Attendance of Community Board 11’s General Meeting

Held on Thursday, January 14, 2015 at

The Bensonhurst Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare,

1740 84th Street, Brooklyn, New York

Present: Bart Allegretti, Ross Brady, Al Campanelli, Rosa Casella, Vincent Chirico, Jin Wing Chiu, Steven Chung, Ruben Colon, Priscilla Consolo, Sal D’Alessio, Linda Dalton, Eric DiNapoli, Paul DiSpirito, Charles Farrauto, Shirley Fineman, John Garvey, Yonah Glatzer, William Guarinello, Eileen LaRuffa, Man Wai Lau, Dr. Tim Law, Nicholas Miraglia, Caleb Pan, Dr. Rabbi Pollack, Sonia Valentin, Robert Whittaker, Andrew Windsor, Robert Yee, Sai Chuen Yeung, Nicholas Zimmitti

Absent: Thomas Andros, Sofia Annunziata, Rocco Buonpane, Karina Cardozo, Warren Chan, Wai Cheung, Claudio DeMeo, Marc D’Ottavio, Anthony Grigos, Ligia Guallpa, Salvatore Rao, Barry Sanchez, Nayeem Siddiqu

Excused: Matthew Bromme, Msgr. David Cassato, Mafalda DiMango, Albert Milone, James Orlando, Antonio Troia, Laurie Windsor

Guests: Anthony Colorafi, Lisa Garvey, Jieheng Chen, Laurel Girvan, Andrew Gounardes – Brooklyn Borough President, Susan Grossman – CB 11, Fran Vella-Marrone – Rep. Donovan, Al Fazio – Assemblyman Abbate, Tatiana Strickland – Department of Consumer Affairs, Mike Gregorio – State Senator Felder, Olga Fiore – State Senator Savino, Dominick Colasanto, Thomas Colasanto, Jeannine Cherichetti – Councilman Treyger, Jenny Fischman – Public Advocate, Daniel Abramson – Mayor’s CAU, Jo Benfanti, Angelina Dahab – Councilman Gentile

Minutes of Community Board 11’s General Meeting

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1740 84th Street, Brooklyn, New York

The general meeting and public hearing of Community Board 11 was opened with Caleb Pan having the honor of the pledge.

Public Hearing

BSA Calendar# 246-15-BZ

1462 62nd Street

The applicant seeks a variance for the legalization of the existing Use Group 3 Yeshiva at the third floor, the creation of a mezzanine on the first floor, and the use of a four-story structure as a Use Group 3 Yeshiva in a M1 zoning district.

Dominick Colosanto, owner of Able Welding, located on 62nd Street between 15th and 16th Avenues, stated he was concerned about the on-street parking impacts.

The Chairman inquired if anyone else from the public sought recognition. Hearing none, a motion was made by Sal D’Alessio to close the public hearing. Seconded by Charles Farrauto. Unanimously adopted.

Public Portion

Daniel Abramson, Brooklyn Borough Director of the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit, announced that Mayor de Blasio has raised the minimum wage for city workers to $15.00 an hour; the signing of an Executive Order for paid parental leave for city employees; and the appointment of Hermina Palacio, the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services.

Jenny Fischman, representing Public Advocate Letitia James, spoke regarding the release of the 2015 Worst Landlords Watchlist, a database of the worst landlords in New York City. The Public Advocate also introduced new legislation to expand tenants’ rights. She further announced that there were informational flyers available.

Tatiana Strickland, representing the Department of Consumer Affairs, spoke regarding the Commuter Benefits Law that took effect on January 1, 2016. Under the law, employers with 20 or more full-time non-union employees in New York City must offer their full-time employees the opportunity to use pre-tax income to purchase qualified transportation fringe benefits.  Informational flyers are available.

Andrew Gounardes, representing Borough President Adams, spoke regarding the success of the New Year’s celebration in Coney Island. He advised that there are informational packets available; but highlighted the Brooklyn Sweethearts event for couples who are married for 50 years or more, the availability of tickets for sporting events for community based organizations serving youth, and community board applications for both appointment and re-appointment are available online at <http://brooklyn-usa.org/community-board-membership-application/>

Makrand Boot, an architect for a local business, introduced himself and spoke regarding the United Nations conference on housing and sustainable urban development. Those interested in learning more and participating can go the website at [www.habitat3.org](http://www.habitat3.org).

Anthony Colorafi, a homeowner who resides on Dahill Road, thanked Marnee Elias-Pavia, for her assistance in requesting signs for Truck Restriction.

The Chairman inquired if anyone else from the public sought recognition. Hearing none, a motion was made by Bart Allegretti to close the public portion of the meeting. Seconded by Sonia Valentin. Unanimously adopted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Man Wai Lau to accept the minutes of the December 9, 2015 meeting. Seconded by Shirley Fineman. Unanimously adopted.

Disposition of Public Hearing

Ross Brady, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the committee met with the applicant, Congregation Machna Shalva, (the Yeshiva), who seeks a Variance from the Board of Standards and Appeals, which would allow the legalization and expansion of an existing four-story yeshiva (Use Group 3).

The premises are located in a M1-1 zoning district, which does not permit the school as of right. Currently, the yeshiva occupies the 3rd floor of the building and seeks to expand and add a mezzanine on the first floor, within the existing building. This internal enlargement would increase the square footage from 124,162 (3.76 FAR) to 133,496 square feet (4.04 FAR). There will be no external construction or tilling of the soil.

The applicant received from the Department of Buildings a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy for a trade school. It did pass fire department inspection and the applicant has just submitted an architectural safety report and an engineer’s report addressing “life safety concerns.”

The Committee is cognizant of the needs for an educational facility in the surrounding community and due to the need for educational facilities and upon the express promises of the applicant, the Committee recommends approval of the variance request with the following provisos:

The applicant indicated that very few teachers will drive to work. The Yeshiva must ensure that adequate teacher parking exists so as not to negatively impact the surrounding community.

The applicant must ensure that buses operate safely and pick-up students at the curb. Buses must not stack up into the street, prevent traffic flow, idle, clean, conduct repairs, or pose a danger to the students or any persons.

Dismissal of students will be staggered to prevent buses and cars from stacking and causing any dangerous situation. Buses will not be stored in front of the premises during school hours. Upon dismissal, only the amount of buses that can be accommodated curbside are brought onto the block in order to prevent long lines of buses or buses slanting and blocking the entire street. Applicant will take all reasonable efforts to ensure the safety of all persons in the vicinity.

A motion was made by Man Wai Lau to approve the variance with the conditions presented by the Planning and Zoning Committee. Seconded by Sonia Valentin. Unanimously adopted.

Councilman Gentile

The Councilman wished everyone a Happy New Year. He advised that he and Councilman Treyger have allocated funding for twice a day basket collection and sweeping services on 18th Avenue. Councilman Gentile asked the community for feedback on the services.

Councilman Gentile advised that there are no new updates on Waldbaums. The matter is in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. As previously reported, the 18th Avenue Waldbaums site was removed from the auction package and is being put up for bid separately. It is his hope that whoever gets the winning bid has experience in a full service retail supermarket.

62nd Precinct

Captain Sanseverino, the Commanding Officer of the 62nd Precinct, reported that crime is down in every category. He further discussed the mentoring program for rookie police officers. Part of the program includes building relationships with the community and volunteers meet with the rookie officers. Anyone interested in volunteering for the program should contact Community Affairs.

Chairman’s Report

Mr. Guarinello reported that IDNYC, the New York City Municipal ID program has a new “pop-up” enrollment site at 6506 Bay Parkway, from February 1 – 19th, Monday through Friday, from 8AM-4PM. Flyers are available for those interested.

The Chairman advised that the District Manager will notify board members whose term expires in 2016, and provide the link to the Borough President’s website.

District Manager’s Report

Marnee Elias-Pavia discussed the back-to-back holiday recycling collection between Christmas and New Year’s. At the December meeting, residents whose recycling is collected on Fridays were advised to place out the recycling immediately following New Year’s Day. The Department of Sanitation changed the collection and picked up the recycling following the Christmas Holiday. Most residents were not aware. She stated while this was beneficial, the information needed to be better communicated.

Ms. Elias-Pavia advised that notification was received from the Department of Transportation that they are relocating the meters from the center strip to curbside on Bay Parkway between Shore Parkway and Gravesend Bay. There will be no change in the amount of parking stalls and will enable street cleaning and maintenance.

The District Manager advised that Phase I of the N line project will see major construction work on the Manhattan-bound station platforms, platform walls, and stairs. To perform this work track access is necessary.

Starting Monday, January 18, 2016, Manhattan-bound platforms, at all nine (9) stations will be out of service for 14 months.  There will be temporary platforms at the 8th Avenue and Bay Parkway stations.  To access the Fort Hamilton Parkway, New Utrecht Ave, 18th Ave, 20th Ave, Kings Highway, Avenue U and 86th Street stations while platforms are under construction, customers will need to back-ride using the temporary platforms at 8thAvenue and Bay Parkway or travel to Stillwell Terminal.

She further advised that Eileen LaRuffa, and she attended a parks presentation given by Commissioner Silver on Parks Without Borders. This is a NYC Parks initiative to make parks more open, welcoming, and beautiful by focusing on improving entrances, edges, and park-adjacent spaces. Parks will be selected based upon online suggestions. The more suggestions a park receives, the more likely it will be selected. Ms. Elias-Pavia felt this would exclude parks in our community since many of the residents may not submit suggestions.

In closing, she advised no garbage, recycling or street cleaning on Monday, January 18th, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

New Business

Eileen LaRuffa inquired about the status of the massage parlors. The District Manager advised that the Buildings Marshall inspected all seven locations that were previously reported.

Sonia Valentin, President of the Friends of New Utrecht Library, invited everyone to celebrate Lunar New Year on February 6th, from 12PM – 2PM.

Robert Whittaker inquired if a response was received from the Department of Transportation in regards to the Bus Stops under the el. He was advised that no further information was received in response to the board’s request.

Mr. Whittaker requested that the B1 bus stop at New Utrecht Avenue be removed due to safety concerns. He also requested signs on 86th Street to advise people not to double park within the columns.

The Chairman advised that double parking is illegal and is a police enforcement issue.

A motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to adjourn. Seconded by Ross Brady. Unanimously adopted.