



## 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](mailto:qn05@cb.nyc.gov)  
[www.NYC.gov/qnscb5](http://www.NYC.gov/qnscb5)



Vincent Arcuri, Jr.  
Chairperson

Gary Giordano  
District Manager

### Minutes of Community Board 5 Public Meeting

February 7, 2024

#### Board Members Present

Bhubaneshor Adhikari; Vincent Arcuri, Jr; Carol Benovic-Bradley; Antonetta Binanti; Tobias Sheppard Bloch; Jessica Boiard; Eric Butkiewicz; Michael Byc; Maritza Carmona; Deepak Chaudhari; Walter E. Clayton, Jr.; Patricia Crowley; Dmytro Fedkowskyj; Steven Fiedler; Dorie Figliola; Fred T. Haller; Fred Hoefflerle; Paul A. Kerzner; Edward Lettau; Katherine Masi; Eileen Moloney; Margaret O'Kane; Michael O'Kane; Donald Passantino; Michael Porcelli; Theodore Renz; Luis Rodriguez; Lee S. Rottenberg; Walter H. Sanchez; Lily Scarabino; Dennis Stephan; Katarzyna Syta; Gyanal Thapa; Barbara Toscano; Patrick Trinchese; Maryanna Zero; Brandon Zwagerman

#### Board Members Absent

Rachel Caracci; Robert Cermeli; Ethan Chan; Salvatore Crifasi; Daniel DeBrucker; Derek Evers; Maryann Lattanzio; Diego Leclery; Melissa Rebecca; Kenneth Rehberger; Jasmine Valle

#### ELECTED OFFICIALS and STAFF

Clare Collins – Queens Borough President Donovan Richards  
Kate Boehme - Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz  
Tianna Armstrong – U.S. Representative Grace Meng, 6<sup>th</sup> C.D.  
Linda Fogal – NYC Council Member Joann Ariola, 32<sup>nd</sup> CD  
Juan Mayancela – NYC Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez, 34<sup>th</sup> CD  
Maria Valdez – NYS Senator Julia Salazar, 18<sup>th</sup> SD  
John D'Angelo - NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, 15<sup>th</sup> SD  
Irene Stathatos – NYS Senator Michael Gianaris, 12<sup>th</sup> SD  
Kevin Wisniewski – NYS Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, 28<sup>th</sup> AD  
Dolma Lama -NYS Assembly Member Steven Raga, 30<sup>th</sup> AD  
Brenda Quinio - NYS Assembly Member Juan Ardila, 37<sup>th</sup> AD  
Viola Isufaj – NYS Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar, 38<sup>th</sup> AD

#### STAFF

Gary Giordano, District Manager-CB5Q  
John Maier, Board 5 Staff

#### GUESTS

Derek Jasmin – Queens Office of the Dept. of City Planning  
Anthony Medina – Ridgewood Times

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

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 Board's Homepage at [www.nyc.gov/qnscb5](http://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**

The District Manager explained that the Mayor's Preliminary Budget was released in January, and that he'll prepare our Board's Responses to the NYC Proposed Capital and Expense Budget for FY 2025 later this month. He said that he plans to focus his comments on major Capital Improvement Projects that are either planned or currently underway in our Board area, as well as our Board's Expense Budget Priorities. He reviewed the Board's Top 10 Capital Budget Priorities as follows:

#### **1. Redesign and Reconstruct Sewer System in Portions of CB5Q Area Having Worst Flooding Problems**

The District Manager said that over the past decade, several large Sewer and Water Main Reconstruction Projects have been undertaken and completed, including \$20+ Million project to install much larger sewer and water mains in Calamus Avenue and in 69 Street, in Maspeth. He said that work on a subsequent project is nearing completion on 69 Street, in the vicinity of Queens Boulevard.

In addition, he said that \$20+ Million was allocated for another project to increase the capacity of the sewer system in Maspeth which called for the installation of larger capacity sewer mains and catch basins, from Calamus Avenue south along 70 Street to the LIE. He said that the contractor is required to replace the sidewalks that were damaged during the construction project.

He said that another Sewer and Water Main Reconstruction Project, totaling \$25+ Million, was completed a few years ago, in a portion of Penelope Avenue, from approximately 70th Street to 76th Street and along 74th Street, where a much larger sewer line was installed between Penelope Avenue and Juniper Boulevard South in Middle Village. He said that the overall cost of this project increased by \$5+ Million when contaminated fill was discovered in the soil that was excavated under this contract, which had to be hauled away.

The District Manager noted that, since these projects were completed, we haven't experienced the kind of severe rainstorms that caused widespread street flooding and sewer backups as had occurred during August of 2007, when 4" of rain fell within 45 minutes, or during August of 2012, when 3 ½" of rain fell in a half-hour. He said last September, when 8" of rain had fallen over the course of an entire day, we didn't experience widespread street flooding and sewer backups in our Board area.

He said that the Board's top priority now is to advocate for the installation of much larger sewer lines in portions of 77th Avenue, at least between 80 Street and 88 Street, where all the rainwater runs down the slope from Myrtle Avenue, between 80th Street and 88th Street, in Glendale.

#### **2. Provide Stormwater Runoff Mitigation**

The District Manager said that our second most important Capital Budget Priority essentially involves a request to install additional Rain Gardens, also known as Bioswales, that are designed to absorb thousands of gallons of stormwater runoff in order to prevent the sewer system from being

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

overwhelmed which leads to sewage treatment plants spilling untreated sewage into the East River, and then into the ocean.

### **3. Correct Cooper Avenue Underpass Flooding, Reconstruct LIRR and 71st Avenue Bridge Abutments Above Cooper Avenue Underpass, and Paint the LIRR Bridge**

The District Manager said that the Environmental Services Committee will meet with representatives from the Dept. of Environmental Protection at the next Committee Meeting to review their plans to upgrade the pumping station at this location.

### **4. Make Capital Improvements to Improve Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety on Grand Avenue at 69th Street, at Grand Avenue/LIE East Bound Service Road, and at the 69 Street/LIE Service Roads Intersections**

The District Manager said that improving traffic and pedestrian safety in the vicinity of the LIE Service Road at these intersections, at Grand Avenue and 69 Street, remains one of our Board's top priorities because it's the most heavily trafficked area in our Board.

### **5. Reconstruct Deteriorated Catch Basins and Provide New Catch Basins in the CB5Q Area**

The District Manager said that all of Ridgewood, Maspeth, Middle Village and Glendale is included in this budget request.

### **6. Reconstruct Palmetto Street from St. Nicholas Ave. to Seneca Ave., and from Onderdonk Avenue to Forest Avenue, in Ridgewood**

The District Manager said that the roadway on Palmetto Street west of Forest Avenue, in Ridgewood, is really deteriorated. He said that only the portion of pavement that's in the center of the roadway, between St. Nicholas Avenue and Seneca Avenue, ever gets resurfaced by DOT because the pillars of the M Train structure block their equipment.

### **7. Reconstruct Sidewalks, Curbs and Pedestrian Ramps along Myrtle Avenue, from Fresh Pond Road to Wyckoff Avenue, in Ridgewood**

The District Manager said that part of this request includes the inspection of sewer and water mains in Myrtle Avenue, as well.

### **8. Reconstruct Wyckoff Avenue, from Flushing Avenue to Cooper Avenue**

The District Manager said that he's hopeful that this project will begin in 2028. Even though most of the proposed project is in Brooklyn, our Board has taken the lead in pushing for it because Wyckoff Avenue is a very heavily trafficked roadway in Ridgewood.

### **9. Replace Existing Bridge on Grand Ave over Newtown Creek in Maspeth**

The District Manager said that this project is very important because it carries a high volume of traffic over Newtown Creek between Maspeth and Williamsburg. He said that this project is estimated to cost at least \$150 Million and is slated to begin in 2027.

### **10. Rehabilitate Ridgewood Reservoir – Phase II, and the Surrounding Area, including Portions of Highland Park and Multi-Use Paths on Vermont Place**

The District Manager explained that the Ridgewood Reservoir was originally maintained as a municipal reservoir until 1954, when it was decommissioned by the City. He said there's about 5 feet of fresh water remaining in Basin 2. Most of the Reservoir is in Glendale, he said. He thanked both Steven Fiedler, the Parks Committee Chair, and Matt Malina with volunteers from NYC H2O, for taking a lead role in advocating to remove invasive species in the Basins and to restore the natural beauty of wetlands in this nature preserve, and for their advocacy for State and Federal landmark status for the entire site.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

### **11. Reconstruct Mafera Park, especially the Turf Ballfield**

The District Manager said that funds have been allocated to redesign the playground in this Park. He said that what we need to advocate for is replacing the surface of the turf ballfield which is quite deteriorated because of all the soccer play there along with occasional baseball games.

### **12. Reconstruct the Lower Ballfields in Juniper Valley Park**

The District Manager explained that this reconstruction is necessary for Ballfields 1 to 4, which are often unplayable for the better part of a week after even moderate rainfall.

Regarding the proposed Expense Budget for FY 2025, the District Manager described the Board's Top 10 Expense Budget Priorities as:

#### **1. Assign additional Personnel for the 104th Police Precinct.**

The District Manager said that at least 170 Police Officers, exclusive of Supervisors, are needed to cope with the incidence of robberies, burglaries, violent crimes, domestic violence threats, response time issues, speeding, auto theft, and rowdy conditions that are often caused by substance abuse, particularly during late night tours. He said that patrol officers often run from one 911 call for assistance to another, due to low staffing levels in the 104<sup>th</sup> Precinct.

#### **2. Provide Field Workers for the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations.**

The District Manager explained that field workers are needed in sufficient numbers to ensure that City water remains excellent; that catch basins are cleaned and repaired, and sewer lines are flushed in a reasonable amount of time. Currently, catch basin repairs and cave-in conditions too often go unrepaired for months.

#### **3. Hire Inspectors and Plan Examiners in sufficient numbers to cope with illegal use of property and questionable construction.**

#### **4. Provide Sanitation Department Cleaning Personnel to Clean Up Illegal Dumping and for Litter Basket Collections.**

The District Manager said that illegal dumping creates unhealthy conditions for local residents, and overflowing litter baskets are an eyesore on our local commercial strips, in addition to attracting rodents to the area.

#### **5. Provide Funding for Educational and Recreational Programs for Children and Teens.**

The District Manager said our Board has been a long-time proponent of funding local after school, evening and weekend sports and education programs for youth in our community. He said that it's especially critical at a time when far too many children and teenagers are unsupervised by parents or guardians after the school day ends, and on weekends.

#### **6. Provide Funding for Fire Department Services.**

#### **7. Provided Needed Services for Senior Citizens.**

The District Manager explained that our Board area has a very large senior citizen population, many of whom are frail, without adequate care, and are living alone. He commended Barbara Toscano, the Director of the Peter Cardella Senior Center on Fresh Pond Road for all the services that they provide to local senior citizens.

#### **8. Provide More Frequent Garbage and Recycling Pick-up for Schools and Institutions.**

The District Manager commented that the current funding levels for this service should not be reduced in the next fiscal year.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

### **9. Allocate funds for the Operation and Enhancement of the Division of Forestry in Queens.**

The District Manager thanked Board Member Paul Kerzner for advocating so strongly for decades for funding to plant thousands of street trees in our Board area, including 900 trees that were planted in Autumn, 1989, in his first year as District Manager of CB5Q.

### **10. Provide Sufficient Personnel for Traffic Safety Inspections, Sign Installations, Pavement Markings, and Sign Manufacturing.**

The District Manager said that due to increasingly dangerous local traffic conditions over the past decade, our Office has received an increasing number of requests for more traffic safety studies, traffic signals, All-Way Stop installations, Speed Bumps, and other requests. He said that the Dept. of Transportation has prioritized requests for speed reducers in the vicinity of local schools.

The Board Chairperson recognized the first speaker as:

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:

"Once again, on behalf of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, we thank you for your support for our Capital Improvement Project request during FY 2024, and we again present this request to you for FY 2025.

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.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

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 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 to 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."

### PUBLIC FORUM

**Paul Pogozelski, President of the Middle Village Property Owners Civic Association**, informed everyone that this year marks the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the Middle Village Property Owners Civic Association. He welcomed everyone to attend their next meeting to celebrate their long history of service to the community at 7pm, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, in St. Margaret's School, in Middle Village. He announced that they will host an Easter Holiday celebration inside Juniper Valley Park for families of all ages. He welcomed everyone to visit Facebook for more information about their upcoming event. In closing, he thanked Board Members Elieen Moloney and Toni Binanti for their support in reconstituting the Middle Village Roller Hockey League this year. He said that it's been great fun for all the children and families who have joined their league.

**Anil Pasram, Stewardship Coordinator of Jamaica Bay- Rockaway Park Conservancy**, informed everyone that, as part of their Workforce Development Program, the Conservancy plans to hire local youth, aged 18 to 25 years old, to work in the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Area for six months, this year. He said that during last year's pilot program, the work crews replanted many native species, and removed 5 acres of invasive species and 6 tons of debris from the Bay. He distributed flyers about the program to all present.

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

**Charles Ober, President of the Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association, and a long-time resident of Ridgewood,** spoke about the proposed Fresh Pond Road Festival which is planned to take place over 4 days in September, from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024. He said that he's concerned that the community derives very little benefit from this event, as compared to another local Street Fair on Myrtle Avenue, which raises as much money in one day as this event does in 4 days. More importantly, he said that by closing down Fresh Pond Road, local residents have expressed concerns about public safety, sanitation, and the lack of public transportation on this busy Bus Route. For this reason, he asked the Board to deny the proposed application to hold a Festival on Fresh Pond Road until these issues are fully considered by the Committee.

**James Lam, a Ridgewood resident and property owner,** also raised objections to the application for this year's Fresh Pond Road Festival by saying that summonses are issued to his property for the continuing stream of litter and garbage that's thrown onto his sidewalk by people who frequent this Festival. In addition, he said men urinate on his front stoop throughout the day and night because there are few public rest room accommodations on Fresh Pond Road for those who attend this 4-day Festival. He also complained that, during this Festival, local residents have great difficulty finding on-street parking. He asked the Board to consider relocating this Festival to another area in Board 5, Queens.

**Luis Rodriguez, a Board Member and long-time Ridgewood resident,** also objected to the Fresh Pond Road Festival based on the fact that Fresh Pond Road is a primary north-south thoroughfare in our community where the Fresh Pond Bus Depot is located. He said that this 4-day Festival limits the mobility of local police patrols from the Precinct, located just a few blocks east of this Festival, and detours local buses, trucks, and private cars onto an alternate route along Forest Avenue. In closing, he asked the Board to consider limiting this event to a 2-day Festival, instead of a 4-day Festival.

**Peggy O'Kane, an Executive Committee Member and long-time Ridgewood resident,** objected to the application for this year's Fresh Pond Road Festival which would close Fresh Pond Road for a 4-day Festival from 5:30pm to 11pm, Thursday through Sunday, September 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024. She pointed out that Fresh Pond Road is the major north-south roadway that connects Ridgewood and Maspeth in our Board area. She said that the closest alternate route is 80 Street, which is 20 blocks away. She also said that during the 4-day Festival, emergency vehicles, police, fire and EMS, have to make torturous detours during the hours of operation of this Festival, which could result in a fatal delay of emergency care. In addition, local buses and trucks have to use the detour route on Forest Avenue, which is a narrow two-lane road that's already congested with traffic. She said that during the daylight hours, before this Festival begins at 5:30pm, there's no place for trucks to make deliveries because vendors' booths block the parking lanes, while some of the rides block a portion of the driving lane. She pointed out that the vendors arrive to set up their stalls the day before this Festival starts and remain in place until long after the Festival is closed. She said that, as a resident who lives close to the site of this Festival, she's found that it's impossible to drive anywhere because you'll lose your parking spot on the street for the duration of this event. In closing, she asked the Board to consider limiting this event to a 2-day Festival, instead of a 4-day Festival.

**Fred Hoefflerle, a Board Member and long-time Ridgewood resident,** objected to the proposed Fresh Pond Road Festival because of the additional traffic congestion and reduction in the availability of on-



## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

street parking for the better part of a week in early September. He also said that the lack of public transportation on Fresh Pond Road during this 4-day Festival places an undue hardship on elderly and handicapped residents who rely on it. More importantly, he said that he objects to closing Fresh Pond Road for recreational purposes because it's a major emergency access route through the neighborhood.

**Joseph Segreti, a long-time Ridgewood resident and member of the Ridgewood Property Owners Civic Association**, said that he objects to closing Fresh Pond Road for the Festival each year, because it's so disruptive to the lives of local residents. He said that Fresh Pond Road is a major thoroughfare for both Ridgewood and Glendale residents, as well as commercial businesses, emergency services, and public transportation in this area of the Board. In closing, he asked the Board to consider an alternate site for this Festival, for example, Eliot Avenue between Metropolitan Avenue and Fresh Pond Road. He said if it isn't feasible to relocate this Festival, then it should be curtailed to a maximum 2-day weekend Festival.

The Board Chairperson thanked everyone for their input and closed the Public Forum.

### Chairperson's Report

#### Vincent Arcuri

The Board Chairperson took the attendance of Board Members present, and he noted that April Narsassian and Nick Cuttonaro both resigned from the Board this year. He also recognized that Gary Giordano, the District Manager, and John Maier on the Board's staff were both present at the Meeting.

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

On behalf of **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr**, Clare Collins reminded everyone that applications for Community Board Membership are still posted on their website at [www.queensbp.org](http://www.queensbp.org) until Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup> at 5pm. She advised Board Members who are up for renewal to make sure they file their application on or before next week's deadline. She also asked Board Members to share this information with local volunteers who may be interested in applying to become Board Members. She welcomed Board Members to contact Kahleel Bragg, the Director of Queens Community Boards, with any questions they have about the application process. His email address is [kbragg@queensbp.org](mailto:kbragg@queensbp.org). Lastly, Ms. Collins announced that the Queens Borough President is hosting a Lunar New Year Celebration for the Year of the Dragon, in Queens Borough Hall from 6pm to 8pm, next Monday night, February 12, 2024. She also announced that from 12 Noon to 4pm next Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, a Stalking Prevention and Intervention Workshop will be held in Queens Borough Hall. Lastly, she announced that their office will host a celebration of Dominican Independence Day from 6pm to 8pm on Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. She advised everyone interested in attending to RSVP to [queensbp.org/RSVP](http://queensbp.org/RSVP).

**On behalf of the Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz**, Kate Boehme reported that recently, the District Attorney announced the arrest and 130-count indictment of a 51-year old man and his 39-year old brother in Astoria, in connection with the seizure of homemade bombs, illegal guns and ammunition. She said that among the items seized by members of Homeland Security and the NYPD were 2 AR 15 style ghost guns and assault weapons, 9mm semi-automatic ghost gun pistols, and numerous other firearms. Also found inside their apartment was a hit list of possible targets, including the names of police officials, judges, politicians and celebrities, she said. In closing, Ms. Boehme welcomed calls for information or assistance to her office at **(718) 286-6295**.



## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

On behalf of **Congresswoman Grace Meng**, Tianna Armstrong announced that in response to the Congresswoman's request, a federal investigation into the rise of mail theft in Queens has begun. She also reported that the Treasury Department has approved the allocation of \$288 Million in federal funds to improve highspeed internet communications in our State.

She said that this week, the Congresswoman returned to Washington to vote for the passage of the Child Tax Credit which provides tax credits for working families with dependent children. She said that this tax credit is estimated to lift 400,000 children out of poverty across the country.

In closing, she announced that from 10am to 2pm, on Thursday, February 15, representatives from the Dept. of Veterans Affairs will be on hand in their office to meet with local Veterans who may have questions about their benefits and are interested in filing the appropriate claim forms. She advised constituents RSVP by calling their office at **(718) 599-3658**. Flyers were distributed.

On behalf of **City Council Member Joann Ariola**, Linda Fogal reported that the Councilwoman is opposed to the proposed City of Yes Zoning Text Amendment because if it's passed, she believes it can destroy the character of local neighborhoods in her district.

Ms. Fogal announced that their office is collecting Valentine's for Veterans donations again this year and welcomed all donations to be dropped off to their office at 93-06 101 Avenue, in Ozone Park until February 12th.

In closing, Ms. Fogal said that small homeowners, who want to challenge their most recent property tax assessment, are welcome to call their office at **(718) 738-1083** to arrange to meet with staff who will review their property tax assessment notifications and assist them to file a challenge, on or before the deadline in March. She said that appointments are available for Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, from 1pm to 4pm. Flyers were distributed.

On behalf of **City Council Member Jennifer Gutierrez**, Juan Mayancela was happy to announce that two new Stop Signs were installed recently in Ridgewood in the vicinity of local schools: on Seneca Avenue at Stockholm Street, and on Seneca Avenue at Weirfield Street.

In addition, he said that beginning on February 12th, their office will assist senior citizens who receive SSI, Social Security or Public Assistance, to file Income Tax Return forms IT 210 and NYC 214. He welcomed calls for appointments from constituents at **(718) 963-3141**,

He announced that free Yoga Classes will be offered once again in Grover Cleveland Park on four Saturdays this Spring, starting on May 5<sup>th</sup>. He said that they plan to host a Town Hall in Ridgewood this Spring, as well. Flyers will be distributed when the arrangements are finalized, he said.

On behalf of **NY State Senator Addabbo**, John D'Angelo welcomed donations to their Valentines for Veterans event, including toiletries, underwear, T-shirts and socks, to be dropped off at their District Office at 66-85 73 Place, in Middle Village. He said that their office is still participating in New York Cares Coat Drive until the end of February. He said that new or gently used coats can be dropped off at the Middle Village office.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Michael Gianaris**, Irene Stathatos informed everyone that the Senator is up in Albany working on budget negotiations. She welcomed calls for information or assistance from constituents to their new office at 45-02 Ditmars Blvd, in Astoria at **(718) 728-0960**.

On behalf of **NY State Senator Julia Salazar**, Maria Valdez announced that from 10am to 3pm on Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, representatives from the Dept. of Buildings will be on hand in their office at 12 Evergreen Avenue in Brooklyn, to answer questions from constituents about summonses or violations

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

that they've received and how to resolve them. In addition, she said that representatives from the Dept. of Finance will be on hand from 5pm to 8pm on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, to meet with constituents in their office, located at 1474 Gates Avenue in Brooklyn, regarding the recent notifications they received about property tax increases in the next fiscal year.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi**, Kevin Wisniewski said that the Assemblyman is up in Albany to begin budget negotiations for the next fiscal year. He said his top priority is advocating for the passage of the proposed Children and Families Reinvestment Act which would include full funding for chronically underfunded family crisis prevention programs and support services. He said that he plans to focus on increasing salaries of childcare workers, as well as human service employees, this year.

Mr. Wisniewski said that the Assemblyman supports expanding Veteran's benefits, in addition to providing intervention and support services in local schools.

He announced that next month's Mobile Office Hours will be held from 10am to 1pm on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, in the Cafeteria of PS 128 in Middle Village. In closing, he welcomed volunteers to join in their Annual Spring Clean Up Series which will start up soon. For more information, he welcomed constituents to call their office at **(718) 263-5595**.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Steven Raga**, Dolma Lama said that the Assemblyman is up in Albany now that the legislative session has begun. She invited constituents to join a Valentine Card making session from 4pm to 6pm tomorrow afternoon in their office at 55-19 69 Street, in Maspeth. She said the cards will be delivered to local Senior Centers in their district for the upcoming holiday.

Ms. Lama also welcomed constituents to join in celebrating the Lunar New Year in Moore Homestead Park, on Broadway at 82 Street, on Saturday, February 17, 2024.

In closing, she welcomed constituents to meet with the Assemblyman in person during the upcoming Mobile Office Hours in the Maspeth Library on 69 Street, from 2pm to 4pm on Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. She welcomed calls for information and assistance to their office at **(718) 651-3185**.

On behalf of **NY State Assembly Member Juan Ardila**, Brenda Quinio said that when Morscher's Pork Store closed their doors on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, after 75 years of continuous operation on Catalpa Avenue in Ridgewood, the Assemblyman issued a Proclamation to honor their years of outstanding service to the community.

Ms. Quinio reported that the Assemblyman co-sponsored legislation to regulate the sale and maintenance of E-Bikes and scooters in Assembly Bill A-8291:

"Requires that any dealer where bicycles and/or scooters with electric assist, electric-powered or lithium-ion electric batteries are sold at retail, or repaired, and lithium-ion electric batteries are housed in a storage facility, maintain functional fire protection and suppression measures effective against lithium-ion batteries and electrical fires, including but not limited to Class B fire extinguishers, battery cases, and automatic monitoring and detection systems; and authorizes the Secretary of State to promulgate necessary Rules and Regulations; and imposes a fine for the willful failure to comply with such provisions."

Ms. Quinio reported that the Assembly Member joined with Assembly Member Rajkumar in co-sponsoring new legislation, known as the Smoke Out Act, to give this City the authority to shut down unlicensed pot shops that have opened in our community.

She announced that in response to requests from constituents, their office will be open on Saturdays from 12:30pm to 2:30pm to accommodate anyone who's unable to meet with staff during the work week. She welcomed calls for assistance and information to **(718) 784-3194**.

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

On behalf of **NYS Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar**, Vjola Isufaj informed everyone that the Assemblywoman is up in Albany working on budget negotiations. She said that they've resumed scheduling regular mammogram screening for women over the age of 40, who live in their district, in partnership with staff from Mt. Sinai Hospital, at their office at 83-01 Woodhaven Blvd. She said that these screenings are scheduled by appointment only, by calling **(718) 805-9050**.

Ms. Isufaj also informed everyone that the Assemblywoman is sponsoring new legislation, A-08428, to target enforcement against all illegal smoke shops, which is referred to as **SMOKEOUT**. She said that this Bill: "Permits municipalities to enforce licensure requirements of retail dispensaries by closing retail locations which sell cannabis without a license; allows seizure of the instrumentality of the unlawful sales, including real estate."

Ms. Isufaj said that another Bill that the Assemblywoman is trying to get passed in the Assembly is a Bill that "Requires bicycles with electric assist and electric scooters be registered, inspected and insured." Lastly, she said that the Assemblywoman has been advocating to pass a Bill, referred to as the "Keep Kids Covered Act," to provide automatic continuous enrollment in the Medical Assistance Program and Child Health Plus for certain children up to the age of 6. In closing, she wished a Happy Valentine's Day.

## Minutes

The Board Chairperson asked Board members if they had received and reviewed the minutes from last month's Board Meeting which was conducted on January 10, 2024. On a motion from Katherine Masi, that was seconded by Walter Clayton, 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 Alcoholic Beverage Applications and Renewals, which was distributed to all Board Members, as follows:

### New Liquor License Application

- 1) **\*La Parrillada Colombiana NYC** Inc. 52-35 Metropolitan Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]

### Liquor License Renewal Applications

- 1) Cahill Enterprise Inc. d/b/a **Glen Patrick Pub**; 53-73 65th Pl, Maspeth, NY 11378 [B/T]
- 2) **Suad Sports Café, LLC**; 70-20 60th Ln, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]
- 3) 299 Wyckoff LLC d/b/a **Bonus Room** 991 Wyckoff Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [B/T]
- 4) **London Lennie's Inc.** 63-88 Woodhaven Blvd, Rego Park, NY 11374 [R]
- 5) Rogner LLC d/b/a **63rd Bar and Lounge** 63-59 Forest Ave, Ridgewood, NY 11385 [R]
- 6) **Zum Stammtisch Inc.** 69-46 Myrtle Ave, Glendale, NY 11385 [R]

### New Wine, Beer & Cider Applications

- 1) \*Regal Cinemas Inc d/b/a **Regal Atlas Park** 80-28 Cooper Ave, Glendale, NY 11385 [Movie Theater]
- 2) \* Flavor Asian Inc. d/b/a **Flavor East** 60-58 Flushing Ave, Maspeth, NY 11378 [R]

### Wine, Beer & Cider Renewal Applications

- 1) **Queens Beer Garden LLC**; 80-60 Cooper Ave, Glendale, 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>

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

Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

### **Demolition or Construction Notifications**

The Board Chairperson reported that there have been no demolition or construction notices received by Board staff since last month's Board Meeting.

The Board Chairperson reported that at the Executive Committee Meeting last Thursday night, the Executive Committee reviewed the proposed applications for Street Fairs in our Board area for the coming year.

He said that the Committee had no objection to 4 of the 5 proposed Street Fairs, with the exception being the Fresh Pond Road Festival, in Ridgewood. He proceeded to read from the list of applications, as follows:

#### **RIDGEWOOD LDC MYRTLE AVENUE FESTIVAL**

SPONSOR:— RIDGEWOOD LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION —

Representative: Theodore Renz, RLDC Exec. Director at (718) 366-3806

RE: MYRTLE AVE btw Wyckoff Ave & Fresh Pond Road in Ridgewood 11 blocks  
SUNDAY – APRIL 21st from 10am to 6pm (Set up at 8am to Shut down at 8pm)

Theodore Renz, Board Member and Executive Director of the Ridgewood Local Development Corporation, said he would not vote on this recommendation because he's employed by the organization that receives the proceeds of this Street Fair.

The Board Chairperson requested a show of hands regarding the Committee's recommendation of No Objection, which was done, and announced that their motion was approved by the full Board.

#### **MYRTLE AVENUE BID FESTIVAL**

SPONSOR: Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District —

Representative: Theodore Renz, MABID Exec. Director (718) 366-3806

RE: MYRTLE AVENUE btw Wyckoff Avenue & Fresh Pond Road, in Ridgewood 11 blocks  
SUNDAY – SEPT. 15th from 10am to 6pm (Set up at 8am to Shut down at 8pm)

Theodore Renz, Board Member and Executive Director of the Myrtle Avenue Business Improvement District, said he would not vote on this recommendation because he's employed by the organization that receives the proceeds from this Street Fair.

The Board Chairperson requested a show of hands regarding the Committee's recommendation of No Objection, which was done, and declared that the motion was approved by the full Board.

#### **GRAND AVENUE FAIR**

SPONSOR: MASPETH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, LIONS AND KIWANIS CLUB

Representative: Maryanna Zero, Maspeth Chamber of Commerce (917) 686-6890

RE: GRAND AVENUE btw 65 Street & 72 Street in Maspeth - 7 blocks  
SATURDAY - APRIL 27th from 10am to 6pm (Set up at 8am to Shut down at 8pm)

As there were no comments, the Board Chairperson requested a show of hands regarding the Committee's recommendation of No Objection, which was done, and declared that the motion was approved by the full Board.

#### **MYRTLE AVENUE FESTIVAL**

SPONSOR: KIWANIS CLUB OF GLENDALE

Representative: Joe Aiello, Past President (516)-622-6758

RE: MYRTLE AVENUE from FRESH POND ROAD to FOREST AVENUE in RIDGEWOOD 4 blocks

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

SUNDAY - AUGUST 4th from 10am to 6pm (Set up at 8am to Shut down at 8pm)  
As there were no comments, the Board Chairperson requested a show of hands regarding the Committee's recommendation of No Objection, which was done, and declared that the motion was approved by the full Board.

### **FRESH POND ROAD STREET FESTIVAL**

SPONSOR: Federazione Italo-Americana di Brooklyn and Queens –

Representative: Tony DiPiazza – (718) 366-9077 & Cell (917) 304-6329

FRESH POND ROAD btw Woodbine Street & Menahan Street, in Ridgewood 5 blocks

THURSDAY - SEPT. 5th from 5pm to 11pm (Set up at 12am to Shut down at 11:30pm)

FRIDAY - SEPT. 6th from 5pm to 11pm (Set up at 5pm to Shut down at 11:30pm)

SATURDAY - SEPT. 7th from 5:30pm to 11pm (Set up at 5pm to Shut down at 11:30pm)

SUNDAY - SEPT. 8th from 5:30pm to 11pm (Set up at 5pm to Shut down at 11:30pm)

The Board Chairperson reported that the Executive Committee was not in favor of granting a 4-Day Festival on Fresh Pond Road this September and made a motion to approve a 3-Day Festival instead, from September 6th – 8th, 2024.

Kathy Masi, Board Member, questioned whether the Board can propose changes to the days of any of the proposed Street Fairs. She said that she thought that the Mayor's Office would only approve the Street Fairs that are already grandfathered into the application process. The District Manager replied that he knows of no reason why the Board would be prohibited from recommending fewer days.

Walter Sanchez, an Executive Committee Member and Maspeth resident, pointed out that at the Executive Committee Meeting, the Federazione representatives did not provide the Committee with the financial report from last year's event, as requested.

Paul Kerzner, a Board Member, said that he supports Peggy O'Kane's recommendation to the Board to limit this event to 2 days only, instead of the 3-days that are being recommended by the Executive Committee. He asked the Board to support the recommendation that she made earlier tonight.

The Board Chairperson replied that the motion on the floor is to recommend approval of a 3-day Festival on Fresh Pond Road.

As there was no further discussion on the matter, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee's recommendation to approve a 3-Day Festival on Fresh Pond Road, from September 6th to the 8th. The motion passed by a vote of – 24 – in favor; -13 – opposed; - 0 – not voting, and – 0 – abstentions.

The Board Chairperson reported that at their Meeting, the Executive Committee also discussed the proposed revisions to the Board's By Laws. He directed staff to distribute copies of the Revised By Laws to all of the Board Members so they could review them prior to next month's Board Meeting when they'll be under consideration by the full Board. Peggy O'Kane, the Board Secretary, typed the proposed revisions to the By Laws in consultation with Members of the By Law Committee. She thanked Eric Butkiewicz for all of his help in revising them. She requested that any questions about the revisions be directed to him.

The Board Chairperson said that, in addition, the Committee discussed the possibility of setting up a social media account for our Community Board. He said that the Committee requested that staff work

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

with Kathy Masi and other Board Members to prepare a clear and precise proposal for the Executive Committee to review.

Regarding Committee Membership, Gary Giordano said that the Board needs an active Environmental Services Committee but lacks a Chairperson for that Committee. The District Manager said he'd appreciate hearing from a Board Member who's interested in chairing that Committee because it's such an important Committee. He said that the Housing Committee is also in need of a Chairperson. He announced that Carol Benovic Bradley recently volunteered to chair the Library Services Committee.

### **District Manager's Report**

#### **Gary Giordano**

The District Manager announced that on Lincoln's Birthday which is celebrated on February 12<sup>th</sup> and President's Day on February 19<sup>th</sup>, which both fall on Mondays, there won't be any household garbage, compost, or recycling material collection. Residents should put their household garbage, compost and recycling materials out for collection after 6pm on the Holiday for collection on the following day, or soon thereafter.

The District Manager said that even though the President of the Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association and other Ridgewood residents spoke about the problems caused by the Fresh Pond Road Street Festival and asked that the Festival be limited to 2 days, he is shocked that the Board voted for a 3-day Festival. He said that this Festival adversely affects more than 20,000 residents living in proximity to the Street Festival. He asked if Board Members living near other commercial strips would like such a large festival in their community. He said that, too often, people from other communities have disrespected Ridgewood, and that when Bushwick was burning, after the 1977 black out, Ridgewood stood strong. Mr. Giordano said that in his opinion, for decades, Ridgewood was the buffer between the high crime area of Brooklyn and much of the rest of Queens.

He pointed out that Board Members, who live in Ridgewood, have been opposed to this Festival for over 20 years. He said that it blocks the main north-south thoroughfare between Ridgewood and Maspeth, which means that buses and trucks are detoured to narrow Forest Avenue, posing dangerous conditions for the duration of this event.

He again said that he was shocked by tonight's vote in favor of a 3-Day Festival on Fresh Pond Road.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Zoning and Land Use Review Committee**

##### **Walter Sanchez**

Walter Sanchez reported that the Committee met on Thursday, February 1<sup>th</sup> in the Board Office, to review the proposed Citywide Zoning Text Amendment for Proposed Gaming Facilities in the City of New York (**N240179ZRY**). He said that the proposed Text Amendment would permit the siting of gaming facilities in certain Manufacturing and Commercial Districts throughout the City.

Mr. Sanchez explained that the proposed change in the Zoning Resolution would enable developers to build gaming facilities as of right, in accordance with the State's requirements. He said that the City administration is very interested in competing successfully for at least one casino in the City. The State has agreed to consider granting licenses to operate 3 gaming facilities in the downstate area, namely, New York City, Nassau County, Suffolk County and Westchester. He said that the Committee has no

## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

objection to the proposed Zoning Text Amendment, provided it limits the number of sites in the downstate area to three, as previously agreed to by the State Legislature.

After a general discussion of the matter, the Board Chairperson requested a Roll Call vote on the Committee's recommendation of no objection which carried by a vote of – 19 – in favor; - 17 – opposed; with – 0 – abstentions; and – 0 – not voting.

### **Library Services Committee**

#### **Carol Benovic-Bradley**

Carol Benovic-Bradley, a Board Member and Ridgewood resident, gave a brief report on the status of projects that are either currently underway or in the planning stages in our public library branches. She said that on Monday, January 22, the Committee met in the Board 5 office with Louisa Benedetto, the Director of Government Affairs for the Queens Public Library.

She said that the Ridgewood Branch Library reopened on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, after repairs were completed on their heating system. The roof replacement project at the Ridgewood Library is currently being managed by the Dept. of Design and Construction and is expected to be completed this Summer, she said.

Regarding the Maspeth Public Library, Ms. Bradley reported that Ms. Benedetto told Committee Members that the Dept. of Design and Construction is currently working to expedite the renovations needed at this location, which should include a roof replacement project.

Regarding the Glendale Branch Library, Ms. Bradley said that their external book drop is out of order at present, and they're waiting on spare parts to repair it. She said that the Committee is also interested in finding out when/if the garden that's directly adjacent to the Library will be open to the public.

She said that, according to Ms. Benedetto, the initial budget cuts to the City's Expense Budget resulted in the loss of 7-day service in all branches throughout the City. She said that the proposed budget cuts will further reduce their hours of operation and programs that they currently provide to the public.

Ms. Bradley said that the Friends of the Ridgewood Library is the only Friends group that's active in the Board 5 area right now. She welcomed anyone interested in reactivating a Friends group in their local library to contact her. In closing, she invited everyone to attend the Book Sale in the Ridgewood Branch Library at 20-12 Madison Street that's scheduled to take place from 12 Noon to 5:30pm on Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the following day, Saturday from 10:30am to 4pm. She said that all the proceeds from the Book Sale will benefit the library's programming. Flyers were distributed.

In closing, she said that the Committee agreed to meet bi-monthly.

### **Parks Services Committee**

Steven Fiedler asked the Board's support for a letter to our local elected officials requesting that at least 1% of the City's Annual Expense Budget be allocated to the NYC Parks Department. He said that the Committee had discussed this issue recently and all were in favor of it. Board Members were in agreement.

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

#### **Eric Butkiewicz**

Eric Butkiewicz reported that the Committee met in the cafeteria of Christ the King High School on January 30<sup>th</sup> to review and discuss the MTA/NYC Transit's proposed changes to local Bus Routes in our Board 5 area of Queens. He said that there's been a series of public sessions conducted by the MTA to receive further comment on the proposed Redesign of the Queens Bus Network. He said that at their Meeting, MTA gave a power point presentation on the Revised Queens Bus Network Redesign Proposal. He welcomed comments from the public about the proposed Revised Queens Bus Network by



## Minutes of CB5Q Board Meeting on February 7, 2024

contacting the Board Office. He announced that the next Committee Meeting will take place at 7:30pm on Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup> in the Board Office.

### **Old and New Business**

Kathy Masi announced that the Education Services Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet with representatives from Community School District 24 Superintendent's Office in the Board 5 Office at 7pm on Wednesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Regarding the Cooper Avenue Homeless Residence, Ms. Masi reported that the number of emergency calls for assistance from this site have been increasing lately.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, the Board Chairperson announced that the next monthly Meeting of Community Board 5 Queens is scheduled for 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 13h, 2024. He adjourned the Board Meeting on a motion from the floor at 9:55pm.