



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

November 8, 2023

Board Members Present

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Carol Benovic-Bradley; Antonetta Binanti; Jessica Boiardi; Eric Butkiewicz; Rachel Caracci; Robert Cermeli; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Steven Fiedler; Dorie Figliola; Paul A. Kerzner; Diego Leclery; Edward Lettau; Katherine Masi; Michael O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Melissa Rebecca; Kenneth Rehberger; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Lily Scarabino; Dennis Stephan; Katarzyna Syta; Gyanal Thapa; Barbara Toscano; Patrick Trinchese; Jasmine Valle; Maryanna Zero; Brandon Zwagerman

Board Members Absent

Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Michael Byc; Maritza Carmona; Ethan Chan; Deepak Chaudhari; Salvatore Crifasi; Nickolas Cuttonaro; Daniel De Brucker; Derek Evers; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoefflerle; Maryann Lattanzio; Eileen Moloney; April Narsasian; Margaret O'Kane

ELECTED OFFICIALS and STAFF

Clare Collins – Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
Kate Boehme – Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz
Johnathan Betancourt – U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez, 7th C.D.
Philip Wong, - NYC Council Member Robert Holden, 30th CD
Juan Mayancela – NYC Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez, 34th CD
John D'Angelo - NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, 15th SD
Irene Stathatos – NYS Senator Michael Gianaris, 12th SD
Kevin Wisniewski – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28th AD
Miles Ashton – NYS Assembly Member Steven Raga, 30th AD
Brenda Quinio– NYS Assembly Member Juan Ardila, 37th AD

STAFF

Gary Giordano, District Manager-CB5Q
John Maier, CB5Q Staff
Nastazia Kielar –Graduate Student Intern for the Fund for the City of New York

GUESTS

Derek Jasmin and Scott Solomon- NYC Dept. of City Planning – Queens Office

Vincent Arcuri, the Board Chairperson, welcomed everyone to tonight's Board Meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:35pm, following a Salute to the Flag. He said that this Meeting is also being livestreamed via YouTube, where 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.

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The Board Chairperson announced the first Order of Business, and said that Walter Sanchez, the Chairperson of the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee, was on hand to conduct the Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING Re: CITY of YES for ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY City wide Zoning Text

**Amendment Proposed by the NYC Dept. of City Planning
(N240010ZRY and N240011ZRY) –**

**Presentation by Derek Jasmin, Queens Planner, and Scott Solomon,
Community Liaison in the Dept. of City Planning**

According to the Dept. of City Planning, this Zoning Text Amendment would: remove outdated restrictions on where businesses can locate; make it easier for businesses to find space or expand; simplify rules regarding which type of businesses are allowed in commercial areas; allow more types of businesses on ground floors and in some cases on upper floors; and update how Zoning Rules classify businesses.

Derek Jasmin, the Dept. of City Planning Liaison for Community Board 5, Queens, explained what zoning entails. He informed everyone that the overall City of YES Citywide Zoning Text Amendment includes two other Initiatives, namely, the expansion of Housing Opportunity, and Carbon Neutrality. He said that the Carbon Neutrality Initiative was presented to the Community Board in June of this year.

He introduced Scott Solomon, an Associate Planner in Queens, as he gave a power point presentation on the CITY of YES Economic Opportunity Initiative.

Mr. Jasmin began by saying that our local businesses are the lifeblood of our neighborhoods that need clear and sensible rules that give them the flexibility to change and grow, which is basically the function of zoning regulations.

He explained that while local zoning regulations often present a barrier to opening, operating or expanding local businesses, by contrast, this Initiative would remove outdated limitations on businesses. He said that the purpose of this Initiative is to support thriving commercial centers and retail streets to better serve NYC communities and encourage the retention of places that sustain our neighborhoods.

Mr. Jasmin outlined four main goals of this Initiative as:

1) Make it Easier for Businesses to Find Space and Grow.

He said that this Initiative will make it easier for small scale producers, for example, local bakeries and 3D print shops, to start or expand their businesses. He said that, for instance, their plans include eliminating arbitrary distinctions between C1 and C2 Zoning Districts so that they'll allow the same mix of businesses in each one.

He also pointed out that outdated dancing restrictions in zoning districts would be eliminated, so that people who get up to dance at a local bar or restaurant are not in violation of local zoning restrictions.

2) Support Growing Industries.

He said that the proposed Initiative would make it easier for property owners to provide space in their buildings for urban agriculture, life sciences, night life, amusements, and home occupations, by giving the City Planning Commission (CPC) greater discretion in determining whether a proposed use is appropriate for a particular site, and thereby eliminate the need to obtain zoning variances or spot zoning changes in many instances. He said that the proposed Initiative would permit indoor agricultural facilities, such as vertical farming to locate in commercial zones, instead of being restricted to industrial areas.

Regarding entertainment venues, such as bars, restaurants, and arcades, he said that these types of businesses would be permitted on local commercial corridors but limited in size to 10,000 sq. ft. of space. He said that large scale venues would remain restricted to the Midtown Special Zoning District, Coney Island or other recreational areas, and industrial zones.

In addition, he said that the proposed Initiative would remove arbitrary distinctions between C4 and C6 Districts, so that in a C4 District, the same business types would be permitted as in a C6 District, where small scale clean production businesses would be allowed up to 5,000 sq. ft. of Ground floor commercial space, and the floor above it.

3) Enable More Business-Friendly Streetscapes.

He said that the proposed Initiative aims to foster vibrant neighborhoods by ensuring that businesses contribute to active, safe and walkable streets. He said that this Initiative would reduce conflicts between competing uses, such as, retail shops, beauty parlors, delis, and auto related uses, by promoting better Ground floor design for active and attractive retail streets, and by prohibiting long blank walls and drive-throughs that break up retail corridors.

He said that they propose to rationalize and consolidate the range of auto-servicing uses into two separate categories between light, and heavy vehicle repair and maintenance. He said that heavy vehicle maintenance must be licensed by the State Dept. of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and would be restricted to remain in industrial areas. On the other hand, new light motor vehicle repair and maintenance shops would be allowed in commercial zoning districts, but only after seeking approval from the Board of Standards and Appeals and establishing a site plan that confines their activity to within a zoning lot.

Under the proposed Initiative, he said that micro-distribution businesses would be allowed to occupy commercial areas, provided they are small scale operations of clean production businesses that are limited to 5,000 sq. ft. of space.

Mr. Jasmin pointed out that, during the pandemic, most New Yorkers began to work from home. He said this expansion of home-based businesses calls for modernizing the City's Zoning Regulations to ensure that home-based businesses, such as barbers, interior decorators, architects, and other new business ventures, are good neighbors.

4) Create New Opportunities for Businesses to Open.

He said that the proposed Initiative would create new opportunities for businesses to open by establishing new zoning tools that could boost job growth and business expansion or adaptation. For example, he said that many large-scale residential developments, such as college campuses or hospitals, are zoned as residential districts, which means that retail services and small-scale producers cannot easily locate inside the building. As a result, residents live much further away from local goods and services than they would otherwise be if they resided in smaller buildings. He said that this Initiative proposes to authorize the CPC to allow up to 15,000 sq. ft. of commercial space in existing or new construction of a large-scale residential campus, which would give greater access to obtain daily necessities, as well as the option to expand the development as circumstances change.

In addition, he said that the proposed Initiative would allow commercial usage of the 2nd Floor in mixed use buildings. And, he said that small scale clean production would be permitted to occupy up to 5,000 sq. ft. of space in a commercial district.

Mr. Jasmin said that under the proposed Initiative, businesses would have a more rationale process in seeking a Waiver of Zoning Rules in commercial districts, regarding front yard requirements or setback heights, bulk limitations or location rules, in order to open a business, such as, a corner store, film studio, or expand a clothing store on the 2nd Floor above their existing storefront. He said that the Board of Standards and Appeals and City Planning Commission would be given greater discretion in deciding these applications on a case-by-case basis. He said that the new proposed Initiative would remove arbitrary distinctions between C1 and C2 Districts, so that existing C1 Districts would allow for the same mix of businesses as those in C2 District overlays, provided they're confined to 5,000 sq. ft. of space. At the same time, he said that the proposed Initiative would remove arbitrary distinctions between C4 and C6 Districts, so that in a C4 District, the same business types would be permitted as in a C6 District,

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where small scale clean production businesses would be allowed up to 10,000 sq. ft. of Ground floor commercial space, and the floor above it.

Mr. Jasmin said that the proposed Initiative would authorize the CPC to create a range of new job intensive zoning districts to serve as Job Centers to attract new businesses to our City by creating new Loft-Style Zoning Districts in outdated Manufacturing Districts throughout the City. In addition, the CPC would allow businesses to apply to open a new corner store occupying a maximum of 2,500 sq. ft. of space, provided they are located within 100 feet of an intersection. In addition, the CPC would be authorized to allow home-based businesses to occupy a maximum of 15,000 sq. ft. of commercial space. Mr. Jasmin also stated that this Initiative proposes to modernize loading dock rules to facilitate the delivery of goods and services to local stores, where deliveries are often left on sidewalks, instead of being delivered into buildings as is the practice in industrial areas. He said that this Initiative would authorize the Dept. of City Planning to regulate the creation of local hubs for safe and sustainable deliveries to occur.

Mr. Jasmin outlined a brief snapshot of the local economy of Community Board 5, Queens by saying that there are approximately 33,700 jobs spread across a range of sectors of the economy, and there are approximately 3,160 storefronts with a wide range of business types occupying them. However, he said that 300 storefronts are currently vacant, which represents a vacancy rate of 10%, as compared to the City's overall vacancy rate for storefronts which is closer to 20%.

He said that the proposed Initiative would make it easier to fill empty storefronts by giving businesses more certainty on where they can locate, what they can do with their space, and by removing outdated zoning restrictions on businesses that are opening new locations or expanding existing storefronts. He explained that many storefront businesses pre-date the adoption of the City's Zoning Resolution in 1961. He explained that, under existing Zoning Regulations, non-conforming uses are restricted from re-occupying vacant storefronts within a residential district, except for R5 and R7, throughout the City. He said that this restriction has hindered the reopening of many storefronts throughout the City. He said that the proposed Initiative would lift certain restrictions on reactivating vacant storefronts which would help to boost the local economy.

Lastly, Mr. Jasmin pointed out that as part of the proposed Initiative, the Dept. of City Planning would simplify and modernize the terms that refer to use in the NYC Zoning Resolution.

In closing, Mr. Jasmin welcomed everyone to visit their website at www.nyc.gov/CityOfYes, then clicking on the tab for Economic Opportunity, to find more information on this proposal. He said that a summary of the 18 components of this proposal was distributed to Board Members for their review and recommendation. He welcomed everyone to ask any questions they may have about tonight's presentation via email to their webpage.

Walter Sanchez, the Chairperson of the Zoning and Land Use Committee, thanked him for his presentation and welcomed those interested in this matter to attend the next Zoning and Land Use Committee Meeting in the Board Office on December 11th, 2023. He advised them to call the Board Office in advance, at (718) 366-1834, to let staff know that they plan to attend the Meeting.

Mr. Sanchez reminded everyone that the purpose of creating various Use Groups in Zoning is to protect the quality of life of residents in low-density neighborhoods like ours. For example, he said that current Zoning Regulations prevent anyone from opening a barber shop next door to your home if you live on a residential block. He said that screen print shops, cannabis stores, auto repair shops, or film studios are prohibited, as well. On the other hand, he said that there are archaic zoning restrictions, including: 1) Pool tables are not allowed in certain types of bars; 2) Proprietors can be fined when patrons dance inside their bar or restaurant; and 3) Bike repair shops are not permitted on the same block as bicycle shops.

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He opened the floor to questions and comments.

Mr. Sanchez asked if the proposed Zoning Text Amendment would mean that barber shops, beauty salons, plumbing supply businesses, and so forth, would be allowed to open for business on residential blocks. Mr. Jasmin replied that these types of small shops, including a local deli, would be allowed to open within 100 feet of the corner on a residential block. However, he said, the main goal of this proposed zoning amendment is to facilitate the reopening of vacant storefronts on commercial strips. He said that since the pandemic, many entrepreneurs have been running businesses out of their homes that don't comply with existing zoning regulations. By expanding the availability of reasonable alternative locations in the vicinity of local commercial strips, he said that it should be easier for these home-based businesses to relocate into more accessible accommodations.

Theodore Renz, Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, and a Board Member, said that some aspects of the proposed Initiative could be beneficial to both local merchants and residents.

Robert Cermeli, a Board Member from Middle Village, commented that zoning regulations are supposed to maintain the quality of life of residents, by restricting industrial uses from occupying properties on residential blocks. He expressed concern about the accessibility of shops that are located on the 2nd floor of stores without an elevator. He said that he supports most of the proposals included in tonight's presentation. However, he said that he's concerned about just how much discretion would be awarded to the City Planning Commission to grant Waivers to Zoning Rules and Regulations.

Patrick Trinchese, a Board Member from Middle Village, said that he has a lot of questions about this proposal, after reading all 600 pages of it. He said that one of the major problems for residents of Middle Village is commercial overnight parking. He asked how this problem would be addressed by this proposal, and asked if opening new home-based businesses wouldn't just compound the problem by generating even more overnight commercial parking. Mr. Solomon, a City Planner in the Dept. of City Planning, explained that, under the proposed Initiative, one of the rules for home occupations is that you can't sell anything out of your house that you don't make in your house. For example, he said that no plumbing supplies or pharmacies would be considered home-based businesses. He said that they would be limited to occupying no more than 49% of the property on the lot. For instance, in a 2-story home with a 2,000 sq. ft. of floor area, he said that a barber shop, doctor's office, or lawyer's office would be permitted to occupy 999 sq. ft of space on the ground floor, provided they obtain a Certificate of Occupancy from the Dept. of Buildings. He said that no on-premises storage facilities would be permitted. He said that initially, he expects there will be plenty of questions about the correct interpretation of the proposed Zoning Regulations, subject to enforcement by the Dept. of Buildings. He encouraged everyone to give them feedback on any outstanding complaints that have been reported to the Dept. of Buildings, so they can work toward clearing up the backlog of unresolved complaints in the system.

Lee Rottenberg, a Board Member from Middle Village, asked what was meant by the phrase walkable streets. Mr. Solomon replied that it refers to their overall purpose of creating a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists and businesses. He said that their proposal would expand the requirement that drive-thru facilities and gas stations obtain a Special Permit or Variance from the Board of Standards and Appeals to open their business in the City of New York. He said that, under this proposed Initiative, all auto related uses would be required to obtain a Special Permit prior to opening their business.

Katherine Masi, a Board Member, expressed concern that someone might open an auto repair shop in a two-story garage on a residential block, under the proposed revisions. She said that there doesn't seem to be enough consideration given to questions about how a new business would impact the quality of life on a residential block.

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Diego Leclery, a Board Member from Ridgewood, asked if there are any advantages to having businesses located so close to residences. Mr. Solomon replied that the Community Board 5 Queens area is predominantly full of auto-oriented neighborhoods. He said that during this public comment period, his agency is looking to hear the opinions of community residents about what types of home-based businesses appeal to them, as well as other specific uses that would be preferable to empty storefronts along commercial corridors.

Paul Kerzner, a Board Member from Ridgewood, expressed his concern that the proposed changes to the C1 and C2 Districts may adversely affect the C3 and C4 Districts in the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District. Mr. Solomon replied that no changes will be made to the underlying zoning districts under this proposal, only the Use Groups will be affected. He said that developers won't be allowed to build larger buildings under this proposal, but there will be a more expanded variety of uses that will be allowed inside a building.

Mr. Sanchez thanked everyone for their input at tonight's Board Meeting and referred the matter to the Zoning and Land Use Review Committee for further review and recommendation.

PUBLIC FORUM

Christina Wilkinson, a Ridgewood resident who spoke on behalf of the Juniper Park Civic Association, said the some of the changes that are being proposed in the City of Yes for Economic Opportunity Zoning Text Amendment could have wide ranging economic impacts. For example, she said that allowing retail and commercial development within 100 feet of the corner in all residential zones would allow corner properties to have a large footprint on their lot, with commercial uses abutting adjacent residential properties. She also said that changing the approval process would remove community input and the ability to negotiate with builders.

Furthermore, she said that the City talks about the need to build more housing, and asked why is this proposal encouraging the opposite outcome.

In addition, she said that by permitting home-based businesses to occupy up to 49% of their property and consolidating the number of Use Groups from 18 to 10, will allow more noxious uses to occupy the Ground floor space in residential areas. She said that these proposed changes would allow commercial development everywhere, which is not appropriate or welcome in our community. She asked the Board to vote against this proposal.

Michael LoCascio, the Director of St. Stan's Sports Association and Vice-Chair of St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Academy in Maspeth, said that the proposed Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries, on the corner of 64 Street at Grand Avenue, are only 486 feet from the St. Stanislaus Kostka School at 61-17 Grand Avenue, less than a block away. He pointed out that this type of business is at greater risk for robberies, because it's a cash based business. He said that they should be located in areas which are not readily accessible to young children. On behalf of 300 families whose children attend St. Stan's School, and 900 families who are enrolled in their Sports Association, he asked the Board to vote against the proposed sites down the block from the school.

Eileen James, a Middle Village resident, said that large 18-wheeler tractor trailers, that haul loads of steel that weigh anywhere from 35,000 pounds to 80,000 pounds daily, have been barreling up and down Eliot Avenue for the past 4 years. She said that truck drivers constantly ignore both small signs on the corner that read: Only Local Deliveries by Trucks, as they turn onto Eliot Avenue from 69 Street. She said that large trucks should stay on the City's Truck Route because the roadway isn't designed to carry this type of traffic. She said that it's particularly dangerous along the narrow section of Eliot Avenue, btw 67 Street and Mt. Olivet Crescent, especially when they drive faster than the 25 MPH speed limit. She pointed out that there are huge cracks in the roadway on Eliot Avenue, due to the overweight truck

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traffic. In closing, she asked that better signage be posted on 69 Street and on Eliot Avenue and more traffic enforcement against illegal truck traffic be performed in the area.

Melissa Rebecca, a Board Member from Middle Village, spoke about creating a social media site for our Community Board on both Facebook and Instagram to foster a more informed public, especially young people. She suggested forming a Social Media Committee that could meet each month to create a posting schedule from month to month. She suggested that the site be restricted to content that consists of brief captions and highlights of Committee Meetings, Public Hearings, and reminders about upcoming events in the community. She welcomed feedback from Board Members about her ideas.

Lance Lovejoy, a Maspeth resident, objected to the proposed Adult-Use Cannabis Dispensaries on the corner of 64 Street at Grand Avenue. He said that common sense dictates that their customers will smoke their product when exiting the shop, just as those who smoke tobacco products do. He said that school children should not be exposed to this smoke while walking to and from school daily. For this reason, he asked that the Board oppose granting any licenses to this type of business in proximity to the school.

Charles Vavruska, a Maspeth resident, said that he opposes licensing any Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries in the Community Board 5 area. He said that Middle School principals have complained to him that school children are arriving at school high on pot daily, and teachers report that some of their students wreek of the smell of pot in the classroom, making their other students very uncomfortable. He said that if the Community Board votes to oppose granting a license to a bar because of noise complaints, then the Board should oppose granting licenses to this type of business, because their products are destroying our children's lives.

Robert Monahan, a resident of 71 Street in Glendale and President of the Greater Ridgewood Youth Council, opposed the proposed site of a new Adult Use Cannabis Dispensary at 70-24 Myrtle Avenue, by saying that the location is a former Bank on the corner of his block, which is a dead-end street. He said that this location is not suitable for this type of business because it's so close to local schools, including a Charter School on Cooper Avenue, and PS/IS 119, where school children walk to and from school daily. Besides, he said that there's no on-street parking where daily shoppers can park their cars on his dead-end block, so this business would only compound the problem.

Susan Vavruska, a Maspeth resident, opposed granting licenses to any Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries near schools or in commercial areas. She said that parents are trying to protect their children from being exposed to drugs of any kind. She complained that people smoke pot inside children's playgrounds in the park now. She said that she's opposed to allowing this element into our community. She said that we need businesses that bring value to our community, instead. She asked the Board to vote against licensing these businesses.

Anthony Nunziato, a former Community Board 5 Member and President of the Juniper Park Civic Association (JPCA), opposed the proposed sites for Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries on the corner of 64 Street at Grand Avenue in Maspeth. He said that he opposed the legalization of marijuana in the first place. He said that since it's a drug, it should be dispensed in drug stores, if at all. On behalf of JPCA's members, he asked the Board to oppose any proposed sites for Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries that are in proximity to local schools.

Michael Messano, a Maspeth homeowner on Grand Avenue, said that he is opposed to opening Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries at the proposed sites on the corner of Grand Avenue & Flushing Avenues at

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64 Street, in Maspeth. He said that he's lived on his block since 1957 and he can no longer sit on his front stoop during the day because he'll get a contact high from pedestrians who walk past his house, while they're smoking pot. He asked the Board to oppose granting licenses to these businesses.

Chris Iavarone, the owner and head instructor of Tiger Schulmann's Martial Arts, announced that they will soon relocate into new space in the Atlas Park Mall at 8000 Cooper Avenue, in Glendale. He said he's taught over 10,000 students in this community about physical and mental fitness for the past 15 years, and he loves Glendale. He welcomed everyone to attend their grand opening ceremony on November 18th, 2023.

Chairperson's Report

Vincent Arcuri

Minutes

The Board Chairperson asked Board members if they had received and reviewed the minutes from last month's Board Meeting that was conducted on October 11, 2023. On a motion from Walter Clayton, that was seconded by Dorie Figliola, the minutes were adopted, as submitted.

Liquor, Wine and Beer License and Renewal Applications

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.

New Liquor License Applications

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 1) Ridgewood Bar and Deli LLC 17-01 Gates Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [B/T] |
| 2) JLJ Restaurant LLC 464 Onderdonk Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [B/T] * |

Liquor License Renewals

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1) 5103 Building Corp d/b/a Knights of Columbus 79-03 Myrtle Ave, Glendale, NY 11385 | [CL] |
| 2) Coyote Bohemio Inc. 55-19 Myrtle Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [R] |

New Wine, Beer & Cider

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1) Rosa's Pizzeria 75-59 Metropolitan Ave, Middle Village, NY 11379 | [R] |
|--|-----|

Wine, Beer & Cider Renewals

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1) Chiquita's Restaurant LLC. 60-59 Myrtle Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [R] |
| 2) Pollos a la Brasa Pio Pio Inc. d/b/a Pio Pio Restaurant 62-30 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park, NY 11374 | [R] |
| 3) El Fogon Rest. Inc. 17-01 Palmetto St, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [R] |
| 4) Woodward Coworking LLC d/b/a Ester 467 Woodward Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [B/T] |

Other Notifications

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1) Cantina 33 Inc. 55-33 Myrtle Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [R] ** |
| 2) Knights Ridge LLC d/b/a TV Eye 16-47 Weirfield St, Ridgewood, NY 11385 | [B/T] *** |

* 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>.

** Notified us of a physical Alteration to their space for a DJ booth. They were on last month's list for Renewal and a Method of Operation change.

*** Will be applying for a New Year's Eve Permit.

[B/T] = Bar/Tavern , [CA] = Catering , [CL] = Club , [R] = Restaurant

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Demolition and Construction Notifications

Mr. Arcuri reported that since last month's Board Meeting, the Board Office received a demolition notice for the 1-story wood frame garage in rear yard of a 3-family house, at **505 Fairview Avenue, (Block: 3382; Lot: 9)**, between Greene Avenue and Bleecker Street, in **Ridgewood**.

He asked Board Members to call the staff in the Board Office to report any suspicious activity they see in our Community Board area.

The Board Chairperson took attendance of Board Members who were present, and recognized both District Manager Gary Giordano, and Staff Member John Maier as present.

The Board Chairperson recognized representatives of local elected officials who were present and invited them to address the Board.

On behalf of **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr**, Clare Collins, the Community Liaison for the Board 5 area, announced three upcoming events on the Borough President's Calendar:

- 1) The Queens High School Fair, from 5:30pm to 8:30pm tomorrow night, in Queens Borough Hall at 120-55 Queens Blvd, in Kew Gardens, Queens;
- 2) Transgender Remembrance Ceremony next Tuesday, November 21st at 6pm in Queens Borough Hall;
- 3) Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6pm on Thursday, December 7th in front of Queens Borough Hall.

She advised anyone interested in attending any of these events to RSVP at www.queensbp.org.

Ms. Collins informed everyone that applications for Board Membership will be posted on their website at the end of the year. She advised all Board Members who didn't attend many Board Meetings this year to contact Kahleel Bragg, the Director of Community Boards in the Queens Borough President's Office, to explain any absences you might have, ahead of reappointments that will be made early next year.

Ms. Collins also announced that this month, the Borough President and Queens Chamber of Commerce will sponsor the Queensboro Tech and Innovation Challenge where 5 of the winning entrepreneurs will be awarded up to \$20,000 in seed money for their ideas. She said that the competition will end in March of 2024. For more information on how to apply for this competition, she said to visit their website at: www.queensstartup.org.

On behalf of **Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz**, Kate Boehme welcomed everyone to attend their annual Veterans Day Ceremony a 11am tomorrow morning at the Vietnam War Veterans Memorial at 79 Street and Grand Avenue inside Elmhurst Park.

On behalf of **Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez**, Johnathan Betancourt reported that the Congresswoman has voiced her concerns about the proliferation of illegal smoke shops in her district to Police Commissioner Edward Caban, and the Sheriff's Department. He said that she emphasized the need for enforcement measures against any locations in the vicinity of local schools, especially because their branding and advertising tactics are apparently very attractive to young children.

In addition, he informed everyone that the Congresswoman introduced new legislation in Congress this past month, known as the Ovarian, Cervical and Endometrial Cancer Awareness Act, to raise public awareness of these deadly illnesses.

On behalf of **City Council Member Robert Holden**, Philip Wong announced two upcoming workshops in their office, located at 58-38 69 Street, in Maspeth:

- 1) From 10am to 1pm, on Thursday, December 14th, 2023, representatives from the Department of Buildings will be on hand to answer questions about how to apply for Work Permits, or clear up

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building violations and other enforcement actions, as well as to explain inspection procedures. He advised that any paperwork they've received should be brought along with them.

- 2) From 11am to 3pm, on Thursday, December 21st, 2023, representatives from the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings will be on hand to meet with constituents to answer any questions they have regarding summonses, hearings, or the status of their violations. Again, he advised everyone to bring any paperwork that they're inquiring about.

In closing, Mr. Wong said that the Council Member is opposed to granting licenses to all Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries that are currently in front of the Community Board. For more information, he welcomed constituents to call their office at (718) 366-3900.

On behalf of **City Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez**, Juan Mayancela announced that constituents in the 34th Council District are welcome to join in the Participatory Budget process until this Friday, November 10th this year. He said that they can vote for new community improvement projects and programs online by going to their website at: <https://council.nyc.gov/jennifer-gutierrez/participatory-budgeting/> or by calling their office at (718) 963-3141.

He said that the Council Member has requested a meeting with the Commanding Officers of the 104th Precinct and 83rd Precinct to discuss the rash of robberies that have been reported recently along the Brooklyn-Queens border.

In closing, he welcomed constituents from rent-stabilized apartments who are having problems with building maintenance issues, as well as anyone who has had difficulty obtaining benefits, such as, Food Stamps and Medicaid, to call their office at 718-963-3141, so they can assist them in resolving these matters.

On behalf of **NY State Senator Addabbo**, John D'Angelo, Office Manager in their Middle Village office, said that the Senator sends his regards but, unfortunately, he can't attend tonight's Board Meeting because he's hosting a Diabetes Information Session that is being co-sponsored by Fidelis Care, and St. Francis Hospital, from 6pm to 8pm in All Saints Episcopal Church, at 84-85 96th Street in Woodhaven. He announced three upcoming events:

- 1) Their office is sponsoring an annual Coat Drive in cooperation with New York Cares.
- 2) State Senator Addabbo will hold Mobile Office Hours next Thursday evening, November 16th, from 5:30pm to 7pm, in the Middle Village Public Library at 72-31 Metropolitan Avenue when he'll be available to meet with constituents personally to address their concerns.
- 3) Next Friday, November 17th, from 10am to 1pm, the Senator will sponsor a Job Fair at Resorts World in South Ozone Park. He said that 70 different vendors will be there to interview job applicants on the spot.

He welcomed calls for more information to their Middle Village office at (718) 497-1630.

On behalf of **NY State Assemblyman Michael Gianaris**, Irene Stathatos said that their office has contacted the State Office of Cannabis Management to express their opposition to siting any Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries near schools. She said that there was a crackdown on illegal smoke shops in Astoria recently, leaving only one shop remaining open for business on Ditmars Boulevard at 36th St.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi**, Kevin Wisniewski informed everyone that they recently completed their schedule of Community Clean Ups this Fall, with about 50 volunteers showing up to work with 25 local students, all of whom received Letters of Commendation from the Assembly Member. He welcomed volunteers to contact staff in their office at (718) 263-5595 to help with their annual Thanksgiving Turkey Drive, a School Supply Drive, and a Clothing and Toy Drive for children.

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Regarding the recent legislative session in Albany, he said that the Assembly Member has been urging Governor Hochul to increase funds for nonpublic and religious schools to purchase additional security equipment. He said that there's currently \$45 Million set aside for this purpose, but an estimated \$90 Million would be required to successfully complete this project.

On behalf of NY State Assembly Member Steven Raga, Miles Ashton announced that they will all be marching in the Veterans Day Parade on Metropolitan Avenue, between 80 Street and 68 Street, in Middle Village this Sunday, beginning at 12 Noon. He said that he hoped to see everyone there. He said that their office will hold a Turkey Giveaway on Saturday, November 18th at the Universal Church in Woodside from 9:30 am to 4pm. He welcomed calls to their office at (718) 651-3185 for more information about the next Turkey Giveaway they're planning to hold this year. He also announced that staff from Queens Legal Services will be on hand to meet with constituents in their office at 55-19 69 Street, between 11am and 2pm, next Thursday, November 16th concerning mortgage foreclosure and homeowner rights. He advised everyone interested in attending this session to register by calling their office at (718) 651-3185.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Juan Ardila**, Brenda Quinio announced that the Assembly Member will host a Mammogram Mobile Unit for his constituents in Ridgewood on December 8th from 9 AM to 5 PM in front of the Ridgewood Public Library at 20-12 Madison Street, at Forest Avenue. She said that free mammograms will be provided to women who: (1) currently live in New York City, (2) are aged 40-79 with health insurance, or aged 50-79 without health insurance; and 3) haven't had a mammogram screening in the past 12 months.

Next month, she said that their staff will coordinate with faculty and students in IS 93 School to host another Clothing and Resource Exchange Event on Tuesday, December 19th from 3 PM to 5 PM inside the school, located at 66-56 Forest Avenue, in Ridgewood. She said that during last month's Resource Event that was held in Rosemary's Playground on Woodward Avenue in Ridgewood, they assisted over 150 low-income families to receive donations of clothing and access to tablets and cell phone services. Regarding complaints about illegal smoke shops in his district, she reported that the Assembly Member plans to tour the district with the NYC Sheriff's Office to inspect the growing number of illegal smoke shops. She said that he opposes granting a license to any locations that are near local schools. In closing, she welcomed calls for more information to their office at (718) 784-3194, Mondays to Thursdays, or via email directly to the Assemblyman at: ardilaj@nyassembly.gov.

The Board Chairperson thanked everyone for their input and introduced the next Item on the Agenda:

District Manager's Report

Gary Giordano

The District Manager wished everyone and their families a Happy Thanksgiving. He welcomed everyone to march in the Veterans Day Parade this Sunday, starting at 80 Street and Metropolitan Avenue at 12 Noon and then heading west to Christ the King High School, in Middle Village.

The District Manager explained that with the legalization of the sale and distribution of cannabis products in New York State, applicants for licenses are mandated to notify Community Boards in New York City at least 30-days prior to applying for their license to operate their business within the confines of their Community Board. He said these Notifications are like a 30-Day Notification about a Liquor License. He explained that 30-Day Notifications are the first step in the application process which allows Community Boards an opportunity for public input in the application process, prior to the State Office of Cannabis Management's issuance of a license.

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He reported that the Board recently received several notifications about proposed locations where people intend to submit applications to open Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries in our Board 5 area. He said that two of the proposed sites are within a block of St. Stan's School on Grand Avenue, in Maspeth: one at 63-09 Flushing Avenue, and the other one at 64-01 Grand Avenue.

In addition, he said the Board also received 3 notifications of proposed plans to operate out of a store at 56-40 Myrtle Avenue, in Ridgewood, but those 3 candidates withdrew from further consideration.

He said that the Liquor License and Cannabis Committee met recently to review the list of proposed locations and voted to oppose three sites: 64-01 Grand Avenue and 63-09 Flushing Avenue, in Maspeth, and 70-24 Myrtle Avenue, in Glendale. He said that, in the meantime, three other applicants withdrew from the application process. He urged Board Members to support the Committee's vote against these three proposed sites because of their proximity to local schools and a house of worship.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Liquor License and Cannabis Committee

Patrick Trinchese

Patrick Trinchese, Committee Co-Chair, reported that the Committee met in the Cafeteria of Christ the King High School, on November 1, 2023, to interview several of the applicants for Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries in the Board 5 area, and express their concerns about some of the locations. He said that 11 community residents attended the Meeting and voiced their objections to 3 of the proposed sites. He said that after a brief discussion, the Committee voted unanimously to oppose the proposed site at 70-24 Myrtle Avenue, due to its location within 500 feet of the closest school, Forte Preparatory Academy, and directly adjacent to McDonald's, in Glendale.

The Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee's recommendation which then carried by a vote of -33- in favor; -1- opposed; -0- abstentions; and -0- not voting.

Mr. Trinchese reported that the Committee also interviewed the applicants for 2 locations in Maspeth, during their Meeting. He said that after careful consideration, the Committee voted to oppose the proposed sites for the Adult Use Cannabis Dispensaries located at 63-01 Flushing Avenue, and 64-01 Grand Avenue, in Maspeth due to their proximity to local schools and houses of worship.

The Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee's recommendation which then carried by a vote of -33- in favor; -1- opposed; -0- abstentions; and -0- not voting.

Parks Services Committee

Steven Fiedler

Steven Fiedler reported that the Committee met in the Board 5 Office on Thursday, October 26th to review the proposed design plans for the Vito J. Maranzano Glendale Playground, located on Central Avenue, between 70 Street and 71 Street. He gave a power point presentation and said that this project is estimated to cost \$5.8 Million.

Mr. Fiedler reported that as part of this project, all new play equipment will be installed in the children's playground area that borders Central Avenue, separating the play areas of young children, 3 to 5 years old, from older children, 5 to 12 years old. In addition, he said that a new sprinkler system will be installed with an automatic shut off valve, to conserve water. He said that all the Park Entrances will remain in place, and the handball court, with the whale painted on it, should remain in place, too.

He said that the design plans call for installing new 4' fencing around this Park. However, the Committee is advocating for fencing to remain at the same height as it is now, so that it could be locked overnight to prevent people from entering the Park after dark. He said that, while Parks Department personnel don't lock Parks overnight, local volunteers should take on that responsibility upon completion of this project. In addition, he said that 19 new trees, with benches all around them, will be planted in the Park

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Paul Kerzner, a Board Member, said that there was a comfort station inside the Park at one time, and asked why it isn't part of this rehabilitation project. Mr. Fiedler replied that it was demolished years ago. Due to the high cost of construction, the Committee doesn't plan to advocate in favor of rebuilding it. Mr. Kerzner said that a mini-comfort station is estimated to cost \$70,000. He suggested that the Committee advocate for the installation of a mini-comfort station during Phase 2 of this Park Rehabilitation, and for Benninger Park and Starr Playground.

Mr. Fiedler reported on funding for current and planned capital projects in the Board 5 area:

\$4 Million - The Reconstruction of Benninger Park Playground, in Ridgewood

\$4.6 Million – The Multi-Purpose Reconstruction of Evergreen Park Playground, in Glendale

\$4.25 Million – Juniper Valley Park Ballfields, in Middle Village

\$8.3 Million – Frank Principe Park Playground, in Maspeth

\$5.8 Million – Vito J. Maranzano Playground, in Glendale

\$4 Million – Mafera Park, in Glendale

\$5.2 Million – Juniper Valley Park, Multi-Purpose Play Area, in Middle Village

\$3.5 Million – Frank Principe Park Sports Utility Lighting, in Maspeth

\$1.5 Million - Ridgewood Reservoir Site Restoration

\$5.3 Million- Ridgewood Reservoir Gate House Restoration

In closing, he said that the Running Track and Football/Soccer Field in Juniper Valley Park was completed at a cost of \$5.5 Million. He also reported that the Rehabilitation of the Highland Park Playground was completed this year at a cost of \$2.3 Million.

Transportation and Public Transit Services Committee

Eric Butkiewicz

Eric Butkiewicz reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, October 24th in the Board Office, to review traffic calming requests, as well as traffic signals and All-Way Stop signs, and roadway markings, particularly in school speed zones. He said that the Committee is advocating for quite a few safety improvements in the vicinity of Our Lady of Hope School and Church on Eliot Avenue, in Middle Village. Regarding roadway resurfacing, he said that while DOT crews have completed repaving the roadways on their list, the road markings have not been installed yet. He said that the Committee requests that all the roadway markings should be installed within 2 weeks after resurfacing is done.

He said that the Committee continues to monitor Citi Bike usage at local stations in our Board area.

He asked everyone to please report hazardous roadway conditions and/or dangerous intersections to the Board Office wherever they occur in our Board area. In closing, he welcomed anyone interested in attending the next Committee Meeting at 7:30pm on Tuesday, November 28th, to call the Board Office at (718) 366-1834 to inform the staff.

New Business

Eric Butkiewicz asked that our Community Board establish a social media account. The Board Chairperson referred the matter to the Executive Committee for further consideration.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Arcuri adjourned the Board Meeting on a motion from the floor at 9:40pm.