



# Community Board 7

## Borough of Queens

Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Beechhurst, Clearview, College Point, Downtown Flushing, East Flushing, Flushing, Malba, Murray Hill, Queensborough Hill, Whitestone, Linden Hill, and Willets Point

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Donovan Richards, Jr.

*Queens Borough President*

Eugene T. Kelty Jr.

*Chairperson*

Marilyn McAndrews

*District Manager*

### COMMUNITY BOARD #7 PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2022

AUDIO AND VIDEO TELECONFERENCE

#### PRESENT

Charles Apelian  
James Cervino  
Kaily Cheng  
Michael Cheng  
Kim Cody  
Nicholas Corrado  
Derick Fang  
Arlene Fleishman  
Richard Forman  
Fred Fu  
Doreen Gatanas  
Pablo Hernandez  
Cody Herrmann  
Jeff Huang  
Lawrence Hughes

Eugene Kelty  
Phil Konigsberg  
Dr. Wensong, Li  
Wendy Louie  
Betsy Mak  
Rev. Richard McEachern  
Barbara McHugh  
Michelle Miao  
Selma Moses  
Sergio Nicolich  
John Park  
Terrance Park  
Yacov Pshtisky  
Frank Quatela  
Kris Ram

Paul Rifino  
Warren Schreiber  
Matthew Silverstein  
Joshua Sussman  
Joseph Sweeney  
Saleem Syed  
John Tsavalos  
Peter Tu  
Harpreet Wahan  
Clarissa Wong  
Maggie Wong  
Dian Yu  
Linna Yu  
Lei Zhao

#### ABSENT

\* Vincent Gianelli  
\* Esther Lee  
\* Frank Macchio

Millicent O'Meally  
Kevin Shields  
Jie Zhu

#### COMMUNITY BOARD #7 STAFF

Marilyn McAndrews, District Manager  
Mary O'Neill, Community Coordinator  
Anne Krzyzanowski, Community Assistant

#### GUESTS

Susan Lui - Congresswoman Meng's office  
Mabel Tso - Congresswoman Ocasio-Cortez's office  
Lya Rothmann - State Senator Stavisky's office  
Howard Wong - Assemblywoman Rozic's office

Amber Yoon - Assemblyman Braunstein's office  
Ali Zirasci - Councilwoman Paladino's office  
Councilwoman Sandra Ung  
Ido Shargal - Mayor Adam's office

\*Excused

**Chairman Eugene Kelty** opened the Public Hearing at 7 pm via audio and video teleconference. Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag in honor of all who fought for our freedom and our country and to never forget those who gave their lives for freedom.

Attendance was taken with ( 44 ) Present ( 3 ) Absent ( 3 ) Excused\*

Announcements from Elected Officials, Mayor's Office and Borough Hall

Announcements from Chairman Kelty:

- Welcomed two new Board Members, Derick Fang and Saleem Syed.
  - On April 2<sup>nd</sup> a block of Bowne Street between Holly Avenue & 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue was co-named Ganesh Temple Street after a prominent Hindu Temple in Flushing. The Hindu Temple Society of North America Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam, known as the Ganesh Temple was established in 1977. This is the first and oldest Hindu Temple in North America.
  - Another co-naming was the intersection at Holly Avenue and Robinson Street to honor former 20-year Community Board #7 member and activist **Sarah Whiting**. She was known for founding the afterschool program, for her work with the NAACP and she always did something for the children who were at Flushing Hospital during the Holidays.
  - Deputy Inspector John O'Connell from the 109<sup>th</sup> Pct was transferred to Manhattan. A new Deputy Inspector will be chosen by a vetting process.
  - Free rides on the LaGuardia Airport link Q70 bus during April 11th – 27th
  - Five-boro bike tour on May 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Councilwoman Ung will have a Summer Camp Fair
  - Jamaica Hospital is hiring elevator operators
  - NYC Department of Transportation Queens Division will resurface many streets in this area.
- Approval of the March meeting minutes

#### **MTA – Flushing - Main Street Station Pedestrian Circulation Improvement Project:**

Daniel Randell, MPA - Assistant Director of Government & Community Relations, MTA

Joseph O'Donnell - Director of Public Affairs MTA - Construction & Development Public Relations

Rajendra Shah - Construction Manager at MTA, New York City Transit

Barghav Shah - Construction Management and Strategy Chief Safety and Resiliency Officer MTA Capital Construction

Kevin Bautista - Senior Project Manager, Infrastructure and Transportation Architecture DSCM Consulting.

The project was awarded 12/21/21 and is scheduled to be completed October 2023 and will cost about \$30,381,000. They will add four new entrances to the #7 subway station on Roosevelt Avenue and Main Street. The Main Street Station is among the 10 busiest stations in the subway system. The current stairs are over capacity. This project's objective is to reduce congestion on the platforms, on the stairwells and on the street level. It will rehabilitate the stairs to become ADA compliant and improve service. The contractor is only allowed to work off-peak hours. There will always be access to the station by all current stairs during construction. Will have a 24/7 construction hotline for concerns & issues.

Bus stops will be relocated for Q17, Q19, Q48, Q65, Q66. They will provide sufficient notices to all local business, deliveries, and emergency services. Will provide sufficient Notice to Work to all business in the area. Con Edison will relocate utilities for the construction. Some of the bus stops were previously relocated because of the building fire on Main Street. There will be monitoring equipment installed on the adjacent building to watch for any building shaking or façade shifting. They will work closely with the nearby building owners. Utilities to be relocated: water, storm & sanitary sewers, telephone (Verizon & Empire City Subway), gas & electric.

**Warren Schreiber:** How will the stairs be ADA compliant?

**A:** That is due to the width and rise of the stairs and pedestrian circulation improvement. This makes it easier for people with canes or other mobility issues to manage the stairs.

**Warren Schreiber:** Will there be signage to re-direct the people to the new bus stop locations? Will the signs be better than just a paper attached to a lamp post that can get blow off?

**A:** There will be signs at the old bus stop and signs directing customers to the new stops. There will be employees during the first week on the street directing people to the new bus stops.

**Chairman Kelty:** We asked that the signs be laminated and also for signs to be put up in the subway station, in many languages, so people can check where to go before them come upstairs.

**Warren Schreiber:** According to your diagram, some of the bus stops will be moved many blocks far away. Couldn't they be relocated closer to the train stations?

**A:** We took into effect the crowding in the area and existing bus stops. We work with our operations planning team.

**Chairman Kelty:** This was bought up at the committee. Many of our residents are older it would be difficult for them to walk that distance.

**Warren Schreiber:** How many turnstiles will there be after the construction is completed?

**A:** There will be three turnstiles at each entrance. The two new locations will have a total of six new turnstiles.

**Phil Konigsberg:** What are the initials DBE on your presentation?

**A:** A certain percentage, 22.5 %, of our contactors have to be Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. This includes Women and Minority owned businesses.

**Kim Cody:** Will the contractor will get a \$350,000 incentive if they finish two weeks early?

**A:** The contractor can get up to \$350,000 if they achieve certain milestones. This is the total amount they could get.

**Lawrence Hughes:** The Q17 & Q25 buses work together. These two buses both take people south along Kissena Boulevard to the Horace Harding Expressway. It would make sense to put the Q17 & Q25 bus stops together so that people can take the one that comes first instead of going to the new Q25 stop which will be many blocks south of Roosevelt Avenue or the Q17 which will be moved many blocks North. It would make sense to put these bus stops next to each other. Traditionally the Q65 & Q25 were next to each other because they were operated by the same company.

**A:** I will speak to the bus planning people and find out why these two buses were placed so far apart.

**Councilwoman Paladino:** This will be quite a mess for quite a while. I agree that signage is important. Thank you to Councilwoman Ung for getting the word out to her constituents of this slight inconvenience or big inconvenience depending on who is traveling. How long will this project take?

**A:** Just under two years.

**Councilwoman Paladino:** It needs to be done. Sacrifices need to be made. We'll do what is necessary. Tell me more about the Q17 and Q15 and some of the bus lines that go into College Point? Everyone who comes to Whitestone takes the Q15 and the Q16, the Q30 to College Point and the Q65.

**A:** The only bus stops that will be affected are the ones referred to already. The service and redesign of the routes is a separate conversation. If anyone wants additional information, we will host fourteen (14) workshops about this. The link for the workshops will be on the redesign web page. The public is welcome to provide feedback during these workshops.

**Councilwoman Paladino:** When will the work start?

**A:** The work will start in June. The buses the Councilwoman mentioned will not be impacted. Only Bus Stops will be moved.

**Chairman Kelty:** I expect that someone will come to the CB #7 monthly District Service Cabinet Meetings to give us updates and we can do community outreach about this project. I want to have your 24/7 emergency phone number so I can give to the Police and FDNY and OEM.

**A:** The Community Board has my phone #.

**Betsy Mak:** I want some clarification. You said there will be four new staircases from the street level to the ticket Booth level. Will there be new stairs from the ticket Booth level to the platform?

**A:** Four new staircases going from the street level to the mezzanine and four new staircases going to the platform level. Total of eight new staircases. And replace four existing stairs.

**Betsy Mak:** The sidewalk is already narrow next to the stairs and there are many newspaper boxes next to the stairs. Can these boxes be relocated?

**Chairman Kelty:** You are right. Some years ago, City Planning widened the sidewalks and the plan was to remove unnecessary sidewalk furniture. We can speak with NYC Consumer Affairs, DSNY and the Flushing BID about removing the sidewalk newspaper boxes.

**Betsy Mak:** Are there any plans to open-up another station entrance at Prince & Roosevelt Avenue?

**A:** These new stairs cases are mostly to the west to catch the people coming from that area. There are no projects for new entrances in this Capital plan.

**Chairman Kelty:** Chuck Apelian, our Zoning Chair, brought this up with the MTA because there is a lot of sidewalk traffic. We have in our budget list to expand the mezzanine area down to Prince Street for at least ten years. People could enter through a staircase on Prince Street and go down to the mezzanine level and to get to the turnstiles. The idea was to get the foot traffic off the street and get people to go down one level.

**Derick Fang:** Why isn't there a stairwell on Main Street across from the AT&T? Will These Be construct at the same time?

**A:** The work will be done in three phases. Stage 1: June – November. Stage 2: January-May 2023. Stage 3: June- August 2023. They didn't have any answer as to why there are no stairs on the other side of the street.

**Maggie Wong:** There are a lot of street vendors & businesses in this area. How will the construction workers work around these? Main street is already very crowded. There are homeless people here even though the Mayor has been working to remove them. I am not sure how you will get this done, hopefully it will be before construction.

**A:** As we get closer to starting time, we will have a more detailed phasing plan. We will report back to the Community Board before the start of construction. We will have a more detailed Management and Protection of Pedestrians and Traffic Plan. We work with NYC DOT, they permit our work area and vouch for the safety and integrity of those areas.

**Kim Cody:** I haven't heard anything about handicapped access.

**A:** This is not an ADA project, it's an existing circulation project. We are widening staircases to make them easier to navigate.

**Betsy Mak:** Will the stairs block any of the small businesses' windows or entrances?

**A:** All four new staircases are closer to the curbs than the buildings. No entrances will be blocked.

**Pablo Hernandez:** I take the subway every day. The elevator and escalator are often broken. This is a big expense to fix.

**A:** Whenever we install a new elevator or escalator, we include in the contract 15 or 20-year maintenance agreement. The contactors or fabricators have to stand by their work. We have a high rate of problems with the mechanical equipment. New projects contacts will contain "Design-Build-Maintain".

**Warren Schreiber:** We will discuss this project further. Please keep Community Board #7 in the loop about this project. If something goes wrong, please let us know about it.

**A:** We will continue to keep CB #7 informed. We have sent in the results of the test pits and what is going on around the station. As soon as the schedule comes out it will send it to the Community Board. We are here to answer any questions.

### Public Hearing

**Request for a street to be co-named for Don Capaldi** – One block of 136 Street between 57 Road & 58 Avenue

The co-naming was requested by Ashook Ramsaran, Chair of NY Presbyterians Queens Community Advisory Council.

**Transportation Committee Chair Nick Corrado:**

I would like Ashook Ramsaran to make a few comments about having this street co-named for Don Capaldi.

**Ashook Ramsaran:** I made a presentation at the March Transportation Committee Meeting. The responses were favorable. Both Congresswomen Ung and Meng are in full support of this co-naming. We are asking for a letter of approval for this co-naming.

**Nick Corrado:** I would like to read a statement from Congresswoman Meng in honor Don Capaldi, he was a special guy. "Don was much more than a terrific civic activists and staff member. He was a great human being and a wonderful special person who was selfless and full of life. He was one of the kindest, friendliest, and gentlest people I have ever known. He touched and impacted so many lives and was liked and respected by all whom he worked with. Rarely did I see him without a smile on his face." I would like any questions at this time.

**Chairman Kelty:** Any questions from the Board Member or from the public?

**Kris Ram:** Don Capaldi was one of the humblest people I have known. I liked him from the time I met him over 20 years ago. He was such a great friend.

**John Kelly (Kissena Park Civic):** Thank you to everyone involved in this project. It is a wonderful idea

**Nick Corrado:** The committee meeting was held on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. In attendance were myself, Pablo Hernandez, Richard Forman, Selma Moses, Kim Cody, Lawrence Hughes, Warren Schreiber Fred Fu, Phil Konigsberg, Wendy Louie, Betsy Mak, Yacov Pshtissky, Dian Yu, Josh Sussman, Matt Silverstein & Chairman Kelty. The vote was unanimous to approve the street co-naming. I make a motion to approve this.

**John Tsavalos:** I second this motion.

**Kris Ram:** I have known Don Capaldi for almost 22 years. He was one of the most wonderful people I have known. He was involved with many community activities. I am in support of the co-naming. It is well worth naming a street after him.

**Terrance Park:** Don Capaldi was my next-door neighbor. He has helped many times and he was involved with community activities. He has been a loyal friend and a good neighbor. I am in support of the co-naming.

**Arlene Fleishman:** I worked with Don Capaldi when we were on the School Board. He deserves to have the street co-named and we miss him.

**42 - In favor    0 - Against    0 - Abstentions**

**Chairman Kelty:** The motion carries.

### **Public Participation**

**Kim Cody:** The Greater Whitestone Taxpayers Civic Association had their first in-person meeting since the onset of the pandemic. Their two scheduled speaker Senator Liu and Assemblyman Braunstein were still in Albany. Thanking Board Member **Joe Sweeney** for speaking at their meeting about public safety work that he does. 109 Pct has an interim Commanding officer until they get a permanent Commanding Officer.

**Warren Schreiber:** There is construction going on at PS 169 which also houses the Bell Academy. We thought it would be a small extension. It is maybe four stories high. The staging area is in in the middle of the street.

**John Kelly - Kissena Park Civic Association:** There will be an event at the Kissena Park Velodrome for children. They have a volunteer committee which has been clearing some of the underbrush and cleaning the park. They are looking for other volunteers.

**Kris Ram:** The 109<sup>th</sup> Pct Community Council will have an in-person meeting this week, it will be at the Bowne Church.

**Arlene Fleishman:** The school building needs to be enlarged because it is an elementary school and a middle school. The Education Committee was informed of this.

**Meeting ended: 09:05 PM**

**Respectfully Submitted**

**Anne Krzyzanowski,  
Community Assistant**