

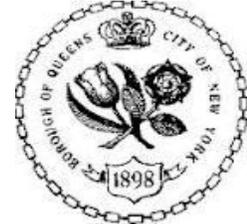


Chairman, Alvin Warshaviak

*The City of New York  
Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

197-15 Hillside Avenue  
Hollis, NY 11423-2126  
Telephone: (718) 264-7895  
Fax: (718) 264-7910  
[Qn08@cb.nyc.gov](mailto:Qn08@cb.nyc.gov)  
[www.nyc.gov/queenscb8](http://www.nyc.gov/queenscb8)



District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, September 9, 2015 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Douglas Sherman, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members Absent:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Edward Chung, Joshua Glikman, Steven Konigsberg, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Harbachan Singh and Alvin Warshaviak.

**Others Present:**

Alexander Bennett representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Aaron Siegel representing Assemblyman David Weprin, Stephanie Campanha representing State Senator Tony Avella, Facia Class representing Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager, and Joseph Marziliano, CB8 staff member.

**Call to Order:**

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

**Public Participation:**

**Thomas Cambell-** [Showing a picture of Hoover Avenue] This is a picture of the road’s condition at Hoover Avenue in Briarwood. It is a beautiful tree-lined street with private homes on one side and apartment buildings on the other. As you can see here, the only problem we’ve got is the street which is in awful condition. My neighbors and I are submitting this petition with 63 signatures addressed to Chairman Warshaviak which insists that Hoover Avenue be milled and paved. We have been waiting for this for 18 months and it is outrageous. We are looking for help from Community Board 8. As an active community member, once you get Hoover Avenue done, I will try to get other streets paved in this neighborhood. There is something wrong: I have monitored the DOT repaving schedule for six months and Community Board 8 has not appeared on it. Briarwood is in even worse shape than Fresh Meadows. I have worked with Marie [Adam-Ovide] on this issue for the last year and a half. I know it has been that long because I married my husband last year and we tried to get the street paved before our marriage ceremony and we were not able to do that.

**Aaron Siegel, representing Assembly Member David Weprin** – On Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup> we are hosting a Health Fair at the Basketball Courts in Smokey Oval “Phil Rizzuto” Park, located at 127<sup>th</sup> Street and 95<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**Dr. Allen J. Bennett**- I want to thank all the members of Community Board 8 for their wishes during my recovery. Please don't forget that it is Flu vaccine season.

**Salute to the Flag**

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

**Approval of Minutes:**

Dr. Allen J. Bennett made a motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2015, seconded by Michael F. Sidell.

Count in favor   34                        Opposed:   0                        Abstained:   0  

**Board Members who approved the minutes:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Tamara Osherov, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Douglas Sherman, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, and Albert Willingham.

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

None

**Second Vice-Chair's Report – Martha Taylor:**

- There was no Chairman's report.

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**District Manager's Report, September 2015**

**NYPD**

While there was a surge in crime in the beginning of the year, this trend has reversed. So far, we are down by three percent on all major crimes. Robberies seem to be on the rise recently at the 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct. There were several robberies committed within 45 minutes one day. It is believed that it was the same group of people.

The 111<sup>th</sup> Precinct has several incidents of credit card skimming machines at the gas stations recently. When using credit/debit cards make sure that there aren't any moveable parts where you insert your cards.

Transit Police reminded us to be very mindful of our surroundings when on the train. Keep your valuables out of sight. Try not to doze off on the subway. Do not put your mobile telephones in your back pocket. While the incidents within our Community Board are low, they are on the rise in New York City as a whole.

**PARKS**

Parks Manager Kevin Selig stated that there were several volunteer clean-up activities within our district over the summer. Volunteers from the Briarwood Community Association painted and lined the basketball courts in Briarwood. The Parks department crew also planted a butterfly garden at Hoover /Manton Playground.

**DOB**

The Department of Buildings' representative stated that a lot of manpower is being allocated to the inspection of the City's free pre-school programs. This is to ensure that the locations are safe enough to open on the first day of school on September 9<sup>th</sup>. It may take a little longer to get second inspections for your complaints.

The agency is also dealing with the 421A Program. This mostly occurs in Western Queens; however, the resources being used may have a negative effect on other areas in Queens

With the recent “outbreak” of Legionnaire’s disease, buildings with cooling towers will be required to be inspected on a schedule. The Department of Buildings will be the agency with which they must file the documents. While CB8 does not have many cooling towers, additional manpower will have to be allocated to address this. This may impact the time frame to inspect properties with complaints.

If you have a retaining wall and are concerned as to whether or not it is safe. The Department of Buildings will inspect it until September 18, 2015. If there are any issues with the wall, the department will not penalize you; however, you will have to file for the repair of the wall. This is being done in an effort to keep the community safe.

### **DCP**

The DCP will be releasing the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Text Amendment at the end of September. A draft may be seen on the DCP website right now. The agency is looking to review both the Zoning for Quality and Affordability Text Amendment and the Mandatory Housing Text Amendment proposals by the end of the fall.

### **DSNY**

We were informed that Sanitation does not have the manpower to remove all the illegal postings on the utility poles [Residents are allowed to remove them if they wish]. Sanitation will no longer use the terms primary, secondary and tertiary streets as a way to identify snow plowing priority. They will use other designations – more information to follow.

### **DDC**

The Department of Design and Construction informed us that 80% of the work was completed under the QED1001 contract. The agency will be working on 164<sup>th</sup> Street near the Grand Central Parkway in the next few weeks.

### **DOT**

There will be two sidewalk contracts simultaneously this year. This would hopefully speed up the process and they will return to CB8 sooner. At this time, DOT did not have the timeframe for sidewalk repair for our area.

DOT advises that anyone with property damage caused by the Department of Transportation to file a claim with the Comptroller’s office within the 90 day period. They do not have the resources to make timely repair to sidewalks and other personal property that have been damaged.

- Hoover Avenue is on the DOT resurfacing schedule for next year. However, the Community Board will fight to try to get it to happen sooner.

### **DEP**

The Department of Environmental Protection is encouraging residents to go paperless. If you sign up for paperless billing, you will receive a 10% discount on your bill.

### **DFTA**

September is National Preparedness month. Please check your “go bags” to make sure that all items are fresh for consumption. If you include medications in your go bags, make sure that they have not expired.

The agency has given grants to a total of 14 senior centers throughout the five boroughs for the new integrated benefits program. This program screens senior citizens for all the services and benefits available to them. Many seniors are not taking advantage of programs and services that can assist them financially and/or to improve their quality of life. Four senior centers received this grant in Queens. They are located in CB3, 5, 6 and 7. Unfortunately none of the senior centers in CB8 or those that service CB8 received the grant for this program.

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

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

- I would like to welcome back Dr. Bennett. We have missed you tremendously and hope you continue to recuperate.
- Congratulations to Board 8 and particularly Marie on another hugely successful Health Fair. It was bigger and better than ever before. I don’t know how you do it, but you get perfect weather every time.
- Congratulations to the Community Board, NYPD 107 Precinct, 107 Community Council and Carolann Foley for participating in the National Night Out Against Crime.
- In Fiscal Year 2016, Borough President Katz is allocating \$1,200,000 towards improvements in Cunningham Park, \$1,500,000 towards improvements in Mauro Playground, \$1,600,000 towards renovations at Vleigh Playground and \$150,000 towards the restoration of the Brinckerhoff Cemetery.
- Borough President Katz would like to wish everyone celebrating Rosh Hashanah a very happy and sweet New Year, and a blessed Eid for those in the Muslim Community and a very productive and happy September for everyone.

**Office of City Planning – Stephen Everett**

- As Marie mentioned a little while ago, I’ll be back in October to talk about the two major text amendment proposals that the Department of City Planning has coming up for public review later this month. They will be subject to review by Community Boards, the Borough President, the Borough Board, the City Planning Commission and then the City Council.
- Quality and Affordability Zoning Text Amendment will tweak some of the rules around the definitions for affordable housing and affordable senior housing. This is to update them in accordance with other State codes. It will also modify some rules that shape the bulk of some buildings (height, lot organization, etc.)
- Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Text will require rather than incentivize for certain residential zoning developments that are mapped for this mandatory inclusionary housing area. This will assure that some of them are provided at an affordable rate.

**Area 7 Chair - Mark J. Lefkof- QSAC Group Home, 84-10 Kent Street**

**Mark Lefkof** - In this matter, Quality Services for the Autism Community proposes a Community Residence at 84-10 Kent Street, Jamaica Estates. Before I begin, I would like to preface that Community Board 8 does not, as a matter of policy, vote on Group Home issues.

We feel we do not have a right or justification to say “do not put one here or there.” The Board has taken the stand that it will not vote on any type of Health Facility that wants to move into our community for the following reasons:

- Saturation has never been defined under NYS site selection law.
- Finding the applicant an alternative site is almost impossible.
- The State Law is in conflict with the Federal American with Disabilities Act.

We had the public information hearing and some of the residents attended and expressed their concerns to us and the applicant. The applicant agreed to (if necessary) install a fence around the property and security system at their expense. The main concern was the residence itself and the type of residents that would be there, which is eight male adults with Autism that have aged out of their previous residences. They will be at this location permanently. A letter was sent to the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities informing them of the agreement with the applicant. We asked the residents to contact the Community Board if there are any issues, and the applicant provided his cell phone number to resolve any future issues.

**Martha Taylor-** Just as a clarification, this is not our procedure for any Health Facility. We specifically do not vote on proposals for group homes for developmentally disabled individuals. We cannot vote against it because it would be in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Mark Lefkof-** I stand corrected.

**Kevin Forrestal-** I do not have a question, but I do have a compliment. Both Martha and Mark's responses to some of the wholly ignorant individuals. Their professional responses to the paranoia of these residents were commendable. Great job!

**Mark Lefkof-** Thank you. I will now refer back over to First Vice Chair Stanley Weinblatt.

**Marc A. Haken- Youth, Education and Libraries Committee Chair**

**Marc A. Haken-** Our Community Board received a copy of a letter from a school board in Staten Island requesting School Safety Officers be given the right to issue tickets to people that double park in front of school while either dropping children off or picking them up in the afternoon.

Chairman Warshaviak referred this to the Youth, Education and Libraries Committee. The Committee met in June and one of the attendees was a Principal in one of the schools in our district. That Principal stated that this problem occurs at his school. I've had opportunities over the years to visit every school in Community Board 8, and every Principal has shared this problem with me as well.

The Committee discussed and asked that this resolution that came through the Staten Island school board be passed by Community Board 8 and sent on to the school boards and Community Boards in the City of New York asking that school safety officers be given the right to issue parking violations. Under the State School Safety Officers are Peace Officers with the ability to issue these tickets, but require permission of the municipality (Police Department) to do so. What we are basically asking is for the Police Department's own officers to issue parking tickets in front of schools.

**Mitch Lisker moved to approve the Resolution Requesting that NYPD School Safety Agents be granted the authority to issue traffic and parking violations in school zones, seconded by Susan Cleary.**

**Carolann Foley-** I do not know why this is not referred back to the Public Safety Committee. This is not a Youth Issue. This is not a school issue, it is public safety.

**Marc A. Haken-** This is a school issue, and a youth issue. It was referred to this Committee by the Chair of this Board.

**Kenneth Cohen II-** I agree with Carolann but in addition to that I feel that the School Safety Officers have their own list of other responsibilities during drop off and dismissal time. Maybe this would be good for an elementary school. A Junior High School or High School would not require this because the kids get off the block quickly onto a bus or down the block. This is what I have noticed from the schools in my immediate neighborhood. I think we should recommend that there be traffic agents or police units during drop off and dismissal to assist school safety for traffic purposes.

**Mark Lefkof-** I strongly recommend that this matter be defeated and referred to the Public Safety Committee for review in conjunction with the Police Department. I would like to see if this is even feasible before sending a notice to the Police Department and other Community Boards that would make us look ridiculous. I took a strong stand against this at the Executive Meeting and voted against it there. I agree with Mr. Cohen that the School Safety Officers have other duties at those times. We may be able to work something out under the new Community Policing system the NYPD is implementing, and I strongly urge my colleagues to vote against it.

**Seymour Schwartz-** What Mark failed to say is that the Police Department is opposed to this and we should take that into consideration. Right now we stand across this country with great trepidation when it comes to the role of our Police. In a sense, there has been an uptick in confrontation with the Police. I consider that important because the School Safety Officers who are performing their duties around the schools are not nearly as vetted nor as trained as our police officers. I fear confrontations with aroused motorists who will be accosted by these school agents. We cannot ignore that at a time like this and have every reason to believe this is why the NYPD is opposed to this. No other Community Board accepts that Staten Island has voted for this so why should we take the lead on a doubtful precedent that is so important? I ask you to consider that and I would say that we should oppose this resolution. This is an important and serious issue. If there are problems around our schools, I think we should ask our Police Department to be present to resolve the issue on our behalf. After all, this year 1,300 new police officers were hired.

**Michael Sidell-** I totally agree with everything Sey just said. I feel we should remove this resolution and pass it over to Public Safety. Also, Ken Cohen came up with an excellent idea. We have meter maids that walk the streets giving tickets for double parking. They should be patrolling, keeping the traffic flowing and issuing tickets at school dismissal.

**Maria DeInnocentiis-** Schools today are so overcrowded that safety officers are really important in insuring that our children are safe. If any of you pass by the local schools you will see that traffic and double parking is extensive. They would not be doing the job that they were hired to do if they were out there issuing tickets. There are new security people that have been hired to control traffic all through Manhattan at every corner and block. They are supposed to give tickets and they hire new classes monthly and that is where the responsibility lies, not the people that are supposed to be keeping our children safe with a watchful eye. I do not think this should go to public safety at all, I think it should just be voted down. I think it is a bad idea and it is in the best interest of our children to give it 'No' vote.

**Kevin Forrestal-** This is a very serious issue. When school is in session I work almost daily with the school safety officers in a different role in a different borough. Today, they certainly do not have the capacity or the ability to issue tickets. I think it is very presumptuous by this Board or any member of this Board to think that we have enough knowledge to come up with the prescription to solve the problem. It is the prerogative of the employer, in this case the Commissioner of Police to determine how to deal with this problem. My personal view is that the correct action for this issue would be to write a letter or resolution saying "this is a very important issue, please solve it." It should be left up to the professionals (Police Department and School Authorities) to come up with a solution. We could refer back to both Committees for further action if they think my suggestion is good. I would advise that this particular motion be rejected.

**Frank Magri-** I agree with the majority of the floor that this is not a good idea because of the lack of training school safety has. It still does not change the fact that some parents do have to drive their children and are not within walking distance. Maybe a parking lot is a solution but even ticketing parents will not stop them from picking up their children. I do not think tickets are the way to solve this problem but we do need to put our heads together to figure out a solution.

**Susan Cleary-** It might be that parking restrictions in school zones could be lifted so that the cars could park to drop off children.

*A hand vote was taken on the motion.*

**Count in favor**   1                        **Opposed:**   38                        **Abstained:**   0  

**Board Members who voted in favor:**

Marc A. Haken

**Board Members who voted against:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence

Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Douglas Sherman, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, and Albert Willingham.

**Jesse Rosenbaum- Transportation Committee Chair- Letter opposing Congestion Pricing**

**Jesse Rosenbaum-** In 2007, Community Board 8 had its last vote rejecting congestion pricing. It has been discussed again recently and a letter has been drafted regarding this issue to Assemblyman Weprin. The letter states the following:

“This issue was thoroughly discussed at our monthly Board Meeting held on March 14, 2007. The Board’s view has not changed since that time. We fear that congestion pricing would only be an additional tax on our middle class residents who travel to Manhattan by car. This tax is not likely to reduce congestion and has failed to do so in other cities where it was implemented.”

That issue has not changed over the years, however; this Board has not had input on the issue in that time.

**Allen Eisenstein made a motion to approve and send the letter regarding congestion pricing to Assemblyman David Weprin on behalf of Community Board 8, seconded by Mark J. Lefkof.**

*A hand vote was taken on the motion.*

**Count in favor**      39                        **Opposed:**      0                        **Abstained:**      0  

**Board Members who voted in favor:**

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Frank Magri, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Douglas Sherman, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members who voted against:**

None.

**First Vice Chair Stanley Weinblatt-** I was just informed that Assemblyman Weprin will not be here tonight, and I want to wish everyone a Happy Holiday.

**Kevin Forrestal-** I would urge the Chairmen of the two Committees to get together and call for a joint resolution to resolve the issue. Harbachan Singh’s brother was involved in a very serious accident. I got a note from him today that he will recover. He has been improving for a couple of days. He is currently in Malaysia with his brother at this time. All of our good wishes and prayers are with him.

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:21 p.m., seconded by Mark J. Lefkof.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Joseph Marziliano, CB8 staff  
September 14, 2015*