



COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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Donovan Richards
Queens Borough President

Marialena Giampino
Chairperson

Rhonda Binda
Deputy Borough President

Christian Cassagnol
District Manager

June 8, 2021

BOARD MEMBER ATTENDANCE

Board Members Attending:

Marialena Giampino
Chaio-Chung Chen
Lynda Coral
Lorena Diaz
Michelle Dunston
Ari Espinal
Leeanne G-Bowley
Kristen Gonzalez
Lara Gregory
Vincent Laucella
Carol Machulski
Sunil Mahat
Patricia Martin
Sylvia Martin
Matthew McElroy

Jose Morillo
Ruby Muhamad
Gurdip Singh Narula
G. Oliver
Georgina Oliver
Alexandra Owens
Ashley Reed
Cristian Romero
Clara Salas
Lucy Schilero
A. Redd Sevilla
Urgen Sherpa
Alton Derrick Smith
Gregory Spock
Dewan Tarek
Louis Walker
Yilin Wang
Minwen Yang

Board Members Absent:

Andy Chen
Deependra Lama
James Lisa
Salvatore Lombardi
Rovenia McGowan
Edgar Moya
Sandra Munoz
Shrima Pandey

Purushottam Panthee
Alexa Ponce
Lindsay Quartini
Brian Ramirez
Oscar Rios
Marcello Testa
Dechen Tsering
May Yu

ATTENDING:

Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager
Margaret Silletti, CB4 Community Coordinator
Christina Long, CB4 Community Assistant
Cristian Romero, Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office
Michelle Hernandez, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Office
Representative from Assembly Member Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas' Office
Berenice Navarette-Perez, Council Member Francisco Moya's Office
Kelly Wu, Council Member Daniel Dromm's Office
James Mongeluzo, NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer's Office
Kathi Ko, City Planner, Queens Office, Dept. of City Planning and colleagues:
Hye-Kyung Yang, Barry Dinerstein, Dylan Sandler, and Alex P.

During the Board's virtual meetings, it may be difficult to determine Board Members, legislator representatives or guests who were present if they were not actively engaged or participating in dialogue or visually seen. Please notify the Board office if you were in attendance at any meeting and not marked present.

COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, June 8, 2021

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: Online Via Zoom

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Marialena Giampino opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

II. Vote on the Minutes May 11, 2021

Board Member Clara Salas made a motion, seconded by Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula, to **approve** the minutes. Motion passed.

Correction: Board Member Lara Gregory stated there were minor edits to the minutes which would be sent to the Board office.

III. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Marialena Giampino reported last night she had attended the Borough Board meeting and the Elevated Text Amendment (subway station elevators) was discussed and voted on. Chair Marialena Giampino voted yes with the Board's recommendations. In addition, presentations were given on the other text amendments on tonight's agenda. No vote was taken on the amendments at the Borough Board meeting as the Community Board's vote is needed. Next, the Board Chair commended the Community Board event held at Louis Simeone Park. It was a great event as well as very successful and the photos sent were appreciated. The District Manager and Staff, the Parks, Environmental and Youth Committees were thanked for their untiring efforts. Also thanks were extended to Board Members who attended the event. Following, the Board Chair announced the Board recesses for the months of July and August although some committees will meet during the summer months. E-mails will be sent. The office remains open to assist with issues, complaints, events, or concerns. A Special Thank You was given to the Board Members for their dedication during a very difficult year.

IV. District Manager's Report

District Manager Christian Cassagnol reported the community event was successful and the community events need to be seen to appreciate their significance.

Subsequently, the following flyers were displayed:

Elmhurst Green Market – Open Tuesdays, 8 am-4pm - June 15 – Nov 23, 41 Avenue between 80th & 81 Streets
Corona Greenmarket – Roosevelt Avenue & 103 Street Open Fridays 8 am- 3 pm June 18- Nov 19
Latin Women in Action – Corona Neighborhood Cleanup - June 12 – 11 am – 4 pm – Contact: Rosemary 917-757-9208

Speaking to Board Members, the District Manager said the EEO receipt needs to be signed and returned to the Board office as soon as possible.

Regarding community cleanups in the Elmhurst community, CB4 will coordinate with Newtown Civic Association and the Elmhurst History and Cemeteries Preservation Society on a planned cleanup for June 26. Details are still tentative, and more information will follow. The Elmhurst mural was recently defaced and the Board is working with the Precinct on its restoration.

Next, the District Manager mentioned an upcoming basketball clinic with students from Forest Hills High School including a coach who lives within the area of CC Moore Park (82 Street/Broadway) and will be for youths ages 6 to 14, Sundays, July 11, 18 and 25. More details will follow.

V. Open Session #1 Member Attendance **(Statements will be limited to two minutes)**

At this point, the Board went into Open Session #1, which also included attendance. Chair Marialena Giampino called on the following Board Members:

Chaio-Chung Chen – In attendance

Andy Chen – Not in attendance

Lynda Coral – In attendance

Lorena Diaz – In attendance

Michelle Dunston – In attendance

Board Member Michelle Dunston reported a street co-naming will be held for former long-time Board Member Priscilla Carrow on Friday, June 11, at 5 p.m. on 98 Place and 57 Avenue. All were urged to attend.

At this point, District Manager Cassagnol reported updates on prior street co-naming were asked about for Jim Galloway and others. The Board had reached out to the Council Member's office for updates on those requests, which have not been responded to. Those street co-naming's also included Hakeem Griffin and the daughter of Miss Williams. Hopefully, a response will be received soon.

Ari Espinal – In attendance

Leeanne G-Bowley – In attendance

Board Member Leeanne G. Bowley complimented the community gardens event. She also spoke about rank choice voting and to contact her with any questions. There is a Pride flag raising on June 14 at 11:00 a.m. at the Borough President's office. All invited. Also an unveiling of an immigrant service center is planned at Borough Hall.

Chair Marialena Giampino speaking not as a Board member, but as a community member with a strong civic and preservation background, invited all on June 19, at 12 Noon, meet at Veteran's Grove Park/Judge Street entrance, to Newtown Civic Association's neighborhood preservation walk.

Also, the Elmhurst History group will be hosting upcoming events. More details will follow.

At this point, Roll Call continued by the Board Chair:

Kristen Gonzalez – In attendance

Lara Gregory – In attendance

Complimented the community event at the Park. Affirmed those who are celebrating LGBTQ month in June. June 12 is Philippine Independence Day. An event is planned at Queens Borough Hall. Access the QBP's website for more information.

On May 25, a 76 year old Asian woman was attacked as a hate crime on 57 Avenue/97 Place, noting the perpetrator was apprehended. She had proposed a Board Hate Crimes sub-committee under the Public Safety Committee.

Deependra Lama – Not in attendance

Vincent Laucella – In attendance

Board Member Vincent Laucella reported the 110 Precinct and the 110 Precinct Council is holding a community event Thursday, June 10, in front of the 110 Precinct, 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Free food and entertainment is available with the opportunity to engage with the local precinct. Get to know your NCO's. All were invited to attend. Also, all were urged to vote on June 22.

James Lisa – Not in attendance

Salvatore Lombardo – Not in attendance

Carol Machulski – In attendance

Board Member Carol Machulski reported she was recently appointed as the Board's representative to the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board sponsored by the Borough President. The Advisory Board's function is to have zero waste landfill and no additional landfill by 2030 with some of the recycling already started. More details on the May 26 meeting will be given later.

Sunil Mahat – In attendance

Patricia Martin – In attendance

Commented the community gardens event was excellent and acknowledged Youth Committee Chair Sylvia Martin for a great job. Recognized Chair Marialena Giampino for her good work as Board Chair during a difficult year and complimented District Manager Christian Cassagnol for all he does.

Sylvia Martin – In attendance

Matthew McElroy – In attendance

Rovenia McGowan – Not in attendance

Jose Morillo – In attendance

Board Member Jose Morillo requested more information on the basketball clinic.

Edgar Moya – Not in attendance

Ruby Muhamad – In attendance

Sandra Munoz – Not in attendance

Gurdip Singh Narula – In attendance

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula reported early voting is June 12 by rank choice voting and there are five candidates to choose from and in four languages. All were urged to vote.

G. Oliver – In attendance

Georgina Oliver – In attendance

Alexandra Owens – In attendance

Shrima Pandey – Not in attendance

Purushottam Panthee – Not in attendance

Alexa Ponce – Not in attendance

Lindsay Quartini – Not in attendance

Brian Ramirez – Not in attendance

Ashley Reed – In Attendance

Board Member Ashley Reed urged all to vote and early voting starts on June 12. Contact her if you are unsure about your polling location which may be different from your polling location for the general election. Exercise your right to vote in this year's primary election.

Oscar Rios – Not in attendance

Cristian Romero – In attendance

Complimented Chair Marialena Giampino on a fantastic job as Chair of the Board.

Clara Salas – In attendance

Board Member Clara Salas said Rank choice voting is bi-lingual. Other languages will be sent by the Board of Elections.

Lucy Schilero – In attendance

A. Redd Sevilla – In attendance

Complimented the Board's leadership and staff on their hard work during a difficult year. The sacrifice and hard work was recognized and thanked for keeping the Board together.

Urgen Sherpa – In attendance

Alton Derrick Smith – In attendance

Gregory Spock – In attendance

Board Member Gregory Spock complimented the Board’s leadership considering all circumstances.

Next, he spoke about pedestrian safety The Mayor’s Vision Safety campaign needs to be reviewed because pedestrian deaths are up about 58% and spoke about a recent death on 43 Avenue where a woman was hit by a car. The need is to look at it from the ground not just from a numbers perspective. People are speeding and reckless and this needs to be addressed for everyone’s safety.

Dewan Tarek – In attendance

Board Member Dewan Tarek commented on Vision Zero and said he would like to see the results between the speed limit augmentation from 35 mph to 30 mph versus 25 mph and the actual rate of pedestrian stats versus the decrease in speed limits. Is there concrete evidence to support or refute the data?

Marcello Testa – Not in attendance

Dechen Tsering – Not in attendance

Louis Walker - In attendance

Yilin Wang – In attendance

Minwen Yang – In attendance

May Yu – Not in attendance

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol read a statement from John Wang, Director, Queens’ Night Market:

“Dear CB4,

After twenty months of cancellations and postponements, the Queens Night Market is finally reopening on June 19. We are very much looking forward to seeing you all again. As described last month, the event will be ticketed until attendance restrictions are completely lifted. Entry will be timed and tickets cost \$5. The proceeds from ticket sales will be used to eliminate vendor participation fees because we know how hard last year has been on small businesses and vendors. We’re also pledging at least 20% of any net proceeds to initiatives that promote racial equity and also COVID-19 relief efforts.

If you have any questions or know of charities that best serve these causes, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Many thanks and see you soon.”

In conclusion, District Manager Cassagnol thanked the Chair of the Board Marialena Giampino and the Committee Chairs for their untiring efforts and dedication in a difficult year. New members were acknowledged for their inquiries and help. Accordingly, the Board staff was thanked for their support.

Meanwhile, Board Chair Marialena Giampino announced a quorum was present with 31 members in attendance.

VI. Report from Elected Officials

--Federal

--State

--City

Senate

Charles E. Schumer

No report. No representative present.

Kristen Gilibrand

No. report. No representative present.

House of Representatives

Grace Meng

Board Member Cristian Romero reported President Biden had signed the Congresswoman’s Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act. This legislation is very important and came at a very necessary time. What this Bill does is to create a position at the Department of Justice so that they can monitor, track and review any hate crimes that come to the department. Before this Bill, when the Department of Justice would ask police precincts if they had any hate crimes to report, many precincts did not keep records. Probably, they just said no because they did not have any records. Based on the history and hate crimes, in all probability, attacks went unreported. The Bill will also provide data so that when hates crimes are reported as increasing, it will be known what to refer to and possess the data to support the information.

Lastly, he reported Congresswoman Grace Meng is hosting an event on June 18. It is an outdoor photo opportunity to recognize K through 12 graduates of the Class 2021. Many students were unable to attend graduation which was done virtually. Bring your own cap and gown and an aesthetically backdrop will be provided to take pictures with family. Graduates can get photos and a certificate from the Congresswoman's office. Flyer with details will be sent.

At this point, State Senator Jessica Ramos addressed the Board on economy recovery. State Senator Ramos was able to pass a Bill that will benefit our community, especially in Community Board 4. Not every worker in New York was able to qualify for unemployment insurance and not every New Yorker received a stimulus check making it harder and harder to make ends meet. On the state level, the Excluded Workers Fund passed which covers workers excluded from other programs. Those people included undocumented neighbors, gig and odd jobs workers not able to pay rent every month. The economic recovery needs to reach every corner of the state and our community. \$2.1 billion was won and we are now waiting for this program to launch at the end of summer. This is important because of the rumors heard about scam artists who are trying to scam our neighbors. An announcement from the Department of Labor in a few months with the final list of documentation for people to qualify is forthcoming. It was recommended if you are interested in the program or are able to share information with your senior center, neighbors, or tenant association, access the fundexcludedworkers.org website. This should be a huge economic boost to our economic corridors, landlords, and small businesses.

Also there is a rental assistance program. If anyone needs help, contact her office for assistance with this or any other program. Next, State Senator Jessica Ramos reminded all about early voting and get out to vote in the Primary election June 22, Before concluding, the Senator reported she had introduced legislation that will affect Community Boards. Many restaurant owners have had much trouble getting approved for their liquor license. Respecting the process, to approve or disapprove licenses, this legislation would make it easier for business persons. Senator Jessica Ramos had proposed temporary Liquor Licenses be available for New York City, which is already available upstate and on Long Island. The idea is to help restaurant owners and entrepreneurs to be able to open new businesses faster in vacant stores and she was optimistic it would happen over the next two days as the end of legislative session is June 10.

Legislator Reports (continued)

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Michelle Hernandez reported the Congresswoman hosted a virtual Town Hall on May 24. This is important for those who need to correct their tax returns. The IRS is currently correcting tax returns for eligible individuals who paid taxes on 2020 unemployment compensation that the American Rescue Plan excluded from taxable income and these corrections will be made automatically. The IRS will send taxpayers a notice explaining corrections.

Lastly, this past Friday the Congresswoman was joined by Senator Kristen Gillibrand, Congresswoman Grace Meng, State Senator Jessica Ramos, and State Assembly Members Catalina Cruz, and Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas at Elmhurst Hospital calling attention to the community funding request for Elmhurst Hospital's Maternity Ward renovation. Representatives submitted funding requests to expand the program. Information will be shared via link in the chat.

NYS Assembly

Brian Barnwell

No report. No representative present.

Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas

A representative reported constituents can apply for the new emergency rescue application starting June 1. The Assembly Member is in Albany fighting for Bills to be passed. PPE and hand sanitizer is also available for distribution.

Jeffrion Aubry

No report. No representative present.

Catalina Cruz

No report. No representative present.

NYS Senate

Michael Gianaris

No report. No representative present.

Toby Ann Stavisky

No report. No representative present.

NYC Mayor's Office

No report. No representative present.

NYC Council

Francisco Moya

Berenice Navarette-Perez reported on the upcoming street co-naming for former Board Member Priscilla Carrow at 5 p.m. on June 11 at 98 Place and 57 Avenue.

Next, she reported on a community clean-up event Saturday, June 12, in E. Elmhurst. Volunteers will clean the steps at 25th Avenue/Ditmars Boulevard starting at 11:00 a.m. All are welcome to join in. Flyers will be sent.

Following she reported on a Juneteenth event on June 19 in front of Trade Fair at 99 Street/Astoria Boulevard. More information on social media.

Last week, Council Member Moya hosted a food box distribution with NAACP to the Malcolm X. Daycare and another one is planned next week with P.S. 330.

Subsequently, Berenice Navarette-Perez announced another \$100,000 in funding was given to the First Baptist Church to help food pantries in East Elmhurst to ensure community members have food on their tables.

Also, the Council Member gave \$100,000 to Urban Upbound that work with food pantries.

The Council Member's Mobile office hours were announced and today the mobile office was outside Elmcors Senior Center and tomorrow the mobile office will be at the district office. Hours are from 10 am, to 12 Noon, and from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Thursday the mobile office will be at Our Lady of Sorrows at 104 Street/37 Avenue, same times. Check out their social media for more information.

Regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, in partnership with the houses of faith and community that have been instrumental in getting adult and youth vaccinated. In zip code 11368 about 70% of adults are vaccinated and 53% are fully vaccinated and 17% have at least one dose.

Lastly, vaccinations are available at our Lady of Sorrows, Monday to Wednesday and the First Baptist Church regularly vaccinates weekly as well as Citifield and the Corona Health Center/Junction Boulevard are both 24/7 sites. Email posted in the chat.

Daniel Dromm

Kelly Wu reported tomorrow a Know Your Rights Town Hall will be held virtually via zoom with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. The presentation will be in English and there will be a Mandarin translation. Discussion will be on hate crimes as well.

The District office legal rights services will end this month and but one session is remaining offering immigrants legal services on Wednesday, June 16. Appointments are available if you need assistance. Appointments will resume in October and more information will follow.

Office of the Queens Borough President

No report. No representative present.

District Attorney Melinda Katz

No report. No representative present.

NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer

James Mongeluzo reported the numbers are looking good for New York City's cash balance projection. Additionally, the Comptroller's Office had released official comments on the fiscal year 2022 Executive Budget and there is a document including many visuals called the Executive Budget presentation which has many different slides and information about vaccination rates, CDC mask guidance, SNAP and cash assistance, small business revenue, and unemployment. There is also a breakdown of how the budget gap will be closed with federal stimulus money and projected budget gaps. And there is an itemization of revenues the city has collected and expenditures related to COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, there is a summary of the federal stimulus money where it comes from and how it will be spent. Specific programs are included where the money will be allocated to. More information in the chat. Call James at 646-689-6509 for assistance.

NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams

No report. No representative present.

VII. Presentation & Votes: ULURP/Zoning Committee

Kathi Ko, City Planner, Queens Office, Department of City Planning (DCP)

FRESH II – Grocery Store Expansion

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically highlighted the vital need for local access to fresh food for New Yorkers, especially in underserved communities. In partnership with the City Council, DCP will seek to expand the existing Food Retail Expansion to Support Health (FRESH). The program which offers zoning incentives and financial benefits to encourage the creation of convenient, accessible stores that provide fresh fruit, meats, vegetables, and other perishable goods in addition to a full range of grocery

products. The new FRESH proposal will seek to bring the program to 11 more community districts, on top of the 19 where FRESH already applies.

Kathy Ko, Planning Liaison, Department of City Planning-Queens will report on the three text amendments on tonight's agenda.

At this point, Kathi Ko introduced her colleagues present tonight, Hye-Kyung Yang, Barry Dinerstein, Dylan Sandler, and Alex P, to answer questions. Kathi Ko reported the three text amendments were presented to the ULURP Committee.

With the aid of screen sharing, Kathi Ko presented the reasoning for the FRESH proposal to the Board. This proposal is a zoning text amendment to update the existing food retail expansion to support health or the FRESH Program. FRESH is an existing program in the zoning resolution and FRESH II would seek to expand on that program based on research and feedback about the existing program. The goal of the FRESH program was to incentivize more supermarkets in underserved areas of the city and to increase accessibility to fresh foods. FRESH II would expand to the existing incentives and provide greater opportunities for fresh foods in new areas of Queens.

A map was displayed where current programs apply. In 2009, the FRESH Program was created in response to a citywide study done the previous year initiated by the Mayor's Office in response to a supermarket shortage in certain neighborhoods of the city. Over the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a dire disparity in grocery store access becoming even more apparent. Grocery stores are a fundamental component of neighborhood health and COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of better access to supermarkets. The goal of the FRESH program was to encourage the development and retention of convenient, accessible stores to provide fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, and other perishable goods. FRESH II looks to expand access to these products in more neighborhoods. The existing FRESH Program has two components: (1) the discretionary tax incentive program administered by the city's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and, (2) a zoning incentive program which is administered by Department of City Planning (DCP).

Slides shown and explained were:

Background: What is FRESH – FRESH Incentives can be obtained through two actions.

Approved Fresh Projects - Since its adoption in 2009, 27 FRESH applications for zoning incentives have been approved.

Manhattan: 5

Bronx: 4

Brooklyn: 17

Queens: 1

Eight of these approved projects have been completed and occupied.

Purpose & Need – Updated analysis of the supermarket landscape across the City in 2018 showed that many neighborhoods remain underserved by fresh food.

Scope of Proposal – The proposed zoning text amendment, FRESH II, will update the existing program that provides greater incentives for neighborhood grocery stores to locate in underserved neighborhoods in the City.

Expansion of FRESH Program --

Kathi Ko explained based on the updated SNI analysis and land use policy text is proposing an expansion of the FRESH Program in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. All were vetted by borough offices and City Council land use staff. Nineteen community districts already exist in FRESH and eleven more would be added. FRESH is only applicable where there is commercial zoning as well as Districts. Fresh applies to the proposed affected areas in District 4 such as the eastern part for the district like Junction Blvd. as a boundary and mapped along 108 Street, Roosevelt Avenue, and other small portions.

Community District 1 has been the only one to see a certification of a FRESH store and there is a high need in many parts of the borough including District 4.

Prevent Saturation of FRESH Supermarkets – Since the adoption of the FRESH program in 2009, we have seen a concentration of Applications in specific areas. Proposal would require that within a ½ mile radius, the sum of additional residential floor area not exceed 40,000 square feet.

Modification of Glazing Requirements for Conversions –

DCP proposes to waive the glazing requirements for FRESH conversions projects

In lower density Residential districts, up to 10,000 SF of the FRESH supermarket area will be waived from the parking requirement. Parking waiver will apply to the FRESH store only, not other commercial or residential uses in the building.

Definition of FRESH store
Restrictive Declaration

As far as a timeline, Community Boards have 60 days until July 26 to review and provide recommendations.

At this point, Board Members presented their questions.

Board Member Lucy Schilero said off Junction Boulevard traffic is very heavy as well as traffic congestion on the Horace Harding Expressway. When the large supermarket is in place, would big trucks come in the area? Also to take into consideration, the close proximity of schools in the area.

In response the reply was traffic studies were done and it is relatively small stores, not very large stores. The average FRESH store is about 12/13,000 square feet. Essentially, they are neighborhood small businesses and neighborhood serving, and huge amounts of traffic would not be generated by the store.

Board Member Gregory Spock inquired what portion of the FRESH store will be devoted to fresh fruits and vegetables which are the most expensive groceries compared to non-perishables such as canned goods. There are more fast food restaurants than accessibility to fresh food and vegetables. How are we holding grocery stores not to be glorified bodegas selling canned goods but actually improving the health of our neighborhood as well as the carbon footprint and supporting local farms that grow locally and not trucked in from foreign countries or across the country.

The response was the FRESH program has a requirement in order to be a qualifying supermarket, it must have a minimum of 500 square feet devoted to the sale of fresh produce. Also, there is a requirement at least 20% of the store sell fresh products and another requirement that every three years the store needs to send pictures and report to DCP it is in compliance with those rules. Additionally, Community Boards notify DCP if stores are not in compliance with those rules. FRESH supermarkets would be full service supermarkets that stock many fresh products. This program is intended for supermarkets not stores such as Target's that also carry food.

Next, Board Chair Marialena Giampino asked how the number was devised that every three years stores have to report to the Department of City Planning.

Barry Dinerstein said once the store gains approval there is a requirement it report within 18 months on the status of the store, but since it is taking longer to build, more time was given, however, there is no scientific reason for this timeframe.

Board Member Lara Gregory asked if stores are required to contribute to the nutritional community education because they are to be part of the neighborhood not just limited to a transactional or commercial relationship with the community.

Mr. Dinerstein responded it is difficult for zoning to include it, but many of the store operators try to guide people to make healthy choices and work with the Health Department to encourage people to eat healthy. Not every single operator may do that, but it is very common with the supermarkets.

Kathi Ko added since the applications come before the Community Board for review, there is an opportunity for the Board to voice any concerns/issues and can involve making sure the store is a good neighbor and part of the community. Issues can be made on a case-by-case basis.

Next, ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith noted the zoning text amendment has Zoning I and Zoning II. Is Zoning I for developers who need additional space for fresh food. Is Zoning II for existing supermarkets?

Mr. Dinerstein responded it is called FRESH II because it is the second iteration of FRESH. The first one was adopted by the City Council in 2009. The City Council and Borough President asked DCP to expand the program. Council Member Francisco Moya had requested Community District 4 be looked at. FRESH II is the second version of FRESH which is an expansion of FRESH although there are some changes to what was passed in 2009. Basically, it is adding new areas including portions of Community Board 4. The program is aimed at incentivizing people to either retain or put supermarkets in new developments as opposed to other types of retail use which sometimes can be more profitable. And by providing incentives to encourage people to make a supermarket.

Board Member Alton Derrick Smith inquired would FRESH II be for developers who want to develop commercial or residential to add additional square footage for fresh food.

Barry Dinerstein answered if it is a new development by agreeing to put a supermarket in the development in perpetuity (forever) additional residential units can be added to the proposed building in exchange for agreeing to the supermarket in the space. Other programs deal with parking that FRESH will give a lower parking requirement in exchange for agreeing to put in a supermarket in the commercial space.

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith brought up the tax incentive. The Economic Development Corporation operates a program that a supermarket operator, either new or existing, can ask for tax incentives in exchange for providing a supermarket in an area where there is a shortage of supermarkets. The program is discretionary and is only granted in places of high need where stores are very much needed and will sell fresh products not found in the neighborhood.

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith commented for existing supermarkets there is no benefit.

Mr. Dinerstein responded there is a tax program for existing supermarkets which has two programs. One program gives substantial tax incentives to those investing enormous amount of money, for example, totally rebuilding the store including replacing air conditioning, electrical upgrades, and all equipment. Many small store operators do not have resources to do so. However, a smaller program exists for supermarket operators that do a renovation or bring in new fixtures or repair an air conditioning system and that allows the city and state to waive the sales tax on equipment. Since sales are close to 9 percent, upgrading the equipment is an incentive for store owners to do modest upgrades.

Accordingly, Board Chair Marialena Giampino said at the Borough Board meeting people want fresh organic food with an emphasis on organic food like Trader Joe's or Whole Foods and more local produce instead of shipping from another country. The preference is on locally grown products in the United States or upstate New York. Are there any incentives to include this in supermarkets?

Barry Dinerstein responded they are slightly tweaking the definition of what is a fresh supermarket. It came about because the way the original requirements were written, it had limited a store to 20 fresh products. The store operators said they wanted to sell organic and fresher items less dry goods. Since it made sense, DCP was concerned the requirements written prevented people from doing so. Therefore, DCP will be more liberal and allow stores to sell more fresh and organic products. The City is working on creating a wholesale market at Huntsville Point which will allow local farmers easier ability to distribute their products to wholesale markets around the city. This is in conjunction with New York State and was optimistic to open by end of year. The expectation is that will permit more local products to be sold in stores in the city in conjunction with New York State. Up to this point, distribution of locally grown products had been very difficult.

Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula commented selling organic products is healthy for all. According to the census, animals are killed every year for human consumption presenting problems such as diseases. Pesticides are used on regular food, which make people sick. Although organic food is more expensive than regular food, it is much healthier and prevents many diseases.

Chair Marialena Giampino asked if existing stores can be incorporated into the plan so that they can have some incentives to stock more fresh and organic products.

Barry Dinerstein responded the zoning is about new stores and new development, however, the tax programs can go to existing stores. If the existing store plans to renovate or creates a need to buy new freezers, the City can help purchase the equipment and give some incentives.

Kathi Ko asked is this for existing FRESH stores or existing supermarkets?

Any supermarkets, responded Chair Marialena Giampino. She continued if it's something stores want to add on to. Are there any programs with this text amendment?

Barry Dinerstein said it applies to existing stores as it is incentives to invest in the business and to upgrade the store and take in business, which is not done now.

Board Member Chaio-Chung Chen suggested city government become a major employer. The money would be given out to open a supermarket and pay workers a salary such as the unemployed or the homeless. In this way, those people are being helped.

Barry Dinerstein responded the City does not want to go into the supermarket business. The City had worked to set-up food co-ops with mixed success. There had been some efforts to set up neighborhood food co-ops owned by people in the community, run by volunteers, and some employees. A very active group of people is needed to do so.

Board Member Chaio-Chung Chen said private enterprise does not want to into this business because no profit can be made and gave more details.

Next, Kathi Ko discussed the **Citywide Hotels Text Amendment:**

This is a Mayoral initiative to create more consistent approach to hotel development across communities and require new hotels to undertake a Special Permit review process. The proposed zoning change would require City Planning Commission approval for any new proposed hotel development and would be subject to full ULURP. This review process would ensure that new hotels do not create significant conflicts with surrounding development.

With the aid of screen sharing, Kathi Ko explained the Citywide Hotel Special Permit, Application for zoning text amendment. The proposed text amendment would create a new special permit for hotel development citywide. It is intended to create a consistent framework for hotel development and ensure that hotels do not negatively affect the surrounding area. This would result in all hotel development being subject to public review through the ULURP process. No new as of right hotel development would be allowed. The goal is to create a consistent framework for hotel development and to ensure new hotels do not negatively affect the surrounding area. This was certified on May 3 and the Community Board will have time to review it through mid-July.

The following slides were presented:

- Background: Hotel Industry Trends
- Queens Context – Hotel Development
- Background: Recent Land Use Changes for Hotels
- Land Use Challenges
- Purpose and Need and Findings
- Applicable Areas
- Findings
- Recovery Proposal
- Environmental Review
- Summary

Subsequently, Kathi Ko presented the **Health and Fitness Text Amendment**

Based on outmoded zoning regulation that dates to 1970s, exercise gyms, licensed massage therapy, martial arts studios, and spas, among other health-related businesses, are not allowed as of right in New York City and instead, those business are required to obtain special permission from the City’s Board of Standards (BSA) to open. The process creates a high barrier for small and independent businesses and is likely to slow the economic recovery of a sector that has been significantly impacted by the pandemic.

With the aid of screen sharing, Kathi Ko presented the following slides:

Health & Fitness Citywide Text Amendment
A proposal to reduce barriers for gyms, spas, and licensed massage therapy throughout the city.

- Proposal Overview
- Gyms, spas, and massage therapy are desirable community amenities
- Zoning rules that regulate development limit where these activities are allowed
- Recent reports have recommended changes to regulation of gyms
- Removing the special permit will support small business recovery
- Proposed Changes for Gyms and Spas
- Proposed Changes for Licensed Massage Therapy
- Proposed Noise and Vibration Regulations
- Proposal Map: Queens CD4
- Proposed Changes to Licensed Massage Facilities
- Proposed Timeline

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino opened the floor for questions not only for the hotel text amendment but also for the health and fitness text amendment.

Board Member Lucy Schilero inquired if hotels need more space to build and if the site is located between two/three family homes, would those homes be condemned.

Kathi Ko responded there is no condemnation on property.

Board Member Lucy Schilero responded there were some hotels on Roosevelt Avenue where water pressure was an issue as the top floors of those hotels did not get enough pressure. Also affected was the community at large.

Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock said regarding the one slide shown, the hotel could operate for another use as we've seen and especially exploited during the pandemic. A large number of hotels had been to house the homeless. Since hotels are struggling, this text amendment will lead to more homeless shelters in hotels.

Kathi Ko responded the Special Permit is intended to address issues with commercial hotels and does not affect the city's current rules for shelters. The Department of Homeless Services is responsible for providing emergency housing for the homeless and is a separate provision. New homeless facilities are not subject to ULURP but pursuant to what is required through a fair share criteria. DHS is required to submit a statement to the Mayor's Office to justify the need and purpose of the emergency facility. This text would lead not to significantly adverse the industry but the hotel pace pre-pandemic would be slowed down. In that way, it is anticipated the conversion from hotels to homeless shelters would not happen at the pace that it was.

Board Member Lara Gregory asked would hotels be required to give back to the community and are they required to employ people from the neighborhood where they are operating. With hotels, many people come and go and are very transactional and can exist totally independent of the community. There is such a huge impact on the community.

Kathi Ko answered the zoning text does not require certain practices/operations of the hotel. The text amendment is about the compatibility in terms of uses and provisions around how it can be built. This text will come before the Board for review and will open a dialogue for conversation. In the past, this platform did not exist for any hotel development as of right.

Board Member Lara Gregory also inquired about the health and the licensed massage therapist pointing out although there is a license requirement to operate massage therapy, New York has reciprocal arrangements with other states. If it's easier to obtain a license in another state, can it be used in New York? Even licensed massage therapists are used to traffic women. Is there input from the District Attorney such as findings?

Dylan Sandler, Project Manager, responded to practice massage in New York State, you have to be licensed by New York State. The license includes education and certain number of hours of practice, which can occur outside of New York State. The New York State Department that grants those licenses will provide reciprocity or a New York State license based on experience and practicing in other locations outside of New York. The answer is yes, but none exists within the zoning as it is through the state licensing rules for massage therapists.

Secondly, the Department of City Planning worked with the Mayor's Office to end gender-based violence focusing on human trafficking and sex trafficking to ensure this proposal addresses issues related to commercial sex and human trafficking that can occur under massage. In the past although commercial sex is illegal in New York State and practicing massage without a license is illegal in New York State, it is useful for the city to issue violations against the business or close down the business and the zoning preserved.

Board Member Lara Gregory it is being elevating into a medical clinic where doctor client privileges would apply. In terms of practicing physical therapy with or without a license. If they are practicing under someone with a license, it can be done.

Discussion ensued about practicing massage without a license.

Next, Board Member A. Redd Sevilla said there is an unintended consequence about the spread of more illegal spas and the enforcement issue and preserving current existing regulations. Clearly, there is a lack of enforcement. The Board reports trafficking activities and have heard from actual employees and call the numbers on the spas along Queens Boulevard, which are linked to soft porn. Enforcement is a major issue. It will be easier for health and fitness establishments to start up or gain greater economic activity, but there is an unintended consequence. Improvement of enforcement is needed, otherwise, unintentionally causing additional trafficking of immigrants. How is enforcement followed up so that it is not a cover for human trafficking?

Board Chair Marialena Giampino said to leave out the spa category in the text amendment. For the FRESH II Supermarket it was reported every three years a report is given and the spas also need to report with documentation within a specific timeframe.

Board Member Chaio-Chung Chen inquired about commercial sex service, New York City has legalized the service. Police do not arrest sex workers or clients. He also commented how is better health protection carried out during the pandemic? Has the City taken steps to protect both the sex workers and consumers?

Dylan Sandler responded New York State/New York City has not legalized sex work. Elite prostitution is illegal in New York State. He spoke about an announcement issued by the Manhattan District Attorney that they would stop enforcing or charging people in Manhattan on charges of prostitution. This does not change the rules in Queens. Any business whether it is primary use or accessory use cannot offer body rubs, massage or other similar services if they are not a licensed massage therapist/health care provider is included in the text amendment. The zoning does provide a civil enforcement layer that is enforceable.

Discussion ensued.

Chair Marialena Giampino commented this text amendment that does not cover additional concerns brought up by the Board.

Next Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula said would the hotels house the homeless people or shelter them. In Queens, hotels are renting for \$150 beds out and renting to the homeless and getting money from the City. Government should provide shelters in certain areas and not ruin the housing market. Neighborhood residents are upset. The Manhattan DA's office removed the prostitution word and human trafficking is still happening.

Kathi Ko responded this is a text amendment that proposes for any type of hotel development that will come to the Board with community dialogue being proposed. Any existing hotel that is operating as a homeless shelter would have to apply for this Special Permit.

Discussion ensued on homeless facilities and the zoning use.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino called for a vote on the three text amendments. Three separate votes would be taken:

FRESH II – Grocery Store Expansion – Vote

Board Recommendations: Local fresh farm and organic food guaranteed.

Emphasis put on community gardens and green markets where everything grown in the community

Nutritional education given

Affordability of the produce

Composting

Restricted to supermarkets City chooses rather than allowing competition. Competition would lower prices. Supply and demand control prices.

Board Member Clara Salas made a motion, seconded by Board Member Gurdip Singh Narula, to **approve** the FRESH II-Grocery Store Expansion text amendment with the Board recommendations.

Board vote: 21 in favor, 10 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

Citywide Hotels Text Amendment

Board Recommendations: No Homeless Shelters allowed

Look at area if it's residential

Water pressure

Board Member Clara Salas made a motion to **table** because of the lateness and more time is needed for discussion.

At this point, Board Member A. Redd Sevilla made a motion to **approve**, seconded by Board Member Clara Salas, the text amendment with Board recommendations.

Board vote: 30 in favor, 1 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

Health and Fitness Text Amendment

Board Concerned about usage, licensing therapists, human trafficking and illegal sex use.

Not accepting spas and massage parlors in the text amendment.

No issues with gyms and health and fitness facilities

Board Chair Marialena Giampino made a motion, seconded by Board Member Alton Derrick Smith, to **approve** the text amendment without the spa and massage parlors component because there is no enforcement and it would allow the floodgates to open.

Board Vote: 27 in favor, 4 opposed, with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

VIII. Presentation & Vote: Parks Committee

Meira Berkower, Senior Project Manager, NYC Parks Plan for Select NYC Parks Playground Animals

The purpose of this project is to create a new public space that showcases beloved playground features in a new and unexpected way: demonstrate NYC Parks' enthusiasm for repurposing rather than disposing of park assets when sites are reconstructed; allow room for quiet contemplation and reflection and to evoke feelings of nostalgia and kinship.

Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock reported the committee met with the Parks Department that presented a proposal to retire playground animals that became popular in the 50's and 60's and are spread around NYC Parks. Many are decaying and in disrepair.

The Goals are:

Create a new public space that showcases beloved playground features in a new and unexpected way

Demonstrate NYC Parks' enthusiasm for repurposing rather than disposing of park assets when sites are reconstructed

Allow room for quiet contemplation and reflection

Evoke feelings of nostalgia and kinship

With the aid of screen sharing, Gregory Spock Parks Committee Chair presented the proposal. Numerous sites were surveyed and found a site in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park near the Unisphere. The animals to be included are a dolphin, camel, frog, another dolphin, and an armadillo. The concern is people will climb on them. These animals will be placed in a site that will have shrubbery, benches and the overall goal is for signage and seating arrangements so that they can be observed. People will be able to take photos next to them.

Questions arose such as what was the cost. The Parks Department said there was no cost. The Committee Chair was leery of the response as well as community members and several other people. The Committee will advocate for a dollar figure since the Parks' budget had been drastically slashed and there are many areas in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park that could use that money for art installation. Also brought up was those five animals are a start, but will more be added.

Stipulations were signage and children climbing on the animals damaging them as well as vandalism.

The Parks Committee voted to **approve** the proposal.

Board Member Lucy Schilero brought up how do we know it will not become a dumping ground for other parks to bring their retired animals and that this may be the only area to do so. She would like to see the area used for children. The animals could be renovated and put back into the park, but the animals be cleaned and maintained, and questioned a cost involved.

Board Member Alexandra Owens asked will the animals be refurbished because they look like they have not been cared for in a number of years.

Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock pointed out the discussion was on retirement in their current state rather than refurbishing the animals.

Board Member Lucy Schilero commented that we will not be taking in all of New York City's animals because the site must be maintained which will be with a cost and more park patrol is needed to enforce no one is climbing on the retired animals.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino said signage is important so that people know not to climb and play on the animals. Multiple signs are needed depending on how many entrances lead into the park and garden.

A slide of what the signs will look like was presented.

The Parks Committee's recommendation was to **approve** the proposal provided clarity is given on those comments discussed this evening.

Board Member Lucy Schilero made a motion, seconded by Board Member Lara Gregory, to **approve** the proposal with the conditions presented by the Board.

The Board vote was 30 in favor, 1 opposed with no abstentions. Motion passed.

IX. Vote: Public Safety and Homeland Security committee

State Liquor Authority Applications

Committee Chair Lucy Schilero reported the Committee met June 1. A quorum was present in the early part of the meeting, but not for the full meeting and the report needs a Board vote. She reported on the following:

Hurricane Season – Starts now from June to November. Call 311 for more information.

Memorial Day Veterans Day Parade – None done in our community.

Unfortunately, many of our vets passed away and families have moved away and commented it is a huge undertaking.

Next, she announced Board Member Lara Gregory had facilitated a hate crime forum with the Borough President’s Queens General Assembly that was open to the public. Board Member Lara Gregory was commended for her efforts and had written to Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero for a diversity group on hate crimes for the Board to request if the Board wished to participate at the public safety level, which was discussed. However, the Public Safety Committee’s present functions take up much time and members did not want to meet twice a month.

It was suggested a separate Board Committee be formed to help combat hate crimes and racially biased incidents.

The Police Department has a large division on hate crimes. However, victims are afraid to report rapes or assaults. If information is disseminated through the media, it would be very helpful. Victims were afraid of retaliation by the assailants.

NYS LIQUOR AUTHORITY LICENSES

JUNE 2021

NEW APPLICANTS

<u>Establishment’s Name</u>	<u>Establishment’s Address</u>	<u>License Type</u>
Nuevo Latino Restaurant Corp.	96-38 Corona Avenue Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider

RENEWAL APPLICANTS

<u>Establishment’s Name</u>	<u>Establishment’s Address</u>	<u>License Type</u>
Tashi Delek Inc. Wasabi Point	76-18 Woodside Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
Kido Sushi Queens	90-15 Queens Blvd. Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
Pico de Gallo Inc.	82-12 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372	Liquor, Wine, beer & Cider
Ayada Thai Inc.	77-08 Woodside Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
Billiards Sol Y Luna Corp.	102-02 43 Avenue Corona, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider
Pizzeria Primera Ltd.	40-21 108 Street Corona, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

Nuevo Latino Restaurant Corp. – Did not attend meeting, however, the application was discussed. The location never had a problem, and the Committee re-looked at the application and voted yes. The floor was opened to the Board for discussion.

Before the vote was taken, Board Member Pat Martin expressed optimism when the new session begins between public safety and health discussions can be on mental health that a facility will be on the agenda to help with mental health in our community. Mental health has been a major issue in terms of crime.

Board Member Pat Martin made a motion, seconded by Board Member Clara Salas, to **approve** the application for Nuevo Latino Restaurant Corp.

Public Safety Chair Lucy Schilero continued the following two establishments were **denied:**
Pico de Gallo Inc. (Assaults, buckets of beer sold, hookah bars) and Pizzeria Primera Ltd. (Mass gatherings, noise complaints).

The rest of the applicants were approved by the Committee.

At this point, a motion was called for on the two remaining establishments denied by the Committee and to approve the Committee's report as presented.

Board Member Ruby Muhammad made a motion, seconded by Board Member Clara Salas, to **approve** the two denials and the Committee's report as presented.

The vote was 30 in favor, 1 opposed with 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

X. Committee Reports

Consumer Affairs

No report by Committee Chair

Environmental

No report

Board Member Carol Machulski reported on the Queens Borough President's Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board meeting that dealt with setting up and business. There were two presentations: the Litterati, which has a goal of a litter free world. This presentation was done on a sophisticated analytic data program used to pinpoint where the most litter is.

The second presentation given was by the Coastal Preservation Network which concentrated on beach and park cleanup in College Point and Powell's Cove. The acceptance of the minutes of the April 28 meeting and a presentation given on changes to the bylaws was voted on. Both were accepted and passed. Lastly, an election of officers was on the agenda. The Chairperson is Amy Marpman, Vice Chair Andrea Scarborough who is a CB12 member, and Secretary Rachel Boeglin. Another person was voted in, but Board Member Carol Machulski did not grasp her position. The QSWAB's goal is zero landfill by 2030. Problems are outlined in a report, *The State of Waste In Queens*. The report details all the problems in Queens. Board Member Carol Machulski commented we do not know where we are in our particular area and Community Board 4's status is unclear with any of the programs that are proposed. More input is needed from the Department of Sanitation and the Department of Environmental Protection. Nothing has been determined how the Board is to move forward.

Health & Human Services

No report

Transportation

Committee Chair Matthew McElroy reported a meeting is planned for June 22. It is a working meeting with the Department of Transportation about budget issues, specifically, last year's budget and how to approach next year's budget with the Board's DOT requests.

Next, the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue/Baxter Avenue/Gleane Street the safety improvements DOT had shown in the drawings were built. For example, curbs have been changed but the signals on Roosevelt Avenue have not yet been changed.

Next, the Revel Company which operates the blue, moped sharing program has also been planning to establish a 300 car fleet of for hire electric vehicles (Telsa). It has come to our attention City Hall has called a meeting of the TLC for June 22 to change the rules regarding electric for hire vehicles. Pursuant to a City Council law passed a few years ago, electric vehicles are exempt from the cap on for hire vehicles. The TLC is considering ending the exemption from the cap. Revel is opposed to it and their case is based on the environmental impact of electric internal combustion vehicles.

Lastly, if you live on a street in Board 4 that needs resurfacing that is a block length, let the Committee know. For a pothole call 511. Send an email to qcb4transportation@gmail.com.

Youth

Committee Chair Sylvia Martin reported on the community garden event. Many parents enjoyed it and would like to see more events such as that in the near future.

XI. Open Session #2

Board Chair Marialena Giampino called out if any Board Members would like to speak, please raise your hand.

Parks Committee Chair Gregory Spock reported a meeting is planned with the Captain of PEP on June 9 at 2 p.m. All were invited to attend or send comments to the Board office.

Since there was no further business, Board Member Lucy Schilero made a motion, seconded by Board Member Chaio-Chung Chen, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.