



Chairman, Alvin Warshaviak

*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, June 10, 2015 at the Hillcrest Jewish Center, 183-02 Union Turnpike in Flushing, New York.

Attendance:

Board Members Present:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, Howard A. Fried, James Gallagher Jr., Joshua Glikman, Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, and Albert Willingham.

Board Members Absent:

Dr. Allen J. Bennett, Edward Chung, Kenneth Cohen II, Monica Corbett, Carolann Foley, Fakrul "Delwar" Islam, Frank Magri, Jennifer Martin, Rabbi Shlomo Nisanov, Simon Pelman, Jesse Rosenbaum, Douglas Sherman, and Alvin Warshaviak.

Others Present:

Alexander Bennett representing Congresswoman Grace Meng, Adam Feng Chen representing NYC Public Advocate Letitia James, Susie Tanenbaum representing Borough President Melinda Katz, Council Member Rory Lancman, Dominic Panakal representing Councilman Rory Lancman, Steph Campanha representing State Senator Tony Avella, Aaron Siegel representing Assembly Member David Weprin, Marilla Li representing Assembly Member Nily Rozic, Stephen Everett of City Planning, Marie Adam-Ovide, CB8 District Manager, and Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff member.

Call to Order:

First Vice Chair Stanley Weinblatt called this Board Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Public Participation:

Joseph Lin- IDNYC Outreach Organizer with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. IDNYC is the free municipal ID program that launched in January. It comes with a lot of discounts and is recognized by City agencies throughout New York. If there are any community organizations that want more information about IDNYC, please come speak with me. I also left brochures on the table. The card comes with movie and Broadway show discounts. It can be used to enter schools and other city buildings. It is recognized by the NYPD. There is a lot more information about it so make sure to take one of my brochures. Call 311 to make an appointment or go to our website at nyc.gov/idnyc. To enroll in person, the Jamaica and Flushing Libraries are your closest enrollment sites. There is also an enrollment site at the Queens Borough President's office until tomorrow.

James Gallagher, Jr. – On May 29th President Obama declared that June is Caribbean-American Heritage Month, to encourage all Americans to celebrate the history and culture of Caribbean Americans with appropriate

ceremonies and activities. I would also like to invite everyone to come to our next Fresh Meadows Homeowners' Civic Association meeting. There will be a Town Hall meeting called by Council Member Rory Lancman to discuss our ongoing flooding problem on Utopia Parkway. Some of the agencies have now come up with solutions which will be shared with the community. We had flooding on Utopia Parkway with the storm we had about 10 days ago. They fixed one corner on 65th Avenue but 67th Avenue is still flooded and further up towards 73rd Avenue also. All are welcome to our next Civic Meeting on Wednesday, June 24th at Utopia Jewish Center in Fresh Meadows for community updates.

Marc A. Haken – I am the President of Friends of Cunningham Park. If you look in your packets you will see the schedule of our events this summer, beginning on June 22nd with the New York Philharmonic and fireworks. There will be 2 Shakespeare presentations at the end of July and August with Children's Workshops. Also we will present 5 movies and a 60's Concert. As President of Hilltop Village Co-op #4, last Thursday evening I had my annual meeting and our District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide was there to make a presentation. When she arrived I noticed how people were coming up to her to say hello and thanking her for her assistance. Our Community Board office is the best in Queens. The staffers are knowledgeable; they know what they are supposed to do. They are cross-trained in case someone is out for a period of time, each can do the job of the other. This happened by design by our District Manager Marie Adam-Ovide who trained and groomed her staff in that way. We, who are members of the board who represent civic groups, apartment and co-op groups and churches, really appreciate it. Thank you so much Marie, on behalf of my community.

Aaron Siegel, representing Assembly Member David Weprin – On Monday June 29th in conjunction with Senator Leroy Comrie's office, Assembly Member David Weprin will be hosting a Fire Safety Prevention Event from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Martin Van Buren High School. All are welcome to attend.

Paul Lazauskas, St. John's University – Our annual summer concert is taking place on Tuesday, July 28th at 7:00 p.m. on the Great Lawn. In the event of rain it will be held indoors at the Little Theatre. The title this year is *Queens Symphony Orchestra Brings Broadway to St. John's University*. I left some flyers for everyone at the table. There will also be a Safe Disposal Event at St. John's on Sunday, August 2nd in the main parking lot on the corner of Utopia Parkway and Union Turnpike.

Salute to the Flag

First Vice Chair Stanley Weinblatt led the salute to the flag.

Approval of Minutes:

Mark J. Lefkof made a motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2015, seconded by Steven Sadofsky.

Count in favor 35 **Opposed: 0 **Abstained: 0****

Board Members who approved the minutes:

Dilafroz Ahmed, Jagir Singh Bains, Robert H. Block, Carolyn Baker-Brown, Susan D. Cleary, Maria DeInnocentiis, Allen Eisenstein, Mary Maggio Fischer, Florence Fisher, Kevin Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr., Marc A. Haken, Michael Hannibal, Robert Harris, Sylvia Hernandez, Tami Hirsch, Steven Konigsberg, Paul S. Lazauskas, Mark J. Lefkof, Bright Dae-Jung Limm, Mitch Lisker, Elke Maerz, Tamara Osherov, Frances Peterson, Charlton Rhee, Samuel Rodriguez, Steven Sadofsky, Seymour Schwartz, Michael F. Sidell, Harbachan Singh, Martha Taylor, Mohammed Tohin, Jacob Weinberg, Stanley Weinblatt, and Albert Willingham.

Board Members who did not approve the minutes:

None

First Vice-Chair Report – Stanley Weinblatt:

- Mr. Weinblatt announced that Dilafroz Ahmed will represent CB 8 on Borough President Katz’ Cultural Affairs Initiative. She will meet with the Borough President once a month.
- Dr. Allen Bennett is in the hospital. He is not taking calls but welcomes greeting cards and prayers.

District Manager’s Report, June 2015

HEALTH FAIR

Please sign up to volunteer to work with us for the annual CB8 Health Fair on Friday, June 26th. We cannot do it alone. We will gladly accept all the help you can give. We also need blood donors. St. John’s University is willing to sponsor a Blood Drive at the Health Fair this year. In order for this to happen we must guarantee 30 donors. Please consider donating blood. Call us or sign the sheet on the table before you leave tonight.

PARKS

Parks Manager Kevin Selig submitted a list of Cunningham Park events for the summer.

DOB

The Department of Buildings’ representative stated that the administration will be focusing on big building projects. Resources will be used to do spot inspections to ensure that the workers, pedestrians and the building are safe. Complaints received against one and two family dwellings will have to be triaged to address the most important ones. When audits are requested many man hours are used. Alteration 1 and New Building applications may take up to seven months from submission to the permitting process. When filing a complaint it is important to be specific.

- What is the issue? [illegal occupancy v. illegal conversion, work without permit]
- When does it occur? [What day of the week? what time of day or night?]
- Where is the issue? [Attic, cellar, back of property]

The zoning regulation is more complex than what is presented in the red Zoning Handbook. The Department of Buildings could use more clerical staff in addition to more plan examiners and inspectors.

The agency will have a new website in the near future. The agency is also looking to have training sessions for the elected officials’ staff and Community Boards’ staff. At the training they will learn how to navigate the website to find information. This will assist them in triaging the complaints that are forwarded to Buildings. The training will be held after the agency has launched the new website. They would also like to have training on zoning as well.

I asked the Department of City Planning’s representative if he could collaborate with Buildings on the zoning training. Stephen Everett will discuss and work with buildings on this.

DCP

The DCP representative stated that the Jamaica Plan Now will have a meeting this week with those chosen to participate. He will have more information for the board meeting next week. Last night a meeting was held with CB12 on the “wayfinding” signs. They are signs showing how to go to the different points of interest in the Jamaica Plan Now area. He stated that they should be reaching out to Community Board 8 soon for a similar meeting. Stephen Everett provided me with the contact person from DOT that is handing this.

I have since contacted Ms. Jennifer Most. The meeting will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. I hope that members from our community that reside within the Jamaica Now Plan will come and give their input. The turnout for Community Board 12 was only eleven. Community Board 8 should have more people from Briarwood, Jamaica Estates and Jamaica Hills willing to participate. At this time, we are looking at June 24th or June 25th. I am assisting DOT in securing Hillside Manor located at 188-11 Hillside Avenue for this meeting.

DDC

Concerns were raised regarding the final restoration of streets in Jamaica Estates. I have spoken to the representative from QED989 and she will give me a list of the locations that DDC worked on under her project. We want to ensure that they have repaired them properly. If not, letters will be sent to DOT requesting resurfacing.

DOT

I recently learned that Hillside Avenue will be resurfaced by July 31, 2015. The resurfacing will be done at night.

DOH & MH

The Department of Health in collaboration with the SLA will host free training sessions on, "Alcohol, Minors and Avoiding Underage Sales." Please call 347-396-7998. The training is for three hours. Establishments with liquor licenses will receive a certificate of completion that can serve as an affirmative defense for businesses cited by SLA for three years.

HPD

May 31, 2015 is the end of the heating season. As of June 1, 2015, the agency stopped taking any complaints regarding heat. Residents may still contact them to file hot water complaints.

The Department of Housing Preservation in collaboration with the NYC Commission on Human Rights will host a symposium called Fair Housing - It's the Law! This will be held on Thursday, June 18, 2015 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Brooklyn Law School located at 205 State Street in Brooklyn. Please RSVP by emailing buckeye@hpd.nyc.gov or by calling 212-863-8033.

The HPD representative also informed us that while the landlords are required to register with her agency; however, they are not required to register their leases with the HPD.

Marie Adam-Ovide

Happy Birthday to Elke Maerz and Mohammed Tohin who are celebrating their birthdays this month!

Council Member – Rory Lancman

- The City Council will hopefully wrap up the budget by the end of this month. The City's finances are in pretty good shape. We are fighting over how much to add rather than how much to cut, which is always nice. The Council is trying to get 1,000 more cops which would be terrific. I do not understand the Mayor's resistance. His own Police Commissioner is asking for more cops. Although crime overall continues to go down, there is a spike in shootings and murders. We will see what the end result is.
- I just came from a meeting with the Jamaica Hills Merchants Association along Hillside Avenue, half of which is part of CB8. They had their first Town Hall meeting tonight.
- This weekend we have 2 family days going on. One is in CB12 at Rufus King Park. Then on Sunday there is one at the Electric Playground.

Marc A Haken – Do you see the possibility of additional funds to open our libraries on Saturdays?

Answer: I don't know if we are going to be able to open our libraries six days a week. It's something that we would all want. I really think that it should be a City priority. As of now we know that we are at least increasing the libraries capital budget by about \$300 Million. That is for ALL the libraries. I don't know if we are able to get the 6 day service.

Marc A Haken – What about additional funds for DYCD for additional youth programs, after schools, weekends and night?

Answer: The Mayor had proposed cutting funding for the Summer and Beacon programs and we were able to get that back. We will see at the end if we have more resources for more summer youth employment and more summer youth activities. We did add a significant amount of after school programs to the Middle Schools this year.

Susan Cleary – Do you know why the Kew Gardens Hill Library construction has been stalled?

Answer: *I do. It is because the City failed to properly supervise the contractor who completely failed to do his job. I think at one point, it may have happened already, they were looking to bring in a new contractor. It was specifically failure of City Government. It was not like they were stealing money or some engineering obstacle that they hadn't foreseen. Just that the contractor failed to do his job.*

Albert Willingham – Do you have any updates on the transit over at the Briarwood station? We have been waiting for that to be completed for a very long time.

Answer: *I know that Sey's Briarwood Community Association may have been given some timelines by DOT. I don't want to give any incorrect timelines.*

Seymour Schwartz: They expect to finish the northern section of the boulevard that they are working on by the end of the year. The contractor is anxious to get to work on the elevator but the MTA has not yet permitted it. That may start sometime next year. By the close of the year, they should shift over all of the work to the south side. Nobody is happy about it. We did get the name change to Briarwood station.

Mike Sidell – I get a lot of complaints about the Kew Gardens Hill temporary library. People are saying it is self service and they are going to the Pomonok library instead. The workers there have to be more involved with the patrons.

Answer: *I could mention that to the library.*

Mike Sidell – Also on a sad note, this Saturday there was a triple shooting in East Harlem. Anthony Frye was shot and killed, an 18 year old that lived in Briarwood and also went to St. Nicholas Tolentine. The funeral is this Friday. We need more cops, it affects all of us.

Answer: *Like I said, I don't understand. Our Police Commissioner is asking the Mayor for more cops and the City has the resources.*

Mark J. Lefkof – At my last Public Safety Committee Meeting, you were very helpful in setting up the meeting and attending with the higher ups in the FDNY. I will be having another meeting on Monday, June 29th and if you or one of your staff could be in attendance that would be great.

Answer: *Yes, either I or one of my staff will attend. Did anyone here attend the 150th Anniversary FDNY Firehouse open houses? [Several people raised their hands] Everyone, have a wonderful summer! You can always reach me and I am here to help.*

Borough President's Representative – Susie Tanenbaum

- I want to acknowledge that Jagir Singh Bains is back after several months of being away. We know that this has been a difficult time for you. The Borough President's office has been keeping you in our thoughts and prayers and are very happy to have you back. If you need anything you know we are all here for you.
- Last month I announced that Borough President Katz was sponsoring her annual Memorial Day event in the Victory Garden outside of Borough Hall. I did not know at the time that our own Sey Schwartz was going to be one of the presenters. Sey spoke of his experiences in WWII in the Pacific. His presentation was so moving. I just want everyone to know that he did an extraordinary job representing the board and speaking as a Veteran. Thank you for your participation.
- Last Thursday evening BP Katz delivered readings at the annual shareholders meeting of the Hilltop Village Cooperative #4 where Marc A. Haken is President. Marc was installed as President for the 36th time. Congratulations to you Marc.
- Monday night Borough President Katz presided over the annual Community Board installation ceremony. I want to congratulate everyone on CB8 who attended. All the new and re-appointed members. Thanks for all the work that you do.
- Last night Borough President Katz sponsored her annual celebration of Phillipino Independence Day and honored four outstanding members of the community. Included were two health care practitioners: one associate publisher of the Phillipino Reporter Newspaper and the other, an actor, Jason Perez, who is a rising star and resident of Fresh Meadows. I want to publicly thank Jim Gallagher and Yolanda Delacruz Gallagher for recommending several of the honorees for last night's event. Thanks to Yolanda for getting up and saying a few words in her capacity as the first Phillipino American who was elected district leader in the Northeast.
- Borough President Katz is inaugurating **the Katz Concert Series**. You can check out our website as well as her Facebook page for more information. I want to invite you all to a concert featuring Yoel Sharabi, "A

Celebration of Jerusalem”, which is coming up on Tuesday, June 30th at 6:00 p.m. at MacDonald Park in Forest Hills. I hope to see you all there.

- I want to wish all those observing Ramadan starting on June 18th a blessed Ramadan and a very happy summer to all. I hope to see all of you at the CB8 Health Fair, which is an event you don’t want to miss.

Office of City Planning – Stephen Everett

- I have one short update on the Citywide Proposed Text Amendment on Zoning for Quality and Affordability. We have more information now on our website including a district profile for CB8 and each of the other 58 Community Boards in the city. The information will explain how the text will affect the district, in which areas and in what capacity. I will be around this evening after we adjourn if there are any questions. I will be in the office if anyone has any questions at any time they can call me at #718-286-3165. Have a great summer everyone!

Adjournment

Mark J. Lefkof made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:11 p.m., seconded by Marc A. Haken.

*Respectfully submitted,
Alma Karassavidis, CB8 staff
June 15, 2015*