



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 Board Meeting held on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Dr. Allen Bennett, Robert H. Block, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Steven Sadofky, Seymour Schwartz, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Edward Chung, Susan D. Cleary, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Florence Fisher, Frank Magri, Jennifer Martin, Charlton Rhee, Jesse Rosenbaum, Douglas Sherman, Harbachan Singh, Rachele Van Arsdale and Stanley Weinblatt.

Others Present:

Jessica Douglas, representing Mayor Bill de Blasio, Alexander Bennett representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Stacey Yearwood representing Councilman Barry Grodenchik, Andrew Taranto representing State Senator Leroy Comrie, Anthony Lemma representing Assemblyman David Weprin, Michael Farca representing Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff member.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Martha Taylor called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

Wendy Phaff- Ms. Phaff represents Queens Center for Progress (QCP). This organization provides programs and services for people with developmental disabilities in Queens and has been in this neighborhood for 66 years. She announced an “Evening of Fine Food” event planned for February 28, 2017 at Terrace on the Park. Please visit www.queenscp.org for information on how to RSVP for this event. Ms. Phaff stated that QCP has a large volunteer program and asked to let her know if there are any organizations that could use their help. She also mentioned QCP’s work with Achilles International, which is a group that trains people with disabilities to run marathons.

Dennis Cooley – Mr. Cooley represents the Queens Congregation of the Christian Fellowship Center (*aka the Church in New York City*). He stated they have congregations in Queens for over 60 years and that five (5) of their seven (7) Queens properties are within CB8; three on Chevy Chase Street, one on Henley Road and one on Dunton Avenue. Mr. Cooley was there to report that since June 2016, the church properties received 232

anonymous building complaints reported through the City's 311 system. Up until June 2016, they had zero complaints during their 59 years of service to the community. He notified the Board that it is of great concern to the church since now the complaints are being made beyond church-owned properties and are being filed against individual members' homes. They believe that the complaints are being made fraudulently with the intent to cause trouble for the church. Mr. Cooley asked for the assistance of the Community Board, local representatives and the Borough President to help resolve these 311 complaints. They would like help to identify the individual entering the complaints to know if they pose a serious threat to the church and its members. *(Mr. Cooley left a packet with information for Board Members).*

Dr. Neeta Jain – Dr. Jain introduced herself to the Board as the newly appointed District Leader from the 25th Assembly District. She extended an invitation to attend her swearing in ceremony on Saturday, January 21, 2017. There will be light refreshments from 1:00 p.m.- 1:30 p.m. The swearing in ceremony will take place from 1:30 p.m – 2:15 p.m. It will be followed by entertainment and lunch. The event will take place at the Student Union Building Ballroom at Queens College, 65-30 Kissena Boulevard. Congressman Joseph Crowley and NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer will be special guests at the event. Please RSVP to njain01.21.17@gmail.com if you would like to attend.

James Marchetti – Mr. Marchetti is the owner of Carriage House Collision. There was a public hearing held on Monday, December 19, 2016 seeking an extension of term of a variance to permit the continued operation of the body shop. Mr. Marchetti stated that the problems they were having with parking of tow trucks have been corrected. He asked that if there are any future issues to contact him and he will promptly take care of the problem.

Alexander Bennett – Mr. Bennett came to make two announcements to the Board regarding the 6th Congressional District:

1.) Congresswoman Grace Meng has arranged for a representative from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to hold regular monthly office hours at her Northeast Queens District Office located at 40-13 159th Street. A VA representative will be available to meet in-person with Veterans, and/or their beneficiaries, to discuss benefits, services, and pending claims. The program started in December and has been very well received. Those seeking to meet with a VA representative must make an appointment.

2.) U.S. Rep. Grace Meng recently announced that the House Democratic leadership has selected her to serve on the powerful House Appropriations Committee. The committee is responsible for funding every federal agency, program, and project within the United States Government. Congresswoman Meng was sworn in for her third term on Tuesday, January 3, 2017.

Jessica Douglas – *(Queens Borough Director, Mayor's Office - Community Affairs Unit)* Ms. Douglas first wished everyone a Happy New Year and thanked all Community Board Members who attended the Mayor's Holiday Party. She announced that the NYC Commission on Human Rights, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, Community Affairs Unit, Public Engagement Unit, the Department of Consumer Affairs, and elected officials, are conducting a 5-borough subway outreach and launched digital and mobile transit app ads on December 20th to inform New Yorkers of legal protections against discrimination and harassment. The NYC Commission on Human Rights also created a "Bias Response Team" with staff members who respond to bias incidents and discrimination across the city. They receive information from callers, reports/tips from advocates and city agencies, such as the NYPD Hate Crimes Task Force, and from news media and social media reports. Bias Response Team members are stationed in every borough. If you witness someone being harassed, you may report it by calling (718) 722-3131.

The Department of Small Business Services has opened the application for a mentorship program geared towards minority and women business entrepreneurs (M/WBEs). The 28-week Corporate Alliance Program (CAP)/Entrepreneurs' Organization (EO) program, offered free of charge, connects M/WBEs with successful

entrepreneurs through supportive mentorship groups. Ms. Douglas stated that she would be available at the end of the meeting to answer any questions.

Salute to the Flag

Chairperson Martha Taylor led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Steve Sadofsky made a motion to approve the minutes of December 14, 2016, seconded by Carolann Foley.

Count in favor 35 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the minutes:

Jagir Singh Bains, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Dr. Allen Bennett, Robert H. Block, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman, Frances Peterson, Steven Sadofky, Seymour Schwartz, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg and Albert Willingham.

Board Members who did not approve the minutes:

None

Chairperson Martha Taylor made a couple of announcements:

- Chairperson Martha Taylor offered condolences to Simon Pelman whose lost his brother.
- Congratulated Board Member Rachele Van Arsdale on the birth of her baby.
- Chairperson Martha Taylor introduced a special guest, Deputy Inspector Scott Henry, who is the new Commanding Officer of the 107th Precinct.

Guest Speaker:

Deputy Inspector Scott Henry, NYPD 107th Precinct – Commanding Officer Henry stated that he has only been here one month and four days and has never felt more at home anywhere in such a short time. He mentioned how Carolann Foley has been guiding him through the long list of people he needs to meet. He is very happy to be here and remarked that in 23 years on the job, he has never seen such a positive relationship between the NYPD and the community. He stated that he worked in plain clothes for seven years before he came to be C.O. so he is not used to being in a uniform yet. He said there was a man waving to him as he was crossing the street and he thought he was trying to get his attention for something, but realized that he was just saying hello. That is a testament to the way this community and the NYPD work together. It needs to be replicated throughout the City. Everyone is doing an amazing job! He informed everyone that he is here to serve the community and to let him know if there is anything that he can do to help.

Allen Eisenstein –

Mr. Eisenstein thanked C.O. Henry for his help (on his first day of the job) with someone blocking his driveway, which was taken care of within a half hour.

Marc A. Haken –

He thanked C.O. Henry for his handling of the crime wave that Hilltop Village experienced recently. Mr. Haken told him how much he appreciated the car and foot patrols that were given to the area. Unfortunately, the perpetrator was not caught but he has moved on to somewhere else.

Deputy Inspector Scott Henry – He stated that it is an ongoing investigation so he is unable to get into the specifics of it. He continued in saying that if no one could confirm that this was the individual involved, even if we are pretty convinced that it was, no legal action can be taken.

District Manager’s Report, January 2017

NYPD

The 107th Precinct’s crime rate has gone down in key categories in 2016 as compared to 2015. Robberies were down 17% but burglaries went up. The Department warns of a group of individuals who appears to move from state to state posing as utility company representatives. They usually work in pairs. While one person goes to your utility line feigning to look at the problem the other roams the house and steals. He asked that residents be vigilant and not to allow anyone onto their property without valid I.D. This was echoed by the representatives from Con Edison, DEP and other City agencies.

There were four (4) car break-ins in one night (12/22/2016). It appears that while vehicles parked a few blocks away to see the beautifully decorated house on Chevy Chase Street, items were stolen from the vehicles. Remember to lock your car doors and not to leave valuables in your car, especially within view.

The issue of illegal parking of tractor trailers on the Horace Harding Expressway and other locations in CB8 was raised. The NYPD does not have tow trucks readily available with the capability to tow away such large vehicles. Booting the vehicles is not an option, as it is used only when the vehicle has a number of outstanding tickets. These commercial vehicles pay the tickets promptly. They may have to do a large operation involving multiple agencies. They will need a certain number of complaints and this will take some time.

DOB

Community Board 8 statistics for 2016 will be provided next month. So far, there were 45 new building (NB) applications, 132 Alteration 1 (Alt1) applications and 47 full demolitions (DM).

It was reiterated that in regards to reconnecting utility service, they must speak to their master plumbers about Limited Alteration Applications (LAA). The Master Plumber must request the inspection or self-certify before the utility company can reconnect service.

Human Resources Administration

The agency is constantly looking for ways to improve their services. Clients may now go to www.nyc.gov/accessnyc to view the status of their applications/benefits online even before they receive notification by mail. They can use their smart phone to send requested information as well. They can request an on-demand interview by calling the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) AKA Food Stamps Interview Telephone Line at 718-762-7669.

FDNY

We were informed that there is a new class of 300+ probationary officers scheduled to graduate in May. The 2016 v. 2015 stats are as follows:

Categories:	2016	2015
Structural Fires	376	384
Non-structural fires	316	395
Suspicious fires	19	22
Emergencies	6323	6355
Medical Emergencies	3413	3200
False Alarms	352	279

There was a five alarm fire on December 30th that started around 6:30 p.m. on Vleigh Place. Most of the businesses closed around 3:00 p.m. The investigation as to the cause of the fire is ongoing.

Con Edison

It was re-iterated that Con Edison workers always have I.D. and they are never in a rush to get into your home. You can call them and describe the person at your door. Customer service always have a picture of the Con Edison employee on their computer and will verify that the person is an employee.

The company revamped its website and made it more user friendly. In addition, residents can report power outages now online and find energy efficiency information.

DOH&MH

Flyers for the NYCWELL were distributed with information about accessing mental health support. It is imperative that restaurants have food handler licenses on site during an inspection. If there is no such license, the agency will have to shut down the restaurant. If the license is lost, the licensee must go in person; pay a fee and it will be reissued.

DEP

There continues to be noise complaints for the sirens of ambulances in the vicinity of Queens Hospital Center.

DEP’s representatives always have I.D. when they try to gain access to someone’s property. They usually leave a door hanger in advance informing the residents when they are coming.

DSNY

The issue of illegal dumping was brought to the attention of Sanitation Enforcement within the district.

Mayor’s CAU

It has now been a year since a representative from HPD has attended a District Service Cabinet meeting at CB8. This is in violation of the New York City Charter that mandates HPD’s attendance. This issue will be brought to the attention of the Commissioner Carrion of the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit for resolution.

NYS Comptroller

The agency reiterated that the staff is willing to come out to senior centers and other organizations to check if they have any unclaimed funds.

Happy Birthday to Board Members: Jagir Singh Bains, Kenneth Cohen II, Maria DeInnocentiis, Frank Magri, Sylvia Hernandez and Martha Taylor.



During the District Manager’s report Chairperson Martha Taylor advised that she had heard from Jesssica Douglas regarding HPD. Ms. Douglas informed her that she had spoken to the Deputy Commissioner of HPD and we have been assured that HPD will be in attendance at our next District Service Cabinet Meeting with a report.

Borough President’s Representative – Susie Tanenbaum

- Ms. Tanenbaum wished everyone a Happy New Year!
- She distributed a newsletter from Borough President Katz.

- Ms. Tanenbaum informed everyone of the Borough President's State of the Borough address which will be on Friday, January 27, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at York College. She invited all to attend and pointed out that the video and text of the address will be available shortly thereafter on the Borough President's website.
- An invitation was given for all to attend Borough President Katz' Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration in conjunction with the Queens Library. This year featuring Freedom Fighters of the Civil Rights Era. This event is always organized with tremendous involvement by the Borough President's African American Heritage Committee. She acknowledged that two of CB8's Board Members; Marc A. Haken and Harbachan Singh are dedicated members of the Committee. She thanked them for all of their help.

NYC Department of City Planning - Stephen Everett

- Nothing to report.

Committee Reports:

Public Hearing – BSA Cal No. 677-53-BZ - Carriage House Collision:

Steven Konigsberg, Zoning Committee Chair:

Steven Konigsberg – A public hearing was held on December 19, 2016 for an application seeking an extension of term of a variance to permit the continued operation of a Use Group 16 Auto Body Repair Shop for Carriage House Collision at 61-28 Fresh Meadow Lane. The business has been at the same location for over five decades. There are no complaints concerning any noise, debris or improper activities. The main problem discussed at the hearing was that their vehicles were being parked in and around the neighborhood in violation of parking regulations. This issue was having an adverse impact on the people of the neighborhood. There is a public school close by who reported difficulties with buses getting in and out of the bus stops. Also there were vehicles being worked on or vehicles left by customers waiting for work to be done in the area. At the hearing, the representation was made by the owner of the premises and their attorney. They stated they would remediate the situation and remove all of the improperly parked vehicles immediately and make sure that the situation did not happen again. They did provide us with a letter to that effect stating that they had removed all the vehicles and tow trucks and that they would park any used tow trucks within their own premises or next door on private property. At the conclusion of the meeting, based upon what we felt was a long-running, ongoing situation which had not been addressed until the meeting, a motion was made to approve the variance, not for the ten (10) years requested but for one (1) year on condition that they are in compliance with the parking regulations.

Steven Konigsberg – (*Question addressed to Jim Gallagher Jr.*) Has there been any follow up with the Principal of the public school?

Jim Gallagher Jr. – There have been complaints for people parking on Fresh Meadow Lane where there are “No Parking Anytime” signs.

Carolann Foley – How do we know that they are vehicles parked/owned by Carriage House?

Steven Konigsberg – The owner of Carriage House did make a request that if there are ever any questions or problems with the neighbors or the principal, they should reach out to him. Did anyone go to speak to the owner?

Jim Gallagher Jr. – I haven't heard from the principal.

Marc A. Haken – We had a hearing for this business previously and there were the exact same complaints over that period of ten (10) years. Now that it is time to renew the variance, the owner is now bending over backwards to work with the Community Board. What happened during the previous ten (10) years?

Steven Konigsberg – This was reflected in the minutes that were distributed when specifically asked to address that situation. When asked whether or not he was aware if it was permissible or prohibited to park the vehicles during daytime hours or overnight, his response was “I can't give you an honest answer for that question”. At the hearing it was just a consensus for the approved motion. We did not have the required quorum.

Mark J. Lefkof – I am in agreement with what Mr. Haken just said. I have been a member of this Board for many years and I remember the previous hearing. The no parking signs have been there for over 20 years on that street. Ignorance of the law is no excuse.

Mark J. Lefkof made a Motion to approve BSA Cal No. 677-35-BZ, 81-28 Fresh Meadow Lane for a one year extension of the variance, seconded by Kevin Forrestal.

Discussion on the Motion:

Simon Pelman – New York City is in need of businesses and tax revenue. I do not approve of someone who violates the rules and regulations; however, filing a variance is a very arduous and expensive proposition. I have done it many times. A one year variance means he now has to come back next year with all of the legal representation. That is very expensive! I would like to amend the motion, with your permission and a vote, to a five (5) year contingent. Also every two (2) years they have to come back with a report as to what they are doing to correct any complaints and to work with the principal of the school. Then he will not have the expense of filing for the variance again in a year.

Mark J. Lefkof – I respect what you are proposing and I understand it exactly, but based on my experience with this location, these same promises were made the last time they met with us and the time before that. I cannot accept your friendly amendment. We would have to vote on it separately if it is amended and seconded.

Simon Pelman made a Motion to amend to increase the extension of the variance for BSA Cal No. 677-35-BZ, 81-28 Fresh Meadow Lane from one (1) year to five (5) years, along with bi-annual (every 2 years) reporting as to what the current status is in terms of the parking situation, seconded by Carolann Foley.

Count in favor 21 Opposed: 14 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the Amendment to increase the variance to five (5) years:

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen Bennett, Robert H. Block, Maria DeInnocentiis, Carolann Foley, Howard A. Fried, Joshua Glikman, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman, Steven Sadofky, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members who did not approve the Amendment to increase the variance to five (5) years:

Carolyn Baker-Brown, Allen Eisenstein, Kevin Forrestal, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mark J. Lefkof, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz and Albert Willingham.

The proposed amendment has been accepted.

Steven Konigsberg asked for a roll call vote to approve the application for a five (5) year variance.

Count in favor 23 Opposed: 12 Abstained: 0

Board Members who approved the application for a five (5) year variance:

Jagir Singh Bains, Dr. Allen Bennett, Robert H. Block, Maria DeInnocentiis, Carolann Foley, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, Bhitihara-Martha Fulton, Joshua Glikman, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Mary Maggio, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Tammy Osherov, Simon Pelman, Steven Sadofky, Martha Taylor, and Jacob Weinberg.

Board Members who did not approve the application for a five (5) year variance:

Carolyn Baker-Brown, Allen Eisenstein, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Fakrul “Delwar” Islam, Mark J. Lefkof, Frances Peterson, Seymour Schwartz, Mohammed Tohin and Albert Willingham.

Liquor License Committee Report – 61-27 186th Street, Mayflower International Hotel Group, Inc:

Michael Hannibal, Liquor License Committee Chair:

Michael Hannibal – Last night the Liquor License Committee met to discuss a full liquor license application for the Mayflower International Hotel Group, Inc. located at 61-27 186th Street. The establishment was approved for the application with a vote of 10 in favor and 2 opposed. They are preparing to open on January 27, 2017.

Transportation Committee Report – Congestion Pricing Letter:

Chairperson Martha Taylor – A letter was drafted regarding Congestion Pricing to be sent to Governor Cuomo. The letter is in your packets. We are looking for approval to send.

Mark J. Lefkof made a Motion to approve to send the Congestion Pricing Letter to Governor Andrew Cuomo, seconded by Carolann Foley.

Bright Dae-Jung Limm – I plan to support this letter but I just want state on the record that I do support the general concept that the plan proposes. I am not supporting this plan is because I worry about whether the money that is supposed to be allocated in part to highways and bridges will actually happen. Based on MTA history that has not always been the case. I don't see any big structural changes in that regard. That is my concern.

Chairperson Martha Taylor – I have the same worries that you have, but I have other worries also. I am vehemently opposed to it. I think the only people in favor of it are those with no disabilities and can easily climb subway steps. Not everyone can do that. It places a very unfair burden on anyone with those problems. I will never be in favor of the plan.

Chairperson Martha Taylor asked for a hand vote to approve sending the letter.

The vote passed unanimously, with no opposition

Adjournment

Carolann Foley made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:16 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff
January 18, 2017*