



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, February 10, 2021 via [Zoom Webinar](#).

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Brown, , Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mary Maggio, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Alan Ong, Tamara Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Harbachan Singh, Douglas Sherman, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Heather Bennett-Idels, Robert H. Block, Solomon Davydov, Joshua Glikman, Mitch Lisker, Frank Magri, Simon Pelman and Charlton Rhee.

Others Present:

Max Weprin representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Davinder Singh representing Honorable Council Member Barry Grodenchik, Raida Hossain representing Honorable Assembly Member David Weprin, Honorable State Senator Leroy Comrie, Paul Graziano, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Jatnna Reyes, CB8 Staff Member.

Call to Order:

1st Vice Chair Michael Hannibal called this Board Meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. [*Chairperson Martha Taylor was having technical difficulties and was unable to join the meeting*].

Elected Officials' Announcements:

Davinder Singh representing Council Member Barry Grodenchik – There will be a Homeowners and Renter Benefit Information Session on Thursday, March 4th at 3:00 p.m. It will be a WebEx conference. Also, on this day, there will be a Ranked Choice Voting information session at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom. If anyone is willing to participate, they can do so by calling their District Office at: 718-468-0137.

Ashley Lin representing State Senator John Liu – They are also hosting the Homeowners and Renter Benefit Information session event with the Department of Finance along with Council Member Grodenchik.

Raida Hossain representing Assembly Member David Weprin – Ms. Hossain introduce herself as the new Chief of Staff for AM Weprin. She joined his office in December. She is looking forward to working with everyone. She will send her contact information to the Community Board via email to be shared with the entire Board. Their office will be holding a Mask Giveaway soon. Once she has the details, she will share them with us.

Taylor Jackson representing State Senator Leroy Comrie – They continue to do tax preparation services for FREE, as well as HEAP application assistance from their office. They continue to be open on a remote basis. You can contact their office at: 718-765-6359.

Salute to the Flag

1st Vice Chair Michael Hannibal led the salute to the flag. He asked that everyone stand in their own way.

Approval of Minutes:

Marc A. Haken made a motion to approve the minutes of January 20, 2021, seconded by Mary Maggio.

Count in favor: **41** Opposed: **0** Abstained: **0**

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:

- DM Adam-Ovide stated that Chairperson Taylor did not have a report. However, Board Member Jesse Rosenbaum had reached out to her on an issue and she gave him the floor to discuss it.

Jesse Rosenbaum – Mr. Rosenbaum stated that they have had a series of complaints of hot rodders driving through the neighborhood making a lot of noise with their mufflers speeding through private streets. Assemblywoman Nily Rozic introduced the Furious Act bill. The bill will amend the vehicle traffic law to allow New York City to operate speed cameras at any time in the school speed zone. The City has identified some areas with special concerns for illegal speed racing. A letter of support from the local Community Board is being requested. After a post drag-racing meeting, the following recommendations were given:

- The NYPD will check with its legal team rate on enforcing trespassing laws for specific parking lots where races congregate. Special signage will have to be installed.
- Federal Realty [broker agency] will look into the possibility of installing an electric power fence that will allow the Fresh Meadows shopping center parking lot after a certain time.
- NYPD will provide monthly statistics (number of summonses issued, drag racing, tinted windows, speeding tickets issue, muffler noise, etc.).
- All drag-racing complaints should be reported to 911. If it falls under reckless endangerment. If it is not, then call 311. Emails should then be sent to local Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCOs), Trotter from the 107th Precinct, Assemblywoman Nily Rozic and Council Member Barry Grodenchik.
- NYPD is working on more checkpoints to catch violators.

Motion:

Marc A. Haken made a motion to approve the letter of support of Assemblywoman Nily Rozic’s Furious Act Bill seconded by Mary Maggio.

A vote was taken.

In Favor: 41 Opposed: 0 Abstain: 0

The motion was approved unanimously.

A letter of support on Assemblywoman Nily Rozic’s Furious Bill will be sent.

DM Adam-Ovide mentioned to 1st Vice Chair Michael Hannibal of the presence of Honorable State Senator Leroy Comrie. He was asked to address the Board.

Honorable State Senator Leroy Comrie

- Honorable State Senator stated that they are working hard on budget hearings for every state agency. The Governor has put out his executive budget. He announced today that York College will be open as a vaccination site.

They are looking to vaccinate at least 1,000-2,000 people per day. They are pushing to get additional sites within the community to try to combat this virus quickly. Council Member Grodenchik and other elected officials have also joined this task force.

- He spoke about the “Planning Together Proposal”. As a former land use chair of the City Council, he had a chance to look at this zoning amendment. He stated that this will empower and actually give more power to Community Boards to make sure that they are detecting and being more aggressive about illegal homes in the area. He hopes that we have an opportunity to make sure that every Community Board and the Borough President have a meeting to address the hysteria this is causing throughout the community. Some candidates running for office are using this proposal as a platform for community involvement. People in the community think they are doing something positive about this situation.
- His office is doing tax preparation services and HEAP application assistance. They are also working with the NYU School of Medicine dentistry program. Anyone interested in these programs can contact their office for more information at: 718-765-5369 or reach out to him via email at: info@leroycomrie.org.

Guest Speaker:

Guest Speaker – George Hadjiconstantinou – Queens Chamber of Commerce – Mr. Hadjiconstantinou spoke about a new program the Queens Chamber of Commerce is offering to help businesses deal with the pandemic. Here is a brief summary of the presentation:

- The organization is partnering up with all of the other Chamber of Commerce in New York City to create resources to help them cope with the pandemic.
- They help in marketing, building strategies, technological support, legal counsel etc. It is very easy to sign up. You can visit their website at: <https://www.nycsmallbusinessresourcenetwork.org/> or alternatively you can reach out to him at ghadji@queenschamber.org or at 516-900-6280 (he covers zip codes: 11433 and 11432) or his colleague Jesse He at: jhe@queenschamber.org or 516-669-3946 (she covers zip codes: 11365, 11366,11367).
- They have some ambitious goals for the next year which are: reaching to 20,000 businesses Citywide, specifically 5,000 in Queens. Over half of them should be MWBE.
- They have touched over 1,200 businesses and they continue doing outreach to all corners of Queens to make sure they can assist them all.
- He is eager to engage with many businesses as he can and looks forward to working with everyone.

1st Vice Chair Michael Hannibal opened the floor for questions from the Board Members.

Alan Ong – [to Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – I am part of the Union Turnpike Merchants Association. I have a business that is struggling and I would love to get in touch with you or Jesse since it is within the area you guys covered.

Answer: [Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – I’ll be happy to speak with you or get you any help we can. I believe your area is Jesse’s area.

DM Adam-Ovide – asked Mr. Hadjiconstantinou if this program is open to all businesses whether they are part of the chamber or not.

Answer: [Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – Yes, this program is open to all businesses. You do not need to be a member of the chamber to receive our services.

Susan Cleary – [to Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – What does MWBE mean?

Answer: [Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – Minority Women Business Enterprise.

Rabbi Nisanov – [To Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – Do you also help not-for-profit organizations or is this only for-profit organizations?

Answer: [Mr. Hadjiconstantinou] – Unfortunately, we do not have as many resources for non-profits. I have assisted in a number of non-profits already. I will be happy to work with non-profits as well.

District Manager’s Report – February 2021

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

1,395,050 vaccines were delivered to NYC as of February 2, 2021. 837,292 were administered of which 618,308 were first dosages and 143,244 second dosages. There is a severe shortage of inspectors to address issues such as pest control and food vending. The inspectors have been reassigned to address COVID-19 related issues. They are trying to hire new ones but have limited funding. The Office of the Attorney General is taking complaints about vaccine scams. These scammers are asking for credit card information and deposit to schedule the appointment.

Con Edison

Richard David was recently hired by Con Edison to replace Carol Conslato who retired last year. There were no major issues during the storm. They make preparations following snow storms in case they have outages due to the salt getting into the manholes.

Department of Transportation

The Mayor has announced a new commissioner for DOT. His name is Henry Guttman. He has a law background. Andrew Arcese did not have much more information to share about him.

Department of Buildings

There were about 2100 DOB complaints filed in our district for 2020. The Department received 250 complaints in January. That is high for our area. They received 96 complaints for elevators in Queens. The pilot program for the half day inspector for Intergovernmental Affairs office is ongoing. They have not yet decided if the inspector will be assigned permanently, as it was suspended during the height of the pandemic.

Department of Design and Construction

Due to the weather, the projects will be suspended. They will resume with planting in the spring. Some locations have been removed due to conflict with electrical boxes. Other locations are being reviewed by an arborist to ensure that no conflicts exist with trees. They await the reports and will share the locations with the CB.

Department of Homeless Services

No new information on the shelter. There are no applications for construction at the Department of Buildings.

Marie Adam-Ovide

Borough President’s Representative – Max Weprin

- Community Board application deadline is on February 19, 2020.
- There are small businesses grant programs going on for businesses in need of up to \$20,000 to support operational expenses in partnership with the City, Queens Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations. More information is available on their website at: www.queensbp.org/smallbusinessgrant.
- Citi Field opened up today as a mass COVID-19 vaccination site.
- There will be a fire safety and education event on Thursday, February 11th in partnership with the FDNY at 5:30 p.m. If you would like to RSVP, please visit: www.queensbp.org.
- There will be a Job Recruitment Fair event on February 18th. More information is available on their website. If anyone has any questions/concerns, he can be reached at: mweprin@queensbp.org.

Committee Reports:

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

- New York State recently announced that individuals with certain underlying medical conditions will soon be able to make appointments for COVID-19 vaccinations.
- These are the conditions in adult New Yorkers that will qualify them for the vaccine beginning February 15, 2021:
- Cancer (current or in remission, including 9/11-related cancers).
- Chronic kidney disease.
- Pulmonary Disease, including but not limited to, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), asthma (moderate-to-severe), pulmonary fibrosis, cystic fibrosis, and 9/11 related pulmonary diseases.
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities including Down Syndrome.
- Heart conditions, including but not limited to heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies, or hypertension (high blood pressure).
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) including but not limited to solid organ transplant or from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, use of other immune weakening medicines, or other causes.
- Severe Obesity (BMI 40 kg/m2), Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m2 or higher but < 40 kg/m2).
- Pregnancy.
- Sickle cell disease or Thalassemia.
- Type 1 or 2 diabetes mellitus.
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain).
- Neurologic conditions including but not limited to Alzheimer's Disease or dementia.
- Liver disease.

The list is subject to change as additional scientific evidence is published and as New York State obtains and analyzes additional state-specific data.

Committee Reports:

Capital and Expense Budget Committee - Marc A. Haken, Committee Chair - The budget requests were submitted. The City answered all budget requests. He reviewed the responses along with DM Adam-Ovide and they noticed that the responses received were wrong. DM Adam-Ovide got in touch with the Office of Management and Budget for them to fix it. The Capital & Expense Budget Committee met and discussed the responses. He stated that it is the board’s responsibility to respond to their responses that are asked year after year. A letter was drafted to be sent to the Mayor on the responses.

Kevin Forrestal made a motion to approve the letter as presented, seconded by Jacob Weinberg.

Count in favor: 41 **Opposed: 0 **Abstained: 0****

Zoning Committee – Steve Konigsberg, Committee Chair - Mr. Konigsberg stated that there was a Zoning Committee meeting on February 8th. They had a presentation from the City Council by Annie Levers on the “Planning Together Proposal”.

These are some key points on the presentation:

- Essentially this is a new direction in terms of policy and planning from the City Council in an attempt to help focus many of the things of the proponent of this plan feel that the City is being deficient over the many years since it’s been operating under the zoning resolution which was passed since 1961.

- In this proposal they will attempt to propose that there be better planning, better oversight, better coordination. In essence, have more input. That is the way that it was presented.
- This plan does not require or make any changes to the zoning resolution, it does not require a trigger to any types of rezoning. It does not propose or support the elimination of single-family zoning within the City of New York. It also does not amend or eliminate Community Boards' role in future re-zoning processes all of which will remain subject to ULURP.
- They are seeking to remedy our perceived to be problems in the past. The plan of this new proposal is to do this on a Citywide basis. It involves a 10-year comprehensive planning cycle in an effort to create a more cohesive planning for the City at large. It will call for the use of a City office called the Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability which will make an assessment of all the different co-existing conditions throughout the City with input from the communities and city agencies. Based upon that data they will work in partnership with the communities and other stakeholders of the community to determine long term needs for the Citywide in terms of housing, jobs, open spaces, schools, parks, and other critical infrastructure. There is nothing specific in terms of police, fire, sanitation but presumably infrastructure items will be taken into account.
- It was a very general presentation, there wasn't anything specific that Ms. Levers spoke about. Although, some of the questions that were raised, did get a little bit more specific. It will be comprised of four members to be appointed by the Mayor, four members to be appointed by the City Council as well as one each from the Borough Presidents. This is the committee which is essentially going to be leading certain proposals on a Citywide basis. They heard from Paul Graziano who spoke to the Board last month. Nothing specific in the plan calls for the undermining of single-family. There is this focus on increasing populations; therefore, on the need of increased housing, the general perception is to do that, you have to have larger types of building structures, apartment buildings etc. With that type of focus Mr. Graziano was making his point in terms of the inadequacies that this is not a tool for planning. He contrasted it with the plan that he proposed and the one that was adopted over in New Jersey which is more comprehensive in terms of tourism services, preservation, as well as allowing for businesses and community growth. While this plan proposes addressing many citywide problems, one of the points that they made on the course of the committee meeting was that we are pretty good at what is being done in Queens. While there may be other areas of the City that may be deficient in terms of their planning and need some more active intervention, why are we bundling everyone together on this broad plan as opposed to attacking those problems and specifically seeking resolutions for those areas that have been experiencing growth problems and dealing with their zoning issues. Ms. Levers agreed that Queens in contrast with many other areas of the City has been very active and successful on its efforts and attempts.
- In conclusion, they called for a vote at the meeting of people who were in favor or opposed on this type of plan coming forth for the City. Mr. Graziano in part of his presentation specifically was able to demonstrate where there is a potential, while it does call for community input, if it doesn't comport the committee's recommendations in terms of where and how to locate areas of growth basically the community would need not be followed. The committee's recommendation may not be followed, and instead, as long as a builder made a proposal in line with the larger planning recommendations could be adopted and permitted to go forward even though the community may not be in favor of it. The vote was taken at the meeting and there were 9 members against this proposal and none in favor.
- He confirmed that Mr. Graziano was present and stated that he will be available to answer questions the public may have.

Kevin Forrestal made a motion to approve this plan and the zoning committee be authorized and delegated to write a statement, resolution or a letter stating why that was done seconded by Jacob Weinberg.

Discussion:

Hersh Parekh – I just wanted to hear from folks that are better versed in this plan than I am. We obviously heard from Paul Graziano at our last meeting about why this is not a good plan and today we heard from Senator Comrie about why this is a good plan. While that there is a greater role for the community board in this plan and since he was a former land use chair, I put some value into what he said. I am curious, maybe in the presentation that was given to the committee, what was Senator Comrie referring to when he said that this will empower the community board.

Answer: [Steve Konigsberg] – You will have to ask Senator Comrie and he is no longer present. While the minutes of the meeting were unable to be distributed in time for tonight, I did request that if the PowerPoint presentation was available that it be sent to each and every one of you. You should all have received an email earlier today from the CB8 office.

Seymour Schwartz – I'll like you to comment on this, I am a little bit puzzled by the contradictory information that has been presented to us from both sides. One critical issue is, as we have been informed earlier that the R1-2 zones would be changed to permit up to three family homes. Based on what the Senator said and what has also been said on the report, it seems a little bit unclear to me. Is there such a proposal in the City Council's version?

Answer: [Steve Konigsberg] – Can we have Paul Graziano perhaps answer that.

Answer: [Paul Graziano] – Sey, I didn't state that the City would be converted into two or three family homes from single family homes. I was saying that the case study that they used in this report used Minneapolis who had just eliminated single family zoning and replaced it where each of those homes can have up to three units. I never said that the City was going to do that. I said the potential for the elimination of single family zoning both from a perspective of comprehensive planning. For the State Senator to think it is a good idea and the authors and the idea that areas can be up zoned every 10 years through this process would put pressure on single family [homes].

Answer: [Steve Konigsberg] – The short answer to Sey's question is: No, planning together does not change any zoning whatsoever. It doesn't eliminate any zoning. It may create a potential for some future changes.

Paul Graziano – I'll try to explain this the way I explained it on Monday. Let's say, you have three choices that have come up, one of those choices gets picked and that area that gets picked has the potential once it's been designated under a 10-year plan, it remains the same zoning but it has been approved to be essentially fast tracked to a different higher density zoning. For example, once that happens, if that happens, a developer can come in, buy properties and then file a ULURP to change that zoning and there will be no ULURP in essence because it already been fast tracked under that comprehensive plan. I know it is complicated to understand but it's essentially every 10 years an area may get designated. That designated area isn't automatically changed but a developer can come in and change it very quickly once that's done.

Seymour Schwartz – I appreciate what Paul said, but in view of the fact that the contradiction and the danger remains, I don't think we can find ourselves accepting such a proposal. I'll like to hear someone say something other than that. Clearly Paul, someone at some point can come in, demolish a structure, and put something larger and handle a three-family. Isn't this true? [To Paul Graziano]

Answer: [Paul Graziano] – It's true if the change is made at that comprehensive planning piece. It's true.

But you said that we have very little to say about that comprehensive planning.

Answer: [Paul Graziano] – Yes, I am pretty offended personally about what happened tonight, but this all started on Monday night after we had our meeting. Tuesday, yesterday the speaker started attacking me personally. I think I've hit a nerve somehow. This just seems to be a continuation that there are starting to be a line of people making pretty amazing statements and then leaving [the meeting] without really backing up anything. I am not causing hysteria in Southeast Queens. I am just trying to present my interpretation of what is going on here. It is up to you guys to decide whether my interpretations may be accurate. That's what I am trying to do tonight. There is a separate bill in the Assembly and the Senate that has nothing to do with this. That bill is pushing for basements and other types of apartments in single- and two-family homes as additional units. It is actually a completely separate bill and is not connected to planning together. The big issue here with this document, it's a City document not the State law that they are trying to push. It's two separate things. I am in favor of the state bill, but we are not really talking about this. If this comprehensive plan is adopted for each community board, the new director of long-term planning said that each community board have to absorb 5,000 people. I am making this up as a theory. The community board will have to come up with one version, the Borough President comes up with one version, this new steering committee comes up with one version and one of those versions gets adopted. It could be the CB, the BP or the Committee, if that one said that area which is currently single family should be up zoned to R6, it doesn't happen immediately but any builder or developer can come in and do it. They will just fast-tracked the land use process to make it happen.

Seymour Schwartz – I think we have received some misleading information.

Susan Cleary – [To all Board Members] The 54-page document is in your email. I urge everyone to read it. The zoning committee meeting to me was devastating when Ms. Levers pointed out an R4 piece of land in one of the five boroughs pictures that she showed us that can be possibly taken over for a huge complex. Right now, it's zoned for a single family, but I am a little confused about that.

Marc Haken – We, as community board members, are here to advocate for the residents of our community board area. I really don't feel that this plan benefits the members/residents within Community Board 8. When Senator Comrie, who is my senator said that this will empower community boards and he knows this because he was chair of the land use committee, having worked for the City Council for two and half years, the land use committee is a very political spot. The votes taken by the land use committee of the City Council had a lot to do with backscratching funding on people's future political goals and aims. I urge all of my fellow members of this board to oppose this plan.

Kevin Forrestal - I'll like to say a few things. As the City Council is going out of office, they are proposing this rather massive change. They are calling it planning together, they haven't notified the community board when they announced the introduction, they only came around and talking to various people when they are already objecting. This is not planning together. They have already announced a very fast public hearing on February 23rd. They are trying to push this through without very much consultation. The director of the long-term planning is as a huge amount of authority that is almost unprecedented since the days of Robert Moses. He doesn't have an authority but has a huge amount of power. It calls for a charter revision which was not adopted by the two-charter revision we've had which would require a vote. This would go without any voting activity. It calls for increase cast of the community boards and a lot of other people without any promise of funding and we are doing this in a time of major fiscal crisis. There is a plan and legislation. The plan calls for a lot of things that is not explicatively stated in the resolution. It calls and talks about a social activity, where it incorrectly said that a lot of the zoning and many of it was done in community Board 8 is based upon racial consideration and giving special considerations to groups of white and rich populations. That is noted in Paul's various diagrams/power points that is clearly not the case. This is a polyconic plan that is extremely complicated and specially those who have worked on the budget. It a complicated and convoluted way of doing things that the public will not understand and would have not participate. It is a call for certain racial and social equity which is a rough endeavor. It gives great amount of power and lead way to developers who are funding so many elected officials. I definitely urge that this is something we should not approve at this time. We should go strongly against and we should particularly go back when we have new elected officials and say how can we potentially approve this situation and also not that is going to happen but as of right maybe on the agenda.

Jacob Weinberg – I just want to get some clarification. If the planning let's say decides to change in Staten Island and approves one-family home to a three-family or whatever they want to do. Would it be automatically accepted in other neighborhoods if it gets approved in one? So that then it became citywide?

Answer: [Steve Konigsberg] – No.

Answer: [Paul Graziano] – No. However, if you remember what Ms. Levers said, she spoke about introducing additional texts. In other words, they were talking about how to update the zoning resolution that this will make it easier to introduce new things to the zoning resolution. She saw that as a positive. I am not sure about that because to me that's the kind of thing something could come in that is really done in a way that there isn't much consultation. Right now, anything that happens under ULURP, happens with major consultation, the community boards, and the public. It's not a perfect system we don't know this. If they set it up at that other level like you are saying, let's say that they came up with a new zoning resolution and they said okay, we are going to create a new zone that allows one-family homes converted into three-family homes or something like that. That could be imposed and re-mapped and could be done at a different level.

Maria DeInnocentiis – I read not in detail, but I read through the 54 pages report and this is my comment on Sey's questions and other questions. We listened to Ms. Levers and she said that three plans will be presented to the city council for consideration, they would choose which plan, if none of those plans were approved, the director would choose one. I just want to let everyone know with all due respect to Senator Comrie, there are 59 Community Boards throughout the City and we are one of them. If there are three plans, the chances are that our small community board would be absorbed into one of those major plans, either through the Borough President's choice or not. This is all speculations, but based on what's in that report, technically they can turn around and say that what the purpose is to look at areas that have transportation that are not in low line areas for flooding, that have good transportation access

and are under-zoned for community displacement for review. If we are included in one of those plans, then Sey's area which is near Jamaica and the subways is a very good candidate for unzoning. That's the problem, right now we can fight, we know we are fighting with Sey with the homeless shelter that is trying to get in there, we will lose all the ability to do that because it will not go to ULURP if they are in that masterplan. Any developer can come in and say this is what we want to do and it meets the skeleton of the plan then they said that it would be a water down environmental study and if that is okay then the developer will be allowed to develop. She also said that infrastructure changes will not necessarily be done at the same time that any up-zoning is done. This is one of the things we fight all the time. We don't want to increase density without increasing infrastructure. It is not going to go hand in hand. When Paul showed us that other community what he was trying to show us was that they planned across the board. They want to do something to build without putting the infrastructure behind it and that is not in this plan. I understand what the Senator was saying that he supports the plan, but I think he is misguided, and I doubt that he really looked at the implications for community boards. As I said that night to Ms. Levers, she said that it is disparate among the community boards in the city, my thing was why aren't we being held as a model, why are we being told that we have to conform. If other community boards didn't see if it's re-zoned, up-zoned, down-zoned or changed that's up to them and their community boards. We are not telling them what to do, we don't want people telling us what to do. We are happy with what we have. I am opposed and I hope all the members of the board vote with me.

Jesse Rosenbaum – I'll like to piggyback on what Maria is saying. Theatrically, if this proposal is approved a developer can come in to a one-family area acquired a piece of property and start developing a three story. This can change the whole texture of the neighborhood. Correct me if I am wrong.

Answer: [Paul Graziano] – It could be three stories, it could be six or ten stories, as long as the comprehensive plan said, these 10 blocks that area can go to R6. Then the builder comes in, all he has to do is file the paperwork and it is not that is already approved, it just fast tracks streamlines no ULURP and then they change the zoning that piece of it. Then another developer come in and he buys another seven pieces of properties and said you know what I want this piece of block done and it becomes a really messy situation.

Paul Lazauskas – Just hearing all of this in my mind, what is the end game of all this. Who here thinks that re-zoning an area with single-family homes to multi-family buildings is an investing trait of anybody? It doesn't make any sense whatsoever.

Howard Fried – There is nothing that I have heard tonight that throws me to a different direction of what a horrendous plan this is. We have to take whatever steps we can to push against it.

Mary Maggio – I agree with everybody else and we have to heat on what happened this year in Manhattan. A pandemic stroke and people didn't want to live in apartments buildings, they didn't want to share the same elevator, etc. I am with the rest of everybody, this is a stupid idea.

Edward Chung – When I moved into Jamaica Estates, I used to live in Brownstone in Brooklyn where everybody lived on top of each other. I wanted an open space that's why I came to Jamaica Estates because it is mostly one single-family homes. The way I see it is, that developers just like to see open spaces and just build, build, build. I think that what Ms. Maggio said is right. People don't want to live together anymore.

Seymour Schwartz – I don't know if this requires an amendment for the motion on the floor. I would suggest that we act and prepare a powerful resolution that is along the path of Kevin's analysis which was very sharp. As I said, if it requires an amendment, I'll make that amendment. Maria DeInnocentiis made a second to that.

Kevin Forrestal – I am the person that made the resolution, the resolution calls for a letter. I am perfectly happy with a letter if that is the desire of the committee.

DM Adam-Ovide – May I just add that there is a public hearing scheduled for February 23rd. Please keep that in mind as you decide.

Answer: [Kevin Forrestal] – Yes, so we have to get it done fast.

Steve Konigsberg – Paul has provided us with a sample resolution from one of our neighbor community boards.

Answer: [Paul Graziano] – I just want to add that CB11 sent their letter out today. It was forwarded to the Community Board today. You can look at CB13’s draft and CB11 and make a decision.

Marc A. Haken – If you go to Midland Parkway beginning at Hillside Avenue and start walking north, they are all one-family homes. If you go up one block on the west side a friend of mine had a huge house on that corner and all of the rest of the houses going north on that side of Midland Parkway are single-family homes. I live in an apartment building and all behind me are private home and I am very pleased about it.

Paul Graziano – We are talking about single-family versus four-story. The people on the upper east-side are worried that their mid-blocks that are zoned for 75-foot height limits are going to be like their avenues which are zoned for 50 stories height limits. It is all a matter of scale and perspective.

Hersh Parekh – After hearing all of these discussions tonight, I have to say that I am opposed to this plan. I don’t think it is right to have a citywide plan for different communities. While I appreciate Mr. Graziano’s explanation of this, it is unfortunate that all of these outside comments we have heard tonight has been against this plan, as opposed to anybody that can provide some sort of balanced discussion which I think may have been helpful.

Steve Konigsberg – My final closing comments are basically, while clearly we are not in a perfect world today, anybody thinks that by attempting to get some type of coordination in a City of this size and that one plan is going to fit everyone, you are just having a PI dream. We need to have much more focus on zoning, we need to have better board budget coordination, better planning until those things are clear but this is not the way to get there.

A roll call vote was taken.

Count in favor: 0 Opposed: 38 Abstained: 0

During the vote, Board Member Dilip Nath stated that he abstained, Committee Chair Steve Konigsberg asked the following:

Steve Konigsberg – *Do you have a financial interest in this? Otherwise, your abstention will be a no vote.*

Answer: [Dilip Nath] – No, but I love my friend Steven Robles who can develop in our community.

Do you have a financial state?

Answer: [Dilip Nath] – No.

Then your vote should be either a yes or no.

Answer: [Dilip Nath] – I abstain.

Then that is a no vote.

Members who voted against: Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Brown, , Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mary Maggio, Elke Maerz, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Alan Ong, Tamara Osherov, Hersh Parekh, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Harbachan Singh, Douglas Sherman, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

Members who voted in favor: None.

Adjournment

Marc A. Haken made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 9:14 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jatnna Reyes, CB8 staff
February 17, 2021*