



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

**Community Board 8**

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Chairperson, Martha Taylor

District Manager, Marie Adam-Ovide

Minutes of Community Board 8 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

**Attendance:**

**Board Members Present:**

Dilafroz Ahmed, Heather Bennett-Idels, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Allen Eisenstein, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed “Delwar” Islam, Neeta Jain, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Yaniv Meirov, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tamara Oshero, Simon Pelman, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny M. Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, Jacob Weinberg.

**Board Members Absent:**

Kenneth Cohen II, Solomon Davydov, Maria DeInnocentiis, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Alan Ong, Hersh Parekh, Frances Peterson, Jesse Rosenbaum, Seymour Schwartz, Deepti Sharma, Tamika Williams-Moore, and Emanuel Yllescas.

**Others Present:**

Evelyn Li – Congress Member Grace Meng’s office, Erick Suionov – Council Member James Gennaro’s office, Ashley Lin from John Liu’s office, Marco Cruz – Assembly Man Daniel Rosenthal’s office, and Lya Rothmann - State Senator Toby Stavisky, and Elizabeth Bian – D. A. Melinda Katz’ office, and District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide, and Sandra Aikens-Williams - CB8 Staff Member.

**Call to Order:**

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**Public Participation:**

**Said Alam** – Announced a rally for youth with disabilities on Sunday, October 30, 2022. They are advocating for additional safety, rights, and accessibility throughout the city.

**Abena Smith** – Ms. Smith is a Community Health Worker of New Jerusalem Worship Center, located in Jamaica. The church was awarded a grant by the city to address COVID disparities in Southeast Queens. They send teams throughout the neighborhoods informing residents of sites for free COVID testing, shots, boosters, and general health safety information. She gave free COVID preparedness kits for distribution.

**Marco Cruz** – [from Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal’s office] There will be a FREE Flu Shot event on Thursday, November 29<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at their District Office. You need to make an appointment prior to getting the flu shot. You can call: 718-969-1508, for more information.

**Cynthia Kong** – DSNY has stopped distributing free curbside composting bins. Labels to mark other forms of compost receptacles are available upon request. Curbside composting collection day is the same as your recycling day.

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**Salute to the Flag**

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

**Elected Officials' Announcements:**

Chairperson Martha Taylor acknowledged the presence of representatives from various officials' offices. Evelyn Li from Grace Meng's office, Erick Suionov from James Gennaro's office, Ashley Lin from John Liu's office, and Lya Rothmann from State Senator Toby Stavisky's office. She acknowledged Elizabeth Bian from Queens D.A. Melinda Katz' office and invited her to give her report.

**Elizabeth Bian** - She announced that Queens DA's office hosted a gun buyback event, resulting in 62 illegal guns taken of our streets. Another date will be set soon. Additionally, they will host a Veteran's event on November 7<sup>th</sup>. There is a new 24/7 hotline for victims of persons experiencing domestic violence, they can call 718/286-4010. The office will host a Diwali Day celebration.

**Guest Speakers:**

**Honorable John C. Liu, NY State Senator**

His legislative priority is reducing class size in public schools. He has passed legislation to mandate class size levels to reduce over the next six years. This would be implemented by purchasing more land or expanding on existing land. Northeast Queens will experience challenges meeting this goal. The need is greatest for middle and high schools. Unfortunately, homeowners tend not to want to live near these schools. Due to re-districting, he is again servicing our community.

**Honorable Toby Stavinsky, State Senator:** Annually nominees are presented, by NYS Senators, for consideration for the Woman of Distinction Award. This year, Senator Stavinsky nominated Chairperson Martha Taylor. Martha Taylor's long history of civic leadership in this community was the basis for her winning this award. Senator Stavinsky presented her a plaque to commemorate this honor. She also acknowledged the presence of a former awardee, Board Member Mary Maggio.

**Chairperson Martha Taylor's Report:** Announced the resignation of Jatnna Reyes. She is moving on to become a New Jersey State Trooper.

**Jatnna Reyes:** Expressed her fondness for the board members and District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide. Her eight-year tenure was appreciated, and she was presented with a big card.

**Marie Adam-Ovide:** Stated Jatnna was an absolute pleasure to have as a worker. She started as an Intern and rose through the ranks. She thanked her for her dedication and hard work.

Chairperson Taylor announced the passing of former board member, Sylvia Weprin. [She was the wife of Saul Weprin and mother of local politicians David and Mark Weprin.] Her website will host a recording of the funeral service. On behalf of Dr. Neeta Jain, she announced the Diwali Day celebration at City Hall. This event is coordinated by Speaker Adrienne Adams, Councilman Jim Gennaro and co-hosted by other members of the City Council.

She also asked that community board members review the proposed 2023 Meeting Schedule and forward suggested adjustments to Marie Adam-Ovide.

Under the City of Yes Proposal, there will be three citywide zoning text amendments that will be reviewed by all community boards next year.

1. Zoning for City Carbon (early 2023)
2. Economic Develop, aimed at boosting housing production (middle of 2023)
3. Parking (early 2024)

There is a YouTube video on this subject. A CB8 Ad Hoc Committee to study and make recommendations to the Department of City Planning will be formed. It will be led by the Buildings and Housing Committee Chair Dipti Sharma. She is currently celebrating Diwali Day, including an invitation to the White House celebration at the request of Vice President Kamala Harris.

The proposal includes plans to eliminate accessory parking. This should not apply to our board where public transit is limited. This [elimination of accessory parking regulations] would allow electric car owners to charge their vehicles in parking spots in buildings they do not reside in. Where would the residents of these buildings park their own vehicles? Additionally, some of these proposals lack details.

The Tentative CB8Q Meeting Dates for 2023 were distributed. Chairperson Taylor asked that CB8 member review these dates and contact the District Manager if there are any conflicts. The dates will be finalized at the next meeting on November 9, 2022.

She and District Manager Adam-Ovide attended the police academy graduation at St. John's University.

#### **Guest Speakers** *(continued)*:

**Deputy Inspector Kevin Chan, 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct** – The Trunk or Treat event was successful. Carolann Foley's contribution helped make this event fun for the children of our community.

The number of reported stolen items stored in vehicles is on the rise. Burglaries are also on the rise. Upon your request they will do a crime survey of your property. He recommends installing video cameras for your added home security. He wants everyone to know how to use their security camera equipment and know the access passcodes.

#### **Public Hearing:**

**BSA Cal. No. 8-04-BZ – 78-15 Parsons Boulevard** - The BSA variance was introduced by Area 4 Chair Dr. Penny Stern, and she invited Mr. Todd Dale to present the application.

**Todd Dale, Attorney** *[representing the applicant]*- He introduced himself and Mr. William Sparano, the architect. He distributed a copy of the architectural rendering of the proposed renovation to all board members. This site is located on the eastside of Parsons Blvd., between 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 78<sup>th</sup> Road. It is zoned as an R2-3. There are two existing buildings on the site: a northern portion with a four-story school and a second building housing a synagogue. The proposed variance is to enlarge the synagogue structure by adding 2 stories and a connection [walk through bridge] between the two buildings. The structure's size would increase by 9,000 square feet, increasing the total space to 39,980 square feet. The height of the school building would be the same as the synagogue. This space is proposed for enlargement of the facility and classroom space and not to accommodate an increase of student body size. Their goal is to modernize and reduce classroom overcrowding challenges. The ground level of the synagogue would have a new cafeteria and entrance to the building. Currently, the lobby area has dual use as a gymnasium. The third floor would be divided into seven classrooms. This addition will allow for dedicated administrative office space.

Laboratory space will be included to strengthen the curriculum. The school has been operating in this community for the past 25 years.

**Dr. Penny Stern asked CB8 Members if they had any questions.**

**Marc A. Haken: How many classrooms are there now?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: Eighteen

**Marc A. Haken: How many students?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: Approximately 460, enrolled.

**Marc A. Haken: What are the ages of the students?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: Ages five to fourteen years old, attending Kindergarten to eight grades.

**Marc A. Haken: In [public] schools' gymnasiums are built to meet state physical education standards. Is it the same for private schools?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: Yes, this will meet any physical education requirements for private schools.

**Marc A. Haken: Are there any physical education requirements for private schools?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: This application is strictly focusing on the building's zoning application.

**Marc A. Haken: There was a substance abuse program at this location operating 25 years ago, is it still there?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: No. This indoor space will allow for the student's physical education to continue all year around. It will also allow for school presentations and assemblies.

**Allen Eisenstein: Can you describe the connection between the two buildings?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: Currently the school has four stories, the synagogue has two stories. A bridge will be built connecting the existing 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the school to the new third floor of the synagogue.

**Kevin Forrestal: What is the allowable FAR existing and proposed?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: Currently it is at 1.3 at 30,516 square feet. The district mostly limits an FAR to 1.0, a variance was granted in 2005. This proposal is an FAR of 1.81 at 39,980 square feet. Totaling approximately 9,000 square feet of additional space.

**Susan Cleary: What is the makeup of the student body?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: 406 boys

**Howard Fried: Is the new gymnasium going to be used instead of the front yard?**

Answer [Todd Dale]: It is my understanding; both will remain in use.

*Heather Bennett-Idels made a motion to accept the application to amend the variance for BSA Calendar No. 2021-83-BZ for 78-15 Parsons Blvd., seconded by Mary Maggio.*

**A roll call vote was taken.** Count in favor: 33 Opposed: 2

**Members in favor:** Dilafroz Ahmed, Heather Bennett-Idels, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Allen Eisenstein, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher, Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan Habib, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed Islam "Delwar", Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Jennifer Martin, Yaniv Meirov, David Mordukhaev, Dilip Nath, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman,

Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Amy Tse, and Jacob Weinberg.

**Members opposed:** Susan D. Cleary and Mary Maggio.

**Public Hearing:**

**BSA Cal. No. 2021-83-BZ 80-74 188<sup>th</sup> Street** – Area Chair Howard Fried introduced the application and invited Jay Goldstein to speak.

**Jay Goldstein, Attorney** [*representing the applicant*] - The property is located at 80-74 188<sup>th</sup> Street. The site was formally a two-family home. This congregation is currently renting space, and now would like a permanent site for double Mikveh services. They seek to construct and are asking for a variance for 795 square feet building for mikveh worship services, lecture hall, group study, small social events, youth programing, mental health services, and social services. They will also offer separate worship areas between men and women. They are requesting a variance for a house of worship within an R1-2 zoning district, which is contrary to ZR-24-111 FAR, accessory parking [25-30] not provided and a side yard less than the minimum required. The height of the structure will be compliant. They propose the ability to hold 300 worshippers. There will also be a kitchen, two entrances and bathrooms. Scheduled worship service hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m., 8 a.m., 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. and noon (depending upon the time of year).

**Marc A. Haken: There are many shuls in that area.**

**Howard Fried: There are seven in the area.**

**Marc A. Haken: Where are they [worshippers] supposed to park during the week and on non-Sabbath days?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: During the week, if there is not a social event, people walk to shul, as they do in other shuls throughout the area.

**Marc A. Haken: What if there is a party?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: They will park on the street, and it will be for a short duration of time.

**Marc A. Haken: If I have a family (myself, wife, and son), where are we supposed to park?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: They will not have weddings, catering service.

**Wendy Gennaro: How many people are regular attendees now?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: About 40 families.

**Martha Taylor: How far along is the development of this property?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: Currently, nothing is on the site beyond a fence.

**Kevin Forrestal: How big is the kitchen and what type of refrigeration is planned?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: The kitchen is 406 square feet; occupancy is 10 people. The plans don't show any gas lines for cooking in the facility.

**Dilip Nath: We must consider quality of life [issues]. Parking availability is limited in that area. It is especially difficult on seniors. We are destroying our community.**

**Howard Fried: How long are days of the week for Mikveh [service]?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: Mostly during the day, usually for three hours.

**Howard Fried: So, you are not going to provide any parking?**

**Answer** [*Jay Goldstein*]: No

**Howard Fried: There will be about 40 families for Mikveh?**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** Yes

**Howard Fried: I believe you are required to have 31 parking spaces if there was no variance.**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** Yes.

**Howard Fried: Is there a projection of 100 families attending service?**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** Yes. Usually only 20 -30 families will be attending, at any given time. During Shabbos we forecast forty families.

**Howard Fried: What about the neighbors? This is a residential street with driveways and one to two parking spaces in front of the homes. We are talking about 35 to 40 families attending services without a place to park. There is a medical building and bus stop down the street with no parking.**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** Most of the parties are in the morning and people will park for just an hour or two. There are commuter drivers and shoppers regularly parked in the area.

**Howard Fried: Where are those cars going to go? Did you do a parking study?**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** The information regarding it is included in the application.

**Dr. Penny Stern: Does the size of this church allow you to be exempt from a parking lot?**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** No, that is why we applied for a BSA.

**Howard Fried: Did the BSA application refer to the parking [situation]?**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** No. It is a residential area and the lot around the shul may only hold two cars.

**Howard Fried: There are various commercial establishments nearby, with customers in need of parking.**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** For the most part, the services will be at night. People will be parked only for an hour or two.

**Howard Fried: You don't just have drivers parking for a short term. There are express bus riders parking, persons going to the supermarket, etc.**

**Answer [Jay Goldstein]:** Yes.

*Marc A. Haken made a motion to accept the variance for street parking and reduced yard space for BSA Cal. No. 2021-83-BZ 80-74 188<sup>th</sup> Street, seconded by Dr. Penny Stern.*

**Dilafroz Ahmed:** I'm not so clear about this, the parking is a problem. Can we modify the motion to include a requirement for parking?

**Marc A. Haken:** I don't accept the amendment.

**Area 7 Chair Howard Fried called for a roll call vote.**

**A roll call vote was taken.** Count in favor: 7 Opposed: 26

Members in Favor: Yaniv Meirov, David Mordukhaev, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Mohammad Rahman, Charlton Rhee, and Jacob Weinberg.

Members opposed: Dilafroz Ahmed, Robert H. Block, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Allen Eisenstein, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher, Jr., John Gebhard, Wendy Gennaro, Ahsan

Habib, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Mohammed Islam “Delwar”, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Jennifer Martin, Dilip Nath, Tammy Oshero, Harbachan Singh, Dr. Penny Stern, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, and Amy Tse.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Kevin Forrestal made a motion to approve the minutes of September 14, 2022, seconded by Mary Maggio.

**Count in favor**   33                        **Opposed:**   0                        **Abstained:**   0  

**District Manager’s Report, November 2022** *[This written report was distributed, and the District Manager asked that Board Members pay special attention to the Department of Transportation’s Car Share information for Briarwood]*

**Mayor’s Community Affair’s Unit (CAU)**

The City of New York is under a state of emergency due to the influx of migrant coming to the city. The Department of Social Services and Department of Immigrant Affairs are working together to house these individuals. They are using Randall’s Island as a temporary triage area for the migrants. They remain there for a few days until the city decides where to send them. Some of them go on to stay with family members in the city or out of state. Others remain and they must find them permanent shelter.

**Department of Homeless Services (DHS)**

They are looking for donation of items for the migrants. Most of them only have the clothes on their backs. They will email me information on how to donate and I will include that on the November Newsletter.

**Police Department (NYPD)**

There was a graduating class of about 650 officers on October 17, 2022. These officers will be sent out to address crime at different locations under the supervision of training officers. There is no word as to how many will be assigned to the 107<sup>th</sup> Precinct. The Community Affairs team is concentrating on crime prevention by going out to senior centers to educate them about the different types of scams. They are on the rise. Additionally, there is an increase in stolen vehicles in the Queens South precincts. This is attributed to drivers leaving their cars running and unattended.

**Fire Department (FDNY)**

The Fire Department’s open house event went very well. They will be giving away batteries at Target located on Jamaica Avenue – details to follow. They continue to do the CPR training for those who are at least 15 years old. There has been no increase in fires nor a fatal fire for our area. There was no increase with the use of Narcan either.

**Department of City Planning (DCP)**

The 164<sup>th</sup> Street ULURP is with the City Council. There is still time for the proposal to be modified. The Council has about a month before rendering a final decision.

**Department of for the Aging (DFTA)**

The Medicare Open Enrollment started on October 15<sup>th</sup> and will close on December 7<sup>th</sup>. For more information, please contact HIICAP (Health Insurance Information Counselling and Assistance Program) at (212) 244-6469.

**Department of Sanitation (DSNY)**

Our superintendent reminded us that the organics collection is in effect now until the end of the year. They are still working on getting the center medians cleaned. They are removing debris; however, removing the weeds is a challenge. I have been advocating for Sanitation to have a plan, the tools and manpower to address the routine

maintenance of our center median. This was raised at Borough Cabinet chaired by QBP Richards who has been working on this issue as well. We will keep you posted once we have a resolution.

**Department of Buildings (DOT)**

There is a huge backlog for follow-up inspections for the properties that received the Requests for Corrective Action (RCA). The Department of Buildings are giving locations submitted by CBs and elected representatives’ priority for re-inspection

**Department of Transportation (DOT)**

The Department of Transportation informed us of a request to have a car share program in Briarwood. It will be located on 87<sup>th</sup> Road between 144<sup>th</sup> and 148<sup>th</sup> Streets. This will require the use of at least two parking space for that purpose. To learn more about the car share program go to:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/carshare.shtml>

*Happy Birthday to Board Members Susan Cleary, Howard Fried, and Ahsan Habib who celebrated their birthdays this month!*



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**Committee Reports:**

**Capital & Expense Budget Committee – FY2022 Capital & Expense Budget Priorities** - Marc A. Haken stated that the area committee meetings have not been very well attended.

**Chairperson Martha Taylor reminded everyone that the Borough President has asked for the record of attendance for these meetings.**

**Mr. Haken** asked everyone to review the budget items before a vote is taken to approve them. Capital budget items are almost the same as last year. Some items were completed or were underway. They were taken off the list. Some items were moved to continued support.

*Mary Maggio made a motion to accept the Community Board 8 Capital Budget Priorities, seconded by Susan Cleary*

Budget Director Haken asked if there was any discussion on the motion; seeing none, a hand vote was taken.

Count in favor   33                        Opposed:   0                        Abstained:   0  

**Approval of the Expense Budget Priorities** – Marc A. Haken asked for a motion to accept the expense budget.

*Kevin Forrestal made a motion to accept the Community Board 8 Expense Budget, seconded by Howard Fried.*

Budget Director, Marc A. Haken asked if there was any discussion on the motion; seeing none, a hand vote was taken.

Count in favor   33                        Opposed:   0                        Abstained:   0



**Marc A. Haken asked for a motion to accept the Needs Statement.**

*Michael Hannibal made a motion to accept the Community Board 8 District Needs Statement, seconded by Harbachan Singh.*

Budget Director, Marc A. Haken asked if there was any discussion on the motion; seeing none, a hand vote was taken.

**Count in favor**   33                        **Opposed:**   0                        **Abstained:**   0  

**Health Minute with Dr. Penny Stern, Health Committee Chair:**

She alerted the board members this is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She reminded everyone that women and men can develop breast cancer.

**Adjournment**

Mary Maggio made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 9:04 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sandra Aikens-Williams, CB8 staff  
November 7, 2022*