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Community Board 13
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GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 22, 2016

BELLEROSE ASSEMBLY OF GOD

240-15 HILLSIDE AVENUE, BELLEROSE, NY

Attendance

Present:

Angela Augugliaro; Isa Avery; Corey Bearak; Alain Berrouet ; Bryan Block; Verdell Boncoeur; Jacqueline Campbell; Daisy Carew; Delroy Dawkins; Bess DeBetham; James Delaney; Samuel Elliott; Seymour Finkelstein; Robert Glover; Edward Harap; Richard Hellenbrecht; Fay Hill; Vernal Holder; Bonnie Huie; Mohamood Ishmael; Rhonda Konter; Antony Kuncheria; Jonathan Logan; Kangela Moore; Marcia O'Brien; Tameka Pierre-Louis; Celeste Powers; Nagassar Ramgarib; Anup Ramnauth; Peter Richards; Ashok Satkalmi; Sanu Thomas; Derrick Warmington; Clive Williams; Jackie Wilson; Jerry Wind

Absent:

Terence Banks; Kyle Bragg; Bruno; Tanya Cruz; Terryl Ebony DeMendonca; Charles Farruggia; Anthony Greene; Lloyd Hicks; Davon Lomax; Mathew Thomas; Wilson Thomas; Pritpal Singh Walia

The Board Chair called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

A moment of silence was called for in memory of the passing of Eileen Voight; Board member Bess DeBetham's sister, Board member Jerry Wind's uncle.

The Board Chair took the roll call.

A motion was made to accept the December 2015 Minutes. It was seconded and unanimously approved.

The Chairman's Report

The Board Chair reported on the events he had attended since the previous month's General Board meeting. A motion was made to accept the Board Chair's Report, it was seconded and unanimously approved.

The Chair called **Council member Donovan Richards** to the stage:

The CM reported on the \$1.5 billion being spent by DEP on sewer projects in southeast Queens. Presently, \$30 million is being spent on sewers in Laurelton; Rosedale is scheduled for the next phase of this capital project. Included in this DOT [flood remediation] are bio swales.

- The CM spoke of being appointed the new Chair of the Zoning and Franchises Committee. In this capacity, he reported that the Mayor's "text amendments" go through his committee. The community board votes against these amendments were "heard" and that issues of concern like transit zones and density would be addressed and "they" would be coming back to the board.
- CM Richards spoke about the formation of the JFK Industrial Business Improvement District (IBID) in Springfield Gardens and this important partnership of business, community, and city agencies with more money being put into city services for this area.
- The CM said he was looking to rezone Springfield Gardens.
- The CM spoke about the satellite precinct in Rosedale that is being staffed with patrol on a 24-hour basis, and how the 116 Precinct is presently in negotiations with the Mayor as they work toward a preliminary agreement.
- CM Richards said he would soon be having a Town Hall Meeting. He also introduced his new Chief of Staff, Mercedes Buchanan.

BM Jon Logan asked about Springfield Gardens and potential rezoning to prevent further hotel development...CM responded that many areas of Springfield Gardens had already been downzoned. BM Rich Hellenbrecht spoke of the need to eliminate M1-1 zones...CM stated those types of issues go through his committee. BM Sam Elliot asked about the hotel being constructed on Guy R. Brewer Boulevard & 147th Avenue...

State Senator Leroy Comrie spoke about how zoning was the toughest committee, made even more difficult by the Mayor's affordable housing plan.

- SS Comrie spoke about how the proliferation of Group Homes coming into the area was a problem; especially after the closing of Creedmoor
- He spoke to the Commissioner for Homeless Services on how the plan works for placing various group homes in a community
- The placing of veterans in a group home on Hollis Avenue is a tragedy in waiting. This was enabled as the city changed the owner's name and moved people in before a lawsuit could be filed
- The State of New York is looking to establish many small [group home] facilities
- He will be holding a Town Hall Meeting requesting all relevant agencies to speak about group home placements
- He advised community members to sell their homes to a broker, not a speculator as this gives easier access to buy a property that can be turned into a group home
- Get the word out to **not** take a reverse mortgage because you cannot deed your property upon passing away
- There are going to be State budget hearings where the Governor taking \$500 million out of CUNY will be challenged
- Additionally, the 2% cap is really hurting the city
- The Governor and Mayor fighting each other was hurting NYC
- In the upcoming hearings he would highlight how the cuts in the Governor's budget hurt the city
- His office would be providing free tax preparation from 10:00 am -12:00pm, with a federal tax assessor volunteering to do online tax filing
- York College also has free tax preparation services
- SS Comrie discussed the "Earned income Tax Credit" and the challenge to get the mortgage assessment lowered
- He announced a business networking/flow event being held at the Harvest Room on March 1, 2016 from 5:30-7:30 pm
- Another event he was sponsoring was the "Young Professionals Networking Event" being held at York College on March 12, 2016

BM Rich Hellenbrecht stated that he was concerned about the state legislature trying to abolish the Padavan Law...if they did a clear replacement was necessary. SS Comrie responded that it simply needed to be updated.

An audience member in a CERT shirt asked how to make the law equitable...CM Richards said there was city legislation for full disclosure...SS Comrie stated the need to get "them" to put homes in "other" areas...this [Mayoral] administration tries – whenever there is an abundance of available property, Group Home developers will flock in.

BM Marcia O'Brien expressed concern with the homeless that were placed in the Holiday Inn on Rockaway Boulevard in Rosedale...how on "recycling nights" folks were walking around...how this will affect property values...CM Richards responded that

there is new leadership at the Department for Homeless Services (DHS) and he was working on this very issue.

BM Alain Berrouet thanked SS Comrie for sponsoring the Young Entrepreneur Networking event at York College.

BM Derrick Warmington stated there needed to be a definition of "saturation" (under the Padavan Law) and asked the elected officials for a "fair share policy."

BM Kangela Moore stated that there was a grading system for agencies on services for the most vulnerable.

Bob Friedrich suggested that the proposed shutdown of Rikers Island meant there would be more neighborhood jails

A representative from AM Alicia Hyndman announced her new office address: 232-06A Merrick Boulevard, Rosedale. She then listed all of the committees the Assembly member had been assigned, including: aging, economic development, transportation, small business services...

Presentations

Lobbying

City Clerk Michael McSweeney spoke about his office's amnesty initiative: From January 1 through June 30, 2016, anyone who should have registered but had not as a lobbyist could do so without a fine. This includes any interaction with city officials, and community board members are considered city officials.

He classified two groups who should be taking advantage of this amnesty opportunity: (1) those aware but do not wanting to be fined, and (2) those not aware they need to register.

Mr. McSweeney stated there are 11 types of lobbying activities, there are some exclusions... Local Law 129 passed in 2013 is the relevant statute. Lobbying is protected speech; however, government may regulate it with fines that are \$25 per day. JCOPE (NYS) has the same amnesty opportunity right now. A pamphlet was handed out, with it also being available online at cityclerk.nyc.gov

BM Jackie Campbell asked if there was a filing fee...CC stated no filing fee, only a summary of activity going back to January 1, 2015.

The reporting threshold is \$5,000 expended on compensation and expenses having to do with lobbying activities.

Department of Health

Pauline Ferrante spoke about the Zika virus:

- 80% who get it exhibit no symptoms
- Correlation between the Zika virus and microcephaly (babies born with small heads)
- There is a travel advisory for women who are pregnant or thinking of becoming pregnant below the continental United States. The species of mosquito carrying this virus is **not** in NYC
- Please report any places where there is standing water (mosquito breeding place)
- There is still concern over the West Nile virus

BM Alain Berrouet asked how racism causes mental illness...Ms. Ferrante stated she was not prepared to answer that question.

BM Jim Delaney asked if mosquito repellent works as a deterrent to bites...DEET works...this [Zika virus] mosquito is very aggressive.

BM Jackie Wilson asked if the mosquito's cousin in the US can transmit the Zika virus...DOH does not know yet. The distinction is that the Zika mosquito bites during the day...

BM Vernal Holder asked if the DOH would be spraying to prevent the Zika virus mosquito...DOH only sprays where West Nile is found. They spray for adult mosquitoes, and also put tablets in catch basins to prevent breeding.

Consumer Affairs

Artee Seemangal spoke about commuter benefits for those who work in a company with 20 or more employees and who work full-time:

- They are eligible for \$255.00 pre-tax income for the commute
- Employers save on payroll taxes – nyc.gov/commuterbenefits
- If an employer does not offer this benefit to an eligible employee after July 1, 2016, they should call 311 and register a complaint
- Union members are outside of this benefit because of their CBA
- To qualify as full-time, one must work 30 hours per week for four consecutive weeks

NYC Emergency Management

Anthony Pennolino and **Kevin Clark** spoke about what they had been primarily working on:

- Manhole fires
- Hazmat
- Utility incidents – gas leaks, water main breaks

They went on to present about "Readiness": (The three "H's")

- Head – plan where to go; secondary phone number (preferably a land line)
- Hand – Go-Bag tailored to each individual's need including meds
- Home – having things in your home if you have to stay in the house for a long period of time including non-perishable foods, meds, water pet supplies

BM Alain Berrouet asked about first aid classes...There are CERT Teams in most communities around the city – with 10 members in tonight's audience – who annually partake in a 10 week training that includes first aid training

Department of Buildings

Anthony Iuliano spoke:

- Call the community board office if there is a problem; going through 311 could add 3-4 weeks before there is an agency response
- Every Tuesday at Queens Borough Hall from 4:00-7:00 pm there is DOB "Homeowners Night" where they can answer any and all questions

BSA Items

- BSA Process: community response before going to Land Use Committee...Rosedale wants a one month layover on BSA No. 1129-64-BZ (Auto Supply store) so the applicant can come to the civic meeting
- Another BSA item held over (homes adjacent to Green Acres Commons)
- A Resolution was read by the Land Use Chair stipulating opposition to Belmont Video Lottery Terminals that are being proposed for that site....BM Clive Williams stated that this same proposal was made the year before in Westbury...The Board Chair spoke of the rally he attended in Elmont that was overwhelmingly against this proposal...BM Seymour Finkelstein said many kids need jobs; why is there no presentation from the other side of the issue...a motion was made to approve the Resolution...by voice vote everyone approved with one abstention.
- Spenser Nelson from CM Barry Grodenchik's office stated that the CM attended the Saturday rally against the VLT's and was also opposed to the proposed installation.

- BM Corey Bearak said that 20 years prior a bus line from Queens into Floral Park (Nassau County) was opposed...yet here is the Queens side of the border supporting the local Nassau County residents...

Committee Reports

Seniors & Special Needs: Co-Chairs Kangela Moore and Jerry Wind reported that Mark Hoffacker from the New York Coalition for Traffic Safety has a "car fit" program for seniors to get comfortable in using their cars in terms of side and rear mirror adjustments and seat height. Jerry stated he was looking for an area to have this program. An ideal location would be the new high school on the Frank Padavan campus.

Youth & Education: Co-Chair Rhonda Kontner reported that the planned Youth Summit would unfortunately be canceled because the committee did not get enough participation from board 13 members or with the partnership members from Community Board 12 Education Committee.

However, the committee is looking to adopt Martin Van Buren High School.

Health Committee: Co-Chair Bonnie Huie reported the committee was attempting to get into the community to go to a school to find out the need...BM Daisy Carew was taking the lead...what are the children's needs? Teachers, more than administrators, will speak more openly to committee members.

Parks & Environment: Co-Chairs Fay Hill and Peter Richards reported –

- BM Tameka Pierre-Louis researched "Arts in the Parks" to see what was required for these to be installed for both beautification and inspiration
- Frank Toner from Rocky Hill Civic Association attended the meeting because he has an interest in having some public art at a public location in Bellerose
- Co-Chair Hill spoke about the southeast Queens Parks Roundtable Meeting that was hosted by CB 12 at the Harvest Room in Jamaica
- Co-Chair Peter Richards requested another meeting with DEP with this committee on proper grease disposal
- DSNY has some composting sites
- \$1.6 million has been allocated to Brookville Park for new bleachers and resurfacing the tennis courts
- After 20 years, a new roof is being installed at the Springfield Park Parkhouse

Public Safety: Chair Clive Williams reported that all liquor license applications are being published in "The Sentinel"

- The objective for asking liquor license applicants to attend the meeting is for the committee to get to know the applicant and gauge their understanding of their responsibility to the community

- Get the SLA engaged – does the SLA always support the Community Board's recommendation? What leverage does the Community Board have?
- He spoke with Detective Cooper and she will attend this committee's meetings as often as possible
- The Committee Chair speaks of a Pilot Project in the Rockaways on community policing
- At the last committee meeting, 8 liquor licenses were approved
- One liquor license application was held over: Little Jerk Hut

BM Jim Delaney asked if local civics were consulted before recommending approval of liquor licenses. The Committee Chair stated that there was a committee member from each area who checked out the establishment and brought their findings to the committee meeting. He also invited BM Delaney to attend the meetings.

Economic Development: Chair Clive Williams reported –

- He commended BM Tameka Pierre-Louis for her enthusiasm and hard work making aggressive steps to get two separate areas (Laurelton & Rosedale) to merge into one Merchant's Association
- He spoke of the two meetings that were held to make this happen
- That it was not about who got credit; rather, to put folks together, moving things forward
- He asked BM Richard Hellenbrecht to present background on the Aviation Roundtable, and why a Resolution has been drafted to support the "Draft Bylaws" as presented by BM Richard Hellenbrecht and Barbara Brown. A Resolution was read, a motion with a unanimous vote to support the Resolution.

Public Speaking Time

Gavriel Ben Yehudah spoke saying that the Rabbi at the Francis Lewis Ohel Chabad site was against the school proposal. He offered "peace," and wants to sit down to work together with the Board Chair and the Cambria Civic Association in an atmosphere of peace over dinner. He wants to establish a dialogue with the community on this issue.

The Board Chair stated he has already taken a position on this issue as a resident of Cambria Heights.

BM Jon Logan does not understand the difference between the speaker's religious group and the group filing the variance application with the BSA.

Respectfully submitted,
 Mark McMillan
 District Manager
 Queens Community Board 13