



The City of New York
Borough of Queens

Community Board 8

197-15 Hillside Avenue
Hollis, NY 11423-2126
Telephone: (718) 264-7895
Fax: (718) 264-7910
Qn08@cb.nyc.gov
www.nyc.gov/queenscb8



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Meeting held on Wednesday, April 19, 2023, at Community Board office at 197-15 Hillside Avenue, Hollis, New York 11423.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Michael Athy, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Allen Eisenstein, Kevin Forrestal, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Michael Hannibal, Neeta Jain, Steven Konigsberg (Late), Mary Maggio, Rabbi Yaniv Meirov, David Mordukhaev, Alan Ong, Tammy Osherov, Hersch Parekh, Tobias Paris, Jenna Citron Schwab, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny Stern, Martha Taylor, Amy Tse, Mayer Waxman, and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members Absent:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Heather Bennett-Idles, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Solomon Davydov, Maria DeInnocentiis, Howard A. Fried, Wendy Gennaro, Ashan Habib, Mohammed Islam “Delwar,” Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, and Mohammed Tohin.

Others Present:

Shubhra Datta representing Borough President Donovan Richards, Luna Fu representing Council Member Linda Lee, Adam Suionov representing Council Member James Gennaro, Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz, Jon Gallo representing State Senator John Liu, Lya Rothmann representing State Senator Toby Stavisky, Marco Cruz representing Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal, Jeff Gottlieb, Marva Dudley of FSCA, Todd Dale, Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan, P.O. Timothy Gorman, 107th Precinct Community Affairs, P.O. McCarthy of 107th Precinct, P.O. Gallino of 107th Precinct, D. M. Adam-Ovide and Sandra Aikens-Williams, CB8 Staff.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

.....
Chairperson Martha Taylor introduced the new part-time staff member, Nettie Norris.
.....

Chairperson Martha Taylor introduced four newly appointed Board Members and asked that they introduce themselves [listed in alphabetical order].
.....

1. **Michael Athy** – Bayside High School Principal, retired.
2. **Tobias Paris** – Queens College student
3. **Jenna Citron Schwab** – A.V.P. External and Governmental Relations for Queens College

4. Rabbi Mayer Waxman – Executive Director, Queens Jewish Community Council

Public Participation:

Saaif Alam – introduced himself as a new Queens General Assembly Delegate.

Marva Dudley, President of Flushing Suburban Civic Association – Thanked board members for supporting Flushing Suburban Civic Association’s request to not allow the Queens School of Inquiry to have a summer long street closure. Due to community opposition Queens School of Inquiry withdrew their application.

Chairperson Martha Taylor announced that if a public participant is late, he/she will not be allowed to speak.

Rokeya Akhter representing District Attorney Melinda Katz – Welcomed all the new board members. Their office hosted a Scam and Fraud seminar, targeted for seniors.

Lya Rothmann representing State Senator Toby Stavisky – The senator is at the state capitol negotiating the budget. Thanks to the Queens elected officials the budget no longer includes Transit Oriented Development Assessor Unit [the governor’s plan to build affordable housing within a half mile of a subway station]. Local control of zoning has been maintained. Senator Stavisky continues the fight against housing compact.

Martha Taylor acknowledged the hard work of our Honorable State Senators Toby Stavisky, Leroy Comrie, John Liu and Joseph Addabbo. Thanks to their efforts the mandate for affordable multi-unit housing within a half mile of a subway or LIRR station has been removed from the budget. The issue of safety of basement apartments remains unresolved.

Adam Suionov representing Council Member James Gennaro – Welcome to all of the new board members. Family Days in Queens is returning. Activities will operate from mid-May through mid-June. For more information, call the office at 718-217-4969.

Chairperson’s Report – Martha Talyor:

Chairperson Martha Taylor requested a moment of silence to commemorate the passing of Board Member Marc A. Haken.

She acknowledged the passing of Board Member Alan Ong’s mother.

There is a weed store trying to open on Union Turnpike between 188th and 189th Streets. There was a similar establishment attempting to open in Kew Garden Hills and was unable to do so. Please let her know if you are aware of how the people or elected officials stopped the opening.

Martha Taylor asked Deputy Inspector Chan of the 107th Precinct to speak.

Deputy Inspector Chan introduced the new Crime Prevention Officer, Gallino, replacing Officer Hoffman. There is a rise in the number of crimes directed at commercial establishments. He asked that businesses install alarms and cameras. They are aware that there are teams of burglars walking and driving staking out the area. A resident went to Mexico for a couple of weeks and returned home to find themselves burglarized of \$250,000.

Michael Hannibal – **When a smoke shop is opening, I know that these establishments are working with the Sheriff’s Department. Does anyone from the NYS Office of Cannabis Management**

contact the 107th Precinct? Has anyone attempted to create a formal line of communications so that the Sheriff’s Department can alert you of illegal activity?

Answer [D.I. Chan]: We are always in constant contact with the Sheriff’s Department. However, regarding cannabis dispensaries, we are more reliant on the public. If you know of an illegal store, let us know. We are most effective when targeting a specific location.

Dr. Neeta Jain: What about guidance for our youth who are already in crisis?

Answer [D.I. Chan]: If the business is conducting illegal business practices, we will send an enforcement team to investigate, especially if the business is near a school.

Deepti Sharma: Is your area of oversight illegal sales or use?

Answer [D.I. Chan]: Both.

Michael Hannibal: We have been attempting to get someone from Office of Cannabis Management to meet with us. We would appreciate it if you can help us arrange a meeting.

Answer [D.I. Chan]: I have a contact person and will try to assist with this.

Martha Taylor: I hope you will join us at this meeting.

Answer [D.I. Chan]: Yes.

Michael Hannibal: When the Liquor License Committee reviews new and renewal licenses, the 107th Precinct sends a representative to the meeting, I would appreciate copying the same cooperative system during reviews of cannabis dispensaries.

Answer [D.I. Chan]: Yes.

District Manager’s Report, April 2023

Department of Parks and Recreation

Director of Recreation, Christopher Davis, came to the Borough Cabinet and spoke about the different recreational activities at the parks. They have different programs at their aquatic centers: Learn to Swim, Swim for Life for 2nd graders, Swim Teams, and Water Exercises for seniors. They have a new director for Special Permits - Michelle Young. They are also looking to hire more staff. They are looking for Playground Associates that work in the summer. This is a good opportunity for college students. They have City Seasonal Aide (CSA) positions. They also have two positions that used to be only for current Parks’ employees that are now open to the general public: Borough Sports Supervisor and Center Manager. He encouraged those looking for a job opportunity go to their website: <https://www.nycgovparks.org/> and click on “Opportunities” to see all open positions.

MTA LIRR

Assistant Director of Government Affairs Anabel Frias for the MTA Long Island Railroad discussed ADA projects for Queens. LIRR Stations at St. Albans, Locust Manor, and Laurelton will have new elevators installed. The elevator at Auburndale station will be replaced. They are planning to start the work in 2024. She also informed us that in February 271 trains were added to the LIRR lines for a total of 936 trains per day. They had some delays during roll out; however, they have addressed these issues.

Fire Department

Chief Bryan Russo of Battalion 50 gave us the stats for March 2023:

Overall	10% increase in activity
Structural	25% decrease
Non-structural	17% increase
Medical emergencies	5% increase
Non-medical (i.e., gas leaks, etc.)	19% increase
False alarms	40% increase

He is concerned about two properties being developed near the firehouse on Hillside Avenue that may affect response time. One is a lot being developed across the street from the firehouse (in CB12) – a planned seven-story residential building. The other is located next door to them, which will become a school for 2,000 children.

NYC Aging

There will be a NYC Medicare Orientation on April 24th from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. They will address: Medicare Part A & B, Medigap, and Advantage plans. Please call Aging Connect for more information at: 212-244-6469.

Department of Transportation

We received several calls about DOT plans for bike lanes on Queens Boulevard off of Hillside Avenue. The business owners are concerned that adding bike lanes would negatively affect their businesses. We were informed by DOT that they had sent their “street ambassadors” to speak to the neighbors. It is too early to know about any proposal or design at this time.

NYPD

The NYPD has a Summer Youth Program for Cadets. This program is about character development and mentoring. It offers opportunities to youth who have in interest in becoming a police officer. It offers a \$20K grant. To participate, the youth must be in school, be at least 18 years old, have a clean record and be a NYC resident.

Happy Birthday to Board Members: Dilafroz Ahmed, David Mordukhaev and Rabbi Mayer Waxman.



Marie Adam-Ovide

Shubhra Datta representing Borough President Donovan Richards – He thanked everyone who attended the inauguration ceremony for the new board members. He wished everyone happy, joyous, and prosperous Passover, Easter and Eid al-Fitr.

Zoning Committee:

Steven Konigsberg (Chairperson) - BSA Cal. No. 295-57-BZ - This public hearing is in response to an applicant seeking to extend the term of a variance that expired in August, 2021. They are requesting a term of ten years.

Todd Dale representing the applicant: He distributed a site map detailing the structure with the land surrounding the gas station and excerpts from the original application. They have returned seven times, since inception, for various reasons.

It is a gas station located at 146-15 Union Turnpike. The site is at the northwest corner of 147th Street and Union Turnpike. The property is designated a C1-2 with Commercial overlay. It is currently used as a gasoline station with a one-story building at the rear. The building was built in 1957 prior to the current construction regulations. The owners have come before this community board on seven prior occasions, for minor amendments. The most recent request was in 2012 for a Certificate of Occupancy. This application was filed prior to expiration. The property was inspected, the sole

objection was to graffiti on the side which was removed. There are no changes to the administration of this 65-year-old establishment. The gasoline portion is operational 24 hours, the repair portion is operational 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Steve Konigsberg: This is 2023 they are looking for 10-year extension and this variance expired in 2021. Therefore, the 10-year extension is to 2031.

Answer [Todd Dale]: I believe it is up to the board to regulate the duration of the variance.

Steve Konigsberg: Marie, do you know of any questions?

D.M. Adam-Ovide: No, not at this time.

Steve Konigsberg: I am opening up to public speaking.

Public Hearing:

Jeffrey Gottlieb: Stated the owner is there most of the day. This gas station is always neat and clean. It has been his experience that the repair prices are reasonable. He would like to recommend that the board continues to approve the station's ability to operate.

Allen Eisenstein made a motion to approve the variance for this BSA. Seconded by Alan Ong. 24 Approved Unanimously. Two board members left prior to this vote. A quorum was not present.

Michael Hannibal: [Chairperson Martha Taylor stepped away] Because we don't have a quorum, we will request an extension from the BSA.

Todd Dale: The next BSA meeting is June 5, 2023, the next CB8 meeting is May 10, 2023. That will be sufficient time.

Michael Hannibal: Thank you for working with us. We will table this matter until the next meeting.

Public Safety Committee Report

D.M. Adam-Ovide: Committee Chairperson Dilip Nath was scheduled to present this report. Unfortunately, an unscheduled out-of-town issue prevented his appearance. A copy of the minutes was included in the board member packet.

Health Minute Report, Dr. Penny Stern

The month of April is:

National Minority Health Month – raising awareness about the importance of the health of racial and ethnic minority communities and reducing health disparities. Encouraging health education and early detection.

Alcoholism Month – focusing on the effects of alcoholism on health.

National Public Health Week – April 3rd through April 9th - focused on the achievement of public health administration in reduction in childhood mortality, vaccine advances, safe drinking water and sanitation, prevention and control with HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis control.

Adjournment

Robert Block made a motion to adjourn, the motion carried unanimously. This meeting ended at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Aikens-Williams, CB8 staff

April 25, 2023