

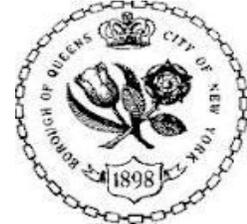


Chairman, Alvin Warshaviak

*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, February 17, 2016 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Mary Maggio Fischer, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Tamara Osheroov, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Steven Sadofsky, Michael F. Sidell, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members Absent:**

Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Kenneth Cohen II, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Joshua Glikman, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Frank Magri, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Samuel Rodriguez, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Alvin Warshaviak, Jacob Weinberg and Stanley Weinblatt.

**Others Present:**

Alexander Bennett representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Yan Chiu-Muniz representing Councilman Elect Barry Grodenchik, Daniel Rosenthal representing Councilman Rory Lancman, Aaron Siegel representing Assemblyman David Weprin, Facia Class representing Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz, Marilla Li representing Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager, and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff member.

**Call to Order:**

Second Vice Chair Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Public Participation:**

**Grace Magee (NYPIRG)** - *New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)*. We are a student run, activist organization that works on student empowerment issues. I am based out of Queens College. We take action for things that affect students and people of the community; higher education, consumer protection and environmental issues. The thing that we work on that I want to share with everyone is our Small Claims Court Action Center out of our office and several other offices. We counsel the public on filing a Small Claims Court case. We offer advice so that people can independently take a course of action. Individuals are encouraged to call the borough in which the event took place. Instead of hiring a lawyer, which can be expensive, we counsel them and offer advice. Anyone who has questions, we will go through the step by step process free of charge.

**Wendy B. Phaff** - I work at Queens Center for Progress locally. We are a Non-Profit that provide services for people with mental disabilities in Queens County. I am here tonight on behalf of Queens Distance Runners, which is a running group in Queens. They are doing the first Queens Marathon on April 30<sup>th</sup>. We are looking for support

from all the communities in Queens to come out and cheer for the runners. It is going to be very exciting. We anticipate about 500 runners. The Queens Centers for Progress have a food tasting event; *2016 An Evening of Fine Foods*, at Terrace of the Park on Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Also, we have a walk coming up in April with a *Footsteps for Progress Pep-Rally Kick Off* on Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 81-15 164<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Mike Sidell**- I wish to reserve my speaking time for next month. I would like to ask that you all pick up the Courier to read the article. It comes out tomorrow.

**Aliya Flake**- I am from the office of Thomas DiNapoli, our State Comptroller. I am a project coordinator and a research specialist. We are doing a survey throughout New York City on noise. As many of you know first-hand, noise is potentially hazardous to public health. Noise can disrupt sleep and adversely impact children's ability to learn. Noise is regulated largely at the local level and there are limited Federal resources for local government. We are doing a survey with the larger goal of helping communities to address the problem of neighborhood noise. We are asking that you complete this survey. This particular Community District has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest level of noise complaints of the 14 Queens Community Districts. During the period of January 1, 2010 through November 30, 2015, there were 6,141 noise complaints, most of which were for loud music and other categories that do not fall into construction or aircrafts. We are planning an audit on how noise gets handled in the City. We want to hear from you about your experience. We asked the Community Board District Manager to email a link to our survey which is at *surveymonkey\*\**. The survey will be available in English, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish. There are about 27 questions. We tried to make the survey as easy as possible. I am leaving a flyer with the links for the survey for this Community Board on the table.

**Daniel Rosenthal**- We have two events coming up in March. On March 18<sup>th</sup> we are having a health van coming to the Pomonok/Electchester area with Free Mammogram Screenings. You do not need insurance. There is no cost but if you are interested you do need to RSVP to our office ahead of time. We are also holding a Town Hall in Briarwood on March 15<sup>th</sup> with IDNYC, DOE, HPD and HRA. This will be held at M.S. 217, 85-05 144<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Marc A. Haken**- On behalf of my colleague, Harbachan Singh and myself, as members of the Borough President's African American Heritage Committee, we would like to invite you all to our Black History Month Event. It will be held on Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Faculty Dining Room at York College/CUNY, 94-20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Jamaica, NY. We will be giving out eight (8) \$1,000.00 scholarships to students who submitted applications. We will also be honoring a number of people within our community. You are all invited to join us.

**Aaron Siegel**- We will be holding an event at the Queens Library Lefferts Branch, located at 103-34 Lefferts Boulevard. This will be held every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. until April 13<sup>th</sup> and will provide Free Tax Assistance from the NYS Dept. of Taxation & Finance. If your income is less than \$62,000 you are eligible. We are also hosting a Food Drive. Details are available in the flyer on the table in the back.

**Pauline Ferrante**- I am here to speak briefly about the Zika Virus. We should all be cautious but it is not something that will affect everyone. About 80% of people who get infected with the virus do not exhibit any symptoms at all. If you do, they are usually very mild; from headache to joint pain to red eyes. The symptoms go away naturally just like every other virus. The main focus is on women who are pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant. There is a very strong correlation between Zika infection and a condition called microcephaly. This causes babies to be born with an abnormally small head and brain, which can lead to developmental issues. We are advising anyone who is pregnant or thinking about becoming pregnant to avoid travel to places where there are outbreaks at this point in time. For New Yorkers, we don't have to worry too much because we do not have the mosquito that carries the Zika Virus. We do not know though if the mosquitos we do have can eventually carry the disease. We are asking Community Boards to let membership know that once mosquito season starts in April, to be aware of all standing water that is on their property and get rid of any breeding locations because we do have mosquitos that carry West Nile Virus. For safety, we encourage everyone to get rid of any standing water.

**Charlton Rhee** - They found in some of the areas where they were using larvicide to eliminate the mosquitos, that the larvicide was what was causing these cases of microcephaly.

**Pauline Ferrante-** That is a theory that is out there. There is not a lot that we know at this point. So we are advising people to avoid travel to those locations.

**Salute to the Flag**

Second Vice Chair Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Susan Cleary made a motion to approve the minutes of January 13, 2016 seconded by Kevin Forrestal.

**Count in favor**      31                        **Opposed:**      0                        **Abstained:**      0  

**Board Members who approved the minutes:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Mary Maggio Fischer, Kevin Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Tamara Osheroov, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Steven Sadofsky, Michael F. Sidell, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members who did not approve the minutes:**

None

**Second Vice Chair’s Report – Martha Taylor:**

- Please look over the Minutes in your packets from our Parks Committee Meeting.
- We wish Dr. Allen Bennett the best. He is having a medical procedure done tomorrow. Let’s all say a little prayer for him and wish him well.

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**District Manager’s Report, February 2016**

**DOB**

Three new kiosks have been added at the Department of Buildings in Queens. Expeditors, architects and engineers with I.D. can go to the kiosks and conduct business, which will shorten their wait time. This will also shorten the time that members of the public wait on line to be seen by DOB personnel at the service window.

**HRA**

The Human Resources Administration has been working on some homeless service initiatives:

- HOME-STAT – a street homeless outreach effort which unifies and expands the City’s resources for finding and getting help to them;
- Doubling drop-in centers that provide food;
- Adding 500 safe haven beds;
- Expanding the shelter repair squad;
- Establishing a hotline run by HRA to register complaints about shelter conditions.

More information is available on the website.

**FDNY**

In the past, when complaints were received about the smell of gas, the FDNY would break down the doors to allow access to the utility companies. Now, the FDNY will only do a forced entry when there is a “**positive reading**” by the utility company.

The number of deaths that are fire related went down by 17% in 2015. Unfortunately, 80% of these deaths could have been prevented. They were due to homes that did not have smoke detectors or had inoperable detectors. There will be a “Get Alarmed” event at St. James Episcopal Church located at 84-07 Broadway in Sunnyside. It will be held on February 27<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. You will receive a combination carbon monoxide (CO) and smoke detector. Volunteers from the American Red Cross will install it for you. Community Board 8 will be co-sponsoring a Get Alarmed NYC event with Assemblyman David Weprin and the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit on March 27, 2016 right here at the Hillcrest Jewish Center at 10:30 a.m.. We will have flyers for distribution at our next meeting in March.

### **DEP**

The Department of Environmental Protection is having its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest. Students from 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade can submit artwork or poetry by the March 4<sup>th</sup> deadline. Please go to [www.nyc.gov/dep/artandpoetry](http://www.nyc.gov/dep/artandpoetry) for more information.

### **DOT**

Please note that a ponding condition is when water does not dissipate after more than 48 hours. The City does not address water on the street that takes less than 48 hours to dissipate. It takes over 48 hours for mosquitoes to incubate.

### **NYPD**

The 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct had a 26% reduction in all major crimes. There will be increased enforcement of the 25 miles per hour speed limit under the vision zero initiative. Please obey the speed limit.

Now that it is tax return season, be aware of IRS scams. Everyone is being targeted – all age groups and ethnicities. Do not send payment to anyone claiming to be from the IRS over the telephone.

### **DDC**

QED 1001 is 99.4% completed. They are now on a hiatus for the winter and will resume work in March. The remainder of the work will be done within a month.

### **DOH&MH**

We had two conference calls recently with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene about the Zika virus. They are advising pregnant women and those planning to conceive not to travel to tropical countries. The virus itself is not deadly. Most people (80%) who get infected do not get sick. Those that do recuperate within a week of showing flu like symptoms and conjunctivitis like symptoms. Symptoms appear after 2 to 12 days after mosquito bite. The threat is really to the unborn fetus who may develop microcephaly which is a birth defect. The brain is underdeveloped. This is associated with developmental and functional issues. Here is a list of unknowns:

- Does Zika cause microcephaly?
- What is a baby’s risk for microcephaly if his or her mother has Zika?
- Does it matter when a woman gets infected during her pregnancy?

During the first conference call we learned that blood tests to detect this virus could only be done by the CDC or the State. It may take at least 7 days to get the test results. The DOH & MH was working on administering these tests at the City level.

During the latest conference call we learned that a man was able to pass the virus to his wife, as he had it in his semen. The DOH & MH recommends the use of condoms if a man was exposed to the Zika virus. If he has a partner who is pregnant, he should use condoms throughout the partner’s pregnancy.

They believe that it is possible to contract this disease in NYC. This is due to having in America a type of mosquito that is a close relative/cousin to the ones that carry the Zika virus in the other parts of the world. They also believe that it is not very likely that it would be spreading in this way here. They are looking to kill two birds with one stone by modifying the West Nile Virus mosquito program for the Zika Virus. This program has been used to manage the mosquito population.

Please go to this link for up to date information about the Zika Virus: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/zika-virus.page>

Happy birthday to our Board Members: **Kevin Forrestal, Paul Lazauskas, Bright Limm, Samuel Rodriguez, Alvin Warshaviak** who were born in the month of February.

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**Borough President’s Representative – Susie Tanenbaum**

- Borough President Katz wants to invite everyone to her annual Black History Month Celebration Event. I want to acknowledge Harbachan Singh and Marc Haken who serve on the Borough President’s African American Heritage Committee. They have done so for many years with dedication. Please give them a round of applause for the work that they do. You are all invited. It takes place Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at York College. The Borough President presents scholarships to a number of very deserving High School students in the borough. We hope you will all come and join us.
- Borough President Katz sponsored her first breakfast in honor of Black History Month with clergy members from southeast and northwest Queens. Again Harbachan Singh and Marc Haken represented the African American Heritage Committee and Community Board 8. It was on February 4<sup>th</sup> and was very successful. Borough President Katz want to have an ongoing dialogue with clergy members. The main topic at this breakfast ended up being affordable housing. She talked about funding opportunities for faith based organizations that wanted to build affordable housing. It was a very productive breakfast.
- On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Borough President Katz presided over her monthly Borough Board Meeting. This was the time of year when her Budget Director, Richard Lee, presented the Fiscal Year 2017 Proposed Expense and Capital Budget Priorities for the borough. Martha Taylor very ably represented Board 8 and voted on this proposal with the other Community Board Chairs. I have a copy of it with me if anyone would like to take a look at it. I just ask that I get it back before the end of the meeting. If you are interested in getting a copy let me know and I will ask Richard Lee if we can make a copy available to you. The Borough Board did vote to approve it. One of the things that was brought up a this presentation was the fact that the borough is not getting its fair share of funding. This is an ongoing problem. This covers many areas from Cultural Affairs to School Construction Authority to Senior Centers. One of the things that really stood out to the Board Chairs and the Council Members that were at this meeting were Parks. Our borough has more park land than any other borough in New York but yet we have fewer Park Police than any other borough. I think they said seven or eight for the borough. This is a really big issue. The proposal recommends increasing funding in all of these areas.

**Marc A. Haken** – You say that Queens is underfunded and we don’t get our fair share. That must mean that some other place is getting more than their fair share. Who is getting more?

**Martha Taylor** – Brooklyn is getting incredibly much more and Manhattan, of course. Staten Island by the way, also in some areas, was proportionately unbelievably higher than anybody else. You need to take a look at that book. If you want, ask Susie and she can get you a copy. The figures are absurd, it happens every year. There is some kind of ancient formula that was formulated under a former City Council Budget Chair. No one was ever able to dig their way out of it to make it more equitable since then. It is pitiful, it really is.

**Committee Reports:**

**Martha Taylor – Parks Committee Chair-  
Report on Meadow Lake Project – Flushing Meadows Corona Park**

**Martha Taylor** – We had a very informative meeting of the Parks Committee and we heard from the Parks Department about plans for a specific part of Meadow Lake. They are doing it in phases. It is the northwest part and its circulation and planning. If anyone has any questions that are not answered in the minutes you can ask me but I think that it is very well written and all the answers are probably there. We all felt that it was a very good plan. All they wanted from us was a letter of support, which we did give them.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – I noticed in the Minutes that the flooding on the Grand Central Parkway was mentioned. If you recall several years ago we had a presentation on this project.

**Martha Taylor** – Yes. State DOT is addressing that. They are addressing flooding on the internal portion. The external portion is being addressed by State DOT and we are probably due for another one of their explanation meetings. It is in their plan and it will get done. I can't tell you when though.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – It is one of the phases of the reconstruction?

**Martha Taylor** – Yes, absolutely.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – When you are driving towards the airport, when it rains, everything from the highway to the lake is slick.

**Martha Taylor** – When it ices up, it is more hazardous. The external part will be State DOT.

### **Maria DeInnocentiis – Area 6 Chair-**

### **Report on Federal Realty Proposed Project – Fresh Meadows Shopping Center**

Over the years the Fresh Meadows Development Area, the residential and commercial properties were made a special district. This means that it is a preservation area and cannot be built upon without permission of our board and the City Council. About 15 years ago, the property was sold and the commercial property was separated from the residential property. We recently had a request by Federal Realty, who is the commercial owner, to look at a building in the special district. There is a hotel being built at 185<sup>th</sup> Street and 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue. On the corner behind Applebee's they want to build a 14,000 SF building with stores on the lower floors and business offices on the upper floors. They believe that the Post Office will not renew its lease and they are also asking to convert the Post office area into 28,000 SF of commercial and business retail space. This was the first that Area 6 heard about the Post Office. We talked about it and listened to their proposals. We feel that the area is highly congested. We had DOT walk with us around the traffic circles to talk about what we can do to mitigate the danger and the excessive traffic that we are having through the circles. We were surprised to hear from Federal Realty that they felt that the parking in the commercial areas is under-utilized. Those of us that shop there know that the streets in Fresh Meadows are private and if you don't have a permit you cannot park there. The only place to park when you are shopping, is in the parking lots. There is no parking anywhere else unless you want to be towed away. They said that the study was done and that it was 15% under-utilized. We disagree. We feel that the hotel is going to impact the community negatively. We don't feel that two buildings need to be built to increase their profit margins at the expense of the community. The Civic Associations that surround the area were all at this hearing. We all unanimously feel that this is not something we want to pursue. They have not filed any papers. They came to us just with an idea. We will need the Board's support because they are going to go beyond the Community Board to develop the property. I have already reached out to Grace Meng about getting the Post office to extend their lease. We cannot afford to lose that Post Office. There is no other Post Office in the area of that size. They are looking into it for us. We are going to be coming back to you. We are planning to meet with Barry Grodenchik to discuss it with him. He has no opinions at the moment but we need to get his support in opposing this. This was just informational but it is something that Area 6 is really focusing on. I will continue to give updates as we get more information.

**Martha Taylor** – So Federal Realty is saying that the Post Office may not choose to renew their lease. Is there anything in that lease that says that Federal Realty has to renew it if the Post office wants to?

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – When I talked to Jay Siegel, he said that generally it is a long term lease with 10 year renewals, which is up in 2018. They felt that given the state of USPS in the country that the government might decide that they don't want to keep that Post Office opened.

**Martha Taylor** – There may be 10-year renewal options, but does Federal Realty have to give them the option?

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – No.

**Martha Taylor** – Federal Realty can say we don't want you to have this lease anymore.

**Maria DeInnocentiis** – Our opinion is that they are testing the waters because if they can get community support to build a 28,000 SF building, they will not renew the lease for the Post Office, whether they want to or not. If they can't develop, they probably would not be able to use that property for anything else and would look to renew their lease. We want the Post Office, not the development.

**Marc A Haken** – Did they in any way, shape or form offer any type of amenities?

**Maria DeInnocentiis** - They wanted to work with us to see what we would like to have there. You have to realize this is a special district. We don't want to break that. They are not adding any parking. They are going to put in 42,000 SF of additional space, half of which is businesses, not stores.

**Martha Taylor – Interim Budget Director -  
Capital and Expense Budget**

We had a Committee Meeting and we went over all of our priorities and requests for Capital and Expense Budget items for this coming Fiscal Year. There were many responses from the agencies that we questioned. Marie has a list of questions that she has already given to the appropriate agencies and we are awaiting their replies.

**Mark A. Haken made a motion to accept the draft from Chairman Warshaviak in regards to our Budget requests, seconded by Mark J. Lefkof.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair Martha Taylor took a hand count for all those in favor of accepting the draft.**

Count in favor   32                        Opposed:   0                        Abstained:   0  

**The motion was passed unanimously**

**Mark J. Lefkof – Area 7 Chair – DCA Newsstand Application # 14539-2015-ANWS  
Proposed Location – N/E/C Midland Parkway and Hillside Avenue**

We have an application for a Newsstand to be placed on the northeast corner of Midland Parkway and Hillside Avenue. They want to put it in front of the Midland Parkway mall on the east side of the Jamaica Estates gatehouse in front of the medical center on the grassy portion of the sidewalk. We had an Area 7 Committee Meeting. Unfortunately we didn't have enough members present so we had a consensus. The consensus of the Committee was unanimously against this proposal. Within a half block there is a minimum of six retail stores that sell newspapers, magazines, cigarettes, etc. These retail establishments pay substantial rent and provide jobs for people of the community. Considering this, there is no need for this in the community.

**Kevin Forrestal made a motion to approve the Application for the Newsstand, seconded by Edward Chung.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair Martha Taylor took a hand count on the motion to approve the Application for the Newsstand.**

Count in favor   0                        Opposed:   32                        Abstained:   0  

**The motion was opposed unanimously**

Steven Sadofsky made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:20 p.m., seconded by Mary Maggio Fischer.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff  
February 29, 2015*

**\*\* NY State Comptroller Noise Survey Links \*\***

**English:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KDGVQ8Z>

**Mandarin:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/B5DC5TR>

**Russian:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/H8KRCDP>

**Spanish:** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7HVRFPW>