Attendance of Community Board 11’s General Meeting

Held on Thursday, March 14, 2019, at

The Bensonhurst Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare,

1740 84th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11214

Present: Bart Allegretti, Al Campanelli, Rosa Casella, Msgr. David Cassato, Iwen Chu, Ruben Colon, Angelo Cucuzza, Salvatore D’Alessio, Linda Dalton, Paul DiSpirito, Laura Gottlieb, William R. Guarinello, Roy Jung, Eileen LaRuffa, Man Wai Lau, Dr. Tim Law, Nicholas J. Miraglia, Caleb Pan, Janet Perry, Antonio Troia, Sonia Valentin, Robert Whittaker, Andrew Windsor, Laurie Windsor, Robert Yee, Linda Zhang

Absent: Thomas Andros, Wai Cheung, Vincent Chirico, Jing Wing Chui, Steven Chung, Lawrence Ciulla, Priscilla Consolo, Claudio DeMeo, Eric DiNapoli, Giuseppe Floccari, Yonah Glatzer, Anthony Grigos, Ligia Guallpa, Peter Joseph, James Orlando, Sai Chuen Yeung

Excused: Ross Brady, Charles Farrauto, Shirley Fineman, John Garvey, Albert Milone, Rabbi Gary Pollack, Nicholas Zimmitti

Guests: Jeannine Cherichetti – Councilman Treyger, Peggy Jung, Kreya Jackson – Brooklyn Public Library, Michael A. Bove – Neighborhood Improvement Association, James Gheda, Tiffany Mickowska – Touro College, Hannah Weinerman – Congressman Nadler, Clio Markman – Congressman Rose, Michael Marques – Bensonhurst Volunteer Ambulance, Al Fazio – Assemblyman Abbate, William Vitale – CERT BK 10/11, Evan Weisberg – Senator Gounardes, Denise Esposito – NYC Emergency Management, Nancy Tong – Assemblyman Colton, Salima Ahmed – Ahmadiyya Muslim, Mario Caggiano – Assemblywoman Frontus, Oscar H Atehortua Sr.

Minutes of Community Board 11’s General Meeting

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The meeting of Community Board 11 was opened with Paula Katinas having the honor of the pledge.

Public Portion

Kreya Jackson, representing the Brooklyn Public Library Highlawn Branch, spoke regarding upcoming events and services offered at the library. Informational fliers are available for those interested.

Denise Esposito, representing New York City Emergency Management, gave a presentation on the Community Emergency Response Team Program. The teams are composed of members of the community who undergo training in basic response skills so they can respond in local emergencies. Information and literature are available to those interested in joining the program.

Evan Weinberg, representing Senator Gounardes, provided a brief update on the State budget, the Senator recently voted in support of the one-house Senate budget proposal. He further advised that the New York City Council passed a Home Rule Request to expand Senator Gounardes’ speed camera legislation.

Mr. Guarinello advised on the importance of addressing the Cost of Living Adjustment for non-profits.

Clio Markman, representing Congressman Rose, advised that the Congressman will be holding a Town Hall meeting on Saturday, March 23, 2019, at Fort Hamilton High School.

Oscar Atehortua Sr., a community resident, stated that many elected officials do not have district offices located in Bensonhurst.

Hannah Weinerman, representing Congressman Nadler, announced that the Congressman will be hosting a Know Your Rights Immigration Town Hall Meeting, on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, from 6-8 PM, at the JCH, 7802 Bay Parkway. Informational fliers are available.

Ms. Weinerman further advised that the Congressman has introduced bi-partisan legislation that calls for the permanent authorization of the September 11th Victim Fund Compensation Act.

Mr. Guarinello inquired if anyone else from the public sought recognition. Hearing none, a motion was made by Man Wai Lau to close the public portion of the meeting. Seconded by Sal D’Alessio. Unanimously adopted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to adopt the minutes of the February 13, 2019 meeting. Seconded by Sonia Valentin. Unanimously adopted.

Assemblyman Peter Abbate

The Assemblyman provided an update on the State budget. He advised that his focus is on education and healthcare, as it has been since elected to office. Our school district is the most overcrowded in the city and yet our students are top performing.

Assemblyman Abbate discussed the importance of returning and maintaining healthcare services in our communities.

Chairman’s Report

Mr. Guarinello reported that Community Board 11 received notification from Big Apple Bath Beach, Inc., of their intention to seek approval from the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse to operate a Chemical Dependency Outpatient Program at 1751 Bath Avenue.

In September 2017, Mr. Garanin of GCap Holdings, presented to the board their plans to establish an Article 28 medical facility with minor substance abuse services at this location. The Board adopted a resolution to issue a letter of no objection for the minor counselling services with the proviso that no substance abuse medication be dispensed.

At the request of the principal, the board adopted a resolution in December 2017, to issue an amended letter of no objection for the minor OASAS counselling services with the proviso that medication not be dispensed at the facility but prescribed as necessary.

Since that time there was communication regarding the change of corporate entity from GCAP to Big Apple Bath Beach.

They are now seeking a confirmation letter of receipt of the notification.

There was lengthy discussion regarding the location of the proposed facility, which is near schools, the lack of dialogue and information provided to the community, and the issue of addiction in our communities.

The consensus of the board was to provide a confirmation letter of receipt of the notification and request that the applicant present the proposal for 1751 Bath Avenue at the April public hearings.

The Chairman advised that the April 11th meeting would be held at St Finbar Msgr. Scanlan Center, 1839 Bath Avenue. Mr. Guarinello thanked Father Gelfant for hosting Community Board 11.

Mr. Guarinello advised that we would also be holding public hearings for:

273 Avenue U – the applicant is seeking an amendment of the zoning map, Section No. 28c, changing from an R5B to an R6A district, the property bounded by a line of 100 feet northerly of Avenue U, McDonald Avenue, Avenue U and Lake Street.

6224 18th Avenue is seeking a renewal of their enclosed sidewalk café that consists of 4 tables and 16 chairs.

6502 18th Avenue is seeking a special permit to operate a physical culture establishment (Blink Fitness).

Mr. Guarinello inquired if there were any comments to the agency responses to the Fiscal Year 2020 preliminary budget.

The Chairman congratulated Msgr. Cassato on his promotion to Chief of the NYPD Chaplains Unit.

District Manager’s Report

Marnee Elias-Pavia advised that the Department of Transportation presented to Community Board’s 11, 13 & 15 School Safety Improvements for 86th Street between Stillwell Avenue and McDonald Avenue.

The plan calls for the removal of one lane in each direction and the addition of left turn bays, painted curb extensions, bike lanes, a right turn ban at 86th Street and Avenue U, and a left turn ban at the intersection of Stillwell Avenue.

The project area covers only a little over one-block within Community Board 11, however she voiced concerns regarding the impact of the turning bans and the creation of new safety issues.

The left turn ban would create a diversion route onto 25th Avenue, down 85th Street, then onto Avenue T or Stillwell Avenue. She expressed the concern to DOT, and inquired if they could explore a left turn phase from 86th Street onto Stillwell Avenue. The ban may cause vehicles travelling to shop on Stillwell Avenue between 86th Street and Avenue T, to then make left hand turns across the double yellow lines to enter the parking lots, or they will make a left at Stillwell Avenue across the double yellow to enter the parking lots from 86th St.

DOT advised that the left turning vehicles are too low to meet the warrants for a turning signal.

The other area of concern was the right-hand turn ban from 86th Street onto Avenue U. This would prevent vehicles from accessing the businesses at this triangle. DOT has agreed to consider adjusting the right turn ban to restrict buses and trucks only, allowing passenger vehicles to make the right turn.

A motion was made by Laurie Windsor to call upon the Department of Transportation to oppose the left turn ban at Stillwell Avenue and 86th Street and study the feasibility of a left turn signal. Seconded by Eileen LaRuffa. The vote was 24 for; 1 abstention and 1 opposed. Motion approved.

The District Manager advised that the Parks Committee hosted the Bath Beach Park Visioning Session on February 21st. Thanks to a $5 Million allocation by Councilman Brannan, this project will reconstruct portions of Bath Beach Park, including new play equipment, pavements, safety surfacing, site furnishings, drainage, water supply and other site amenities. Once the project is designed, Parks will make a presentation to the committee.

The New Utrecht Library held a visioning session for a $22M project for the reconstruction of the library. Once this project enters construction phase, which will be some time in the summer of 2021, the library will be closed for 2 years.

Community Boards 11 and 13 will be hosting a community resource night on Wednesday, April 10th from 6-8PM, at Il Centro. There will be various city agencies and elected officials participating.

The Department of Transportation will be making a Vision Zero presentation at Il Centro on March 21st at 7:30 PM.

New Business

Man Wai Lau spoke regarding Community Board 11’s capital and expense recommendations for fiscal year 2020. He provided a detailed breakdown and comparison on the requests.

Mr. Guarinello inquired if there was any other new business. Hearing none, a motion was made by Sonia Valentin to adjourn. Seconded by Laurie Windsor. Unanimously adopted.