



COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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Melinda Katz
Borough President

Damian Vargas
Chairperson

Melva Miller
Deputy Borough President

Christian Cassagnol
District Manager

BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE: DECEMBER 19, 2017

Board Members Attending:

Priscilla Carrow
Chaio Chung Chen
Marialena Giampino
Ingrid Gomez
Peter Manganaro
Rovenia McGowan
Ruby Muhammad
Sandra Muñoz
Gurdip Singh Narula
Georgina Oliver
Shwe Zin Oo
Albert Perna
Alexa Ponce
Ashley Reed
Oscar Rios
Cristian Romero
Clara Salas
A. Redd Sevilla
Lucy Schilero
Malikah Shabazz
Gregory Spock
Marcello Testa
Damian Vargas
Louis Walker
Rosa Wong
Minwen Yang
Lester Youngblood

Board Members Absent:

Giancarlo Castaño
Lucy Cerezo-Scully
Lynda Coral
Erica Cruz
Judith D'Andrea
Maria D'Amico
Jennifer Gutierrez
James Lisa
Salvatore Lombardo
Patricia Martin
Edgar Moya
Neil Roman
Gigi Salvador
Alton Derrick Smith
Vivian Tseng

ATTENDING:

Joe Nocerino, Queens Borough President's Office
Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager
Christina Long, CB4 Community Assistant
Assembly Member Francisco Moya AD39
Lissette Barcia, Assembly Member Jeff Aubry's Office
Ernestine McKayle, Corona, NY
Debra Hargrove, Corona, NY
Robert E. Grant, Corona, NY
Jimmy Apostolatos, Elmhurst, NY
Alexandra Owens, Corona, NY
Jonathan Custodio, Bronx, NY
Jim Galloway, Corona
Maria Canela, Corona, NY
Mike Liquori, Corona, NY
Veronica Ramirez, Corona, NY
Saroj Sedalia, Elmhurst, NY
Joanne Bird, Forest Hills, NY
Rev. Roberto Jimenez
Angel Ortega, Corona, NY
Jorge L. Rodriguez, Corona, NY
Priscilla Walton, Elmhurst NY
Ariana Marte, Jackson Heights, NY
Qibin Ye, Council Member Daniel Dromm's Office
Stephanie Roman, Corona, NY
Librada Reyes, Corona, NY
Lucy Block, Elmhurst, NY
William Giron, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's Office
John Melecio, Corona, NY
Selma Morales, Corona, NY
Sgt. Raznikiewicz, NCO Supervisor, 110th Precinct
Jeremy Chan- Kraushar, Jackson Heights, NY

COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: VFW POST #150
51-11 108 STREET
CORONA, NY

I Chairman Vargas opened the meeting at 7:35pm

II. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

III Executive Secretary Marialena Giampino took the roll call. A quorum was not present.

IV. Vote: Minutes November 14, 2017

Because a quorum was not present, at this time no vote was taken on the approval of the minutes.

V. Report of the Chairperson

Chairman Vargas wished everyone a happy holiday and happy new year. While there wasn't a lot to report, he did mention that on December 4th, he attended Borough board, a meeting in which all the Chairs and Council Members meet to discuss important issues at the Borough President's office. The presentation this month was on LaGuardia and JFK Airports. A copy of the presentation in pdf format will be sent to members once it is received by the board office.

Next, Chairman Vargas went on to discuss the application for members of the public who wish to join the board's committees. He went on to explain that members will have voting rights on said committees, but not on the board level. The 6 page application has been recently revamped, and would be readily available in hard and electronic formats to those members interested in having them. Chairman Vargas further explained that this formal process gives public members the chance to get more fully acquainted with board operations with the intention on possibly becoming Board members in the future. This gives the Board a good idea on who is really qualified, really wants to do this, and also prevents conflicts of interest.

Finally, Chairman Vargas mentioned that a handful of Board members have been looking to be appointed to more than one committee. He went on to explain that no formalized process has been set yet for such a move, but that a simple form would be generated to be handed out to those members who wish to do so. He mentioned that some members have been appointed since they have already formally reached out to the board office. Members who wish to serve on multiple committees should reach out to the District Manager.

The only way to get another committee is to be formally put on a second one. Board members are responsible for attending both of their respective committees' meetings.

CB Member Malikah Shabazz commented on an application that was handed to the Board office by her earlier in the month. Ms. Shabazz was given an updated copy of the latest one.

VI. Report of the District Manager

District Manager Christian Cassagnol mentioned that while the Board office has been somewhat quiet, there have been a substantial amount of Holiday tree lightings throughout the district.

Mr. Cassagnol briefly mentioned that a CB4 staffer would be on leave for a little while, and that the office is in the process of acquiring an intern from LaGuardia College within the next few days. The internship would run from December through February.

Next, District Manager Cassagnol reported on ongoing issues with 111th Street. He went on to mention that the 111th Street project has been in effect for some time now, but as of late, the Board office has been getting complaints about the plan. He touched on subjects such as the lack of daylighting and dangerous intersections along the corridor. District Manager Cassagnol went on to explain that the latest crash reports for the corridor are actually higher year to date (ytd) than last year before the plan was implemented. The Board office has drafted and sent a letter in which Mayor DeBlasio, Commissioner Trottenberg, and all the Elected Officials within the district have been cc'ed.

A copy of the letter explaining the Board's disappointment in NYCDOT's lax attitude on the project was on hand for members interested in seeing it. The letter basically says "We just want to see it relooked at. That's all we're asking. Hopefully open dialogue will happen sooner than later."

His final announcement was that going forward all Committee Chairs will begin to receive District Service Cabinet (DSC) minutes. He went on to explain that the DSC is a City Charter mandated meeting chaired by the District Manager on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. These meetings give the Board the opportunity to work closely with agencies to discuss delivery of services and to identify pockets where services are not being properly delivered. Copies of the minutes will not be sent to the full board, but Chairs are urged to disseminate them as they see fit with their committee members.

Chairs will get a good idea as to what is going on within the district, and can now have a direct link to the issues and the agency contacts responsible. These meetings are not open to the public.

Chairs are urged to reach out to the board office with any larger issues with the intent on bringing them up to agencies at the monthly DSC meetings.

At this point, a quorum became present, and a vote on the November 14th minutes was made. Motion was made by **Priscilla Carrow**, and seconded by **Clara Salas** to **approve** the minutes.

Motion passed unanimously.

VII. Public Forum

At this point, Chairman Vargas invited members of the public to speak.

Mr. Melvin Hernandez a resident of the community who grew up locally, and is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints briefly discussed community work that has been done by the church. They have helped the community with several events such as community cleanups. Mr. Hernandez mentioned that the church was very active both locally and worldwide, and has the drive to help everyone. He thanked the board for its time.

Next, Ms. Priscilla Walton, Principal of the Elm Community Charter School was called forward. She mentioned that the school was approved as of June 2017, and would be opening in August of 2018. The school would begin with 100 seats for Kindergarten and 1st graders. Over 150 applications have already been submitted. She asks that the board help to spread the word about the school.

At this point, CB Member Georgina Oliver asked about the student to teacher ratio. Ms. Walton stated that currently the school is set at 27 seats per class, with a total of 2 teachers for class bringing the ratio to approximately 13:1. Ms. Walton mentioned that while no location has been officially chosen, they are still looking. Some locations in and near Elmhurst have been found, but some don't fit the school design. The search continues. An online newsletter is available to those interested..

CB Youth Chair Ingrid Gomez asked about the percentage of students being accepted by the school that live in Elmhurst. Ms. Walton stated that as a public school, they must be open to the public. However, as previously promised, recruitment thus far is solely being done in Elmhurst and Corona with 85 – 95% of applicants from within SD 24. SD 24 kids will be pushed to the top during the lottery process.

CB member Marcello Testa asked how many ELL learners the school was looking to have. Ms. Walton explained that the school would follow the same structure of local public schools within the district with 30% ELL and approximately 14% special education as well. These numbers would be somehow phased into the school's lottery system.

At this point Chairman Vargas thanked the Neighborhood Coordination Officers for their hard work. NCO Supervisor Sergeant Raznikiewicz "Raz" reported that overall crime is down. There has been a surge in burglaries in Sector Adam as part of an alert between the 110, 115, and 108th precincts. Detectives are currently working hard to apprehend the individuals.

She reassured that the NCO program is working well. As of late, the NCO's handling "Sector Adam" worked on 82-11 Grand Avenue. The owner has been located, and the property is currently locked. Sgt. Raz next commented on the current homeless condition at Frank O'Connor Park (78th St and Broadway) across the street from Elmhurst Hospital.

CB Member Georgina Oliver asked whether Elmhurst Hospital had a program where it allows homeless individuals to stay at the hospital to stay warm similar to Queens Hospital, which it does.

Sgt. Raz reported on the amount of trespass complaints in Sector Boy. Her report ensued regarding an increase in patrols within the sector due to an increase in gang related violence.

Sector Charlie is currently focusing on Park of the Americas (104 Street and 42nd Avenue.) The precinct has been working with the Dept. of Parks, and as a result the park is now being locked and unlocked by the NYPD daily. Discussion ensued regarding quality of life issues within the sector I.e.: illegally parked vehicles, graffiti along the LIRR.

Lastly, Sgt. Raz reported on NCO' Sector David along the vicinity of Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Summonses have been issued, and suspects apprehended for complaints along the corridor of 111th Street. I.e.: noise complaints, unregistered/illegally parked vehicles, and property snatching.

CB Member Chaio-Chung Chen commended the officers and saluted them for their hard work.

Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero asked about what gang was referenced earlier. Sgt. Raz stated "ABK".

CB Member Clara Salas informed the Board on shelters in the Bronx that would take in homeless individuals throughout the city regardless of migratory status such as Bronx Living Room and Sisters of Charity. Discussion ensued regarding the ongoing problem of homelessness throughout the district.

VIII. Report of the Legislators

Joseph Nocerino from the Queens Borough President's office wished the Board a happy holiday on behalf of the Borough President. Next, Mr. Nocerino discussed Community Board Member renewals. The deadline is January 12th for those members whose applications are up on even years. Applications were on hand for members wishing to reapply.

Next, Chairman Vargas welcomed Assemblyman Francisco Moya.

Assemblyman Moya thanked the Board for all its hard work. The Assemblyman mentioned that 2017 was a good year, but that 2018 will be even more so.

Assemblyman Moya briefly touched on 10 pieces of legislation that were signed into law during his 7 year term in the Assembly.

He expressed his thanks to the 110 precinct and the NCO's for their hard work. Assemblyman Moya mentioned the yearly Three Kings Day on January 2nd at the Corona Library in conjunction with Congressman Crowley. Assemblyman Moya finally mentioned that he would be working on the Community Board's Capital and Expense wish list, and that discussions were under way.

Qibin Ye of Council Member Daniel Dromm's office wished the Board a happy holiday on behalf of the Council Member, and expressed appreciation to the board and the 110th Precinct for all its hard work. She announced that the Council Member would like to extend the invitations to the Holiday Open House Thursday December 21st from 5-7pm.

William Giron of NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's office was called next. He wished the Board a happy holiday on behalf of the Comptroller. Mr. Giron reported that the Comptroller published a report called "The Other Transit Crisis: How to Improve the New York City Bus System." In the report, of all the major cities, NYC has some of the worst bus service. This is because the bus route is over half a century old. Discussion ensued regarding data within the report, specifically about the 30% increase in small businesses, and the idea that many commuters work at/ would visit these businesses outside of regular 9am – 5pm hours. A concern is that the MTA has unfortunately portioned bus times within the standard 9am – 5pm time frame without taking later work shifts into consideration. The recommendation in the report is that bus routes be revisited. The report is available online at comptroller.nyc.gov. Mr. Giron also offered to mail a copy to those who do not have access to the internet.

IX. Report: Public Safety Committee

Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero reported on "spoofing" a caller id scam used by telemarketers by using phone numbers and faces similar to loved ones to get the victim to pick up. The victim inadvertently agrees to the product being sold by saying "yes" when asked "can you hear me" Currently the FCC is working on the issue.

Ms Schilero briefly touched on an anti-bullying law put forth by Council Member Daniel Dromm.

NeXt, she reported on safety issues with fires throughout the district. She emphasized the importance of not overloading surge protectors with appliances as well as the dangers of having space heaters close to ones' bed. The FDNY urges people to purchase flame resistant holiday lights and decorations whenever possible, and to refrain from using nails to hang decorations. Ms. Schilero briefly discussed the dangers of unattended ash trays. Lastly, she asked that in the case that one smells gas, to immediately call 911, ConEd at (800) 752-6633 or National Grid at (718) 643-4050.

At his point Ms. Schilero read the following report:

New Applicants

ESTABLISHMENT'S NAME ESTABLISHMENT ADDRESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Taqueria El Sialoense Deli, Inc. Wine, Beer and Cider	40-08 Case Street Elmhurst, NY	Approved
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Renewal Applicants

ESTABLISHMENT'S NAME ESTABLISHMENT ADDRESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Boca Junior's Steakhouse, LLC Liquor, Wine and Beer	81-08 Queens Blvd. Elmhurst, NY	Approved
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85-16 Food Corp.. "Cevicheria El Rey" Wine, Beer and Cider	85-16A Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	Approved
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Alteration Applicants

ESTABLISHMENT'S NAME ESTABLISHMENT ADDRESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

El Coyote Bar & Grill Liquor, Wine and Beer	45-02 Junction Boulevard Corona, NY	Denied
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Pico De Gallo, Inc. Liquor Wine and Beer	82-12 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY	No recommendation given
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Ms. Schilero pointed out that Pico de Gallo Inc. was a split vote among the committee with 2 yes, 1 no and one abstention due to confusion over the legality of an alteration within the establishment. Discussion ensued.

Public Safety Committee member Ms. Georgina Oliver further explained that her concern was that despite the scope of the work, the committee cannot know what work was actually done. Is that wiring really safe? To the knowledge of the committee, no official inspection by the FDNY or DOB was conducted.

Ms. Schilero emphasized that the owners insisted on the work being minimal, but no formal proof was given to the committee at the time of the meeting.

Chairman Vargas asked whether an inspection by the DOB and FDNY was necessary every time an alteration took place. It could not be determined whether an inspection was a mandate. Conversation ensued regarding the legality of an

alteration without a follow-up inspection. Ms. Schilero stated that the sketch submitted by the owners would not suffice, and that actual photos would be needed.

CB Member Priscilla Carrow asked whether the item could be tabled. Lucy Schilero stated that if the item were tabled, the restaurant would get its license anyway.

Next, Public Safety Committee Member Alexa Ponce stated that photos of the work were never requested in advance. She stated that according to the owners, no special permits were needed since the work was so minimal. She proceeded to explain that the only work being done was a downsizing of the kitchen to suit a smaller operation.

Public Safety Committee Member Gurdip Singh Narula pointed out that it was his feeling that any form of electrical or gas work should be inspected and certified.

Chairman Vargas again re-asked whether an inspection was a requirement, and not a committee preference.

Discussion ensued regarding tabling the application.

CB Member Malikah Shabazz mentioned that we should be able to fact find on what should be a simple procedure.

At this point CB Member Gregory Spock paraphrased Law 85-05 Section C:

“Prior to new construction or major renovation of a food service establishment, or non retail food processing establishment, the department may require such establishment submit sketches or plans showing the floor layout equipment, plumbing ventilation, refuse, storage facilities.

Lester Youngblood made a motion to **table** the application, seconded by **Priscilla Carrow**.

Motion to table was **denied** with 11 Yes, 13 No, and 3 Abstentions.

At this point a motion to **deny** the application was made by **Georgina Oliver** seconded by **Ruby Muhammad**.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion to **deny** passed with 16 Yes, 2 No, and 9 Abstentions.

At this point a motion was made to approve the remainder of the applications.

Georgina Oliver made a motion to **accept** the committee report to approve the remaining applicants seconded by **Alexa Ponce**.

Motion to accept committee report passed unanimously.

Damian Vargas at this point asked that a motion to reword the motion be made since the report was not to be accepted as a slate as there was one denial.

Motion to **amend** the motion was made by **Sandra Muñoz**, and seconded by **Alexa Ponce**.

Motion to accept the committee report with amendment passed unanimously.

X. Parks Committee Report: Linden Park (Park of the Americas)

District Manager Cassagnol briefly reported on the upcoming redesign of Park of the Americas. He stated that earlier in the month, the committee met with the Parks Dept. who presented a plan to renovate a portion of the park. He stated that funding was given from multiple sources on this park that CB4 has had on its wish list for some time. District Manager Cassagnol explained that while the work seemed major, it is only for approximately half of the park, specifically the synthetic field, the play equipment, and the areas surrounding it.

He stated that while no quorum was present at the committee meeting, those present were in favor of the design.

Mr. Cassagnol went on to discuss the difficulties often presented when importing a tree onto Parks property for the numerous holiday events that take place during the season. As per his discussions with Chairman Al Perna, it was recommended that all parks designs going forward whenever possible should implement some form of evergreen/ pine / holiday friendly tree for sake of the numerous holiday tree lighting ceremonies.

At this same meeting, it was further discussed that evening as per the recommendation of CB Member Gregory Spock that all parks going forward should also have some form of performance space as parks are not only for trees and playing, but should also be honored for the cultural spaces that they are.

Lastly, Mr. Cassagnol mentioned that the Board has already begun looking into ways to fund the second half of the park including conversations with soon to be City Council Member Francisco Moya.

Ms. Lucy Schilero asked whether the wrought iron gate around the park would remain intact. DM Cassagnol stated that current plans have no change to the existing fence. He did notice a substantial decrease in vagrants and crime within the park ever since the NYPD began locking and unlocking it daily

CB Member Redd Sevilla stated that this is not the first time that this request was brought up, specifically referencing CC Moore Park. It was reiterated that the current design for Linden does not have a holiday tree nor performance space as part of the design, but that in the brief discussions with the Parks Dept., the request was overall well received, and would be considered in design going forward.

Motion was made by **CB Member Ingrid Gomez** and seconded by **CB Member Lucy Schilero** to **approve** the parks design with the possibility of holiday tree, and performance space before final design.

Motion passed unanimously

CB Member Minwen Yang inquired about the small sculpture park near the Queens Blvd. exit near the Queens Center Mall. CB Member Marialena Giampino offered to email the information to those who want it.

District Manager Cassagnol briefly touched on the fact that Louis Simeone Park's completion is right around the corner, and that the most recent workshop held at IS61 was well attended.

Youth Committee Chair, Ingrid Gomez announced that CB Member Alexa Ponce was elected as the new Vice Chair for the Youth Committee. Ms. Gomez announced that the committee met on December 14th with Mitchell Flax, Founder of Valence College Preparatory Charter School. Ms. Gomez reported there are just a few middle schools within the district and that Mr. Flax is looking to fill this gap Ms. Gomez read their mission statement:

"Valence College Prep equips all scholars in grades 5 – 8 with the academic skills with professional habits and strength of character to graduate from college and lead lives of opportunity."

Mr. Flax will be seeking a letter of support when he presents to the full board in February 2018.

Ms. Gomez went on to state that info sessions would be held to members of the community who wish to learn more in advance of the February presentation.

Dates for the workshops are as follows:

Tuesday January 11th - 6:45pm at the Lefrak City Library

Thursday January 18th - 7:15pm at the Corona Library **

Saturday January 20th - 10:30 am Lefrak City Library

Saturday January 20th - 1:15pm at the Corona Library

**** Note that soon after the meeting, a correction was made to Thursday January 18th. The correct time is 6:15pm, and not 7:15pm.**

CB Member Lucy Schilero asked about the location of the school. Ms. Gomez explained that no location has been chosen, but that there is an ongoing search.

Motion to **adjourn** was made by **Priscilla Carrow**, seconded by **Gurdip Singh Narula**.

Motion passed unanimously.