



COMMUNITY BOARD No. 3, Q.
82-11 37th Avenue, Suite 606
Jackson Heights, New York 11372
Telephone: (718) 458-2707 Fax: (718) 458-3316
Website: www.CB3QN.NYC.GOV
Email: Communityboard3@nyc.rr.com

BOARD MEETING

Thursday, May 21, 2015

The Louis Armstrong School
32-02 Junction Blvd. East Elmhurst, N.Y.

ATTENDANCE

Patrick Beckles
Emma Brandt
Ann S. Brown
Elba Buendia
Sonya Davis Roberts
Vivian Dock
Renetta English
Vasantraï Gandhi
Patricia Glunt
Larinda Hooks
Joyce Hucless-Julian
Stephen Kulhanek
Marta Lebreton
Lynda McDougald
Martin Maier
Caridad Mak
Bill Meehan
Lisa Mesulam
Ralph Moreno
Laverne Nimmons
Philip Papas
Dorothy Phelan
Jessica Ramos
Fausto Rodriguez
Jairo Rodriguez
Leoncio Romero
Edmund Rosenbaum
Agha Muhammed Saleh
Jimmy Smith
Arthur Teiler
Shanel Thomas
Hamlett Wallace
Edwin Westley
Camilo Zamora

Giovanna A. Reid, District Manager
Keisha Howard (Recorder)

ABSENT

Shiv Dass
Ladislá Pérez
Daïvd Rosero
Pat Thorpe

Guests

Yessika Giraldo , Rep., CM. Daniel Dromm
CM. Julissa Ferreras , Jorge Fangul, Cheyenne Aguayo, Rep.,
Gary Gilbert, Rep. Assem. Hon Michael DenDekker
Barbara Jackson, Rep., Congressman Crowley
Lisa Atkins, Rep., Borough President's Office
Fred Lee, City Planning, Q.B.P.O
Nicole Garcia – Queens Commissioner DOT

Please note: The next Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 18, 2015 at 7:00PM.

Stephen Kulhanek, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:45PM and welcomed all in attendance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Martin Maier, Board Member, invited the public to the Jackson Heights Art Show which will be held on Saturday, May 30th and Sunday, May 31st 2015 from 12 noon to 4pm and 6:30 to 8:30 pm respectively at St. Marks Parish Church located on 82nd Street & 34th Ave.

Steven Kulhanek, Chairman, read a letter from Nicole Bailey, the Principal of "The Learning Tree Multi-Cultural School".

Good evening, my name is Nicole Bailey. I am the founder and Principal of "The Learning Tree Multi-Cultural School." We are an elementary/middle school, serving children in grades Pre-K – 8.

It has been brought to my attention that my neighbor up the street, "Malcolm X Daycare Center" building is to be sold. The daycare center has been a staple in the Corona, East-Elmhurst community for many years. The loss of this icon, due to the sale of this property by its owner, represents an unfavorable 'shift' in prioritizing as regards to the needs of this community. For many years, the community has been served socially, and landlords have benefitted economically, from the presence of service providers such as Malcolm X Daycare Center. With the sale of this building, the community will be left with a hole that it will be challenged to fill. Services are becoming passé, in exchange for the "big bucks." We must remember, however, that a community, a neighborhood, is made up of people, and those people need services.

We need Community Board #3 to support the continuance of this building to be used as the "Malcolm X Daycare Center" site.

The Malcolm X Daycare Center is certainly a "landmark" institution in this area. Perhaps an amicable solution to this dilemma can be to have the building designated as an official "Landmark" building; preserving the culture and history of a people during an upcoming shift.

Without service institutions, the push for revitalization in this community will benefit no one. We look forward to a balance that will actually benefit both the commercial, as well as residential participants in this community.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Education Committee – Lisa Mesulam, Chair

School Construction Authority – 69-01 34th Ave(Former White Castle Regional Office).

Danielle Shaft from the School Construction Authority said that Council Member Daniel Dromm found the site and referred it to SCA. She introduced, Kendrick Ou, Senior Director of the Real Estate Department.

Mr. Ou said that the SCA has started the public review process for the proposed new school site located on the north side of 34th Ave between 69th & 70th Street. The SCA is proposing to acquire the property, demolish the existing building that's on site and construct a new primary school facility with approximately 450 seats. In order for the SCA to move forward with the project, the public review process has started which includes a request to go through the Community Board and the Education Council number 30 to hold a public hearing.

Given the extraordinary need for schools in this part of Queens, the Department of Education's capital plan has identified the need for 1300 additional seats, of which about 900 were funded. The SCA has evaluated this site and believe that it is a great location that will eliminate overcrowding at nearby schools like PS152 and PS69.

Philip Papas, Board Member, said it's a great spot for this school and he is happy to see this project. He said he knows there are other schools on 34th Ave and a bike lane on both sides, but when school is dismissed there is a lot of double parking and this causes congestion at times. He would like to know if there is anything in place to correct the congestion being that there is a highway there.

Danielle Shaft said that they haven't started on designs as yet, but traffic study would definitely be incorporated in the design.

Agha Saleh, Board Member, said it's wonderful to have another school in the district. But since it's so close to the BQE, with all this traffic, how will they control all that noise & pollution when it starts to affect the children.

Kendrick Ou said that there are a lot of schools next to rail lines and under the flight path for the airports, but the SCA has very robust design standards. All new SCA's buildings must provide interior classroom noise attenuations that will allow for classroom instruction. Through the designs and the engineering, the SCA will be able to address these concerns.

Patricia Glunt, Board Member, asked the SCA how they will accommodate the teachers that need parking in the area, since the residents are already struggling to find parking. She said that outdoor spaces and windows that can

open are very important for children and teachers in classrooms. How will SCA accommodate all of these issues.

Kendrick Ou stated that there will be onsite school yard space on that is 200 by 100 feet. In terms of parking, SCA does not provide on-site parking. Every inch of space that is available to them will be used for school yard or instructional space. They will continue to consult with Department of Transportation as part of the impact analysis to look at things like parking.

Traffic/Transportation – *Steven Kulhanek, Chair*

DOT – 108 Street Bicycle Network Connection- Bike Lanes

Patrick Kennedy, Project Manager for the DOT Bicycle Program, said that his agency is planning a re-design of 111th Street by Flushing Meadows Corona Park in CB4. The connection is in place at 34th Ave. He said whenever they look at bike routes for design & construction they always try to connect it to the existing network and in this case it would be 34th Avenue & 108th Street.

DOT would install shared lane markings that serve a dual purpose of instructing bicyclists where to be so that they would be out of the range of parked vehicles and also to inform motorists that there might be a cyclist down the roadway. From Northern Blvd. to Ditmars Blvd., the proposal is for the street to become a little wider. The existing road is 48 feet wide they will add bike lanes to that. There will be parking lanes on one side, the travel lanes on the other side and the bike lanes in the middle of that because there will be enough space on the roadway.

Arturo Sanchez, Board Member said he is a little confused about how things are planned out in the community and the City in general. One of the things that we do know that's going on in CB3 is the development of massive projects along Northern Blvd., and Flushing Meadow Corona Park which clearly relate to the traffic flow and make the development of a bike lane rather problematic. He asked: How is it that we can have these projects that clearly will have an impact on traffic and at the same time along these very streets we are proposing a bike lane?

Patrick Kennedy, Project Manager, said DOT is not removing any travel lanes, motorists still have the opportunity to travel both ways on the street. What they are doing is taking the existing roadway width and organizing the roadway space. There is enough space for bikes to ride safely, vehicles to move safely and vehicles to park.

Leoncio Romero, Board Member, said that he welcomes these kind of projects. In CB3 there are not many bike lanes. He asked which city agency is responsible for assuring that when those utility companies open up the street, they put it back in order. When they cut 34th Ave bike lines, they don't repave or repaint.

Patrick Kennedy, Project Manager, said that DOT is in the process of repairing 34th Ave. Whenever a street is redesigned, the plans are submitted in the system and all changes that are to be made are logged. Utility companies, when they do work, are supposed to repaint and restore the street. Many times, however, the companies don't do it. DOT has an enforcement division that monitors and goes out to find the utility company that worked in that area. He said if there are locations where the bike lane paintings are missing to call 311 and an inspector will go out to take a look at it.

Astoria Boulevard Safety Improvement Project

Heidi Wolfe, Pedestrian Projects Group, said that she is presenting a proposal for Astoria Blvd. from 99th to 105th Streets. Astoria Boulevard is a Vision Zero Priority Area. In 2011 DOT did a study and found that the lane reduction along the corridor is not feasible due to high traffic volumes.

Ms. Wolf said Council Member Julissa Ferreras requested that DOT to look into safety improvements for Astoria Boulevard. Ms. Wolf said there is a lot of speeding. A speed study was done in 2014 and found that 60% of the vehicles were speeding heading west bound and 69% heading east bound. DOT's goal this year is to try and tackle and redefine the Boulevard as more of a neighborhood street and less of an extension of the Grand Central Parkway. There is a senior center, fire station, grocery store, church and numerous bus stops. Even though it's only 6 blocks, there is a lot to cover, so it was broken down into 3 project areas. 99th Street will be realigned, for shorter, more direct crossing. The median at 99th Street would be extended to remove 27th Ave from the intersection and simplify movements. The median at 100th Street for pedestrian and vehicular access would be opened and pedestrian and vehicular signals would be added. The left turn bay at Kearney Street would be closed medians extended. The left turn onto Kearney Street would be banned and the west median at 29th Ave pulled-back. Curb extension at McIntosh and 29th Ave would be created to shorten crossing and Humphreys Street for one block from Astoria Boulevard to 29th Ave would be reversed. The median at 31st Ave for pedestrian and vehicular access would be opened, and pedestrian and vehicular signals added. They would construct a curb extension at 31st Ave and Astoria Blvd. to slow vehicular turn onto Astoria Blvd. and make 31st Ave one-way east bound from Barclay Triangle slip to Astoria Blvd. They would also ban left turns onto 31st Ave from northbound 103rd Street, and create a three phase - signal at 31st Ave/105th St/Gilmore St to reduce vehicular conflicts.

Patrick Beckles, Board Member, asked what will happen to 35th Ave & 108th Street, coming down to 31 Ave & 31 Drive. Ms. Wolf said there will be no changes.

Arthur Teiler, Board Member, said Astoria Blvd. is a diagonal street and squaring it off doesn't seem quite right. When you are coming east on 31st Ave to get to Astoria Blvd., you will hit Astoria Blvd. at an angle southeast towards the highways. He said those impediments are going to be in the way.

Ms. Wolf said, she agrees with Mr. Teiler that Astoria Blvd. is a diagonal street, but what they are really trying to do is slow the cars that are turning. It's still a wide street that will accommodate bicycles to the side with the cars coming and slowing down.

Shanel Thomas, Board Member, asked if the street has to be split or the plan can be done without splitting.

Ms. Wolf responded to get a new signal they have to meet federal warrants and it's basically an inverse graph. DOT could not signalize and leave the intersection and median intact.

Ann Brown, Board Member, asked about 31st Ave and commented that there is no high volume of traffic there. She questioned, when you are going East, you will continue East, no one is going North, then come back to Astoria Boulevard or go the other way.

Ms. Wolf said there is no demand to go northbound, but what they do in traffic analysis is projected volumes. She stated that this will be an attractive route for vehicles and that is part of the warrant analysis.

Julissa Ferreras, Council Member, thanked DOT for their presentation. She said last year she spoke about the capital investment and it hasn't been used yet. This project, Astoria Boulevard, is just what can be done immediately. She reached out to DOT and told them that they have to do something because of the calls from the Community Board, Senior Centers and residents that they couldn't make a left after Astoria Boulevard. Her District goes from 92nd Street all the way to Willets Point, but they just look at the areas where something could be done quickly. She said they looked on 111th Street which is another project that they are working on which is making access to Flushing Meadow Corona Park safe along 111th Street and connecting this bike lane safer in the neighborhood. This is all part of a bigger picture and DOT has a list that has been submitted for 23rd Ave & Ditmars Blvd. and Ditmars Blvd. will be getting some speed bumps to discourage the speeding.

Council Member Ferreras stated that there is a finance hearing at the Department of Environmental Protection next Wednesday for funding to create bioswales along Astoria Boulevard. She is working with DOT, DEP and the Parks Department to figure out all the spaces where they can make all those medians greener.

The issue of flooding will also be discussed during this DEP hearing. C.M. Ferreras said that there was a briefing at City Hall. She can report that there is money in FY17 Capital Budget. There is about 6 million dollars that's included in the capital plan to dredge the bay. She has been pressing DEP since she became a Council Member and finally it came through. The bay will be dredged in FY17. Hopefully this will eliminate some of the water issues that are going on right now. She said that she needs direction, so she can know what she is doing right, what needs improvement and what she should be asking the agencies for. As Finance Chair, every City Agency has to report to her for the budget. She thanked CB3 for this opportunity.

37th Road Pedestrian Plaza – Diversity Plaza

Andrew Ronan, representative from DOT Public Space, presented a proposal for the capital redesign of the 37th Road Pedestrian Plaza. He said it will bring to a lot of improvement to the area. The Plaza was implemented in 2011 as a result of a much larger transportation study. This plaza has been host to many community events and most recently after the earthquake in Nepal, the plaza has become the center for the Nepalese community to join together and hold a vigil. The CB3 Board meetings are also held at the Plaza in the month of June. It is a historic first for New York City.

Barbara Wilks, representative from DOT, said they will be able to add some trees, signage, planting and some seating similar to what's already there, but it will be a little sturdier. There will also be a restroom that will be maintained by the vendors and there will also be pedestrian lighting.

DOT had several community meetings already to get the community input on this design and they are here tonight to get the approval from the Community Board, then they will go to the Public Design Commission. This design will be out this winter and construction will start the following spring and should be completed in 2017.

Shekar Krishnan, of Friends of Diversity Plaza, said their coalition is a large diverse neighborhood group, consisting of local residents, activists, organizations from CCHYA, Jackson Heights Beautification Group etc. These organizations try to make the Plaza very welcoming to the public. Their mission is to bring the neighborhood to the Plaza so it can be seen as a special and treasured public space for everyone in the neighborhood. The friends of Diversity Plaza are excited about this project and, they fully support it, and ask the Community Board to do the same.

Yessika Giraldo, from Council Member Daniel Dromm's Office said that this plaza means a lot to the community. She said the first concern when the idea came up regarding closing the street was safety in the community. She thanked DOT and everyone else that has been working to put this project together.

Hamlett Wallace, Board Member, would like to know what type of trees they would be using in the plaza and if the pavement will have different colors.

Ms. Wilks said they will use sweet gum and honey locust trees. The sweet gum will turn red and the honey locust will turn yellow. She said they were selected because they have a very eerie quality. Regarding the paving, they will be working with the standard DOT colors.

Agha Muhammed Saleh, Board Member, said that this project does not fit the promises that were made to the stake holders.

Bill Meehan, Board Member, said he lives on 73rd Street and he has been involved with the plaza since the original DOT study. He said they have had 100 hours of reviewing, planning and hoping to come to this conclusion tonight. Every meeting they had was open to the public, numerous people came in with positive and negative comments, their concerns were addressed and this project is a result of that. The plaza is a very important place for the people of Jackson Heights, because there was no green or public space in Jackson Heights. He thinks this project is a wonderful thing for the neighborhood and he is very thankful for this.

Arturo Sanchez, Board Member, said “this plaza and everything that it represents is kind of a celebration. The language that is used is the language of your celebration and your diversity. He stated that the genesis of this plaza has never really discussed. How this plaza came to being and what were the political forces that were behind this plaza.”

Business / Economic / Development – *Arthur Teiler, Edmund Rosenbaum, Co-Chairs*

Azoguenita Bakery & Rest. III – 101-19 37th Ave, Corona, NY 11368 (New-Wine/Beer)

Edmund Rosenbaum, Co-Chair, called upon the owner of Azoguenita Bakery & Rest. III

The owner said they want to open a full service restaurant and bakery and want to apply for a new wine/beer license. He will be opening 7am to 10pm, Monday to Friday & Saturdays & Sundays 7am to 11pm.

La Esquina Del Sabor Rest. Corp. – 99-01 Northern Blvd., Corona, NY 11368 (New – Wine/Beer)

Edmund Rosenbaum, Co-Chair, called upon the owner of La Esquina Del Sabor Rest. Corp.

The representative said La Esquina Del Sabor Restaurant is a family oriented place where you can go with your children to have a good time. They open in the morning until 10pm and will be applying for a wine/beer license.

Executive Session

Stephen Kulhanek, Chairman, opened Executive Session with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion #26- Adoption of the May 21, 2015 Agenda

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Caridad Mak, to adopt the agenda, was passed unanimously.

Motions by Committee

Education Committee – *Lisa Mesulam, Chair*

School Construction Authority - 69-01 34th Ave. (Former White Castle Regional Office).

Lisa Mesulam, Chair, informed the Board that the committee recommends that the proposal be approved.

Motion #27 - 69-01 34th Ave

Upon motion duly made by Lisa Mesulam, seconded by Edwin Westley, to approve the proposal was passed unanimously.

Traffic/Transportation – Steven Kulhanek, Chair

DOT -108th Street Bicycle Network Connection

Stephen Kulhanek, Chair, informed the Board that the committee recommends that the proposal be approved.

Motion #28 -108th Street Bicycle Network Connection

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Emma Brandt, to approve the proposal was passed with a vote of 33 in favor, 2 opposed and 2 abstentions.

Reason for abstention:

Board Member Arturo Sanchez said he supports the notion of a bike path from the point of view of the density of traffic that will be generated because of the large scale mega projects that are currently being built along Northern Blvd. This will definitely increase the amount of vehicular traffic and as such, he felt that this project will be dangerous to the community and that's the reason he abstained.

Astoria Boulevard Safety Improvement Project

Stephen Kulhanek, Chair, informed the Board that the committee recommends that the proposal be approved.

Ann Brown, Board Member registered her concerns regarding the planned changes to Astoria Boulevard at 31st Ave, 27th Ave and Humphreys Street. DOT should take another look at these intersections.

Motion #29 - Astoria Boulevard Safety Improvement Project.

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Leoncio Romero, to approve the proposal was passed with a vote of 35 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

37th Road Pedestrian Plaza – Diversity Plaza

Stephen Kulhanek, Chair, informed the Board that the committee recommends that the proposal be approved.

Motion #30 -- Diversity Plaza –

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Edwin Westley, to approve the proposal was passed with a vote of 34 in favor, 0 opposed and 3 abstentions.

Reasons for Abstentions:

Agha Saleh, Board Member, said that this project does not fit the promises that were made to the stake holders. This design is not acceptable and that's the reason why he abstained.

Shanel Thomas, Board Member, said she feels that the stake holders should have more say in the design and development of the project.

(Business / Economic / Development – (Arthur Teiler, Edmund Rosenbaum, Co-Chairs)

Azoguenita Bakery & Rest. III – 101-19 37th Ave, Corona, NY 11368 (New-Wine/Beer)

Edmund Rosenbaum, Co-Chair, informed the Board that the committee recommends that the application be approved.

Motion #31 - Azoguenita Bakery & Rest. III – 101-19 37th Ave, Corona, NY 11368 (New-Wine/Beer)

Upon motion duly made by Edmund Rosenbaum, seconded by Vasantrai Gandhi, to approve the application for a wine/beer license was passed with a vote of 37 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstention.

La Esquina Del Sabor Rest. Corp. – 99-01 Northern Blvd., Corona, NY 11368 (New – Wine/Beer)

Edmund Rosenbaum, Co-Chair, informed the Board that the committee recommends that the application be approved.

Motion #32 - La Esquina Del Sabor Rest. Corp. – 99-01 Northern Blvd., Corona, NY 11368 (New – Wine/Beer)

Upon motion duly made by Edmund Rosenbaum, seconded by Leoncio Romero, to approve the application for a wine/beer license was passed with a vote of 37 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

Chairman's Report

Stephen Kulhanek, Chairman, thanked everyone who attended the Borough President's training session. The Chairman said that Board Member Vasantrai Gandhi informed him that there is a show called "Neighborhood Slice" which will be doing a little piece on Jackson Heights. It will be aired on June 2, 2015 on channel 25. The swearing in for new and re-appointed Board Members will be on June 8, 2015 at the Hall-of Science. A number of Board Members will be honored for 25 years of service to the Community Board. These members are: Jimmy Smith, Ralph Moreno and Vasantrai Gandhi. The Health Fair is coming up and Vivian Dock, Chair of the committee will be giving her report this evening.

District Managers Report

Jackson Heights Library Rally

Giovanna Reid, District Manager, said on Tuesday, May 26, 2015 there is going to be a rally in support of our local Jackson Heights Library. She encouraged everyone that will be available on that day at 3:30pm to attend.

Play Street for Our Lady of Sorrows

Ms. Reid said there is a proposal to create a play street at 105th St between 37th & 35th Avenues Our Lady of Sorrows Church. The program will run from July 1, 2015 to the end of August.

Flooding

Giovanna Reid reported to the Board that DEP is in the area addressing flooding and other complaints.

Motion # 33 - Adoption of the April 16, 2015 Monthly Minutes

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Edwin Westley, to adopt the April Monthly Minutes, was passed unanimously.

Committee Report

Health & Social Services

Vivian Dock, Chair, informed the Board that the Health/Social Services committee held their meeting to plan the Leon Von Holden Memorial Health Care Expo 2015 which will be held on Saturday, June 13th at the Corona Health Center, 34-33 Junction Blvd from 10AM-3PM. She thanked everyone who signed up to volunteer their time/refreshments/raffles and giveaways. The next committee meeting will be Thursday, June 4, & June 11, 2015 at 6:30pm in the District Office. She is inviting the Board Members and community residents to come out to this meeting to help in the planning of the event.

Youth Services

Marta Lebreton, Committee Chair, said that every year Community Board 3 supports the Soap Box Derby. CB3 has two cars that will be running in the soap box derby. One of our drivers passed away, but we are still running her car and Cheyenne Aguayo, Representative, Council Member Julissa Ferreras, said that they will be having their 25th Annual East Elmhurst Corona Family Day event on Saturday, June 6, 10am – 7pm. There will also be a free bike helmet giveaway have purchased a second car. She is asking all the Board Members for \$1 for a donation towards the soap box derby.

Legislators Report

On Saturday, May 23, 11am – 2:30pm at I.S. 221 School.

Lilly Pioche, Representative, Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry's office, wished everyone a happy and healthy Memorial Day.

Gary Gilbert, representative from Assemblyman Michael DenDekker's office, said that he has flyers for their upcoming shredding and E-Waste recycling on Saturday, June 13, 2015 at the Waldbaun's shopping center at 75th Street between 30th & 31st Ave.

Yessika Giraldo, Representative, Council Member Daniel Dromm, wished everyone a great Memorial Weekend.

Barbara Jackson, Representative, Congressman Joseph Crowley's Office wished everyone a great Memorial Weekend.

New Business

Bill Meehan, Board Member, said that the annual LGBT parade will be on June 7, 2015 and they will be marching down 37th Ave from 89th – 75th Streets. There will be a festival on 37th Rd, from 75th -77th Street. The Community Board will be marching and he is inviting everyone to come march and celebrate diversity.

Shanel Thomas, Board Member said that Neighborhood Housing Services of Queens will be having a Financial Literacy Program for young people ages 13 to 20 on May 27, 2015 from 5pm – 7pm.

Motion #34 Motion to Adjourn

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Martin Maier to adjourn the meeting, was passed unanimously.

The meeting was closed at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Keisha Howard