Attendance of Community Board 11’s General Meeting

Held on Thursday, February 8, 2024, at the

Bensonhurst Center for Rehabilitation, 1740 84th Street

Present: Ross Brady, Jay Brown, Angelo Bruno, Victoria Cammarota-Curto, Milly Choy, Salvatore D’Alessio, Claudio DeMeo, Chung Dick, Leon Freue, Jeffrey Harris, Kerry Hines, Roy Jung, Michael Kasper, Richard Kurtzer, Edward Lai, Eileen LaRuffa, Dr. Tim Law, Nancy Sottile, Sonia Valentin, Katherin Vero-Tayar, Robert Whittaker, Andrew Windsor, Laurie Windsor, Sai Chuen Yeung, Xin Jie Zeng, Daniel Zurek

Absent: Angelo Cucuzza, Kenneth Fu, Michael Garthaffner, Man Wai Lau, Joudi Menafah, Albert Milone, Leon Salama, Kaise Sun, Winton Tran, Jason Wong

Guests: Peggy Jung, Susan Tedesco-Bruno, Patricia Capuano, Gloria Daniels, Thomas Hoefel, Hunter Rabinowitz – Brooklyn Borough President’s Office, William Vitale, Tambe John – New Utrecht Public Library, Justin Bolusi – Council Member Carr

Minutes of Community Board 11’s General Meeting

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Chairperson Laurie Windsor called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Public Portion

Hunter Rabinowitz, representing the Brooklyn Borough President’s office, announced that the Borough President will be delivering his State of the Borough address on Tuesday, February 13th, at CUNY Tech at 6:30 PM. He further advised that the Community Board application period is open until February 19th. Informational flyers are available.

Zunera Ahmed, representing Senator Iwen Chu, extended Lunar New Year greetings, and advised that there are numerous celebratory events taking place throughout the district. She further announced that they are hosting a pro bono legal clinic, as well as representatives from the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings. Informational flyers are available.

Dennis, a community resident, spoke regarding an abandoned building on his block. He advised that the front door is boarded-up, but the windows were broken, and items were removed from the house. There were empty liquor bottles strewn and he requested assistance in addressing this issue.

Tambe John, representing New Utrecht and Highlawn Public Library, announced various programs throughout the library system. She urged people to visit [www.bklynlibrary.org](http://www.bklynlibrary.org) for the calendar of events.

Gloria Daniels, Parks Manager for District 11, announced a new initiative, “Lets Green NYC”. She advised that during Covid-19, our parks became community hubs for residents and the goal of this initiative is to engage a record number of volunteers by the end of 2024. For those interested in participating, there are brochures available.

Daniel Zurek, representing the Neighborhood Advisory Board 11 (NAB), advised that they are seeking volunteers. The members of the NAB help allocate federal funds to local programs. Applications are available to anyone interested in serving.

Sonia Valentin, representing the 62nd Precinct Community Council, announced that on Valentine’s Day they will decorate the outside of the precinct to show the police some love. She further announced that the Community Council is meeting on Wednesday, February 21st. There will be a heart health presentation by Maimonides Medical Center.

Captain Eddie Lau, the Commanding Officer of the 62nd Precinct, urged residents and businesses to attend the upcoming Community Council meeting. He advised that current crime trends and community issues are discussed at this meeting. All events and crime prevention tips are shared on social media.

Jason Chen, representing the Department of Sanitation, spoke regarding the new rules that govern waste set-out times for both residential and commercial properties. He further advised that beginning March 1st, businesses are required to place their refuse in containers for collection. There will be a one-month grace period and enforcement will begin on April 1st.

Dr. Tim Law, representing the Chinese American Social Services, announced that the 18th Avenue Lunar New Year parade will take place on Sunday, February 11th at 10:30AM, beginning on 18th Avenue and 66th Street. All are invited to attend.

Chairperson Windsor 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 Angelo Bruno. Unanimously adopted.

Minutes

A motion was made by Ross Brady to adopt the minutes of the January 11, 2024, meeting amended to reflect Mille Choy’s presence. Seconded by Kathy Vero-Tayar. Unanimously adopted.

Chairperson’s Report

Chairperson Laurie Windsor stated that the responses to the Fiscal Year 2025 Capital and Expense budget recommendations were distributed and inquired if there were any comments.

The Chairperson voiced concerns about the responses from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and they are very much aware of the concerns and requests. The board has made multiple requests to meet with the agency to further discuss the status of these issues, and we have received no response. Chairperson Windsor recommended that this be included in our statement.

Robert Whittaker voiced his frustration on the quality of the responses and the work invested to reflect the needs of the community. He questioned why we bother to receive the same responses.

Marnee Elias-Pavia, District Manager, responded that we have a Charter mandated responsibility to submit budget recommendations and that we should not allow the agencies responses to diminish our advocacy.

A motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to include the concerns with DEP’s responses in the budget statement. Seconded by Angelo Bruno. Unanimously adopted.

Chairperson Windsor extended greetings for a happy lunar new year. She advised that she and Marnee would be attending the 18th Avenue Lunar New Year parade, which is a well-attended celebration filled with cultural performances and festivities.

District Manager’s Report

Marnee Elias-Pavia advised that today the District Office received notification that applications are being accepted for affordable housing at 88 Bay 34th Street. There are 3, 2-bedroom units available for rent at $2,493 monthly rent. 130% AMI, which translates to an income range of $85,000-$198,000 depending on household size.

Interested persons can apply online via [www.nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://www.nyc.gov/housingconnect) or can request paper applications. The deadline to apply is February 14th.

She advised that the Department of Transportation has issued new rules for the permanent Dining Out NYC, outdoor dining program, which replaces the temporary pandemic era Open Restaurants.

The new program has very clear guidelines on set-up requirements, fee structure, clearances, and café materials and fees. There will be 2 types of cafes: roadway and sidewalk cafes. Sidewalk cafes will be permitted to operate year-round and on the roadway from April 1 – November 29.

In addition to the fees associated with the program, the restaurant would also have to file for a revocable consent, which will be referred to the Community Board for public hearing and a recommendation.

The District Manager announced that the Department of Environmental Protection will hold a virtual workshop on the Green Infrastructure Grant Program on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM. Attendees will learn about funding available for green roof retrofits on private property, eligibility requirements, and how to apply. She will share registration information in the newsletter.

The Department of Design and Construction has submitted preliminary contract drawings for Green Infrastructure in OH-15 Gravesend Bay Tributary Area. The project scope includes the design of permeable pavement via the use of precast porous concrete panels, which will be installed along the curb areas.

The project is currently scheduled to be constructed in Fiscal Year 2028.

Alternate side parking is suspended tomorrow for lunar new year, and on Monday, February 12th, asp is suspended for Lincoln’s birthday. There will be no garbage, recycling, or compost collection.

Residents who normally receive Monday trash, curbside compost orrecycling collection may place their material out at curbside Monday evening for collection beginning Tuesday, February 13th.

In closing, she advised that notification of demolition was received for 2501 86 Street, the location of the proposed homeless shelter.

Marnee Elias-Pavia addressed the issues of the house that appeared to be empty. She advised that she is working with various agencies and the 62nd Precinct to address the matter.

Planning and Zoning Committee

Ross Brady, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the committee held a public hearing on February 7, 2024, for Board of Standards and Appeals application # 406-82-BZ, McDonalds, 2411 86th Street.

The applicant seeks an extension of term for a previously approved special permit to operate an existing eating and drinking establishment with a drive-through.

The committee recommends the approval of the extension of term with the proviso that the applicant stores their garbage in an enclosed area and the applicant monitors and addresses rodents.

A motion was made by Angelo Bruno to accept the recommendation of the committee with the provisos. Seconded by Andrew Windsor. Unanimously adopted.

Chairperson Brady further advised that the committee further discussed Green Fast Track for Housing – City Environmental Quality Review Type (CEQR) II.

The City Planning Commission is proposing to change its rules to exempt certain housing and related actions from review from SEQRA/CEQR procedures.

CEQR is mandated by the State Environmental Quality Review Act and is the process by which New York City agencies determine what effect, if any, a discretionary action they approve may have upon the environment. CEQR is a disclosure process and not an approval process in and of itself. Completion of an environmental review supports other decisions made by agencies such as approvals of rezoning or variance applications, funding, or issuance of discretionary permits.

The proposed rule change would exempt development that enable incremental development of at least 1 and no more than 250 new dwelling units or new income-restricted dwelling units located wholly within an existing R5 through R10 Residence zoning district, and 175 units new dwelling units or new income restricted dwelling units in a R1 – R4 zoning district.

The EAS assists the board when reviewing discretionary actions to advocate

for appropriate levels of service and staffing for Police, Sanitation, Transportation and Parks services. Additionally, the EAS assists with determining the adequacy of school seat capacity and utilization, needs for childcare slots, for senior center services, and wastewater capacity, stormwater runoff and discharges, to determine the ability to

support added growth.

Mr. Brady stated that this community will not be sustainable without addressing the need for additional services and infrastructure investments and the EAS is necessary to do so.

The committee recommends submitting these concerns to the commission.

A motion was made by Kathy Vero-Tayar to submit the concerns to the commission. Seconded by Eileen LaRuffa. Unanimously adopted.

New Business

Robert Whittaker advised that he is an employee of New York City Transit, and Express Bus riders are not being served well. He advised that buses are not being dispatched since there are at least 10 to 12 buses awaiting repairs.

Old Business

Chairperson Windsor requested that everyone rise. She stated that at last month’s meeting our District Manager, Marnee Elias-Pavia mentioned that it was her 25-year work anniversary.

Chairperson Windsor and the 62nd Precinct Community Council acknowledged the District Manager and presented flowers to Marnee Elias-Pavia.

A motion was made by Eileen LaRuffa to adjourn. Seconded by Sonia Valentin. Unanimously adopted.