

Attendance of Community Board 11's General Meeting
Held on Thursday, January 14, 2021, at 7PM
Virtual Meeting

Present: Bart Allegretti, Ross Brady, Albert Campanelli, Rosa Casella, Angelo Cucuzza, Victoria Curto, Linda Dalton, Claudio DeMeo, John Garvey, Laura Gottlieb, William R. Guarinello, Jeffrey Harris, Eileen LaRuffa, Man Wai Lau, Dr. Tim Law, Albert Milone, Alex Pellitteri, Rabbi Gary Pollack, Lenny Salama, Sonia Valentin, Robert Whittaker, Andrew Windsor, Laurie Windsor

Ex Officio – Councilman Justin Brannan

Absent: Sofia Annunziata, Msgr. David Cassato, Wai Cheung, Vincent Chirico, Iwen Chu, Steven Chung, Ruben Colon, Paul DiSpirito, Charles Farrauto, Janet Perry, Briar Sambolin, Inga Smolyar, Antonio Troia, Sai Chuen Yeung, Linda Zhang

Excused: Salvatore D'Alessio, Shirley Fineman, Roy Jung, Edward Lai, Nicholas J. Miraglia, Daniel Zurek

Guests: Police Officer Vendra and Detective Agosta – 62 Precinct Community Affairs, Cathy SantoPietro – Re. Malliotakis, Declan Hong – Assemblyman Colton, Frank Fontana – Department of Buildings, Captain Chen – 62nd Precinct, Evan Burr – Brooklyn Borough President, Kathy Vero-Tayar, Steven Patzer, Danielle Shapiro –Brooklyn Public Library, Andrew Olsen – Recovery, Gloria Daniels – NYC Parks, Hannah Weinerman – Rep. Nadler, Nany Lulu – Brooklyn District Attorney, Sarah Anders – Senator Gounardes, Ed Cerna – Mayor's Community Affairs Unit

Minutes of Community Board 11's General Meeting
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The meeting was opened with Ross Brady having the honor of the pledge.

Public Portion

Nancy Lulu, representing the Brooklyn District Attorney's office, spoke of the recent cases that their office has brought forward. She further advised that January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The Brooklyn Human Trafficking Task Force, Suffolk County Anti-Trafficking Initiative, and the Western District of New York Human Trafficking Task Force are partnering to deliver a targeted statewide training for law enforcement, healthcare providers, and the community on how to better identify trafficking in their workplaces and community. Additional information can be found at www.brooklynnda.org/hawareness2021/

Gloria Daniels, representing NYC Parks, advised that Bensonhurst Park has re-opened following reconstruction.

Danielle Shapiro, representing Brooklyn Public Library, announced that that they are planning on releasing a limited-edition library card in Summer 2021 in celebration of Juneteenth. For more information on this exciting project, please visit <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/black-american-library-card>

She further advised that patrons have access to over 30 select branch lobbies for quick transactions. Holds pick up and return bins will also be available. Masks are required for both patrons and staff. Materials that are checked out during this time will not accrue fines for the time being nor will fines accrue on items checked out before the closure. While the libraries in-person events are on hold, they are offering virtual programming via Facebook Live broadcasts, Zoom meetings, and streaming from our branch staff.

Both the Highlawn Library and the New Utrecht Library offer Grab and go service. Hours M, W, F 10:00 am to 4:00 pm and Tues/Thurs. 1:00 pm - 7:00 pm.

Cathy SantoPietro, representing Rep. Malliotakis, advised that the office is located at 7715 3rd Avenue, and staff is available to assist residents.

Sarah Anders, representing Senator Gounardes, spoke regarding recent legislation in the Senate getting accurate COVID19 vaccination information, as well as additional vaccination sites in Southern Brooklyn.

Edward Cerna, Brooklyn Borough Director, Mayor's Community Affairs, advised that the City is on track to reach its vaccination goal of 175,000 people. He further spoke about the upcoming vaccination mega site at Citi Field. He urged those who are currently eligible to receive a vaccination to visit <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>

Mr. Guarinello advised Edward Cerna that neighborhood residents who use the vaccination finder are directed to locations in The Bronx and not nearby locations. The Chairman thought it may be a glitch in the system.

Hanah Weirnerman, representing Rep. Nadler, advised that a new stimulus bill was passed. Some of the items included in the bill are \$600 direct payment, PPE loans have re-opened, and extended unemployment insurance. Additional information can be found by visiting Nadler.house.gov

Declan Hong, representing Assemblyman Colton, inquired about the homeless shelter at 2147 Bath Avenue.

Sergey Chuprik, representing the Comptroller's Office, advised that while we are not meeting in-person, the Comptroller continues to publish newsletters. Those interested can visit <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/press-releases/> to stay updated.

Steven Patzer introduced himself and advised that he is running for the 47th District in the City Council.

Mr. Guarinello inquired if anyone else from the public sought recognition. Hearing none, a motion was made by Andrew Windsor to close the public portion of the meeting. Seconded by Ross Brady. Unanimously adopted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to accept the minutes of the December 14, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Dr. Tim Law. Unanimously adopted.

Councilman Brannan

Councilman Justin Brannan was pleased to announce the re-opening of the newly reconstructed Bensonhurst Park playground. This park has not seen renovations in 20 years, and he advised that the work is not complete until the other side of the park sees future renovations. He visited the park this past weekend, which was full of happy children.

The Councilman addressed the issue of COVID-19 vaccine availability. He stated that while there are millions of people eligible under the current guidelines; however, the reality is that the city is receiving a limited supply of the needed doses. Additionally, the website does not specify availability until the very end of the registration process.

He stated that the City needs to better communicate that eligible people should not expect to receive the vaccination immediately.

The Chairman concurred with the issue of transparency related to the availability of doses.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Guarinello advised that Community Board 11 received notification from the Department of Homeless Services regarding the planned opening of a shelter for 150 adult men at 2147 Bath Avenue.

The shelter, operated by Institute for Community Living, a non-profit service provider, anticipates opening in late 2021.

The opening of this shelter is part of the Mayor's borough-by-borough plan for addressing homelessness that will end the use of cluster site and commercial hotel facilities citywide.

The Chairman stated that we have a homeless crisis in this city. The schools within CB 11, have 1,200 students who live in temporary housing, and many residents in the district live in severely crowded conditions.

However, there are concerns regarding oversaturation of community facilities in this area; the decision to shelter single men and not families with children, as well as zoning questions.

The immediate area has far more infrastructure to support families rather than single men. There are 2 parks, multiple schools, houses of worship and community-based organizations to support families with children.

We are in the process of scheduling a meeting with DHS and the provider to discuss these concerns.

The Chairman reminded board members whose term is expiring on March 31st to submit their re-appointment applications. Residents who are interested in applying for membership can visit the Borough President's website to apply.

62nd Precinct

Captain Chen, the Commanding Officer of the 62nd Precinct, reported that the community saw a 9% decrease in indexed crimes for calendar year 2020. There was a spike in car thefts citywide and he urged car owners to remove keys from their cars and never to leave the car running unattended.

District Manager's Report

Marnee Elias-Pavia reported that the Department of Design and Construction has advised that they are beginning the preliminary design for the 86th Street Safe Routes to Transit Project. The project includes infrastructure, pedestrian safety, and accessibility improvements for transit riders along 86 Street between 19th and 25th Avenues, along with pavement and intersection safety improvements on 20th Avenue from Benson Avenue to 86th Street. Work will include installation of bus bulbs, bus pads, upgrading curb ramps for ADA compliance, pedestrian signal improvements, consolidating signage, providing conduits for future lighting below the D-train, and water main replacement.

As with all sewer or water main projects there will be temporary shut-off of water services. We will be advising DDC of events and holidays to help mitigate impacts to the surrounding area.

Additionally, she will inquire if there are additional bicycle parking/corrals included in the design; especially where the sidewalks are expanded at the main Bay Parkway and 20th Avenue; that the bus stop waiting areas are expanded in length for the articulated buses, and additional benches are included along the corridor.

The District Manager thanked Councilman Brannan for his continued support of our neighborhood parks.

She further advised that the Department of Finance will be holding virtual Outreach events to provide information and assistance on the 2021 Notices of Property Value. Those who are interested can register through the Department of Finance's website.

The Mayor recently announced that effective January 15th, street vendor policy and enforcement will now be the responsibility of the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. She will be contacting the agency regarding the complaints that we receive for the 86 Street vendor related conditions.

In closing, she advised that there is no trash or recycling collection, nor street cleaning, on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Monday, January 18, 2021.

New Business

Eileen LaRuffa stated her concerns regarding the increase in population due to new development and the lack of parking and infrastructure strains.

Mr. Guarinello advised that most of the current new development is as-of-right and they can build without coming to the board.

The District Manager added that these issues have been previously identified in our statement of district needs, capital and expense priorities and included in land use recommendations.

Sonia Valentin announced that the 62nd Precinct Community Council will be holding their virtual meeting on Tuesday, January 19, at 7:30 PM.

Dr Law stated his concern regarding vaccination sites and availability.

Jeffrey Harris spoke regarding the death of a child on 67 Street between 20th and 21st Avenues. He stated that there are no speed cameras in the area of PS 205, nor a traffic signal on 66 Street and 20 Avenue.

The Chairman advised that we will contact the Department of Transportation.

Ross Brady stated that we have to be aware of future development happening in the community. He also voiced his concern regarding the new sex shop on 86th Street.

The District Manager advised that complaints have already been filed and the Department of Buildings inspected and issued violations for the certificate of occupancy.

Robert Whittaker inquired if the Department of Transportation responded to the issues raised at the Bay Parkway and Shore Parkway onsite meeting. He further advised that a bus went up on the sidewalk along 86th Street.

The Chairman advised that we haven't received a formal response from DOT and then we will bring up the 86th Street concerns when we received the final design.

Mr. Guarinello inquired if there was any other new business. Hearing none a motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to adjourn. Seconded by Man Wai Lau. Unanimously adopted.