



Queens Community Board 13

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GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 24, 2017

**SAINT LUKE BAPTIST CHURCH
133-21 232 STREET
LAURELTON, NY**

Attendance

Present:

Angela Augugliaro; Isa Avery; Corey Bearak; Alain Berrouet; Verdell Boncoeur; Jacqueline Campbell; Mizanur Choudhury; Barbara Clements; Tanya Cruz; Delroy Dawkins; Bess DeBetham; James Delaney; Terryl Ebony DeMendonca; Samuel Elliott; Seymour Finkelstein; Lorraine Gittens-Bridges; Robert Glover; Felice Hannah; Fay Hill; Bonnie Huie; Mohamood Ishmael; Franck Joseph; Antony Kuncheria; Jonathan Logan; Kangela Moore; Marcia O'Brien; Michael O'Keeffe; Tameka Pierre-Louis; Celeste Powers; Anup Ramnauth; Peter Richards; Ashok Satkalmi; Steven Taylor; Mathew Thomas; Lourdes Villanueva-Hartrick; Clive Williams; Jackie Wilson; Jerry Wind

Absent:

Terence Banks; Bryan Block; Kyle Bragg; Daisy Carew (R); Charles Farruggia; Richard Hellenbrecht; Vernal Holder; Rhonda Kontner; Davon Lomax; Curlene Nelson; Nagassar Ramgarib; Sanu Thomas; Wilson Thomas (R); Pritpal Singh Walia; Derrick Warmington (R)

Angela Augugliaro, First Vice Chair (FVC) called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was put aside as there was no American flag on the premises. She requested a moment of silence for the people who died in the Queens Village fire.

Presentations

FDNY Borough Commander Chief Ed Baggott:

- Updates tragic fire on 208 Street –
 - Response in 4 minutes
 - No 911 call came from inside the building; the first from a passer-by.
 - Found 5 fatalities from 21 to 2 years of age on the second floor of the structure.
 - They are presently on the scene with NYPD...meticulous investigation on cause...no obvious sign of criminality – leaning toward an accidental cause.
- Fire Prevention –
 - Last year there were 48 fire deaths in NYC.
 - No working smoke detectors within [the 208 Street] structure; smoke detectors are important and will save lives.
 - Check your smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries.
 - Buy a detector if you do not have one. Put one on every floor.
 - There are injuries and deaths because no detector was on the premises.
 - Get a CO detector.
 - **“Have a Plan”** to get out of the house...jumping from the second floor is dangerous.
 - Basements and attics are very dangerous places; they are not designed for people to live; get a smoke detector.
 - If there is only one way out, find a second way out.
 - Smoke detectors cost \$10; a 20-year detector is \$20.
 - Candles are problematic; you have to very, very careful with candles.
 - ...a firefighter died because of incense burning.
 - Keep matches and lighters away from children.
 - This is the largest loss of life in NYC by fire in 2 years.

Q: How do you train someone to get out of an attic?

A: An attic is not a (legal or) livable space (not part of the Certificate of Occupancy). If that is the decision, get a portable ladder. This is not recommended, but if that is your decision, get a smoke detector for the attic and the floor below.

Q: Should you have a smoke detector in the basement?

A Yes, because that is where the boiler and hot water heater are located.

Q: The news reported that the car had something to do with the fire?

A: I will not speculate. The fire started somewhere; it is being investigated.

BM Jon Logan: In Cambria Heights some buildings are not being used according to code. There is community concern. How can we get some action?

A: There is a right to privacy. We need "probable cause" to get a search warrant. They are not easy to get.

BM Alain Berrouet: When will the investigation be completed? It seems there was an accelerant used...

A: The Fire Marshals and FDNY Commissioner will make a statement in a few days. I will send the Press Release to the Community Board.

BM Jackie Campbell: What can be done about hoarders?

A: There is a right to inspect only in public areas. We must have probable cause there is a dangerous condition. They can partner with social service issues if there is a mental health issue. There is this balance between privacy and government intervention.

Q: Put a CO detector near the boiler room?

A: Put one in the basement.

BM Tanya Cruz: Will FDNY give away fire extinguishers?

A: No. Just get everyone out of the building and call 911 immediately.

BM Tanya Cruz: What about barbecue fires?

A: It's outside of the structure. FDNY response time in Queens is about 4 minutes.

BM Fay Hill: We must change the batteries.

BM Alain Berrouet: We need fire safety education for the children.

A: It is already happening.

FVC Augugliaro thanks Chief Baggott for coming. [Applause]

New Board Members

Mizanur Choudhury, Lourdes Villanueva-Hartrick, Barbara Clements and Steven Taylor all stand and introduce themselves to Board and community members present.

The Board Executive Secretary, Jerry Wind, took the roll call.

FVC Augugliaro acknowledges all of the representatives of elected officials present.

William Spivey, Trustee from St. Luke's Baptist Church, came to the front and welcomed the Board membership. FVC Augugliaro thanks BM Bob Glover who was instrumental in getting St. Luk's for the meeting.

Michael Lambert, Deputy Commissioner for Public Affairs, NYC Comptroller's Office, spoke briefly as a resident of the community.

District Manager's Report

The District Manager spoke about moving the meeting around the community twice a year away from our home site of Bellerose Assembly of God. The DM's Report is included in the Sentinel. He explains what the Community Board Office tries to do with the Sentinel each month in terms of useful information, upcoming events, etc. He thanks Community Coordinator Maxine Allen and Community Associate Corey Ince for the work they do every day. [Applause.]

BM Jon Logan speaks about the upcoming firefighter exam.

A motion was made to accept the February General Board Meeting Minutes.
Approved.

Presentations

Anthony Iuliano, NYC Department of Buildings:

- Seasonal activities to be in compliance –
 - Paving over property (you need a permit) – as of April 2008, a certain percentage of the property must be green space (20-30%, depending on the size of the lot).
 - Paving over green space for parking is a violation (illegal curb cut).
 - DOB has a monthly homeowner's night at Queens Borough Hall.
 - Fines; legalizing after-the-fact. Penalty fees are in effect.
- Rentals – a one-family house not owner-occupied must be registered with HPD.
 - This helps the City keep up with owner location.
 - There cannot be more than 3 roomers, boarders or lodgers in a one-family home.
 - Enforcement – getting access is a problem.
 - Access warrant to ascertain an illegal condition.
 - Basements can be legalized as apartments.
 - Failure to register fine with HPD is \$250-\$500.
- Commercial vehicles parking in a residential zone (R-1 thru R-5):
 - Not overnight.
 - PODs allowed for <30 days.
- Home occupations (offices):

- o Cannot exceed 25% of [overall] floor area.
- o Cannot exceed >500 square feet.
- o Can have one employee not of the same profession.
- o No signs allowed in the front yard.
- o Day care/nursery schools must be licensed by the DOHMH with the location in the building.
- Construction activity:
 - o Weekdays, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm; weekends, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.
 - o Must have permits (must be more than 300 feet from a house of worship).
 - o Outside of a two-family home, on a weekend must have an after-hour variance.
- Squatters:
 - o Know the conditions. If utilities are cut off, they can tap into the neighbors electric or a utility pole.
 - o They may start fires within the structure if it is cold in winter.
 - o Reach out to the lending institution through the Community Board or an elected official...they will clean up and seal the building.

BM Jon Logan: When did the HPD registration come into effect?

A: Literature will be sent to the Community Board office.

BM Lourdes Villanueva-Hartrick: There is a Bellerose Tudor that is abandoned. The front is intact; the back is leaking water. The owner is still paying taxes. When the house is torn down, does it have to be [re-built] as a Tudor?

A: Depends on the zoning...only if landmarked. The forensics engineer can get to the structure and write a violation.

BM Bess deBetham: Can you park a tractor-trailer cab on [private] property?

A: Must have a commercial license plate; livery cabs can be parked overnight on a residential neighborhood.

BM James Delaney: Farmers Market puts its goods on the sidewalk...Once outside of the property lot lines...send inspectors...3-foot rule is DSNY (street visibility rule).

BM Seymour Finkelstein: What is the difference between a cellar and a basement?

A: A basement is <50% of street level grade; a cellar is >50% of street level grade in which one can have an accessory bathroom – no kitchen. In a R-3 zone, you can have an apartment in a basement.

Q: There is a rash of businesses closing on Merrick Boulevard creating dumping...

A: Tough for DSNY to clean private property, up to the property owner. Go to the Department of Finance website and follow-up with the owner.

BM Jackie Campbell: Can an abandoned property get ticketed? It's an eyesore...

A: If they are paying their [property] taxes, only so much can be done.

Jim Trent: Can one change a flat roof to an angle roof?

A: Come to Borough Hall on Tuesday with digital photos to determine if permits are necessary. (Permits will be required if it affects the structure - load bearing).

Q: What about "Zombie Houses"?

A: We can send an inspector if the windows are not sealed...

Mike Augugliaro: Are basement apartments going to become legal because of the homeless situation?

A: There is presently a pilot program in East New York [Brooklyn] to see if they can legalize basements into legal apartments. However, there is strong opposition to this initiative.

Q: Who has the responsibility to get the permit, homeowner or contractor?

A: The contractor required to pull the permit; the owner signs off. The owner...the contractor must be licensed...the architect gets the plans approved. This should be negotiated in the contract process about whether it is the contractor or architect.

Q: Someone bought the home a certain way. They had problems with the neighbor who then called DOB. They came and gave her violations for a house she owned for over 20 years. What can she do about this?

A: Buyer beware. When buying a property, make sure you have your own attorney. A violation is a violation.

Inspector Jeff Schiff, Commanding Officer, 105 Precinct:

- Crime is down 11% for the month, 13%YTD
- On 4/16 there was a non-fatal shooting...two teenagers and their mother at war over a hairdo...looking for leads
- There was a major takedown – Operation Jack Rabbit
 - 11 arrests, 1 individual, 45 cars, 16 motorcycles with an estimated value of \$500K
 - Fraudulent documents, inspection stickers
 - Rock-solid case with suspects facing 7-10 years

- 51 incidents of Grand Larceny
 - 91/51 identity thefts
 - 7 instances of tires and rims
 - Unintended instances in cars left open with bags, wallets and valuables visible
 - 7 fraud scams
 - 1 text message scam (someone bought \$43K of itune cards)
- The Inspector states he is very serious about his job...
 - He implores his officers to be professional
 - He needs to know about the "bad apples"
 - CCRB complaints down 10%
 - Now CCRB complaints down 17%
 - Outside units CCRB complaints up 3%
 - The incident (referred to by Jon Logan) occurred with an outside unit

BM Jon Logan thanks Council Member Miller for concern about the NY Post article. Why is there such over-enforced [sic]?

A: Addressed before at the Community Board meeting. He has the largest precinct in the city with 300 officers, more than the 103 and 113 precincts combined. He believes in the "broken window" theory.

- Marijuana sales is a factor in much crime:
 - This is a national problem
 - 53 homicides are attributed to marijuana sales
 - There is a nexus between violence, marijuana and drugs

BM Felice Hannah: She is concerned with the source – 105 Precinct. The 105 Precinct is finally doing something passionate. [Applause].

BM Alain Berrouet: How does poverty correlate to crime? There major factor in this is men of color. Men of color are disproportionately targeted...

BM Jon Logan: This conversation cannot be had here. He commends Inspector Schiff. His concern is federally funded military style [outfits and vehicles]. This needs to be discussed in various forums.

Joe Block, Department of Parks

- He thanks BM Fay Hill and BM Kangela Moore for getting volunteers to help clean the Springfield and Brookville Parks. [Applause.]
- "Dog Runs" (fenced off areas where dogs are off-leach):
 - There are none in QCB13.
 - There must be a "dog group" who advocates for it.

- Parks does not do day-to-day maintenance.

Q: How large can they be? How do they get funded?

A: Some are a few acres. It is normally just a section of a park. It is a fenced-off area. It depends...

BM Kangela Moore: She has an advocate who has done one in the Rockaways.

A: Take a trip to a dog run and speak to the people. Talk to the folks in the park...

BM Mike O'Keeffe: Who decides?

A: The dog owner organization. Then they should advise the Community Board and elected officials. Feedback from CB and elected are important before Parks will do anything.

A: Look at parks design. Noise abatement. Plantings. Parks must recognize the group based on an affiliation with Partnership for Parks.

Q: How does this happen?

A: Find a location...form an organization...get recognized...get funding from an elected official.

Council Member Donovan Richards

- Announcement of location of 116 Precinct:
 - \$1.7M infrastructure – wants transparency.
- Started \$30M project in Rosedale:
 - It requires reporting to the Community Board and elected officials for transparency and accountability.
- BSA Bill: mandates all BSA applications be put online and they are sent to community boards and elected officials.
- Airport Connection and jobs (JFK IBID) in Springfield Gardens with a \$500K budget:
 - Funded by the business community.
 - Job opportunities.
- Revitalization of Merrick Boulevard:
 - \$1M upgrade of facades.
 - Safety improvements on the road.
- PS 132 in Laurelton won \$1M for a new kitchen.
- Cleanup efforts on May 6, 2017:
 - Cleaning up graffiti

- Funding for Wildcat to keep main thoroughfares clean on Merrick Boulevard.
- \$3.8M for Brookville Park:
 - Includes a dog run.
 - Upgrade tennis courts.
 - Upgrade barbecue area.
- New development:
 - Tools to be put in place for mixed-use development.
 - Initiative to incentivize and keep good food markets in the community.
 - Southeast Queens took 90% of the DEP budget.

BM Bonnie Huie: Construction along Twin Ponds...

A: Its drainage from some neighborhoods; it flows into Jamaica Bay.

BM Alain Berrouet: Can Amazon be put into Associated? People do not know quality food...

A: People know what they want. Green Acres drains lots of money from the community. We don't want to lose the character of small business owners.

BM Steven Taylor: With regards to the BSA Bill – would they have to pay attention to community input?

A: That is part of the package of bills. These bills are all online.

BM Tameka Pierre-Louis: Can there be increased availability of parking to draw in business?

A: Meters help because more business is coming in (Though many people did not want metered parking).

BM Jon Logan: What part of the package? What is the number?

A: Go to council@nyc.gov, click on legislation under his name.

Nominating Committee

BM Tanya Cruz nominates BM Alain Berrouet. He accepts.

BM Jon Logan nominates BM Kangela Moore. She accepts.

BM Alain Berrouet nominates BM Jon Logan. He declines.

BM Mohamood Ishmael nominates BM Michael O'Keefe. He accepts.

BM Kangela Moore nominates BM Lorraine Gittens-Bridges. She accepts.

BM Anup Ramanuth nominates BM Jim Delaney. He declines.

BM Clive Williams nominates BM Delroy Dawkins. He accepts.

BM Anup Ramanuth nominates BM Ashok Sakalmi. He declines.

BM Anup Ramanuth nominates BM Mohamood Ishmael. He declines.

BM Anup Ramanuth nominates BM Seymour Finkelstein. He accepts.

FVC Angela Augugliaro nominates BM Corey Bearak. He accepts.

FVC appoints BM Mike O'Keeffe as the Chair of the Nomination Committee. He accepts.

By voice vote, the Board unanimously supports the Nomination Committee as presented.

A motion is made to suspend the Committee Reports. By voice vote, a unanimous vote yes.

Public Speaking

Katherine Good, ASPCA:

- They are working with NYPD to prevent animal cruelty. If you see animal cruelty, please call 911. If you suspect animal cruelty, call 311.
- They supply intervention and advocacy for people who need help:
 - Dogs who live outside;
 - People who need help with veterinary care;
 - Hoarding situations with too many animals.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark McMillan

District Manager

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