



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

*The City of New York
Borough of Queens*

Community Board 8

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt and Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Kenneth Cohen II, Allen Eisenstein, Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum and Rachele Van Arsdale.

Others Present:

Alexander Bennett representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Jennifer Greer representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Daniel Rosenthal representing Councilman Rory Lancman, State Senator Leroy Comrie, Muhammad Rahman representing Assemblyman David Weprin, Facia Class representing Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz, Marilla Li representing Assembly Member Nily Rozic, City Planner, Stephen Everett, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff member.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

Jacqueline Alston-Gordon – Ms. Alston-Gordon is the founder of Carl’s Butterflies which is a 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit crisis organization that supports children while their family member transitions through a critical illness, hospice care or death. It is offered to young children, teens, and adolescents. Informational folders were left with the Community Board.

Jennifer Greer – Ms. Greer represented Council Member Grodenchik’s office to speak about the Participatory Budget. Council Member Grodenchik has allocated \$1.5M this year for projects to include school and library upgrades. She invited the community to ask questions or share any of their ideas with her after the meeting.

Daniel Rosenthal – Mr. Rosenthal reported that on behalf of the Jamaica Estates Association and local store owners, a request was made to the Department of Transportation to have the parking meters changed from one to two hours on Union Turnpike from Utopia Parkway to 188th Street. He informed everyone that this request was

approved and the meters will now be two hour meters. This will allow shoppers more time to patronize the local businesses.

Assemblywoman Nily Rozic – Assemblywoman Rozic announced she will be having a Free Bike Helmet Fitting and Distribution Event on Sunday, October 2nd from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., along with Council Member Grodenchik. It will be held at P.S. 46 Alley Pond School, 64-45 218th Street. She provided flyers and asked that everyone share the information with their family and friends.

Salute to the Flag

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Steven Sadofsky made a motion to approve the minutes of June 8, 2016.

Count in favor 35 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the minutes:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Tamara Osheroov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt and Albert Willingham.

Board Members who did not approve the minutes:

None

Guest Speakers:

Glenda Grace – Chief of Staff, Queens College – Ms. Grace discussed Queens College’s Strategic Plan for 2015-2020. These are some of the main highlights of the plan: [*a few copies were distributed around the room*]

- The vision of President Felix Matos Rodriguez and Queens College: to facilitate student success; to support faculty and staff excellence; to weave together campus, community, and global connections; to strengthen operational capacity and infrastructure.
- Motto is “We learn so that we may serve”.
- Learning about the needs of the community and having a good overall relationship.

Ms. Grace pointed out that our Board Member Sylvia Hernandez is the Event Planner at Queens College.

Mr. Grace opened the floor for Q&A.

Douglas Sherman –

Is it possible to download a copy from the website?

Answer: [*Glenda Grace*] – Absolutely. If you go to the website at www.qc.cuny.edu and type in Strategic Plan, you will get exactly what is in the booklet that was handed out.

Monica Corbett –

Does the Queens College Advisory still meet?

Answer: [*Glenda Grace*] – *They are meeting on Monday.*

Answer: [*Mary Maggio-Fischer*] – *They sent out an email. It is this Monday, September 19th at 7:00 p.m.*

State Senator Leroy Comrie –

Senator Comrie congratulated Martha Taylor as the new Chairperson of Community Board 8. He announced that he has a new communications person, Andrew Taranto. The Senator reported that he received a letter from DOT about the two hour meters that will be on Union Turnpike. He will be working with all of the other elected officials to look at the issues along Union Turnpike. The Rain Barrel events went well at Cunningham Park over the summer. There were several smoke detector events that were also successful. Moving into the winter season, he advised that all smoke detectors be checked to make sure they are working properly. He pointed out the importance of not plugging too many electrical appliances into the same extension cord. Senator Comrie announced that the State is expanding its Foreclosure Assistance Program. If anyone has a problem with foreclosure or emergency home repairs, there are programs that could help. He attended the meeting at Queens Hospital regarding the T-Building. He heard the passion and concerns from all sides and intends to work with Council Member Lancman and the other elected officials to come up with a final solution for the T-building. There is a need to figure out something that will be equitable and fair for the community.

Chairperson Martha Taylor made a couple of announcements:

- Chairperson Martha Taylor informed everyone that the Comptroller’s office did an audit on the inventory practices of office equipment for all 14 Community Boards in Queens. We received the preliminary report and our Board passed with flying colors. There were 70 items audited and there were no discrepancies.
- She offered condolences to Jagir Singh Bains whose brother-in-law passed away. He was not in attendance as he was in Toronto for the funeral. Condolences were also offered to Steven Sadofsky on the passing of his mother-in-law.
- Best wishes for Rachele Van Arsdale for a healthy baby. She was recently put on bedrest and will not be able to attend meetings for the next few months.
- Congratulations to Tami Hirsch whose neighborhood of Utopia Estates received a write-up at Atlasobscura.com (*the article is in your packets*).
- Congratulations to Kevin and Jackie Forrestal who welcomed another grandson, Henry James Forrestal.
- She reminded everyone about Alvin Warshaviak’s retirement party next Wednesday, September 21st. She asked if anyone planning to attend has not yet RSVP’d to please see Mark Lefkof at the end of the meeting.
- Chairperson Martha Taylor asked Seymour Schwartz to give a brief summary about the T-Building meeting.

Public Hearing on the T-Building:

Seymour Schwartz, Area 2 Committee Chair:

- Mr. Schwartz informed everyone that there was a public hearing held on Wednesday, September 7th regarding the T-Building. He stated that a summary of his presentation at the hearing is included in the Board Members’ packets.
- He stated that after long discussions and much consideration, Mr. Dunn’s submitted plan was approved unanimously.
- There was opposition from nearby residents, but there was representation from a number of directions in support of the project.
- As it now stands, it is up to the Board at HHC to make the final decision.
- For Community Board 8, it is important that the builder sets aside 8,000SF to house a rent free community center.
- He pointed out the information on Queens Community House also included in the packets, stating that they operate a number of senior and community centers throughout the borough. He stated that they are very eager to work on behalf of Community Board 8.
- He advised that it depends upon whether or not the City is prepared to take on some additional funding to make the facility rent free.
- This area of Queens is in dire need of this type of institution.

Chairperson Martha Taylor mentioned that we are on our way to having a Farmers Market in Cunningham Park. A copy of our letter of support to Commissioner Lewandowski can be found in your packets [*green sheet*].

District Manager's Report, September 2016

NYPD

The 107th Precinct stated that crime is still high. There has been a 5% increase in crime compared to last year. The number of petit larcenies, however, has decreased. We discussed a recent dog bite incident in Holliswood and the need for a standard procedure. Since the changes with ASPCA, it has been very difficult to address these issues.

DOH & MH

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's travel warnings in regards to the Zika Virus remain the same. The mosquitoes that carry the Zika virus are not found in New York, however, they are doing their best to decrease the population of another breed of mosquitoes that is related to the ones that do.

The dog bite incident was also discussed by our DOH representative and concerns with being infected with rabies. He informed us that there has not been a dog found with rabies in several decades. We should be more concerned with bats and other wildlife that carry the disease.

The agency relies on the dog owner to report any changes in the dog after ten days of observation. If the dog is still alive after that time, it does not have rabies.

DOB

Good news! The Department of Buildings will be getting about 58 new plan examiners citywide and 20 for Queens (*about 34%*).

DOT

There has been an issue with streets resurfaced in our district where the roadway is either higher or at the same level as residents' driveways. The agency has asked that the homeowners raise their sidewalks. This seems like an unreasonable request. Our representative stated that he will be attending an agency meeting to discuss this issue with roadway maintenance.

DFTA

We are still waiting for events to be scheduled for the fall at Queens Borough Hall. September is Preparedness Month and DFTA will be going to senior centers to give presentations.

OEM

The Office of Emergency Management is also giving presentations. They are also giving away go bags during these presentations. They also have light towers for events being held at night that they can loan upon request.

DEP

They are available to provide bio-swales presentation to the Community Board. They are requesting a date for such a presentation, if needed. They will be cleaning the catch basins at least once yearly. They do not have the schedule yet and do not know when they will be at CB8. I will keep you posted

HRA

They now have additional languages for literature (i.e. Urdu, Bengali, etc.).

PARKS

We had many successful events this summer. The Big Apple Circus will not be returning to Cunningham Park as they did not receive the requested funds.

Happy Birthday to Steven Sadofsky who is celebrating his birthday this month.



During the District Manager’s Report, Chairperson Martha Taylor made a point to express Community Board 8’s disagreement with DOT’s suggestion that homeowners raise their sidewalks. She stated that there is no reason why the agency should ask this of homeowners. This is the responsibility of DOT. It is an expensive proposition and we absolutely disapprove of it. She wanted to make everyone aware that our opposition was made clear to DOT.

Robert Harris – *Is there any other information regarding the installation of bioswales?*

Answer: [Marie Adam-Ovide] – *They are trying to set up a meeting with elected officials, civic leaders and Community Boards. As soon as I have a date and location, I will share it.*

Robert Harris – *If there is green lettering and markings on your sidewalk that means the City wants to dig up the sidewalk and put in a drain (bioswales).*

Answer: [Martha Taylor] – *If you look up bioswales on the internet, you will get an accurate description of what they are and what the City plans to do with them.*

Answer: [Kevin Forrestal] *Green letters on the sidewalk identify that they are areas to be studied; not a decision made.*

Borough President’s Representative – Susie Tanenbaum

- Ms. Tanenbaum mentioned that she realized how many Board Members were attending committee meetings over the summer. She shared that Borough President Melinda Katz wants to thank the Board for being so committed to the community.
- National Night Out at the 107th Precinct was a huge success! Congratulations to Carolann Foley, Steve Sadofsky, Frank Magri and Mary Maggio Fischer for helping to make it such a great evening.
- She wished all who celebrated a blessed, although belated, Eid.
- Frances Peterson and Steven Konigsberg were presented with Community Board Service Awards for their service on the Board for 20 years.
- She wished everyone celebrating Rosh Hashanah a very happy New Year on behalf of Borough President Katz.

Office of City Planning – Stephen Everett

- Nothing to report.

Committee Reports:

Special Citizens Futures Unlimited (SCFU): Proposed Group Home – 185-24 80th Road (*Informational Only*).

Martha Taylor, Chairperson:

- Chairperson Martha Taylor informed everyone that there was an informational hearing held on Tuesday, August 30, 2016 regarding a proposed group home on 185-24 80th Road. SCFU is looking to establish a community residence for six (6) developmentally disabled persons at the above address. This will be a 24-hour Supervised Individual Residential Alternative (IRA) for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

- She reported that there was no real opposition. People had questions about what the plans were for the house. They intend to greatly improve the house which is in terrible disrepair. It was previously rented to a number of St. John's students who turned out to be very disturbing for the area. This will be a much better outcome for the house.
- We cannot vote on this as it is there "as of right". Any opposition which would not allow it to happen would be a violation of the American Disabilities Act. This Board does not do that.

Adjournment

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:16 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff
September 30, 2016*