswalk, blocking the pedestrian walkway, because police are permitted to tow them away immediately.

Council Member Holden said that he also sponsored Intro 758 this year, which would apply to electric vehicles, including Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3 E-bikes, and require them to be registered, and have visible license plates. He said this Bill would apply to any moving vehicle that is either battery operated or is propelled by a motor. He said that this Bill doesn't apply to E-scooters because their speed is so limited, they're not as dangerous. He invited comments from the Board about this legislation which has not reached the floor of the City Council yet.

The Council Member also informed everyone that he allocates funds every year to provide free transportation for seniors in his District to drive them to and from their doctor's visits. He said that their answering service is available between 9am and 12 Noon. He welcomed his elderly constituents to call (718) 559-4352 if they need a ride to their doctor's office.

In closing, he thanked everyone who participated in the 911 Memorial Service that was held on Sunday.

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

NY State Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar commended Vincent Arcuri, the Board Chairperson, District Manager Gary Giordano, and the entire American Parade Committee for the tribute to those who died in the World Trade Center Disaster on Sept. 11, 2001, which was conducted in Forest Park on Sunday afternoon. She said it was a very touching and moving Memorial Service.

The Assembly Member gave a brief overview of legislation that was passed by the Legislature under her sponsorship this year. She began by citing a Bill to require waste transported by rail to be covered, to end noxious waste fumes and dust from being emitting into the air in Middle Village, Glendale and Ridgewood, and all the other neighborhoods that are adjacent to freight rail lines in NY State. She said that this Bill had stayed in Committee for 13 years before being passed with bipartisan support this year. She thanked Mr. Giordano and Kathy Masi, a Board Member and former Board member of CURES (Civics United for Railroad Environmental Solutions), for their continuing support. She said that she's looking forward to seeing the Governor sign this Bill into law soon.

In addition, she said that another piece of legislation that she sponsored this year, to establish Diwali as a Public School Holiday in NY State, was signed into law by the Governor this Summer. She said Diwali is observed by over 600,000 New Yorkers.

Regarding other matters, the Assembly Member announced that her office distributed 1,000 book bags filled with school supplies, to local school children prior to the first day of school this month.

Regarding upcoming events, she said that she will host a Public Safety Town Hall from 5pm to 8pm on Wednesday night, September 20th, in The Woodhaven Manor when Police Commissioner Edward Caban, First Deputy Commissioner Tania Kinsella, and other police officials will be on hand to address the community's concerns about spikes in crime in her District. She welcomed constituents to attend it and advised them to RSVP, either by calling her office (718) 805-0950, via email, or the QR Code on the flyers that are being handed out tonight. She said: "Your safety is my top priority. I am working now to shutter all the illegal smoke shops in our District. I am in communication with Mayor Adams, City Sheriff Anthony Miranda, and our 104th Precinct!"

The Assembly Member said that she's invited Kevin Kim, the NYC Commissioner of the Dept. of Small Business Services, to meet with local shop owners and businesses located in commercial strips in her District to address their concerns next month.

The Assembly Member said that over the Summer, she hosted several events, including the Mobile Mammogram Van from Mt. Sinai Hospital. She encouraged women who are 40+ years old to register for this free screening to detect breast cancer, by calling her office at (718) 805-0950 to set up an appointment. The Rain Barrel Giveaway on Sunday, August 6th at 10:00 AM at the Forest Park Bandshell, was very well received, she said. Free legal services are available for eligible constituents all year round, based on constituents' requests for assistance, she said. Lastly, she said that one of her favorite programs is the very successful Summer Reading Challenge, to encourage school children to develop reading skills over the Summer vacation.

On behalf of **City Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez**, Juan Mayancela announced that, in cooperation with the congregation of Primera Iglesia Kichwa Sinai, they sponsored a Community Clean Up on both Palmetto Street and Gates Avenue, from Onderdonk Avenue to Seneca Avenue, in Ridgewood, on Saturday, August 19th. He said that there was a good turnout for this event, and volunteers also helped to distribute over 100 backpacks with school supplies that day, along with staff from State Senator Salazar's office.

Regarding upcoming events, he announced that their office will sponsor:

- 1) A Mental Health First Aid Training Session in cooperation with the Department of Health from 9am to 5pm on Saturday, October 21st, in the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council at 59-03 Summerfield Street, in Ridgewood. He said that upon completion of this session, participants will receive

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

an Adult Mental Health First Aid Certificate. In order to attend this training, constituents need to RSVP at: <https://District34Ridgewood.timetap.com>. He welcomed everyone to attend.

2) The Annual Electronic Waste Event at Maria Hernandez Park on Knickerbocker Avenue at Suydam Street, on Saturday, October 21st, from 10AM to 2PM. He said that constituents may discard e-waste trash, such as TVs, VCRs, computers, monitors, tablets, printers, old cell phones, etc. Regarding complaints about rodents, he urged everyone to report their complaints to a 311 operator or online so the Dept. of Health will be notified about this problem. In closing, he informed everyone that there's a High Alert in effect regarding Food Stamp scams, and he welcomed calls to their office at (718) 963-3141 from victims about this fraudulent activity so their staff can follow up on the case with representatives of the Human Resources Administration.

On behalf of **NY State Senator Addabbo**, John D'Angelo, office manager in the Middle Village office, announced that their office is sponsoring another Rain Barrel Giveaway this Saturday, September 16th at the Glendale Community Garden, at 74-10 88 Street, in the parking lot of the Talmudic Seminary. In addition, he informed everyone that their Semi-Annual Paper Shredding and Electronic Waste Recycling Event will be held in the Forest Park Bandshell Parking Lot this month, from 10am to 2pm, on Saturday, September 24th, 2023. He welcomed anyone interested in competing in the upcoming Pickleball Tournament in Juniper Valley Park next weekend, sponsored by State Senator Addabbo, to RSVP by calling their office at (718) 497-1630. Pre-registration is required because all participants must sign a waiver in order to enter this tournament, he said.

On behalf of **NY State Senator Julia Salazar**, Maria Valdez reported that their office has been working together with the State Liquor Authority and Community Boards in their District to resolve any complaints about establishments with liquor licenses. She welcomed calls to their office regarding problems or issues associated with any establishments in the 18th Senatorial District, which includes Bushwick, in Brooklyn, as well as a portion of Ridgewood along the Brooklyn/Queens border. She said their office is located at 212 Evergreen Avenue, between Willoughby Avenue and Myrtle Avenue, in Bushwick. She welcomed constituents to call their office at (718) 573-1726 if they need help or information regarding local issues.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi**, Kevin Wisniewski thanked the many volunteers who helped their office over the Summer, at the Annual Rain Barrel Giveaway, the distribution of school backpacks to hundreds of young students, and with making food pantry deliveries to disabled residents in their District. He also publicly thanked the Shops at Atlas Park and Common Point Queens for securing several hundred backpacks for distribution to local school children. Regarding the recent uptick in COVID19 cases, Mr. Wisniewski announced that their office will provide free Rapid Covid Test packets and face masks to constituents who call their office at (718) 263-5595. Regarding community clean ups, he said that they plan to hold a clean-up in Ridgewood in October, and asked for suggestions about locations where they should concentrate their efforts. Regarding the status of legislation that the Assembly Member sponsored this year, he said that his Bill that would require New York to connect children in foster care, who have developmental disabilities, to available support services has passed both houses of the Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature before it takes effect. For more information, he welcomed everyone to read their Summer Newsletter, or call their office at (718) 263-5595.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Steven Raga**, Dolma Lama reported that over the Summer, their office hosted a series of legal clinics in their office about subjects ranging from Housing Rights to SSI and Disability Benefits, and Veterans Rights. In addition, she said that they hosted two successful Rain Barrel Giveaways, where over 80 barrels were distributed to local community residents at each

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

one. They also sponsored free Mammogram screenings for women over age 40 in a Mobile Van parked in front of their office at 55-19 69 Street, in Maspeth. And, she said that they held their first Annual Health Fair where participants were offered free dental screenings, Narcan Training Sessions, blood pressure and sugar glucose checkups.

Regarding upcoming events, she announced that this Saturday, September 16th, they will host a Paper Shredding Event that is co-sponsored by Assembly Member Catalina Cruz, in front of Elmhurst Hospital. Lastly, she welcomed everyone to attend a Veterans Benefits Information Session in their office on Tuesday, September 19th, as well as a Queens Legal Services Workshop regarding Food Stamp (SNAP) Benefits. She welcomed calls for more information about these events at (718) 651-3185.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Juan Ardila**, Melissa Villalobos announced that their office will commemorate the life of Joe Nocerino, a former City employee who had worked in the Office of Queens Borough President for many years, by planting a tree in his name and painting park benches around it at Grover Cleveland Park from 12 Noon to 3PM on Tuesday, September 19th, 2023. She welcomed everyone to participate.

In closing, she welcomed calls for more information to their office from Monday to Thursday at (718) 784-3194.

On behalf of **Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz**, Kate Boehme reported that their office launched a Merchants Business Improvement Program that is a boroughwide initiative to thwart shoplifting by repeat offenders and to help keep business owners, shop clerks, security guards, and customers safe from those who threaten or harass them. She said that based on the success of their pilot program, this initiative has been expanded to include the entire Borough of Queens. She said this new approach enables police to issue trespass notice warnings to individuals who've been identified as aggressive shoplifters on repeated occasions and arrest them if they return to the location after having been warned to stay away. She advised store owners to contact their local precinct and request to work with their local Neighborhood Coordination Officer (NCO) as part of this initiative.

Minutes

The Board Chairperson asked Board members if they had received and reviewed the minutes from the last Board Meeting on July 12, 2023. As there were no objections, Mr. Arcuri requested a voice vote on the motion to adopt the minutes, as submitted, which passed unanimously

The Board Chairperson introduced both Gary Giordano, the District Manager, and John Maier, Staff Member.

District Manager's Report

Gary Giordano

The District Manager requested a Moment of Silence to commemorate the lives of those lost in the World Trade Center Disaster on September 11, 2001.

The District Manager recalled that over 30 years ago, when the City's annual budget process was dominated by the Board of Estimate, there were scores of local civic leaders and Board Members who testified at annual Budget Hearings in Queens Borough Hall to advocate for local capital projects and services to meet the needs in our community. He said that the budget process was streamlined after the Board of Estimate was abolished, and a new City Charter was adopted. Now, each Council Member is allocated \$5.5 Million annually to develop local projects and services in their districts, each Borough President receives a separate allocation of funding, and Community Boards are mandated to conduct a

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

Budget Hearing on the City's Capital and Expense Budget each year and submit their list of Capital and Expense Budget Priorities to the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget at this time of year.

Mr. Giordano explained the next step in this budget process will determine our Board's Capital and Expense Budget Priorities for Fiscal Year 2025, which begins on July 1, 2024. He said that the Executive Committee plans to meet next week in the Board office to review the Board's current Capital and Expense Budget Priorities and formulate a list of FY 2025 Capital Budget Requests that will be distributed to Board Members in the form of a Survey. He said that the Budget Survey package will include explanations of all the Board's Capital and Expense Budget Items. The Surveys will be emailed to all Board Members. He said that there will be a maximum of 34 Capital Budget Priorities on the attached Survey of Budget Priorities. He asked Board Members to complete their surveys of the Capital Budget Priorities by ranking their top priority as #1, then write #2 next to their second priority, and so on. He said that the completed Budget Surveys are due back in the Board Office the following week.

Once the Budget Surveys are received in the Board office, staff will tabulate the results and report them to the Executive Committee for review at their next Committee Meeting, which will take place prior to our next Board Meeting. The Committee's recommendations regarding the Board's Capital and Expense Budget Priorities for FY 2025 will be presented to the full Board for a vote at next month's Board Meeting on October 11th. He said that this is one of the most important actions that Board Members take each year.

Regarding plans to repave local roadways, the District Manager announced that beginning this week, the Dept. of Transportation is scheduled to start milling and then resurfacing local streets in our Community Board area. He said that most of the streets on the current list are in Ridgewood and Glendale this year. He said that most of the resurfaced streets on last year's list were in Middle Village and Maspeth. He pointed out that the following roadways will be milled and resurfaced at night: Myrtle Avenue from Fresh Pond Road to Cooper Avenue which was milled this week; Seneca Avenue from Myrtle Avenue to Menahan Street; Cypress Avenue from Myrtle Avenue to Cooper Avenue; and Fresh Pond Road from Metropolitan Avenue to Flushing Avenue. He cautioned everyone to drive slowly over any roadways that have been milled, because there are lots of depressions in those roadways until they're resurfaced, which will hopefully be within 2 weeks after milling.

The District Manager also announced several roadways in Middle Village that are scheduled for milling and resurfacing this year including: Juniper Boulevard North from Lutheran Avenue to Dry Haror Road; Juniper Valley Road from 69 Place to 74 Street; and 69 Street from Metropolitan Avenue to Eliot Avenue.

In response to Sal Crifasi's question during the Public Hearing regarding the siting of a homeless shelter at 78-16 Cooper Avenue several years ago, the District Manager explained that soon after the Board was notified about the proposed homeless shelter in the former factory building, he filed objections to the Work Permits and occupancy of the former factory for use as a homeless residence, on behalf of the Community Board. He said he argued that homeless shelters are permanent residential facilities, which are not permitted in manufacturing zones by the NYC Zoning Resolution, with the exception being a case where a zoning variance has been granted. In response to his letter of objection, the Commissioner of the Dept. of Buildings disapproved the Work Permits that had been issued for work on the proposed site. However, the Dept. of City Planning subsequently proposed a Citywide Zoning Text Amendment with respect to the siting of Hotels, Motels and Boatels, which states that certain community facilities, namely, homeless residences, are permitted as of right in M1 zones throughout the City. He said that

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

once that Zoning Text Amendment took effect, our Board's objections were moot, and Work Permits were reissued for the proposed homeless shelter on that site. He said that, regarding the Outreach House, they needed a variance because that was required at the time of their original application.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Liquor License and Cannabis Committee

Patrick Trinchese

Patrick Trinchese reported that the Committee met in the Board 5 Office on Thursday, August 17th to meet with the applicants along with their attorney, regarding an application for a license to open a Cannabis Dispensary at 57-01 Myrtle Avenue, on the Northeast corner of Seneca Avenue, in Ridgewood. Mr. Trinchese said that the applicants are a husband and wife team, Suzanne Verboter and Fernando Pena, who said that their prior experience for the past 24 years has been running Fatty's Café, and a bodega that was converted into a wine bar, in Astoria.

He said that Ms. Furboter told the Committee that they're both very fond of Ridgewood and would like to get involved with local food pantry programs in our Board area, once they're open for business at this site. Mr. Pena told the Committee that there will be no visibility to the inside of this property from the street or sidewalk. Jorge Luis Vasquez, Esq. of Vasquez Segarra, LLP, their attorney, said that efforts will be made to assure that people do not consume cannabis outside or near their establishment.

Mr. Trinchese said that in response to questions about what type of security they plan to have on site, Mr. Pena replied that they will hire a Security Management firm to provide security guards at the door to screen potential customers who must swipe their ID card upon entry, and that numerous security cameras will be installed both inside the building and around the perimeter of the building. Mr. Vasquez told the Committee that their security guards will wear uniforms while on duty. He also told Committee Members that there will not be any neon signs in or around the building, and no displays will be posted on premises.

Mr. Trinchese said that Mr. Pena informed the Committee that this business venture is one of the first 35 licensees for cannabis sales in the City of New York. He also told the Committee that they are not considering cannabis delivery at this time, and their application does not include a delivery service. In response to a question about the viability of this business in the face of all the cannabis that's being sold illegally in shops and on the street, Jorge Luis Vasquez, Esq. of Vasquez Segarra, LLP, the applicant's attorney, told the Committee that the State of New York is in the process of hiring more Sheriffs and he expects that more locations will be shut down from now on.

When asked about the financing for this business venture, Mr. Vasquez told them that the owners are being financed through the State of New York. When asked about product quality, he said that all of their products will be labeled to indicate how much THC is in each one.

Mr. Trinchese reported that Mr. Pena told the Committee that, as their business of selling standard cannabis grows, they plan to market other helpful products that are made from the cannabis plant. Mr. Trinchese stated that since the applicants are already licensed by the State of New York to sell cannabis products on premises at this location, and they've shown their willingness to address all of the Committee's concerns, the Committee has no objection to their application to open at this site.

Regarding the most recent list of applications for liquor licenses and renewals, Mr. Trinchese reported that the Committee reviewed the locations and have no objections to their operations.

Sal Crifasi asked why the Committee doesn't provide an update to the Community Board at each Board Meeting about whatever actions have been taken regarding the establishments that are applying for liquor licenses, and when and if licenses have been issued by the State Liquor Authority, despite the Board's objections.

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on September 13, 2023

The District Manager replied that our Board's policy is to concentrate our attention on establishments where numerous complaints have been reported to the Board Office and/or the Police Precinct, without resolution. He reported that the State Liquor Authority recently issued a Temporary License to permit the sale of alcoholic beverages on the premises of a bar at 465 Seneca Avenue, for which he'd written a letter of objection this Summer. In this case, he said that the Temporary License expires in 6 months and will be subject to further review at that time. He said that Community Boards are Advisory Boards and as such, cannot compel compliance with the law, but can only advise people to do so.

John Maier, a Staff member, explained that all applicants are required to notify the local Community Board at least 30-days prior to submission of applications for a new Liquor License or Renewal to the State Liquor Authority (SLA). Applicants have 270 days after they file their 30-Day Notice about their intent to file an application to submit it to the SLA. He said that if anyone has any questions about an application, they're welcome to contact the Board Office. After a general discussion of the matter, the Board Chairperson announced the next Item on the Board Agenda as:

Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee

Eric Butkiewicz

Eric Butkiewicz reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, August 29th in the Board Office, with representatives from Con Edison who gave a power point presentation about their project to install high voltage cables underground in the Juniper Valley Loop, which encompasses the area from Metropolitan Avenue in the south, near Christ the King High School up to Juniper Valley Park. He said that there are 4,800 customers in this section of Middle Village who frequently lose power during storms and heat related outages. He said that this project will split the loop into two, to make the system more resilient during storms and allow them to expand the network's capacity. He said that Con Edison plans to install new electric cables that will be buried under the roadway along Metropolitan Avenue, from 65 Lane to 75 Street. He said that work on this project is slated to begin soon.

Mr. Butkiewicz said that the Committee continues to review traffic calming requests, as well as requests for traffic signals, All-Way Stop signs, and roadway markings, particularly in school speed zones. He said that requests should be emailed to the Board Office ahead of time, to give Committee Members enough time to investigate the locations prior to their Meeting so they'll be prepared to discuss them in a timely manner.

In closing, he announced that the next Committee Meeting will be conducted in person at 7:30pm, on Tuesday, September 26th in the Board 5 Office.

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that there are problems with the surface of the newly installed running track at Juniper Valley Park that's now crumbling. He said that the contractor installed a floated surface over the concrete base that's the foundation underneath the running track. He said that the contractor has returned to repair it wherever the surface cracked. But, large holes have recently developed in the surface, he said. The floated surface cannot withstand the amount of traffic use that this track is getting from park users every day, and it's in hazardous condition now, he said.

Mr. Fiedler also reported that there's been a lot of vandalism in Juniper Park recently. He said that lately, there have been very large parties inside the Park. He asked everyone to report any infractions of the law to 911 or 311 immediately in order to guarantee everyone's safety inside the Park.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Arcuri adjourned the Board Meeting on a motion from the floor at 9:18pm.