



Chairperson, Martha Taylor

*The City of New York*  
*Borough of Queens*

**Community Board 8**

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District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, December 12, 2018 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Florence Fisher, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul "Delwar" Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Frank Magri, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, and Albert Willingham.

**Board Members Absent:**

Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Paul S. Lazauskas, Jennifer Martin, Tamara Osherov, Simon Pelman, Charlton Rhee, Rachele Van Arsdale, Jacob Weinberg and Stanley Weinblatt.

**Others Present:**

Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Davinder Paul Singh representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Pierre Millien representing State Senator Leroy Comrie, Mohammad Rahman representing Assembly Member David Weprin, Daniel Blech representing Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal, Hudy Rosenberg representing Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Izabela Szczepanska, CB8 Staff Member.

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

**Public Participation:**

**John Amato** – Mr. Amato spoke about a large tree that fell along Union Turnpike in November during the snow storm. He advocated for more funds to be allocated for the Parks Department for street tree maintenance (i.e. pruning, sidewalk repairs damaged by trees, etc.).

**Kimberly Mitchel** – Ms. Mitchel thanked Marc Haken for inviting her to share her new venture. She started a new business Young Professional Staffing Solutions and it is located at the Franhill Shopping Center (205-07 Hillside Ave, Suite #22) on Francis Lewis Boulevard and Hillside Avenue. They provide temp positions, permanent positions, as well as internships for young people who have graduated from high school, those who are in college and those who have graduated from college.

**James Gallagher Jr.** – Mr. Gallagher stated that the NYPD Shield Unit in collaboration with the PBQN Counterterrorism Unit and Community Affairs will present an active shooter presentation. It will be at Queensborough Community College (220-05 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue) on Monday, December 17, 2018 from 6:00

p.m. to 8:30 p.m. it is open to everyone in the community. It is designed to prepare religious leaders of all religious institutions in the event they are involved in an active shooter situation with best practices. (*Mr. Gallagher will email a copy of the flyer to District Manager tomorrow to share with the Board*).

**Allen Eisenstein** – On December 18<sup>th</sup> the ICCJ [Israel Center of Conservative Judaism] Jewish Center is having the same exact presentation.

**Mike Sidell** – Mr. Sidell spoke in favor of the McDonald's BSA application to be approved after fifty years. He urges every Board Member to approve the BSA for the address of 72-69 and 72-71 Kissena Boulevard because it encompasses two buildings and it will be a great improvement to the neighborhood.

**Neil Weisbard** – Mr. Weisbard is representing McDonald's Corporation that is seeking a special permit for an accessory drive-thru for a Use Group 6 eating and drinking establishment/restaurant. The BSA term is five years. This site is located in a C1-2 commercial district. To operate a drive-thru one must apply for a special permit. The request from the BSA satisfies the finding of the ZR 73-243. There are frontages along Kissena Boulevard, 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and Aguilar Avenue. The entrance is on 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue where there will be room for thirteen cars. The existing McDonald's will be completely renovated. There will be a minor enlargement, approximately 500 square feet, to accommodate the drive-thru and refrigerated trash room.

The application is required to have ten car spaces but twelve will be provided. There will be two separate drive-thru lanes to alleviate any congestion that may occur. The entrances and exits are on separate streets and this should have minimal impact on traffic. Residences are located adjacent to the site (*across Kissena Boulevard or Aguilar Avenue*), both of these two streets are major thoroughfares; therefore, the drive-thru facility should not have any undue adverse impact on residences. This drive-thru has also been in existence since 1980 not 1999. The final finding is that the amount of parking spaces complies with the zoning resolution. The zoning resolution requires 24 parking spaces and this site has 34 parking spaces; therefore, it complies. If there are any questions he is available to answer them.

**Chairperson Taylor** – No, if there are any questions they can be asked when it comes up on the agenda then you may address them.

**Neil Weisbard** – He agreed and stated that Brian Winters from the engineer's office who designed the place is also present.

**Davinder Paul Singh** – There will be a Homeowner Enrollment Event which is a SCHE (*Senior Citizens Homeowners' Exemption*) and DHE (*Disabled Homeowners' Exemption*) benefit. It is great for senior citizens over 65 years, veterans and people with disabilities. It will take place in Windsor Park Library [79-50 Bell Boulevard] on Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup> from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. everyone is encouraged to attend.

**Richard Reif** – Mr. Reif submitted a proposal last week in the interest of the safety of students, parents, and teachers at P.S. 164. His proposal was to make 77<sup>th</sup> Avenue into a one-way street going east from Park Drive East to Vleigh Place to prevent collision and threats to public safety. He has since modified the proposal to limit the one-way access from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. only on school days. He has brought a petition with signatures from the school's principal, students, parents, and school safety officers in support. The principal has tried for several years to have DOT conduct a traffic study because she is worried about the school's safety. Similar measures were taken at Middle School 172 in Glen Oaks two years ago and at St. Luke's School in Whitestone last year. He is hopeful that we can do the same thing before a serious accident happens.

### **Salute to the Flag**

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Carolann Foley made a motion to approve the minutes of November 14, 2018, seconded by Mary Maggio.

Count in favor 38                      Opposed: 0                      Abstained: 0

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**Chairperson’s Report – Martha Taylor:**

- Welcome back to Carolann Foley!
- Community Board 8 has hired a new part-time employee her name is Marleah DesRuisseaux. She is a Queens College student and I have met with her. She seems absolutely confident and lovely and she will start next week.
- Before I wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year I would like to wish our District Manager a Happy Birthday since today is her birthday.

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District Manager’s Report, December 14, 2018

**Marie’s report is in purple in memory of Jennifer Philips Brozowski a former staff member who passed away a few years ago in December. She used to create our beautiful greeting cards.**

**DFTA** – Ms. Carol Resnick is the acting Commissioner for DFTA. The agency is waiting for the Mayor to appoint a new commissioner. Remember to change the water in your go bag. Do not overload electrical outlets and only use extension cords with the ULR sign. Remember to water fresh Christmas trees. DFTA conducted a training for their staff on the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) program recently.

**HRA** – Encourages senior citizens to apply ASAP for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). It is a grant funded program that closes once the funds run out. For those having problems with their furnaces, please call the Heap Hotline at (212) 331-3150 for assistance. She also stated that some organizations and elected officials’ offices provide assistance in applying for this program.

*Pierre Millien, Jr. informed us that assistance is provided every Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. except holidays at State Senator Comrie’s office. Please call to make an appointment at 718-765-6359.*

**DDC** – The QED1047 project that includes upgrading water main on 164<sup>th</sup> Street from Grand Central Parkway to Union Turnpike will start in mid-January. A test shutdown was scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup> and all those affected were notified. We received no issues or complaint about the shutdown.

**DOT** – When asked about disturbing 164<sup>th</sup> Street so close after the resurfacing, DOT responded that they were not informed of the project until after the milling was already done. They could not keep the street undone until the project commences.

DOT recently started on the 188<sup>th</sup> Street traffic safety improvements. They will be done in two parts. They already installed bollards at the intersection of 188<sup>th</sup> Street and 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and added markings. The second part will be done in spring 2019 near the traffic circles. There will be additional markings. There will also be a traffic light at 188<sup>th</sup> street and 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Queens Deputy Commissioner Jason Banrey is scheduled to come to our Transportation Committee next week to give us further updates.

**QPL** – They wanted to introduce “It’s Time for Kind” campaign. You can share an act of kindness performed or experience during the holiday season by going to [www.queenslib.org/itstimeforkind2018](http://www.queenslib.org/itstimeforkind2018).

**Con Ed** – If residents are experiencing difficulty to pay their electric bills, please contact 1800 7CONED (752-3633). They can sign up for a payment arrangement or get a referral for assistance. Once services are turned off it is more difficult to reinstate service.

**DOB** – Contrary to what store owners may believe the Department of Buildings is not conducting a sweep of illegal signs. There is no moratorium on signage and commercial property owners may receive a fine of \$6,000 for an illegal sign if they are found in violation. Please note that the minimum fine for a commercial property for doing work without a permit was recently raised from \$5,000 to \$6,000.

The Department of Buildings received 426 complaints from year to date for illegal conversions in CB8; 269 work without permits and 94 construction contrary to plans. The number of DOB complaints for CB8 is average as compared with other CBs in Queens. The number of work contrary to plans was actually on the high end as compared to other Queens CBs. The boards with the most complaints are: CB7, 9, 10 and 12.

**NYPD** – Detective Motta informed us that there is a decrease of 5% in overall crime. This includes a 29% decrease in burglary and 25% in robberies. There is an increase in grand larceny due to credit card fraud and check washing. The 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct conducted a tow operation and 2 trucks were removed on Horace Harding Expressway, one on Main Street and one on Kissena Blvd.

Please note, there is only one tow truck capable of towing trucks and it is shared by the whole City. They can only do these type of operations quarterly.

**FDNY** - Fires decreased when compared to last year except for medical emergencies and non-fire emergencies. The later was only up by 14 incidents – mostly for gas odor. Chief Tauber brought flyers about how to safely use candles during Hanukkah. If you have not done so in November, do change the batteries of your smoke and CO detectors.

If you have not changed your batteries for your smoke detectors we have some available at the table. If you would like take some today for yourself or someone else who may need to use them.

**DEP and HPD** did not attend the District Service Cabinet.



*Allen Eisenstein, Jesse Rosenbaum, Steve Konigsberg, Bhitihara Fulton, Seymour Schwartz, Tammy Osherov, Stanley Weinblatt, Tami Hirsch, Charlton Rhee, Simon Pelman, Dr. Allen Bennett and Fakrul "Delwar" Islam.*

*Happy Holidays to all!*

*Marie Adam-Ovide*

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**Discussion:**

**Marc A. Haken** – I read somewhere that the Fire Department is getting fewer fire calls and more medical calls. They are looking to take money out of buying fire trucks and buy more ambulances. Was that discussed?

**Marie Adam-Ovide** - That was not discussed at our meeting.

**Marc A. Haken** – Do you think at our next meeting that that’s one of the things you can ask about?

**Marie Adam-Ovide** – I’ll send an email and request it so that they will have the answers for me for the next meeting.

**Marc A. Haken** – I can’t remember where I saw it.

**Chairperson Taylor** – I saw it too.

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**Borough President’s Representative – Susan Tanenbaum**

- Ms. Tanenbaum handed out the current Newsletter for Queens Borough President Katz which highlights: events, policies she has spoken on about and initiatives she has funded.
- On behalf of Queens Borough President Katz everyone is invited to her annual Kwanza Celebration on Wednesday, December 26<sup>th</sup>. It will begins at 5:00 p.m. with a film called “The Black Candle” narrated by Maya Angelou. At 6:00 p.m. program and refreshments will be provided. Ms. Tanenbaum stated this is one of the most spectacular events that the Borough President hosts. This event is organized by the Borough President’s African American Heritage Committee. She would like to acknowledge Marc Haken and Harbachan Singh who are long time members of this committee.
- In November Borough President Katz launched her 2020 Census initiative. As mentioned last month Ms. Tanenbaum was the point person for the former Borough President in 2010 and will be the point person again for the 2020 Census initiative. Borough President Katz formed a Queens Complete Count Committee. This committee is made up of trusted community leaders who can report information back to their communities. This will help develop messaging within the borough and help everyone have a census form. It will not be easy and is in everyone’s best interest and benefit.
- Census determines how much federal funding our borough receives for social service, infrastructure and also determines representation in congress. There is no numerical limit, the more the better. We would like everyone to be a part of this. Anyone who is interested or would like more information, please contact Ms. Tanenbaum. She will help with filling out applications next week. In January Borough President Katz will announce who the members of the Queens Complete Count Committee are.
- HRA sets up a HEAP office at the Borough President’s office in Queens Borough Hall every year and they will be here on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. through March this year.

**Discussion:**

**Marc Haken** – A second piece of the African American Heritage program is the thousand dollar scholarships given away. Might you have the website that [high school]seniors can apply to for the scholarships?

**Susie Tanenbaum** –I can check and provide the information to Marie. Marie can email it to everyone.

**Kevin Forrestal** – On December 2<sup>nd</sup> the New York Times Magazine section had an article about census “Who’s Counting” (*he will send the link to Marie*). It is quite interesting and includes some historical things and how census was used not long ago.

**Susie Tanenbaum** – Thank you, I have learned a lot coming up here tonight. I want to wish everyone a very Happy Holidays belated Happy Hanukah and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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**Committee Reports:**

**Steven Konigsberg**– the Zoning Committee held a public hearing On November 28, 2018 in regards to BSA Cal. No. 2018-164-BZ for a McDonald’s located on Kissena Boulevard and 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. As you have heard earlier this evening from the representative at the attorney office who spoke in regards to the application during the public participation portion, they are going to be demolishing the existing building and putting up a brand new one. At the same time we are seeking a special permit legalization of the drive-thru. Essentially they are going to meet all the necessary requirements under the statute. Now there will be enough spaces in the queue and shouldn’t back up into the street. It doesn’t have an adverse impact on either the transportation, the residents or traffic in the area. We had five people that night who came to the meeting and we had zero participation of public members. Everyone who attended from the community board voted in favor of the application. So our recommendation, which is not a binding resolution, was to support the application.

**Marc A. Haken made a motion to approve BSA Cal. No. 2018-164-BZ, 72-71 Kissena Boulevard, for the legalization of the drive-thru servicing the McDonald's eating and drinking establishment located on the site, seconded by Seymour Schwartz.**

*Steven Konigsberg opened the floor for questions/discussion from the Board Members.*

**Rabbi Nisanov** – Sorry, the drive-thru was not legal before?

Answer: *[Steven Konigsberg]* – Apparently not.

**Marc Haken** – It wasn't legal before.

**Rabbi Nisanov** – Is it open now 24/7?

Answer: *[Steven Konigsberg]* – Yes, we are not an enforcement agent.

*A roll call vote was taken.*

Count in favor   38              Opposed:   0              Abstained:   0  

**Board Members opposed:**

**None**

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**Adjournment**

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:12 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Izabela Szczepanska, CB8 staff  
December 19, 2018*