

Attendance of Community Board 11's General Meeting
Held on Thursday, February 11, 2021, at 7PM
Via Teleconference

Present: Ross Brady, Albert Campanelli, Rosa Casella, Vincent Chirico, Ruben Colon, Angelo Cucuzza, Victoria Curto, Salvatore D'Alessio, Linda Dalton, Claudio DeMeo, John Grvey, William R. Guarinello, Jeffrey Hariis, Roy Jung, Edward Lai, Eileen LaRuffa, Man Wai Lau, Dr. Tim Law, Janet Perry, Lenny Salama, Briar Sambolin, Sonia Valentin, Andrew Windsor, Laurie Windsor

Assemblyman William Colton, Councilman Mark Treyger

Absent: Bart Allegretti, Sofia Annunziata, Msgr. David Cassato, Wai Cheung, Steven Chung, Paul DiSpirito, Charles Farrauto, Albert Milone, Alex Pellitteri, Inga Smolyar, Robert Whittaker, Sai Chuen Yeung, Linda Zhang, Nicholas Zimmitti, Daniel Zurek

Excused: Iwen Chu, Shirley Fineman, Nicholas J Miraglia, Rabbi Gary Pollack, Antonio Troia

Guests: Marissa Petito, Michelle Yeung, Shirley Grant- CB 11 staff, Sarah Anders - Senator Gounardes, Toni Ann Ruiz, Ella Tang, Steven Patzer, Edward Alonge, Jenny Chen, Denise Daniello, Michael Scalise, Lana Dziouba, Yangfan Chen, Frank Zanghi, Mohammed Abdelnaby, A Asramon, Diana M., Eric Chan, Christine Testa, Judy Lei, Agnes Wong, Clarissa Soto, Moona Chen, Bing Chen, Juan Chen, Frank Fontana- Department of Buildings, Rainy Su, Tao Chen – 62nd Precinct, Marie Foo, Shun Siem, Lenny Roudik, Annette Olivo, Sharon Pinsker, Janice Guang, Ken Chen, Liu Woon Yip, Cheri Lo, Jeanette Calabrese, Anthony DiPalma, Malik Hassan, Yichun Lin, YK Cheung, Sherin Hamad, Tambe John – Brooklyn Public Library, Andrew Tsui, Mandy, Sherry Sh, Bridgette Ingraham-Roberts – NYC Health+Hospitals, John Ricottone, Jenny Chen, Carmine & Caterina Lengua, Annette Olivo, Filomena Gargano, Aaron Kinsberg, Deborah Lamano, Concetta Bologna, Waiyee Chan, Antra Ra, Kathy Samaris, Xiang Chen, Sergey Chuprik – Comptroller's Office, Allyson Kuang, Frank Kugler, Phil S., Zhi Wong, Nancy Lulu – Brooklyn D.A., Jeanette Cusumano, Jacky One, Cindy Liang, Jenny Zhang, Lisha Chen, Hannah Weirnerman – Rep. Nadler, Marietta Lam, P>O Venda & Det. Agosta – 62 Precinct, John Lee, Bilgin Kerisli, Dorothy Garuccio, Evelyn Wenitzky, Ari Kagan, Natasha Cordero, Carol E., Dmitry Ovodenko, Viv Gao, Joseph Picarello, Taher Abdelhadi, Josephine Picarello, Hui Ling Zhang, Miao Ling Chen, Patricia Capuano, Maggie Kong, Connie Lee, Paul Marino, Yu Pang, Shanshan Lin, Ilan Kinsberg, Amy Yu, Richie Calabrese, Alissa Petito, Jennifer Ou, Mary Chan, Sam Zhan, Jimmy Xu, AR, Andrew Olsen – NYC Recovery, Mingzhu Chen, Charles Yam, Irina Dubatova, Tracy McCormick, M. Sobers, Irene Son, Anna Scaife – Councilman Treyger, Kwok Chow, Isaac Belenkiy, Vera Gao, Xiu Zhu Guo

Minutes of Community Board 11's General Meeting
Held on Thursday, February 11, 2021, at 7PM
Via Teleconference

The meeting was opened with Assemblyman Colton having the honor of the pledge.

Moment of Silence

William R. Guarinello, Chairman, requested a moment of silence in memory of Marnee Elias- Pavia's father, Howard Elias, who died.

Public Portion

Mr. Guarinello welcomed everyone to this evening's general meeting especially those who are attending their first community board meeting. He recognized the many people in attendance who are concerned about the planned shelter at 2147 Bath Avenue, and acknowledged that the office has been contacted by over 350 residents who are opposed to the location of the shelter, via email/phone calls/petitions.

Sharon Pinsker inquired if a shelter could be appropriately sited in a commercial or manufacturing zone, and how can she receive updates for future meetings. She stated that she is not a "nimby" but concerned regarding this particular location for 150 men.

The District Manager advised that all meetings are posted on our website, www.brooklyncb11.org or residents can send an email requesting to be placed on our e-list for meeting notifications.

Sarah Anders, representing Senator Gounardes, advised that the Senator is working on passing legislation to help small businesses, election reforms to empower NY voters, New Deal for CUNY that would make CUNY tuition free, and the opening of the community pantry at 8018 5th Avenue.

Hannah Weirnerman, representing Congressman Nadler, advised that with tax season beginning, if there are general questions or issues, residents should feel free to contact their office. The Internal Revenue Service is urging tax filers to file online. There are free resources available to the public regardless of their income.

She further recommended for those that didn't receive any Economic Impact Payments or got less than the full amounts, they may qualify for the Recovery Rebate Credit and must file a 2020 tax return to claim the credit even if they don't normally file. Information can be found at www.irs.gov.

Nancy Lulu, representing the Brooklyn District Attorney's office, advised that due to the citywide surge of gun violence the District Attorney, the NYS Comptroller and the NYPD hosted a gun buyback event. The event resulted in 48 firearms turned in.

She further advised that in honor of Black History month, the Brooklyn D.A. would be holding a virtual celebration. Details will be shared when confirmed. Anyone with issues or concerns can contact the DA's Action Center at 718-250-2340.

Concetta Bologna, a resident of Bay Parkway between 86 Street and Benson Avenue, spoke regarding the unsanitary conditions on 86th Street, the sidewalk obstructions, and the failure of the merchants to clean. She inquired as to when it would be cleaned-up.

John Ricottone commented that money is being spent on gun buy-back program but when people get arrested for possessing a gun they are released.

Cindy Liang spoke regarding legal dumping on Bay 23rd Street between the park and PS 200. People dump mattresses, furniture, and electronics. She stated that she filed a complaint via 311 to no avail.

She also spoke regarding cars making illegal U-turns on Bay Parkway to enter the westbound entrance to the Belt Parkway, and not yielding to pedestrians who have the right-of-way.

Frank Fontana, representing the Department of Buildings, advised that there is a new tool on the website that allows the public to track and receive updates on job filings. He also spoke regarding Local Law 152, that requires inspections of gas piping systems in all buildings except 1 and 2 family homes. The timeline for inspections in our district is January 1, 2021 -December 31, 2023.

Tambe John, representing Brooklyn Public Library New Utrecht Branch, advised that all Brooklyn branches are open for limited customer service. She further advised that there are no fines being assessed for late returns.

Annette Olivo, a resident of 14th Avenue opposite the golf course, spoke regarding barbecuing, double parking and excessive garbage in Bay 8th Street park. She stated that she feels unsafe and there needs to be more police on patrol.

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

Minutes

A motion was made by Ross Brady to adopt the minutes of the January 14, 2021 meeting. Seconded by John Garvey. Unanimously adopted.

Chairman's Report

William R. Guarinello spoke regarding the planned shelter at 2147 Bath Avenue, for 150 men. He advised that a virtual meeting was held with the Department of Homeless Services and the Institute for Community Living, and our elected officials to get more information following the receipt of the generic notification. This meeting was not a public hearing since there is no application for site selection or a special permit; however, the meeting was streamed to Facebook so that the community could get the information that we were receiving.

Some of the major concerns voiced at the meeting was the location, which is a residential district with a C1-2 overlay, oversaturation of existing community facilities in the immediate area, and the occupancy of 150 men rather than families with children.

Neither the Department of Homeless Services nor ICL, has not responded with answers to our questions.

A motion was made by Ross Brady to reject the location of the planned shelter at 2147 Bath Avenue and call upon the Department of Homeless Services to work with Community Board 11 on alternative locations. Seconded by John Garvey. Unanimously adopted.

The Chairman advised that the District Manager would address the sanitation issues brought forward at the public portion of the meeting.

He further announced this coming summer, Brooklyn Public Library will release a limited-edition library card celebrating Black culture and history in Brooklyn and America, in partnership with Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and Brooklyn's Community Boards. The card will be released as part of Brooklyn Public Library's Juneteenth 2021 celebrations, the first year this holiday will be recognized as a City, State and public-school holiday.

Mr. Guarinello advised that Community Board 11 will be participating in this endeavor.

He further announced that the Mayor recently released the preliminary budget for fiscal year 2022. He inquired if there are any comments to the responses.

Assemblyman Colton

Assemblyman Colton thanked the board for quickly sharing the Department of Homeless Services notification. He has since been communicating with multiple concerned groups regarding the location of this planned shelter. He reiterated that this isn't an issue of helping homeless people but an issue of location, type of help, and occupancy.

He stated that he will be following the money because the city is spending a lot of money on building shelters and it is not helping homeless people. He stated that in many instances this has been a money-making business and it has been reported that there have been scandals in various parts of the city.

The Assemblyman will be demanding that before any kind of shelter program is brought into our community, we need to know specifically the type of services being offered.

Assemblyman Colton spoke regarding the upcoming NYS budget and the positive impact that the federal stimulus package could bring to our communities especially to our schools.

In closing, he wished everyone a happy Lunar New Year.

Councilman Treyger

Councilman Treyger thanked Assemblyman Colton for his tremendous fight in Albany for our schools.

The Councilman announced that he has introduced legislation that would require the Mayor to include homebound senior citizens in the vaccine distribution plan. There needs to be fairness and equity in the distribution of vaccines and our most vulnerable population has been left out.

The Councilman spoke regarding this community serving more than its fair share of high needs populations in the vicinity of the planned shelter. There are facilities that serve people with high needs, emotional and social challenges. People from this community have never called for the closing of these facilities; but have asked how they can help.

The inability of DHS or the non-profit provider to confirm the hiring of one full-time social worker speaks to the lack of social service infrastructure and the failure of this administration. This administration is in no position to lecture anyone about empathy, compassion, equity, and fairness when they have already failed the very people they are supposed to serve.

He further stated that he stands by the Community Board's zoning concerns and he will not support any special permit that comes before the board. He added that this matter may end up in court.

Councilman Treyger advised that he contacted the administration seeking that consultation courtesy, which was never afforded to this community, and to work with Community Board 11 on an alternative location.

District Manager's Report

Marnee Elias-Pavia thanked everyone for their condolences on the passing of her father.

She addressed the Bay Parkway traffic concerns brought forward at the public portion of the meeting and advised that an onsite meeting was recently held with DOT to address those issues. We are currently awaiting a response from the Brooklyn Borough Commissioner.

She further advised that the Department of Sanitation will be working tomorrow, on Lincoln's Birthday, which has historically been observed as a holiday. Residents who are scheduled for Friday collection should follow their normal schedule.

As of now, there will be no collection on President's Day, Monday, February 15th

The Department of City Planning announced that they have partnered with the MTA, New York City Council and Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities to identify zoning as one policy tool that could help accelerate accessibility throughout the transit system. The proposal, Zoning for Transit Accessibility, will allow the MTA to work more efficiently with private developers to help achieve systemwide accessibility.

This citywide text amendment is expected to undergo public review in the Spring.

Today, fewer than 30% of MTA New York City Transit stations are ADA accessible.

YouthBridge-NY announced that applications are now open, to apply for their 2-year fellowship beginning August 2021. Applicants must be a high school sophomore and be willing to learn and share new perspectives. For more info or to apply, please visit www.youthbridgeny.org

New Business

Sonia Valentin announced that the 62nd Precinct Community Council will be holding their virtual meeting on Tuesday, February 16th, at 7:30PM. Anyone interested in joining can email pct62ndcc@aol.com. The NCO Sector B Build the Block Meeting will take place on Saturday, February 13, 2021, at 12:30 PM, at St. Athanasius Church.

Laurie Windsor, Chairperson of the Transportation Committee, advised that there have been numerous complaints regarding the 90-degree parking created on Bath Avenue between Bay 22nd and Bay 23rd Streets. She stated that this was an ADA issue, as well as a safety concern since this location is home to a park, mosque and school.

She advised that a meeting was previously held with the Department of Transportation, elected officials and the 62nd Precinct to discuss the precincts parking issues and the feasibility of creating angle parking, which was denied due to the width of the street.

She stated that this is not acceptable and must stop immediately. Eileen LaRuffa, Chairperson of the Parks Committee, voiced her concerns about the safety of the children, who may not be seen by cars backing-up onto the sidewalk.

Captain Chen, Commanding Officer of the 62nd Precinct, advised that due to the double-parking on Bath Avenue he decided to create angle parking. He stated that this is temporary until a better solution is found. He stated that he is aware of the risks of cars backing-up onto the sidewalk, so parking cones were placed.

A motion was made by Laurie Windsor to call upon the Police Department to immediately stop the angle-parking on Bath Avenue between Bay 22nd and Bay 23rd Streets. Seconded by Andrew Windsor. Unanimously adopted.

John Garvey inquired as to why the 2.5 miles of boardwalk was not cleared of snow.

Dr. Tim Law spoke regarding the misinformation and fear circulating within the community's older population regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. He inquired if a presentation could be made by an expert.

A motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to adjourn. Seconded by John Garvey. Unanimously adopted.