



The City of New York
Borough of Queens

Community Board 8

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Chairperson, Martha Taylor

District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 via at the Hillcrest Jewish Center located at 183-02 Union Turnpike and via [WebEx](#).

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Carolyn Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Joshua Glikman, Ashan Habib, Michael Hannibal, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Alan Ong, Tamara Oshero, Hersh Parekh, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Tamika Williams-Moore.

Board Members Absent:

Jagir Singh Bains, Heather Bennett-Idels, Kenneth Cohen II, Solomon Davydov, Carolann Foley, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton Marc A. Haken and Tami Hirsch.

Others Present:

James Mongeluzo representing NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer, Max Weprin representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Honorable Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Davinder Singh representing Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Kristen Jeffries representing Council member James Gennaro, Daniel Blech representing Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal, 107th Precinct Commanding Officer Kevin Chan, P.O. Kevin McCarthy, 107th Precinct Community Affairs, P.O. Timothy Gorman, 107th Precinct Community Affairs, Scott Solomon, Department of City Planning, CB8 District Manager and Jatnna Reyes, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

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

Public Participation:

Florence Fisher – Board Member Florence Fisher announced her retirement. After 34 years she will no longer be with us. She thanked all the entire Board for their support throughout this journey and looks forward to keeping a connection with each and everyone of the Board Members. She will be missed!

Salute to the Flag

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Harbachan Singh made a motion to approve the minutes of November 10, 2021, seconded by Seymour Schwartz.

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:

- There was a fatal fire that occurred last night at 71-02 162nd Street. Two seniors died and there are two patients with non-life-threatening injuries. The cause of fire is under investigation as per FDNY Fire Marshals. FDNY is planning to host a fire safety/prevention event soon in our district. We’ll keep you posted. They will also canvass this area to offer smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to our residents.
- Technological upgrades have been done to the office’s conference room recently. We now can have hybrid committee meeting in the office.
- Committee assignments were included in the Board Members packets. She encouraged each member to take an active interest in attending committee meetings.
- In the Board Member packets, there is a revised list of the Board Meetings dates for the upcoming year. There were no objections to the dates. The meeting dates are now final.
- She wished everyone Happy Holidays! Merry Christmas and a Happy Kwanzaa!

Chairperson Taylor welcomed the 107th Precinct Officers who were present. She informed everyone that P.O. Pete Capozzi has retired and we have a new officer in his place. His name is P.O. Timothy Gorman. She welcomed him aboard and looks forward to working closely with him.

Chairperson Taylor announced that Board Member Seymour Schwartz had important news to report to us. She invited him to address the Board.

Seymour Schwartz – Mr. Schwartz spoke about the T-Building. He informed everyone that with the help of the Board and his own efforts, the T-Building is finally being built and its nearing its final completion. It will serve as a residential building with 124 units available for rent to residents at 60-100% of the aream median income (AMI). It would also have a community center which will serve for the residents of the are and the entire district. The community center will be runned by Common Point which is a community-based organization operating the greater NYC area to bring community programming and support to all.

Mr. Schwartz’s report was cut short due to technical difficulties.

Commanding Officer Kevin Chan was in attendance. Chairperson Taylor invited him to say a few words.

Commanding Officer Kevin Chan – 107th Precinct

- The precinct is down 10% in crime; however, there is a spike in grand larceny in the last few months. Thieves are using skimming devices. They caught two of these devices in the area within the past two weeks. He asked that if anyone is using a debit card at any of the local banks/ATM machines, to please be careful. He asked that everyone checks the machine before anything to make sure there is no skimming device attached. Skimming devices are installed in the debit card slot portion of an ATM machine, once you put your debit card in your information is read, kept and duplicated for fraudulent activities. He also asked everyone to be aware of their surroundings when putting their pin numbers in.
- Package theft is also on the rise. He advised everyone to make sure someone is home when waiting for a package. He suggested that individuals install cameras in front of their homes and their surroundings. This will help in monitoring your home while away and keeping track of any unusual activity that may be going on. It is a way of keeping your home and your property safe.
- He reminded everyone to not keep their space heaters on at night. This is a way to prevent a fire from occurring.
- He wished everyone a Happy Holiday season and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Chairperson Taylor thanked Commanding Officer Chan for being so responsive and so dedicated for the community. He hasn’t been with us for a long time but he has been wonderful! We are happy to have him.

- **Board Member Allen Eisenstein also thanked C.O. Chan for all the work he has done within the community. He also mentioned how responsive and helpful the NCO officers have been.**

Council Member Barry Grodenchik was in attendance. Chairperson Taylor invited him to say a few words.

CM Barry Grodenchik – CM Grodenchik thanked everyone for their support throughout his career. He grew up in District 8. Most of the schools he attended are in CB8. He will be retiring soon. He thanked Chairperson Taylor and DM Adam-Ovide for all their support and their work throughout his journey. Together they were able to do many great things. (i.e. Redwood Playground, Upper Playground & 210th Street Playground. All in Cunningham Park). There will be a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Friday, December 17th at 1:00 p.m. on the Phase I of the Vanderbilt Motor Parkway. He was excited to work with us on the expansion on P.S. 26Q, they will be building an addition at the southern end of the school. The school will be made fully accessible for everyone. He was proud to participate on the renaming of Mel Doby Way (he was not a member of our Board but was the president of one of the Hilltop Village Co-op buildings where Board Member Marc Haken lives). He was a good man. He died from COVID-19. Hopefully his successor and the City Council, Linda Lee will have a ceremony for him [Mr. Doby]. He feels lucky to have served to District 8 for so many years. He will forever be grateful to have been a part of us. He wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season!

Elected Officials’ Announcements:

Daniel Blech representing Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal – They had a toy drive which was held throughout the entire month in their office. They had a good turnout. If anyone needs any assistance, please reach to their office at: 718-969-1508

James Mongeluzo representing NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer – They completed the final edition of the New York by the numbers economic and fiscal outlook newsletter. This gives a lot of information about the fiscal and economic health of the City. The Annual Financial Report for the last Fiscal Year. It is available on their website. For more information and many other reports, please visit: www.comptroller.nyc.gov. If anyone needs to reach out to him, he is available at: 646-689-6509

District Manager’s Report, December 2021

Queens Public Library

The Queens Public Library “Time for Kind” campaign started. Information is available on their website.

Department of City Planning (DCP)

The ULURP for 185-17 Hillside Avenue was approved. It can only have Option 1 – whereby 25% of the units must be affordable at 60% AMI. He anticipates that a new ULURP for 77-39 Vleigh Place will be certified by DCP in mid-January and forwarded to CB8 for review. CB8 will have to submit a response by mid-March.

Department of Sanitation (DSNY)

The JTPs (Job Training Personnel) are back. This means they will have the manpower to address the issues with the center medians within the next couple of weeks. With the assistance and support of Councilman Gennaro, the commercial strips and tree pits are getting cleaned.

They are working 12-hour shifts - Night Plow schedule. Remember to place garbage out after 4 p.m. on the night before for collection. If you have leaves that were not collected on Sunday, please place them out with your regular trash.

Superintendent Eyal Egger is being re-assigned to District 13. We will have a new superintendent starting on Monday.

Fire Department (FDNY)

The numbers are steady and there has been no increase in fire incidents. The EMS calls are back to normal. They should have statistics for calendar year 2021 next month.

Department of Transportation (DOT)

The agency started their “Dusk and Darkness Safety Campaign” to remind drivers that there are more people out in the street during these hours and to watch out for pedestrians. The Holiday Embargo started and will end on January 2nd. During this time only emergency work permits will be issued for whole or part of certain roadways to work on the streets. For CB8 these locations are: Hillside Avenue, Main Street, Queens Blvd., and Union Turnpike.

Department of Buildings (DOB)

As previously reported the Department of Buildings has a Homeowner Relief Resolution Program. Under this program homeowners are given warnings instead of violations for certain infractions. After inspection, homeowners are given forty to sixty days to resolve these infractions. Many inspections will be due in early January.

We will be working closely with DOB to ensure that inspectors return after the 60 days grace period for the issues that come to us.

Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP)

For those who missed the November 15th deadline to receive automatic monthly family tax credit, they can still receive the tax credit by filing a tax return.

The City sued used-car dealerships and won*. These dealerships have been fined. The fines will be for both punitive damages and for restitution.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOH & MH)

The health inspectors came back to the field office from City Hall. They now have 6 to 7 inspectors. I reiterated the need for inspections in Kew Gardens Hills. We had a few community members who spoke about harborage conditions in their area at the last CB8 meeting. Inspections were made and violations were issued last week.



Happy Birthday to: **Al Eisenstein, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steve Konigsberg, Sey Schwartz, Bhitihara Fulton, Tammy Osherov, Deepti Sharma, Tami Hirsch, Charlton Rhee and Simon Pelman.**

Marie Adam-Ovide

** One case was regarding **Kings Autoshop**, which operates two Brooklyn Mitsubishi locations. DCWP is charging the company with more than 7,000 violations and seeking more than \$50,000 in restitution for 34 consumers, civil penalties, and revocation of both of its used car dealership licenses.*

*The case against **JF Motors** includes **Automania, Luxury Automotive Club, and the now-closed World Auto**, all of which are in Queens. DCWP is charging the JF Motors family of dealerships with more than 9,000 violations and seeking more than \$100,000 in restitution for nine consumers, civil penalties, and revocation of its two remaining licenses.*

The agency currently licenses 476 used car dealerships and has received more than 10,000 complaints about the industry since 2014.

*DCWP encourages New Yorkers who are looking to buy a used car to read the **Used Car Consumer Bill of Rights**, which dealerships are required to post and give to each consumer before they sign a sales contract.*

*The **Bill of Rights** must be provided to the consumer in the language in which the contract was negotiated if the translation is available on DCWP’s website. Any consumer who has had a problem with a used car dealership should file a complaint by visiting **nyc.gov/dcwp** or calling 311.*

Borough President’s Donovan Richards Representative – Max Weprin – On Friday, December 17th, they will be hosting a Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony and Toy distribution at 4:30 p.m. outside of Queens Borough Hall. On behalf of Borough President Richards, he wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season.

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City Planning Representative – Scott Solomon

- The Health & Fitness Text Amendment and the Citywide Hotel Text Amendment were both approved by City Council on December 9, 2021. On November 23rd, the 185-17 Hillside Avenue re-zoning was approved unanimously by City Council.
- **77-39 Vleigh Place** – An application was filed and was seeking certification on December 13th; however, the applicant decided to defer temporarily. It is most likely looking to be certify as early as January 18th. This application will seek a re-zoning from R3-2 and establishing an R6A district with a commercial overlay from C1 to C2. This could facilitate development of a 8-story mix use building (i.e. ground floor retail, 119 dwell units, etc.). It should come to the Board soon for review.

Committee Reports:

Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern, Health Committee Chair:

- Dr. Stern spoke about the Omicron variant that is spreading quickly. According to the CDC’s director Rochelle Walensky, Omicron is more transmissible than the Delta variant. The number of cases is doubling approximately every two days. Going into the holiday season, the expectation is that the cases will continue to grow in the coming weeks. Despite the rapid and wide spread, the virulence seems to be much less than what was found with the Delta strain. This means that people are not displaying serious symptoms. There was one reported death in the UK. In the U.S., the Omicron infection seems to result in mild illness. The Delta variant is still here. She encouraged everyone to remain vigilant, to get vaccinated and those who are vaccinated and eligible for the booster, to get the booster. Practice social distance again and keep wearing a mask. For those who remain unconvinced of the seriousness of this pandemic, we have lost 800,000 people in this country to COVID-19. One (1) in ten (10) seniors have died. She encouraged everyone to do their part and keep safe.
- She wished everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season!

Committee Reports:

Kevin Forrestal:

- On November 30th, the application for the Bukharian Synagogue of Hillcrest had their public meeting at the BSA. The meeting started off with the Chair complementing the Community Board’s meeting minutes of the public hearing from October 2020, being very comprehensive and useful. She went on to say that she noticed some things from the last board meeting and she offered that the staff and/or commissioner come to our Board and address us as to the BSA’s process, they recommended that they do so. The chair and all the members of the board noted on the application that it exceeded the character of the neighborhood and directed the applicant to reduce the size of the facility on the application. She personally drafted some alternatives, for example taking out the mikvah which she said is not part of what would be required by the BSA.
- The commercial kitchen, she noted that is not really needed at all. In conclusion, they stated that the size of the project needs to be diminished, the top floor can be removed entirely as well as the kitchen. The attorney of the applicant stated that he will have to consult this with his client and get back to them within 6 weeks with alternative plans. He will keep us posted.

Adjournment

Mary Maggio made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:24 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jatna Reyes, CB8 staff
December 21, 2021*