



## COMMUNITY BOARD # 4Q

Serving: Corona, Corona Heights, Elmhurst, and Newtown

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**Donovan Richards**  
Queens Borough President

**Marialena Giampino**  
Chairperson

**Ebony Young**  
Deputy Borough President

**Christian Cassagnol**  
District Manager

September 13, 2022

### PUBLIC HEARING ATTENDANCE

#### Board Members Attending:

Marialena Giampino  
Rownoka Ashakhan  
Michelle Calderon  
Jaime Cho  
Lynda Coral  
Michelle Dunston  
Leeanne G. Bowley  
Vincent Laucella  
Carol Machulski  
Sylvia Martin

Matthew McElroy  
Mac Ryan Merchan  
Jose Morillo  
Ruby Muhammad  
Ashley Reed  
Clara Salas  
A. Redd Sevilla  
Alton Derrick Smith  
Louis Walker  
Minwen Yang

#### ATTENDING:

Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager  
Jasly Martinez, CB4 Community Associate  
Kathi Ko, NYC Dept. of City Planning  
Kyle Salcido, Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office  
Michelle Luna, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Office  
Samantha, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz's Office  
Kevin, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz  
Louise Emanuel, Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry's Office  
Pat Rosero, Queens Borough President's Office  
Representative from Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz's Office  
Cynthia Kong, DSNY  
Mark Weprin, GreenbergTraurig, Attorneys At Law  
Patrick Taylor  
Allison Curreria, GreenbergTraurig, Attorneys At Law  
Sung Kim, Hillcrest Architects

#### Public Hearing Attendees:

Erycka Montoya, 98-40 57 Avenue, #16E, Corona, NY  
Dolores Benner, 96-02 57 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Jorge L. Rodriguez, 98-23 Horace Harding Exp., Corona, NY  
Issa Khan, 108-40 45 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Gerri McNeill, 97-30 57 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Loretta Henderson, 96-0 57 Avenue, Corona, NY

**Public Hearing Attendees: (cont'd)**

Jon Anzalone, 104-03 51 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Debra Hargrove, 96-02 57 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Andrea Lewis, 97-30 57 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Mark Landas, 43-31 Ithaca Street, Elmhurst, NY  
Pamela J. Aarcisse, 98-30 57 Avenue, #14J, Corona, NY  
Monique Martin, 98-38 57 Avenue, #11A, Corona, NY  
Steven Fuller  
Daniel Parker, 90-51 55 Avenue, Elmhurst, NY

**Speakers List**

Louise Emanuel, Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry's Office  
Jorge L. Rodriguez, 98-23 Horace Harding Exp., Corona, NY  
Jon Anzalone, 104-03 51 Avenue, Corona, NY  
Marc Landas, 43-31 Ithaca Street, Elmhurst, NY (signed in but did not speak)

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

DATE: Tuesday, September 13, 2022

TIME: 6:30 P.M.

PLACE: VFW Post #150  
51-11 108 Street  
Corona, NY 11368

### **Subject: 97-27 57 Avenue Rezoning Project – (Food Bazaar)**

The development manager of the property located at 97-27 57 Avenue (Queens Block 1906, Lot 1) seeks a zoning map amendment to map C2-4 commercial overlay within 185 feet of the north side of 57 Avenue on the west half of Block 1906 and within 160 feet of the north side of 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the east side of Block 1906.

The Rezoning would facilitate the expansion and modernization of the existing supermarket on the Development Site with an as-of-right residential component to be constructed pursuant to the Development Site's R6B and R6A.

Chairperson Marialena Giampino opened the meeting at 6:35 pm and read the subject matter into the record. It is the first of many meetings on this matter. Comments and statements will be taken and sent to the appropriate agencies.

District Manager Christian Cassagnol explained this meeting is one of several hearings. The approval process is one of many steps. The ULURP/Zoning Committee has already heard the presentation in June. The application is sent to the Community Board, the Borough President, and the City Planning Commission and to the City Council to reach a resolution.

You can follow the application's process via the link online. If you do not receive the Board's Newsletter on a regular basis, go to [nyc.gov/queenscb4](http://nyc.gov/queenscb4) where updates are posted. Directly after the presentation, questions and comments will be accepted from the Board members and only comments from the Public. A question and answer session between the Public and presenters will not transpire.

If you have any questions as a public member, reach out to the Board office where it will be directed to the speakers for response. Two sign in sheets were on hand: one for attendance and one for speaking time.

Executive Secretary Louis Walker took the roll call. A quorum was present.

At this point, the representatives for the applicant presented the proposal. With the aid of a slide presentation, Allison Curreri, Associate, representing Greenberg Traurig LLP, Attorneys at Law, explained the application to facilitate the expansion and modernization of the existing Food Bazaar Supermarket, located at 97-27 57 Avenue, by mapping a C2-4 commercial overlay over the entire property while leaving the existing underlying R6-A and R6-B zoning districts.

The application was presented to the Board's ULURP/Zoning Committee in June who submitted follow-up questions after that meeting. The applicant's representatives provided responses in writing earlier this month.

The property is owned by Bogopa Service Corp. operator of the Food Bazaar chain supermarkets located in the tristate area. The building is about 60 years old, and the owners would like to rebuild it with a larger, more modern supermarket.

Next, the site location in context was shown located north of Lefrak City and near a number of shopping centers in the area.

Next, bus lines run along 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue that stop adjacent to the site on 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The Woodhaven Blvd. and R subway station is located ½ mile to the southeast.

Next, the supermarket was built in 1962 under a BSA variance that had a 25 year term. The variance was required because the site was in an R-6 zoning district in which no commercial uses were permitted. Soon after that, a C1-2 commercial overlay was mapped on a portion of the site, but only within 100 feet of 57 Avenue, which is about 20,000 sq. ft. The site is about 34,000 sq. ft. of area. The variance was necessary for the portion of the supermarket located in the residential district beyond the overlay. In the late 1980's, the site's current zoning was established within a portion of 100 ft. being rezoned to a R6A district retaining the C1-2 commercial overlay while the rest of the site was rezoned to an R6B without any commercial overlay.

Since the commercial overlay still covers a portion of the site, the variance is necessary to maintain the legality of the existing supermarket. Because of the term limit of the variance, it had to be extended multiple times and currently expires in about five years.

Next, the application proposes to establish a new C2-4 commercial overlay that would be located over the entire property while leaving the existing R6-A and R6-B underlying zoning districts in place. This will enable a new, larger supermarket to be built without obtaining an amendment to the BSA variance.

The property is built well below its maximum permitted floor area which is approximately 88,400 sq. ft. and would not be increased by the rezoning.

The owner determined that a new development on the property with an expanded supermarket should also utilize the property's committed floor area by providing residential units above the new supermarket.

The residential component is entirely as-of-right- under today's zoning and the proposed zoning change would allow the owner to have a larger store. Is the rezoning preferable to seeking an amendment to the variance because it will eliminate the need to keep continually renewing the variance for the life of the store and an amendment to enlarge the building would require a showing of financial hardship and it would be difficult to prove such hardship.

Next, the existing store was built almost 60 years ago and has very old an inefficient fixtures and mechanical systems. The store had undergone very minimal updates since it was built and given the uncertainty of the limited term of the variance, the challenge is for ownership to invest in upgrades. The supermarket has an open parking area. Looking along 98 Street, it has 21 parking spaces and an open loading dock in that area and the trash is also located within the unenclosed loading dock area.

Next, the store's existing floor plan is about 22,000 sq. ft. Customer service vehicles enter the service area on 57 Avenue immediately adjacent to the existing bus stop and the cars exit on 98 Street using the same curb cut the delivery trucks use to access the loading dock.

Next, the proposed rezoning action would allow the Food Bazaar to have an expanded and modernized store. In keeping with newer Food Bazaar stores, the market would have expanded product selections particularly for fresh produce, meat, seafood, and much more energy efficient fixtures and improved waste management systems.

Next, a chart was shown comparing the current store to the proposed store. The new store would have a larger floor plan on the ground floor allowing for an increase in the size of the sales floor of about 5,000 sq. ft., which is about a 30% increase. It would also add new space in the cellar nearly doubling the amount of storage area for the store.

Next, the loading area and the parking would both be enclosed and 46 supermarket parking spaces would be provided in the cellar, which is more than double the existing 21 parking spaces.

Further detail on the ground floor plan was shown. The main customer entrances to the supermarket is located on 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue with the residential entrance on 98 Street; trash located on 98 Street and enclosed which will improve odor and vermin conditions. The entrance and exits to the supermarket parking in the cellar would be moved to 97 Place. Moving the parking entrance off of 57 Avenue and away from the bus stop would be safer for pedestrians and separating supermarket parking from the loading and trash areas would improve customer experience and prevent delivery truck interference with customer vehicles.

Next, in the presentation to the Land Use Committee, they were shown a proposed project having approximately 25 accessory supermarket parking spaces which is a modest increase from the store's existing 21 spaces. Feedback was received from the committee that more information was needed on the relationship between the size of the store and the number of parking spaces. Some members expressed the parking seemed insufficient. As explained in their letter to the Committee, the applicant decided to fully excavate the cellar level to provided more parking. As shown on a slide of the cellar plan, the number of commercial parking spaces would be increased 46 so while the size of the cellar space in the store is increasing by about 30% , the supermarket parking would be increasing by about 120% from 21 spaces to 46.

The garage would be self-parked and free to supermarket customers. Also, the cellar would have more back of house space; the current store does not have space in the cellar. There will be about 8,000 sq. ft. storage space, and the owner stated the increased storage space, along with the ability to store more products on the expanded store shelves, will enable them to reduce the number of truck deliveries by about 50%.

Images displayed show the existing one story building. Adjacent residential developments from the northeast and from the southeast were shown.

Next, to provide additional contacts for this application, the architect had prepared an illustrative map for the as-of right-building to be developed. The proposed would comply with all floor area and bulk requirements within the existing R6A & R6B zoning district which are not affected by the proposed commercial overlay expansion.

Next, the development would use the site's maximum permitted floor area which is about 88,400 sq. ft. and about 26,400 sq., ft., would be commercial floor area, not including the commercial space in the cellar. The rest would be residential above with 78 dwelling units. The residential component would fully comply with current zoning requirements including floor area, height and setbacks.

In addition to the expanded supermarket and parking in the cellar, the building would have 47 parking spaces accessory to the residential use located on the buildings second floor equal to 60% of the units which is more than the 50% requirement zoning.

The owner's business is operating the supermarket and they are pursuing the rezoning to have a larger and secure supermarket with more modern fixtures and would provide a great deal more parking than the site currently has.

At this point, the floor was opened for questions by the Board Members.

Question 1:

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla - Can you describe the portfolio of the residential developer and let the Board know if there are other buildings in this area they own?

A. Patrick Taylor, Sherwood Real Estate Group, replied Sherwood Real Estate Group in partner with Bogopa Service Corp. is the owner of the Food Bazaar supermarket chain. Sherwood develops mostly multi-family partners throughout the boroughs, New York City and New Jersey and had previously partnered with Bogopa on a separate redevelopment in the Bed-Stuy/Bushwick border in Brooklyn which is currently under construction and somewhat similar to this development.

Q. Anything in Queens?

A. Yes, in Jamaica. In downtown Jamaica, a 315-unit development and rentals which has 30% affordable housing with retail.

Question 2

Executive Secretary Louis Walker asked how long the store will be closed.

A. Store closure noting moving inventory and demolition and re-opening to be about 24 months.

Question 3

By a Board Member:

In the Environmental Impact Statement, the building is to be natural gas powered. Is it possible for it to be 100% electric?

A. Yes. The plan for the building is 100% electric. What is required by the EIS is to put an e-designation on the site which is intended to make the building cleaner which requires natural gas heating if a gas source is used; there is no restriction on using electric instead, which is encouraged by the building code.

The city has a new building code requirement where buildings of a certain size must be all electric: the building system as well as all appliances.

Question 4.

By a Board Member:

Q. Where is the entrance for the tenants and supermarket?

A. The supermarket entrances and exits is on 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue which is more appropriate for retail, and the residential entrance is located on 98 Street.

Question 5

By a Board Member:

Q. Is the commercial space for the supermarket increasing?

A. Yes. Currently, the sales floor area where the customers experience currently is about 17,000 sq. ft. and would increase by about 5,000 sq. ft. To 22,000 sq. ft. And the rest of the increase in the store size would be from backhouse and storage space much of which is located in the cellar.

Question 6

By a Board Member:

Q. What type of residential building would be above the supermarket? Is it affordable?

A. The original concept for the residential development included 30% affordable housing in conjunction with the Affordable New York Program also known as 421-a. The program had expired in June and was not renewed. It is anticipated that it will be renewed and most expect it will include the same or more affordable housing as the old program. The old program had 30% of units with a variety of income levels within the 30%.

The objective for this development is to use the new program when it comes online. It is a state level issue and when it becomes available, they will proceed with the Affordable Housing Program.

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol commented on the 24 month closure of the supermarket and asked will it be done in phases or does that include the supermarket as well as the residential component or one then the other?

A. The 24 month period reflects the supermarket only. It is a goal for the operator to get it back online as soon as possible.

Anticipating working with them to emphasize turning the space over, then the apartments will lag a bit behind three to six months.

Question 7

By a Board Member:

Q. Regarding the 421-a Affordable Housing Program, if it is not renewed does the development have an alternative plan?

A. There are three options:

1. Redevelop the supermarket and no residential

2. Wait for a new program because without the tax abatement, it is not feasible and it would not be possible to obtain financing for the development.

The potential to redevelop the existing supermarket alone without residential will be subject to BSA approval because of the existing variance, which is uncertain on how much of a larger supermarket would be allowed, if at all or,

3. The existing supermarket remains in place.

#### Question 8

By a Board Member:

Q. In the new supermarket, is the owner open to hiring more people and would they be people from the neighborhood, particularly, local and youth.

A. Currently, there are 73 employees (40 full time and the remainder part-time). Indications for the expanded store are 83 employees (50 full time and 33 part-time). He could not speak on where the employees are living or the hiring practices, but they are unionized. Titles, seniority and benefits are dictated by the union jobs.

#### Question 9

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith:

Q. Will the supermarket stay as is if there is no 421-a tax abatement?

A. The option of keeping the supermarket as is--the most doable option in that case. A rebuild of the store would require BSA approval and the BSA would have to be approached to discuss what they would consider. For a number of reasons, it would be difficult to gain approval for such an application.

The other option is to wait longer to see if 421-a is extended., which is keeping the existing store for longer and pursuing some type of amendment to the variance to expand the store. It would be a lot of work to rebuild the store. It is unknown how much of an expansion the BSA would allow.

Q. Would hardship have to be indicated to the BSA? Currently, there is no hardship.

A. The requirement to the BSA to expand the variance must be shown that the owner cannot make a reasonable return on the property under current zoning. The site could be redeveloped with a building that looks exactly like the building that the architect had shown in the illustrative mapping which would have a smaller commercial component and a larger residential component within the permitted floor area. For that reason, it would be difficult to express to the BSA a reasonable return cannot be earned from the site when it could easily be redeveloped as-of-right without the current proposed action.

#### Question 10

Q. By a Board Member:

Regarding the 46 enclosed parking spaces, will those be paid parking?

A. Parking is intended to be free to customers.

#### Question 11

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith:

Q. Where is the exact location for resident parking?

A. The entrance would be located on 98 Street. Residents would drive up the ramp on the second story on 98 Street over to 97 Street. The parking entrance to the supermarket in the cellar is ramped down and the residential parking on the second floor along 98 Street would be ramped up.

#### Question 12

By a Board Member:

Q. Is the residential parking free to the residents in the building?

A. Residential parking fees would not be free and up to the developer to charge the residents. Since there are fewer parking spaces than apartments, there would be some cost for use on a monthly basis.

#### Question 13

Christian Cassagnol, District Manager

Q. In addition to residential units, are there any other amenities or uses in the residential component such as swimming pool or laundromat the building will have?

A. The current proposal has about 2,000 sq. ft. of indoor recreation area which is as yet unclear for use: i.e. a gym, or community room for residents as well as about 3,000 sq. ft. of outdoor recreation space which is not fully programmed.

#### Question 14

First Vice Chair Ashley Reed:

Q. Will the proposed units for the residential component be studios, one or two or three bedrooms?

A. It will be a mix of studios, one, and two bedrooms. Rents would be market rate with the Affordable Housing component as dictated by the new tax abatement.

Question 15

By a Board Member:

Q. What is the average sq. footage for an average unit?

A. The average unit is about 670 sq. ft. The average size of a studio unit is about 500 sq. ft. which is very preliminary. The developer would hire a marketer who would be able to convey how many units and their size are marketable for the area.

Question 16

ULURP/Zoning Chair Alston Derrick Smith

Q. Because this is a rezoning application why is this not subject to Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH)?

A. This rezoning does not increase the total residential FAR (floor area ratio) based on its lot size. The R6-A allows up to three times the lot area in the R6-A district and the R6-B allows up to two times the FAR and together that allows on the site, under current zoning, 88,400 sq. ft. of floor area. The proposal for the commercial overlay does not change that number; does not increase the permitted residential FAR on the site. Underlying zoning districts control density, bulk, and the maximum envelope of the building whereas the commercial overlay does not change its aspects, but allows certain commercial uses usually on the ground floor of a given building with a commercial overlay. MIH is required where the residential floor area is increased on a site whereas this application does not do that.

Question 17

Q. Is this building being built according to the city's initiative?

A. The rezoning R-6, even without the rezoning, the same building can be built as illustrated. The difference is more of the commercial use can be developed apparently, the commercial rezoning is permitted within 100' of 57 Avenue. This rezoning is seeking to expand the entire zoning lot, but it does not increase the overall buildable floor area of the site. Mandatory Inclusionary Housing is only applicable when the buildable floor area is increased. The owner's goal is to have the supermarket in the community for a long time.

Question 18

Executive Secretary & Parliamentarian Louis Walker:

Q. Will the current employees have jobs during the construction?

A. Yes. Employees are unionized so they must prepare. All the employees will have the opportunity to work at various other Food Bazaars in the area. One is located a few blocks away on Junction Blvd. When the new store is completed, employees will have the opportunity to return.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino called on members of the Public to make statements within two minutes.

1. Louise Emanuel

(Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry)

Spoke about the impact the project will have on the community. Much construction such as digging and vermin will present problems and we do not know what is underground since the store has been on site 60 years. More discussion is needed for the community and stated she felt it was not presented.

2. Jorge Rodriguez

Spoke about the traffic congestion around the site. Vehicles trying to get into 21 parking spaces go around 98 Street to 57 Avenue stopping buses. The entrance proposed will be on 98 Street moving to the basement, coming out on 97 Street and generating an overflow of traffic. Currently, there is much congestion on those streets and felt this proposal would not improve the situation.

3. Jon Anzalone

Prior to the presentation, his support would have been conditional, however, he does like the project. Food Bazaar stores are very nice and a larger store would be a benefit to the community. His conditional support was based on the same concerns about traffic congestion. It is a very busy street with buses and arterial access to the Long Island Expressway and Queens Boulevard. He was pleased to see the small parking spaces were addressed providing more access and also consideration given to the placement of the parking entrances on smaller residential streets.

4. Marc Landas

Signed in did but did not speak.

Mark Weprin an attorney with GreenbergTraurig stated Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry was upset about the timing. Mr. Weprin stated they do not do the calendar when it comes to the ULURP process and they had tried to move it up before the summer, but there was not enough time for the Board to consider it properly. Conversations were started over the summer and Mr. Weprin informed the Assembly Member he was prepared for ongoing dialogue. As construction moves forward, however, a community advisory panel would be formed as a means for residents to contact the construction site to discuss the issue at hand.

Allison Curreri reiterated the proposed building now has 93 parking spaces which is 72 more than exists today. There was a full Environmental Impact Statement prepared in connection with the application. The total project including the residential component would generate at the highest peak hour about 34 more vehicle trips so that the increased parking spaces would be very efficient.

Mark Weprin added it is important for the owner to ensure traffic flows because customers would not shop at the store if they could not enter.

Board Member Georgina Oliver stated she is not against the application and asked would one way street requests be applied to those affected streets. Coming around 57 Avenue and making a left onto Junction Boulevard, is very bad. People have been hurt and killed in that neighborhood and was requesting the Department of Transportation to act on the area where traffic jams and the traffic patterns exist, noting appropriate parking and protections must be brought into the community as well. Schools, day care centers and children are in the vicinity of the building site. She mentioned a child who was killed on 98 Street.

Allison Curreri responded the commercial parking entrance on 97 Street is a one-way north and it was agreed this would be a smooth traffic pattern for the vehicles entering and exiting. Vehicles would turn right entering the building and turn right exiting the building. Vehicles would not cross lanes. Commercial parking would be where the most traffic is generated. This is a much better solution than the current location on 57 Avenue next to the bus stop.

Since there were no other questions or comments, Board Chair Marialena Giampino closed the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m.

The monthly meeting of the Board immediately followed.



September 13, 2022

## COMMUNITY BOARD ATTENDANCE

### Board Members Attending:

Marialena Giampino  
Rownoka Ashakhan  
Michelle Calderon  
Jaime Cho  
Lynda Coral  
Michelle Dunston  
Leeanne G-Bowley  
Lara Gregory  
Vincent Laucella  
Carol Machulski  
Sylvia Martin  
Matthew McElroy

Rovenia McGowan  
Mac Ryan Merchan  
Jose Morillo  
Ruby Muhammad  
G. Oliver  
Georgina Oliver  
Ashley Reed  
Clara Salas  
A. Redd Sevilla  
Alton Derrick Smith  
Marcello Testa  
Louis Walker  
Minwen Yang

### Board Members Absent:

Valery Calderon  
Tsering Dechen  
Aridia Espinal  
Ramakrishna Kadukuntla  
Deependra Lama  
James Lisa  
Salvatore Lombardo  
Abu Zafar Mahmood  
Par Martin  
Edgar Moya  
Sandra Munoz

Alexandra Owens  
Shrima Pandey  
Purushottam Panthee  
Alexa Ponce  
Brian Ramirez  
Cristian Romero  
Urgen Sherpa  
Dewan Tarek  
Charlie Tetiyevsky  
Yilin Wang  
May Yu

### ATTENDING:

Christian Cassagnol, CB4 District Manager  
Jasly Martinez, CB4 Community Associate  
Kathi Ko, NYC Dept. of City Planning  
Kyle Salcido, Congresswoman Grace Meng's Office  
Michelle Luna, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's Office  
Samantha, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz's Office  
Kevin, Assembly Member Catalina Cruz  
Louise Emanuel, Assembly Member Jeffrion Aubry's Office  
Pat Rosero, Queens Borough President's Office  
Representative from Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz's Office  
Cinthia Kong, DSNY  
Mark Weprin, GreenbergTraurig, Attorneys At Law  
Patrick Taylor  
Allison Curreria, GreenbergTraurig, Attorneys At Law  
Sung Kim, Hillcrest Architects

**COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING**

**DATE: Tuesday, September 13, 2022**

**TIME: 7:30 P.M.**

**PLACE: VFW Post #150  
51-11 108 Street  
Corona, NY**

I. Board Chairperson Marialena Giampino opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

A moment of silence was observed for victims of COVID-19 and for those who navigated the effects of the pandemic and a remembrance for those who have passed from 9/11.

The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

**III. Roll Call**

Executive Secretary Louis Walker took the attendance. Since a quorum was not present, the vote on the minutes could not be taken and would be taken later on in the meeting.

**IV. Chairperson's Report**

Board Chairperson Marialena Giampino reported since meetings were held virtually for over two years, the Board will now be holding in-person meetings depending on meeting locations. Moving forward, when meeting on applications sites closer to the applicant's proposal will be selected.

Next, CB4's committee choices were discussed. Committee Chairs should have received a listing of their committee's members.

As an update to the FDNY firehouse in Elmhurst, a definite solution has not been had, but there are talks they will be given space at Newtown Field. Details are unclear but are being followed and being followed up with Council Member Krishnan.

The Borough Board met last night, however, the Board Chair could not attend. First Vice Chair Ashley Reed attended instead.

First Vice Chair Ashley Reed reported it was a meeting of the superintendents who gave updates.

Also, a new pre-K was opened at the Hall of Science with 200 students enrolled.

**V. District Manager's Report**

District Manager Christian Cassagnol reported staff member Christina Long is no longer with the Board after ten years of service. Jasly Martinez has joined the Board staff.

Next, he spoke about the Sunshine Fund as many people have asked about a gift for Christina Long. Since the Board had not met in person for over two years, there is no money in the Sunshine Fund. He mentioned Second Vice Chair Cristian Romero was married over the summer. The office staff did something for Christina: took her out to lunch, a gag t-shirt and a gift card. Collections to the Sunshine Fund are on a yearly basis and a requested donation is \$15. Both the District Manager and Board Treasurer Leanne G.-Bowley will collect for the Sunshine Fund.

Next, District Manager Cassagnol spoke on the Board's Needs Statement, which coming up soon, but before the Needs Statement is the budget consultations between District Managers and all city agencies. This is the Board's wish list and all meetings are open to the public. The Needs Statement process takes place over a course of several meetings. He suggested Board Chairs have introductory meetings and find out which meeting dates work with the committee's members. Although the Needs Statement is due October 31, it must proceed via public hearing, and voted on at a Board meeting. The Board probably would receive an extension so the vote will take place at the November CB meeting. While October 31 is the deadline, there is approximately a week or so before the Community Board meeting.

Next, District Manager Cassagnol spoke about members' placement on the Board's committees. If your committee choices were not submitted, you were not put on the committee of your choice. If you were on a committee and did not get in the top three, please give it more time.

He reported there were some bone fragments found at Newtown Playground a few years ago, and the bones were archeologically examined and discovered they are human remains. For some time, we have tried to get the bones reinterred. The park was renovated and we do have the bones and are looking to rebury them next to the deceased buried in the cemetery.

**V. Public Forum – Good & Welfare of the District**

District Manager Christian Cassagnol called out if there were any members of the public who wished to speak on community issues. Since there were none, the next agenda item was discussed.

**VI. Vote – Minutes June 14, 2022**

Board Member Clara Salas made a motion, seconded by Environmental Chair Carol Machulski, to **approve** the minutes as presented. Since there were none opposed or abstentions, the motion passed.

**VII. Report from the Elected Officials**

**House of Representatives**

**Grace Meng**

Kyle Salcido read a statement from U. S. Representative Grace Meng, Assembly Member Hevesi and Council Member Shulman on the heavy rainfall and flooding Queens had recently experienced:

*“Once again, Queens is forced to endure flooding as a result of heavy rainfall just nearly two weeks after the one year anniversary of Hurricane Ida’s devastation to our borough. Many constituents were working towards rebuilding their lives and properties and now face additional setbacks. Many now impacted by Hurricane Ida must now deal with damages caused to their properties.*

*As we deal with the impacts of climate change, future floods will continue which is why we need immediate action. We are going to do everything we can to make sure Queens gets the proper funding to help mitigate flooding including getting city and state to use money from the federal infrastructure bill, signed into law last year, and is crucial that a portion of the funding located for New York be used to address this problem in our borough.*

*Our office has been in constant contact with city and state agencies related to the matter and will continue to demand these resources be used for things such as upgrading outdated sewers and catch basins so that our communities can be actively protected from future storms.*

*Queens’s residents cannot continue to rebuild from one disaster to the next only to wonder how much rain may fall in the future. An immediate investment of infrastructure funding for needed upgrades will save lives, spare millions of people the economic burdens they face, and save much hardship in the future.*

*This is the right thing to do and must be done.*

*The matter is being actively reported to the Governor and Mayor’s offices on the most problematic areas, and working to get available resources to constituents.*

*If you have been affected by flooding, please contact Congresswoman Grace Meng’s office.”*

Environmental Chair Carol Machulski brought up the last two Needs Statements requested a number of remedial efforts be made in different parts of Corona and Elmhurst regarding flooding. The response was there was no money. The NYS Climate Act is in effect but so far nothing has been done to implement any programs which needs to be expedited because we do not want to keep having these floods. We were told we do not have inland flooding, but we do.

The response was rounds of infrastructure flooding was passed for New York State and the State decides how that money is allocated. Congresswoman Meng’s office is happy to advocate for further funding to address this issue.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino inquired how we can find out if the funding is directed to New York City.

The response was an inquiry would be made and report back to the Board

Next, the problem of mail theft was brought up. Specifically, relay boxes. A letter was sent by the Congresswoman to the local USPS manager urging steps be taken to secure those boxes and informed the Board USPS is adding a second lock. As it is now, there is a master key that opens all relay boxes which causes a security risk if the master key is lost, stolen, or misplaced. If this key gets into the wrong hands, thieves have access to all relay boxes in the area.

Also, narrower slots will be made to prevent mail fishing which will make it difficult for the criminals.

Any issues with USPS, contact Congresswoman Grace Meng’s office.

Next, the Congresswoman has worked on voting and passing legislation in the House to protect marriage equality and reproductive rights and access to contraceptives.

**Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**

Michelle Luna reported last month Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act. Some of the victories include IRA and funding to fight climate change which will create 9 million jobs in clean energy.

For the first time ever, Medicare will be able to directly negotiate some prescription prices. The Bill also caps insulin to \$35 for a 30-day supply and limits out of pocket cost for prescription costs to \$2,000 per year for those on Medicare.

Also, there is increased funding that will allow for the IRS to go after wealthy tax abaters.

Also, last month President Biden ordered student loan forgiveness for anyone earning \$125,000 per year or less. \$20,000 for Pell grant recipients and \$10,000 for all other borrowers. The deadline extended to January 3. Nearly 8 million borrowers may be able to receive relief automatically, however, an application will be available by early October. The same application will allow you to request refunds for payments made since March 2020. Additionally if you worked in the nonprofit sector or government for ten years, you may be eligible to have all of your student loans forgiven. Scammers are already trying to take advantage of people because asking for loan forgiveness is free. Please report any scammers to the FTC. Applications for Service Academy nominations for fall 2023 are now open and due November 1. Congressional offices may nominate candidates to four of the five U. S. service academies. Tuition is free but a minimum of five years military service is required prior to graduation. If you or someone you know would like to be considered, please complete the form on their website. Applications are open for the Congressional App Challenge due November 1. Please visit their website for details.

### **NYS Assembly**

#### **Catalina Cruz**

Samantha reported on summer and upcoming events from the Assembly Member's office and constituent resources. During the summer, many backpack giveaways were held for children in the community. Also, the Assembly Member attended the Ecuadorian Parade during the summer.

Most recently, P. S. 89 was re-named to honor the late state senator to the Jose Peralta School for Dreamers.

Some upcoming events this week are:

Friday, September 16 – Block Party and Back Pack event. A Queens Public Library bus will be on site as well as food and a deejay. All were urged to come out.

Partnering with TCH on Saturday, September 24 for a block party.

Constituent resources available from the office are assistance with HRA, appointments made for a new ID, and help with ERAP and affordable housing.

The block party will be held behind the Assembly Member's office at 41-40 Junction Blvd.

District Manger Christian Cassagnol added Community Board 4 is co-sponsoring the back pack event. Volunteers are needed.

### **Queens Borough President's Office**

Pat Rosero reported her email address is [arosero@queensbp.org](mailto:arosero@queensbp.org) if you have any questions, concerns, please let her know. Log on to the queensbp.org website to find more information on upcoming events.

Upcoming events are:

September 21 – Monkey pox Town Hall – 6:00 p.m. via zoom

September 14 at 6:00 p.m. - Virtual Redistricting NYC Council Town Hall

September 24 – Queens Wellness Day, which will be held in Flushing. RSVP go to queensbp.org for this and many other events the Borough President will hold.

### **Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz**

A representative reported during this past summer 67 charges were lodged a Whitestone defendant who was found in possession of 42 illegal fire arms inside his home. This case illustrates the Queens District Attorney's Office makes every effort to take illegal, dangerous guns off the street.

On September 24, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., a gun buy back event. Anyone turning in an inoperable fire arm would receive an I-pad /cash.

### **VII. Report & Vote: ULURP/Zoning Committee**

#### **97-27 57 Avenue Rezoning Project (Food Bazaar)**

ULURP/Zoning Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith reported this is a rezoning application. Any time there is a rezoning application, the ULURP process must be involved. When the application is acted upon at the Community Board level, then it is sent to the Borough President, next to City Planning Commission, then onto the City Council. It is a process.

This owner has the right to build residential units, a small commercial establishment which is as of right. However, the applicant is asking for more. Some of the concerns involving the application are congestion and the closure of the supermarket for two years or more.

Next, the ULURP Chair mentioned the height of the building. According to the regulations, building height should be no more than 75', but in the application it is stated the building height is 75'-100'. Regulations state six stories for that particular zone R6-a (no taller than 75'. 25' higher than regulations.) The application states 75' to 100'.

Discussion ensued about the building height.

Next, ULURP/Zoning Committee Chair Alton Derrick Smith brought up the Affordable Housing component. Is there any type of affordable housing besides 421-a? There was no indication what type of affordable housing would be sought. 421-a shows only 10% of the units, specifically, how many units would be affordable mentioning the AMI and expressing no taxes are paid for 25 years. Mr. Taylor responded the program is speculative and there are various options: 25% to 30% of the units remain affordable and are marketed through lottery from HPD. The income limits where there are a variety of options where AMI's range from 40% to 60% to under 30%. For a mid-town Manhattan neighborhood, 130% is affordable. For Corona that AMI is not affordable, which this project would not provide. Affordability is associated with the 421-a program and would be much less. It was unclear what the program looks like possibly 60% to 100% AMI.

The expectation is that the as the 421-a program is re-enacted either affordability unit percentages will be higher or the AMI percentage will be lower.

Next, ULURP/Zoning Chair Alton Derrick Smith spoke about traffic congestion, mentioning the bus route on 97 Street and noting future truck deliveries to those new residents adding more traffic obstruction. Looking at rezoning applications, the question arises is this a government initiative or personal application or required by New York City.

If the Community Board approved a personal application, it would open the district to anyone who wants to improve his property, consequently, flooding the Board with applications. If there was a government initiative included such as an MIH, it would be entertained. Standards must be set regarding how rezoning applications are judged.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino opened the floor to questions from Board Members.

Board Member Georgina Oliver inquired about the ULURP Committee's recommendation for the application.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino responded the committee did not make a recommendation because the committee had requested more information from the applicant but did not receive it until a week ago.

District Manager Cassagnol explained the clock on this application expired and because of the Governor's open meeting requirement, the Board was given some more time, but now the deadline had expired.

Since the ULURP/Zoning Committee heard the proposal in June, there have been some changes noting the increased parking spaces component.

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla brought up about the ULURP/Zoning Chair had received a letter stating the owner would keep it as is if there were no affordable component.

The Board has experienced many residential developers who build in the neighborhood not for our neighbors in terms of pricing. 421-a is important because the Board represents neighbors, families and friends experiencing prices out of reach. The Board recognizes to build as of right but consideration must be given to those families who live directly in that area and make pricing within the reach of those families.

At this point, Board Chair Marialena Giampino called for a vote on the application.

A motion was made by Board Member Lynda Coral, seconded by Board Member Georgina Oliver, to **deny** the application.

Before the vote, Board Member A. Redd Sevilla asked why was the motion made to deny.

Board Member Lynda Coral responded because there was not enough information to review it. A motion cannot be made to support if information is not sufficient.

Board Member Clara Salas suggested to abstain from taking a vote because without enough information, it is not clear.

Discussion ensued.

Executive Secretary Louis Walker took the roll call vote. To vote yes is to deny, to vote no is to approve.

The vote was 23 to **deny** (yes), 0 opposed, with 2 abstentions. Motion passed.

Board Member A. Redd Sevilla inquired of the Board Chair Marialena Giampino can the Board put forth a statement why the Board denied the application.

Board Chair Marialena Giampino responded more information was needed and the plan was contingent upon the 421-a renewal, affordability and traffic congestion.

Discussion ensued.

**VIII. Report & Vote:**  
**Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee**  
**State Liquor Authority Applications**

**NYS LIQUOR AUTHORITY LICENSES**

**September 2022**

**NEW/TEMPORARY PERMIT APPLICATIONS**

<b><u>ESTABLISHMENT NAME</u></b>	<b><u>ADDRESS</u></b>	<b><u>LICENSE TYPE</u></b>	<b><u>NEW/Temp</u></b>
Jakaru NY Corp.	108-59 Roosevelt Avenue Corona, NY 11368	Wine, Beer & Cider	New & Temp.
El Foco Rojo Inc.	85-16A Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider	New & Temp.

**RENEWAL APPLICANTS**

<b><u>ESTABLISHMENT NAME</u></b>	<b><u>ADDRESS</u></b>	<b><u>LICENSE TYPE</u></b>
Rare Hospitality International Inc.	92-30 59 Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
N & D Restaurant LLC <i>The Olive Garden Italian Rest. #4443</i>	92-10 59 Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
Bunvised Inc. <i>Jaew Honn</i>	71-30 Roosevelt Avenue, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Fl. Jackson Heights, NY	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
Mirinea Inc. <i>Timmy's Deli</i>	111-02 Roosevelt Avenue Corona, NY	Beer & Cider
Osvis Bar Restaurant Corp. El Canelazo Bar Restaurant Corp.	80-04 Roosevelt Avenue Jackson Heights, NY 11372	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider
Gran Corona Diner & Grill Corp.	91-28 Corona Avenue Elmhurst, NY	Wine, Beer & Cider

**METHOD OF OPERATION CHANGE**

<b><u>ESTABLISHMENT NAME</u></b>	<b><u>ADDRESS</u></b>	<b><u>LICENSE TYPE</u></b>
Brothers Bar Corp. <i>Duo Gastropub</i>	40-37 75 Street Jackson Heights, NY 11373	Liquor, Wine, Beer & Cider

District Manager Christian Cassagnol presented the Public Safety Committee's report and gave details as follows:

Osvis Bar Restaurant Corp.

*El Canelazo Bar Restaurant - Approved*

Initially, this restaurant was denied because there were some items to be looked at, however, conditionally within 24 hours a dismissal was received and ultimately the Committee granted approval.

Rare Hospitality International Inc.

*Longhorn Steakhouse #5453 - Approved*

El Foco Rojo Inc. - Approved

Bunvised Inc.  
Jaew Honn – Approved

Mirinea Inc.  
Timmy's Deli – Approved

Gran Corona Diner & Grill Corp. – Approved

Brothers Bar Corp.  
Duo- Gastropub – Withdrew application

At this point, District Manager Christian Cassagnol explained the Board's policy regarding approving/denying liquor license applications. If the establishment has no violations, they are not called in.

Board Member Ruby Muhammad made a motion, seconded by Board Member Georgina Oliver, to **approve** the Committee's report as presented. Since there were none opposed or abstentions, the motion passed.

## **IX. Committee Reports**

### **Consumer Affairs**

Committee Chair Michelle Dunston reported an introduction meeting is planned with new members and mentioned prices are out of control and need to be addressed.

### **Environmental**

Committee Chair Carol Machulski reported the committee did not meet in July, however, an email was sent to all members on July 8 welcoming the new members and including a reminder to review the FY2023 Needs Statement and the Budget Register as the first order of business. When the committee returns in September, there will a discussion on the FY2024 Needs Statement. Members were also reminded attendance at committee and Board meeting is mandatory.

QSWAB met virtually on June 22 and July 27: at the June 22 meeting, a Bylaws Committee was formed and elections were held for officers for next year.

On July 5, the Committee Chair had attended a meeting of the Environmental Justice Committee Chaired by Bilal Key who brought attention to the NYS Report on Disadvantaged Climate Communities. In December 2021, a draft of disadvantaged climate communities was released for public comment with an interactive map. The public comment period ran from March 9 to August 5. This stems from the Climate and Community Investment Act (S4264A) which is still in the Environment Conservation Committee. The act "seeks to transition NYS 100% renewable energy, create hundreds of thousands of jobs, protect workers in the fossil fuel industry and support communities most impacted by climate change and pollution".

Using the 2020 Census, the committee had created a map with two overall categories: one containing population characteristics and vulnerability, and the other the environmental burden and climate change risk. Within category is a breakdown of more specific variables. The map can be accessed on the State's website.

Originally, Mr. Key quoted that the state was earmarking \$380 million to this project and each community would receive a maximum of 35% of this to implement changes specified in the criteria. Both Elmhurst and Corona are on the map as disadvantaged climate communities.

The next morning, the Committee Chair emailed the District Manager and the Board Chair to alert them to this information and to the necessity of commenting on the lack of transparency for this program and the need to have the variable of "inland flooding" for these communities changed from 0% to something more indicative of the reality of our district.

### **Health & Human Services**

Committee Chair Clara Salas reported the last committee meeting was successful and very well attended. The discussion was on the COVID-19 and the variant. The Committee Chair provided information on the virus. Information was also given on the vaccines. The virus is staying with us and not going away. Vaccination is important along with, use of masks, personal hygiene and taking good care of yourself.

Clara Salas thanked all who attended and noted the new Committee Chair is Shrima Pandey.

At this point, Board Member Georgina Oliver reported vaccinations are available and if anyone is having difficulty securing those vaccines, please call Georgina Oliver who will assist. The Monkey pox and the new COVID19 vaccines are offered but may be available at some hospitals but not others. She can help and also mentioned free Covid-19 kits are available.

### **Parks, Cultural Affairs and Historical Preservation**

Committee Chair Ashley Reed welcomed the new members and reported the Parks Department finished its proposal for the Josephine Caminiti Playground and the new design will be presented to the committee next month.

### Transportation

Committee Chair Matthew McElroy reported a Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 29. The committee worked successfully with DOT representative John O'Neill on many issues, however, he will be leaving the agency. Committee Chair Matthew McElroy requested a letter from the Board be sent to DOT Borough Commissioner commending John O'Neill for his commitment to serving the residents of the community. In the second half of last year, many issues were addressed by the Committee. The Committee Chair thanked and acknowledged members Rovenia McGowan and Alexandra Owens, who spent much time responding to those issues.

At this point, Board Member Georgia Oliver brought up heavy traffic congestion on 99<sup>th</sup> Street and Junction Blvd. where there is a health center, a school, along with many populated sites and buses along the route including cars double parking and the U. S. Post office all contributing to blockage. Relief is needed.

Discussion ensued about the buses along the route.

### Youth Services

Committee Chair Sylvia Martin reported the committee did not meet during the summer, however, a meeting is planned for the fall. An email will be sent.

Since there were no further issues, Board Member Lynda Coral made a motion, seconded by Board Member Georgina Olivier, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.