

The City of New York

Queens Community Board 3

82-11 37th Avenue, Suite 606, Jackson Hts, New York 11372

BOARD MEETING

**Tuesday, April 11, 2006
School**

at: I.S. 227, The Louis Armstrong

**32-02 Junction Boulevard
East Elmhurst, NY**

PRESENT

Patrick Beckles
Cristina Borrero
Emma Brandt
Ann S. Brown
Vivian Dock
Margaret Dozier
Vasantraï Gandhi
Luis Gomez
Judy Grubin
Darryl Hoss
Edward Kiernan
Lorraine Kresse
Stephen Kulhanek
Grace Lawrence
Marta Lebreton
Martin Maier
Lisa Mesulam
Ralph Moreno
Michael Anthony Nardiello III
Alfonso Quiroz
Joseph Ricevuto
Edmund Rosenbaum
David Rosero
Dr. Arturo-Ignacio Sanchez
Jimmy Smith
Arthur Teiler
Union
Augusto Tiongson
Edwin Westley
Comm. College
Jorge Zamora
QW3
Giovanna Reid, District Manager

ABSENT

Khaleeq Arshed, M.D.
Earline Berry
Mizanoor Biswas
Charles Castro
Richard Cecere
Shiv Dass
Howard Dent
Annette Hicks Gill, Esq.
Joyce Hucless-Julian
Norma Jimenez
Capers Johnson
Ana Lopez
Thomas Lowenhaupt
William Salgado, Esq.
Felicita Santiago
Patricia Thomas
Orlando Tobon
Hamlett Wallace
William Young

GUESTS

Michelle Villagomez, *Queens Library*
Zoe Sullivan, *Bethex Federal Credit*

Prof. M. Caton; Prof. R. Octaviano;
Prof. P. Gimberg—*LaGuardia*

Supt. Gerald O'Brien, *Sanitation –*

Neal Friedman, Esq.

Irene Voss, Recorder

Peter Stern, Esq.
Mr. Chung, *Cyber City Internet Café*

Ivonne Garcia, Borough President's Office
Barbara Jackson, Congressman Joseph Crowley, 7th C.D.
Austin Shafran, Congressman Gary Ackerman, 5th C.D.
Murlaina Tindall, Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry

Approximately 25 Residents

Vasantrai Gandhi, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7:55 p.m. He introduced the first "Public Information" speaker, Michelle Villagomez, Queens Library Community Relations Associate.

Public Information

Michelle Villagomez advised that on April 19th, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. all are welcome to attend an award ceremony honoring Borough President Helen Marshall at the Flushing Library. Ms. Marshall is a staunch supporter of the library and has contributed 35 million dollars.

On behalf of the Queens Library, Ms. Villagomez thanked the Board for its past support in the fight against budget cuts. Unfortunately, she advised that the libraries are facing more cuts to its already diminished budget.

The Queens Library receives \$7.9 million less today for library services when compared to FY '02. As a result, 40 of Queens' 63 libraries are closed all weekend. In addition, the proposed executive budget calls for an \$11 million reduction in funding for the Queens Library. If this occurs, library service in Queens would fall below five-day service – communities all across Queens would be without the valuable services and programs we provide.

Once again, Queens Library is asking the Board's support by writing letters to the elected officials requesting:

- Baseline restoration of the \$11 million proposed cut beginning July 1, 2006;
- Restore the \$7.9 million cut from the library's annual city budget for library services;
- Provide \$4 million for expanded library facilities;
- Provide \$1.6 million for new books.

For questions, please contact Jimmy Van Bramer, Director of Government and Community Relations at (718) 990-8585.

Bethex Federal Credit

Zoe Sullivan, representing the Forest Hills Community House, advised that Bethex Federal Credit Union was established and has served the greater Bronx community for more than 35 years. Though it offers similar services to most banks, Bethex is not a bank, although it is regulated by the federal government. It is owned and operated by its members; as a result, it exists solely to meet the needs of its membership and the community it shares. There are only 2 credit unions in the Jackson Heights area. Banks and check cashers are abundant in the areas near Roosevelt Avenue and the subway system. This does not serve the entire community at large. As residents of this community, there are many hard-working people who do not have a social security number. This obstacle alone, can make it difficult for people to access affordable financial services. The last census indicates that 66% of the residents in the area of northwest Queens are foreign born. The median income was \$37, 847, which falls below both the borough and city median. Jackson Heights is thriving as an ethnically and economically diverse community. Ms. Sullivan stated that a credit union would provide financial services and education to anyone in the community who would like to become a member. Because credit unions are cooperatives, any profits from its activities would be reinvested in the economic development of the community. Ms. Sullivan further advised that loans from large banks and grants from elected officials will assist in starting them up.

Environmental Asthma Assessment and Prevention Project

Vivian Dock, Co-Chair of the Health / Social Services Committee invited Dr. Arturo Sanchez to introduce principals of the project.

Dr. Arturo Sanchez, Professor of Urban Studies at LaGuardia Community College, introduced Professor Marcia Caton, Professor Rosely Octaviano and Professor Philip Gimberg, from LaGuardia Community College. The professors enlightened the Board on the Project.

Dr. Caton advised that LaGuardia Community College has received funding from Congressman Joseph Crowley, under the aspiration of the Environmental Protective Agency. One of the objectives that the EPA has looked into is the noise pollution level emanating from LaGuardia airport. In collaboration with the E.P.A., the college will be reaching out to the community for assistance. The information will be gathered, documented and reported back to the

Congressman for additional funding. The scope of the project will look at holistic health; identify respiratory tract asthma and its prevention.

Dr. Octaviano advised that a task force from LaGuardia College has trained students to go into the homes of residents to identify asthma in both adults and children. The students will environ- mentally assess the home, target possible triggers that might be causing the ailment, and remove the trigger so that asthma attacks do not recur. Each assessed home will receive a kit containing lots of beneficial material on asthma

education. Six months later the home will be revisited and the child/adult will be interviewed and evaluated. Hopefully, a positive change will result – i.e. fewer days home from school or work and fewer doctor visits.

Dr. Gimberg stated that 300 participants are needed for the project and this can be achieved through community effort. The project is being promoted by visiting schools in the area, clinics and other places where people with asthma participate. The project will conclude in May, 2007 at which time the data will be collected and analyzed. Mr. Gimberg welcomed ideas /contacts from the public and urged that friends and neighbors be made aware of the project.

Vivian Dock advised that she will invite LaGuardia Community College to participate in our upcoming Health Fair.

Sanitation

District Superintendent Gerald O'Brien, Queens West 3, stated that he is open to Sanitation concerns from the community. The following issues and concerns were voiced to the Superintendent :

- Regulations for private carting for businesses
- Illegal posting
- Increase the number of corner litter baskets
- Garbage spillage into streets during collection
- Garbage trucks backing up onto sidewalks during collection

The Chairman welcomed and introduced the newly appointed Board members, as follows:

- Ann S. Brown
- Charles Castro
- Michael Anthony Nardiello III
- Alfonso Quiroz
- Edmund Rosenbaum

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Land Use

BSA 87-11/21 Northern Boulevard (KFC) – A request to amend the previous application to include extended operating hours of the drive thru from 12:00 midnight to 1:00 a.m. daily.

Augusto Tiongson, Committee Chair, advised that the previous application, heard on December 15, 2005, failed to include the hours of operation of the establishment. Mr. Tiongson introduced Neal Friedman, attorney for the applicant.

Mr. Friedman stated that the hours of operation were erroneously omitted in the original application. They are seeking to extend the hours as follows: Sunday through Thursday up to

11:00 p.m. On Friday through Saturday they are requesting the hour to be extended from 12:00 midnight to 1:00 a.m.

For the record, Mr. Tiongson advised that no complaints or violations have been reported and that the residents in the area were notified. He welcomed the public's participation.

Judy Grubin stated that even though the extended hour to 1:00 a.m. is on weekends, the hour is too late.

The residents in the immediate area will be disturbed.

DCA 39-20 104th Street (La Officina) – An application for a cabaret license.

Augusto Tiongson, reported that the applicant is taking over the cabaret and will not make any physical changes or alter the operation in any way. The establishment currently holds a cabaret license. Mr. Tiongson introduced Peter Stern, attorney for the applicant.

Peter Stern, Esq., advised that the business has been in operation since 1982. There is no history of police action, unusual disturbances, nuisances, or drug activity on record. There will be no alterations or expansions made. The establishment is in compliance with City Health and Fire Department codes. Mr. Stern advised that it employs female dancers to entertain. The establishment does not permit topless dancers, nor are the patrons permitted to dance with, or touch the dancers. There is no live music. The establishment is a small local cabaret with a neighborly atmosphere and is a good neighbor.

Discussion ensued:

Ed Westley stated that in the past several outstanding D.O.B. violations were cited. Were they cured?

Mr. Stern advised that boiler maintenance violations that go back to 2001 were inspected and have been cured. He further stated that in 2003 an application made for the installation of a proper sign permit was granted, the permit expires on June 30, 2006.

Pat Beckles requested clarification on the boiler violation.

Mr. Stern advised that in 2002 / 2003 a loose valve on top of the boiler was uncovered. It was repaired and ultimately passed inspection.

Augusto Tiongson noted that there is no "Public Assembly" permit as of November 30, 2005.

Mr. Stern advised that a permit for 68 to 70 persons has been issued by the Department of Buildings under the Certificate of Occupancy. An establishment that holds more than 74 people requires a Public Assembly permit. Further, a P.A. permit requires a secondary means of egress. Although this establishment does not require a P.A. permit, it has a secondary means of egress.

Judy Grubin inquired if anyone knows how many people are in the cabaret at a given time – is a counter stationed at the door?

Mr. Stern stated that the owner's main concern is not to violate the fire code. By going over the number of persons allowed, he will risk having the establishment closed down. The bouncer oversees the number of people that come into the establishment.

Ralph Moreno requested clarification on the type of dancing performed?

Mr. Stern stated that the dancers perform both slow and disco dancing; no physical contact is involved. He further noted that physical contact is prohibited by law.

Grace Lawrence inquired about the days and hours of operation.

The hours of operation are 7 days a week, from 8:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m.

DCA -- 38-09 Junction Boulevard – An application to renew a permit to operate an internet café

Mr. Chung, a partner in the Cyber City Internet Café, advised that the internet café has been operating for 3 years. The hours of operation are 11:00 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week.

A new city law requires all gaming cafes to file for a permit. Mr. Chung described the café as a computer lab – there are 32 computer station set-ups with access to the internet, VIOP and E-Mail connections. The internet café is a convenience to the local residents who use E-Mail to keep in touch with relatives in their native country. The charge is \$2 to \$3 per hour and is cheaper than communicating by long distance telephone. The internet café, adjacent to the Junction Boulevard subway station, is easily accessible to school age kids that live in the area. After school hours, students can type up their school work, do research on the internet, or perhaps prepare a resume. If needed, staff will help the students construct resumes and supervise. Students are not allowed into the establishment during school hours; I.D. is always required. Staff has open communication with the police in the event of a problem.

Luis Gomez stated that many families in the community do not have computers -- the internet café provides a good service.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Chairman opened Executive Session with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of the April 11, 2006 Agenda

Upon motion duly made by Grace Lawrence, seconded by Darryl Hoss and unanimously carried, the Agenda was adopted.

Motions by Committee

BSA 87-11/21 Northern Boulevard (KFC) –

Augusto Tiongson, Land Use Chair, advised that the Committee recommends that the amended application for the extended one hour of operation from 12:00 midnight to 1:00 a.m. be approved.

Discussion ensued:

- The extended hour to 1:00 a.m. will disturb the residents in the near-by co-op.
- There have been no complaints from the neighboring private houses.
- The establishment should be entitled to the extra hour and the Board should go for approval.

Motion # 14 – 2006 -- BSA 87-11/21 Northern Boulevard (KFC)

Upon motion duly made by David Rosero, seconded by Lisa Mesulam to extend the operating hour to 1:00 a.m. was unanimously carried. .

DCA / 39-20 104th Street (La Officina)

Augusto Tiongson advised that Committee recommended approval of the application with the following conditions:

- Cure outstanding violations
- Staff monitor its patrons to ensure that capacity is not exceeded.

Discussion ensued:

- In previous years there was topless dancing and nudity – request that the Board amend the motion to include no topless nudity show.
- Visit the establishment on any given night to observe what is really going on.
- Postpone the application to be heard again at the next meeting.
- The Board has 45 days to comment on the application. We may not have enough time for an extension.

Moton # 15 – 2006 -- DCA / 39-20 104th Street (La Officina)

Upon motion duly made by Augusto Tiongson, seconded by Edward Kiernan for a permit to operate a cabaret, with a vote of 19 in favor and 10 opposed was carried, with the following proviso:

- No topless dancing or nudity is permitted
- Cure outstanding violations
- Staff monitor its patrons to ensure that capacity is not exceeded.

DCA -- 38-09 Junction Boulevard – An application to renew a permit to operate an internet café

Augusto Tiongson advised that the Committee recommended approval of the application.

Discussion ensued:

- Post a sign that says, minors are not allowed on the premises before 3:00 p.m.
- Ask all minors for I.D.

Motion #16 -- 2006

Upon motion duly made by Augusto Tiongson, seconded by Grace Lawrence to renew the operating license for Cyber City Internet Café was unanimously carried.

District Manager's Report

Giovanna Reid welcomed the new Board members. She brought to the Board's attention that the monthly D.M. Report will now include demolition notifications and Taxi Limousine Commission renewals. She added that if a Board member has a question or concern about liquor license or T.L.C. renewals, to contact the District Office.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Gandhi requested that Board Members promptly return the Committee Assignment forms that were mailed to them. He is looking to create new committees and consolidate others.

Adoption of the March 16, 2006 Minutes

Judy Grubin requested that her statement on *page 5* under "*Discussion*" be amended to read as follows: "approval without a solution to parking does not make sense – as of right, you still want to be a good neighbor."

Motion #17 – 2006

Upon motion duly made by Vasantrai Gandhi, seconded by Edwin Westley and unanimously carried, the amended March 16, 2006 monthly minutes was adopted.

Committee Reports

Health / Social Services

Vivian Dock advised that Committee is diligently preparing for the upcoming June 10, 2006 annual Leon Von Holden Health Fair. A form will be mailed to Board members to be filled out. They are to indicate the hours that they are available and the job they wish to undertake on the day of the Fair. In order to plan for this event, she requested that members attend the Committee meeting on April 24th at 5:00 p.m.

Landmarks

Martin Maier, Committee Chair, read a draft letter to New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn. The letter expresses the need for an increase in funding for the Landmarks Preservation Commission in the FY 2007 Budget. Mr. Maier urged the constituents of Community Board #3 to be supportive and sign this letter.

Legislators Report

Barbara Jackson, representing Congressman Joseph Crowley, informed the Board that an "Immigration Forum" will be held on April 20th, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., located at 74-09 37th Avenue.

Chairman, Vasantrai Gandhi thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Voss