

The City of New York

Queens Community Board 3

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

BOARD MEETING

**Thursday, May 18, 2006
School**

at: I.S. 227, The Louis Armstrong

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

PRESENT

Khaleeq Arshed, M.D
Patrick Beckles
Cristina Borrero

Ann S. Brown
Richard Cecere
Shiv Dass
Howard Dent
Margaret Dozier
Vasantraï Gandhi
Judy Grubin
Darryl Hoss
Joyce Hucless-Julian
Norma Jimenez
Capers Johnson
Edward Kiernan
Stephen Kulhanek
Grace Lawrence
Marta Lebreton
Ana Lopez
Thomas Lowenhaupt
Lisa Mesulam
C.M.
Ralph Moreno
Michael A. Nardiello III
Joseph Ricevuto
CAU
Edmund Rosenbaum
David Rosero
Merchants Ass.
Dr. Arturo Ignacio Sanchez
Jimmy Smith
Aubry

ABSENT

Earline Berry
Mizanoor Biswas
Emma Brandt

Charles Castro
Vivian Dock
Annette Hicks Gill,. Esq.
Luis A. Gomez
Lorraine Kresse
Martin Maier
Alfonso Quiroz
William Salgado, Esq.
Felicitia Santiago
Patricia Thomas
Jorge Zamora

GUESTS

Hon. Hiram Monserrate, 21st District

Robbin Dalton, Queens Zoo Director
David Newman, N.Y. Mets
Philip Goldfeder, Mayor's Office,

Ivonne Garcia, B.P.O.
Jackson Heights Bangladeshi

Murlaina Tindall, Rep. Hon. Jeffrion

Arthur Teiler
Augusto Tiongson
Orlando Tobon
Hamlett Wallace
Edwin Westley
William Young

Giovanna Reid, D.M.
Irene Voss

Approximately 30 residents

Vasantraï Gandhi, Chairman, opened the meeting at 8:45 p.m. and introduced this evening's first public participation speaker, 21st District Councilmember Hiram Monserrate.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councilmember Hiram Monserrate introduced a proposal for additional street signage at 104th Street and 37th Avenue, Corona in honor of Sgt. Jose Gomez. Sergeant Gomez is a fallen soldier in the Iraqi war who gave his ultimate sacrifice to this nation. His immediate family are long-time residents of 104th Street. On behalf of City Council and the family of Sergeant Gomez, Hiram Monserrate requested the Board to consider waiving the normal protocol and approve the proposal for the additional street renaming signage this evening. In this way City Council can expeditiously pass the bill and further the legacy of the Gomez Family.

Claire Speranza stated that she speaks on behalf of the North Queens Homeowners' Association, the United Community Civic Association and the Jackson Heights Neighborhood and Homeowners Association in opposition to expanding the landing lights property into a playground/ball field. The neighborhood would like to see a serene park setting with trees, shrubs and perennial gardens to visually and environmentally enhance the green space.

The Jackson Heights Bangladeshi Merchants Association advised that they were originally approved to hold their June 24, 2006 street festival on either Broadway or 37th Avenue, from 70th to 73rd Streets. The permit was recently denied by the police precinct at this location for public safety reasons. The precinct determined that an alternate location for the festival to be held on 69th Street between 37th and 35th Avenues. The Association requested that the Board reconsider the original location.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Queens Zoo

Robbin Dalton, Director of the Queens Zoo, updated the Board on some of the zoo's latest happenings:

- An exciting jaguar exhibit will open in 2008. The money for this exhibit was allocated by the Borough President and City Council. The jaguar exhibit at the Queens Zoo will be the only one of its kind in New York.
- On Saturday, June 10, 2006, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Board Members and their families are invited for an early morning preview of "Bison Bonanza" and a complimentary breakfast. The bison is the zoo's signature theme and celebrates the American Bison Society's 100th anniversary.
- The "wildlife theatre" offers wonderful plays and skits for kids with an ecological theme.
- The zoo has many visitors during the summer months -- volunteers are needed with second language capabilities.

Mr. Dalton stated that the Queens Zoo is a community zoo -- the more that it is used the better off everyone is.

New York Mets

David Newman, Marketing Communication Division, of the New York Mets, presented an update on paving the way to construction of the new ball park:

- Construction will begin in mid-June -- the new Mets ball park will open up in 2009. The present stadium will be deconstructed in 2009 to create a parking facility in 2010.
- The capacity of the new ball park will hold 45,000 patrons (a reduction of 25% seating capacity).
- The Mets Corporation does not own the parking facility -- parking is controlled by the Parks Department and managed by a central parking company.
- The N.Y.P.D. runs the traffic flow -- many meetings were held addressing this issue.
- There will be a shortage of 2000 parking spaces for a period of four years. The #1 priority is the acquisition of space with various property owners throughout the area. The Mets Corporation is also working with the City and the Parks Department in finding interim replacement parking during construction. The spillover is not only heavily impacted on this side of the Grand Central Parkway, but the Flushing area as well.
- With the help of City agencies, public service announcements/advertising are being established on the L.I. Railroad, subways, buses and in the media, to encourage people to use public transportation to the games. The MTA will add additional #7 subway trains during game times.

David Newman requested the Community's help to lead the Mets in a positive direction during the restoration process. Free Mets game tickets were given out.

Mr. Gandhi requested that the stadium proposals be submitted to the Community Board in writing.

Mr. Gandhi introduced Philip Goldfeder, the new Queens representative from the Mayor's Office, the Community Assistance Unit (C.A.U.).

Mr. Goldfeder reported that his priority is to make sure that the community is well represented in City Hall and to update the community on the latest happenings in the Mayor's office.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

B00955 / Golden Town Car & Limo Service – 32-60 81st Street, East Elmhurst, N.Y.

A proposal to renew the operating license.

Augusto Tiongson, Land Use Chair, advised that TLC is now asking Community Boards to review recommendations for license renewals every two years.

John Bigonar, general manager of Golden Town Car & Limo Service, stated that the business has been at the same location for 16 years. There are approximately 30 cars and 50 drivers. When not on call, the cars park in a lot on 76th and Roosevelt Avenue.

Q. -- Ed Westley inquired if the establishment had any outstanding complaints or objections.
A. -- *No, there is no record of complaints or objections from the neighborhood.*

B00909 / Mexicanos DF Car Service – 37-08 100th Street, Corona, N.Y.

An application to renew the operating license. Augusto Tiongson introduced the owner, Jose Gracias.

Mr. Gracias stated that the company has 21 cars; when they are not on call, the cars are parked in a lot on 102-15 Lincoln Avenue. The establishment has been in business six months; the current license is registered under the previous owner (Unidos Car Service) which has now expired.

Augusto Tiongson advised that no record of complaints have been reported, nor has there been any objection from the neighborhood.

Ralph Moreno stated that the Community Board works hard trying to abate noise. Drivers tend to stop in front of residences to pick up passengers and proceed to blow their horns at all hours during the day or night.

Mr. Gracia stated that his drivers call the customers right before pick-up. They do not blow their horns, especially at night.

Speed-Hump Proposal

A request by McClancey High School for a speed hump at 71st Street between 31st and 32nd Avenues.

Steve Kulhanek, Traffic/Transportation Chair, advised 71st Street runs southbound with traffic lights on either end. He encouraged the public and Board members to comment on the proposal.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vasantry Gandhi, Chairman, opened Executive Session with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion #18 – 2006 -- Adoption of the Agenda

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

MOTIONS BY COMMITTEE

Land Use

B00955 / Golden Town Car & Limo Service – 32-60 81st Street, East Elmhurst, N.Y.

Augusto Tiongson, Chair, advised that the Committee recommended approval to renew an operating license for two years.

Discussion ensued:

A comment was made pertaining to fare rates and how prices grossly vary from one location to another. Another statement pertaining to livery cabs and horn honking was also made. Mr. Tiongson advised that the two issues have nothing to do with the renewal of an operating license.

Motion #19 – 2006

Upon motion duly made by Augusto Tiongson, seconded by Grace Lawrence and unanimously carried, that the application be approved for the renewal of a 2-year car service operating license.

B00909 / Mexicanos DF Car Service – 37-08 100th Street, Corona, N.Y.

The Land Use Committee recommended approval of the application.

Motion #20 – 2006

Upon Motion duly made by Augusto Tiongson, seconded by Edwin Westley and unanimously carried, that the application be approved for the renewal of an operating license.

Traffic / Transportation

Speed-Hump Proposal – A request by McClancey High School for a speed hump at 71st Street between 31st and 32nd Avenues. Stephen Kulhanek, Chair, advised that the Committee met in April and recommended approval.

Motion #21 – 2006

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Grace Lawrence, with a vote of 34 in favor and 1 abstention, to approve the speed hump at 71st Street between 31st and 32nd Avenues, was carried.

Proposal by Councilmember Hiram Monserrate for additional signage at 104th Street and 37th Avenue to honor Sgt. Jose Gomez, fallen soldier of the Iraqi war.

Stephen Kulhanek, Traffic/Transportation Chair, noted that this Board follows certain procedures when reviewing additional signage proposals. First it is reviewed by the Transportation Committee and a public hearing is held. It ultimately goes to the full Board and is voted on.

The Councilman requested that the Board vote on the proposal this evening and set aside the standard procedure. If the Board does not agree to vote on it now, the proposal will not be heard by City Council for another six months.

Discussion ensued:

- Grace Lawrence stated that it is not a good idea to break procedures. "If we do for one we have to do for all", she said. We should have a vote at next month's meeting.
- Norma Jimenez stated that he was a member of our community for more than 15 years. Nothing should stop us from doing this tonight, she said.
- Jimmy Smith stated that although the Community Board's rules and regulations should be respected, an exception should be made this time.
- David Rosero stated that many more will die in this war – are we going to name all of our streets after everyone that has died?
- Dr. Sanchez stated that in a time of war there is always flexibility. Sgt. Gomez was one of our own and we should put ourselves in his family's shoes.
- Michael Nardiello stated that we are a multi-cultural society and we must fight for the people who are serving and dying in this war. Waive the normal procedure and vote on it tonight.
- Darryl Hoss -- the Board owes it to the community to hold a public hearing. Let's do it in June.
- Tom Lowenhaupt -- The Board would be disrespectful if we rush the proposal through.
- Ed Westley – The pain that the family suffers will never go away -- waiting another month or two won't make a difference.
- Ana Lopez -- the signage is for the family, not the victim. Let's go through the procedure.
- William Young stated that he himself is a Veteran and recommends that the Board waive the normal procedure.

Steve Kulhanek suggested that a hand-count be taken to waive the procedure. The majority of Board Members agreed to waive the procedure.

Motion #22 – 2006

Upon motion duly made by Steve Kulhanek, seconded by Dr. Arturo Sanchez, with a vote of 32 in favor and 2 abstentions, for additional signage at 104th Street and 37th Avenue honoring fallen soldier, Sgt. Jose Gomez was carried.

Bangladeshi Merchants Association

Stephen Kulhanek reported that the organizers came before the Board in December for a permit to hold a street event on Broadway between 70th to 73rd Streets on June 24th, 2006. The Board approved their request to hold the event at that location. The 115th Precinct declined their request and instead have it on 69th Street between 37th and 35th Avenues. The organizers requested a letter of support from the Community Board to hold the event at the original location.

A hand-count was taken -- the Board agreed that a letter be sent.

Landing Lights Project Committee

Mr. Gandhi introduced a proposal by Tom Lowenhaupt to create an “Ad Hoc Committee Landing Lights Project” that will draft an improvements plan for the Landing Lights Park area. The Committee will work with community residents, Airport, Sanitation/Environment, Health / Social Services, Land Use, Parks and Transportation Committees to formulate an improvements plan.

Motion #23 – 2006

Upon motion duly made by Vasantrai Gandhi, seconded by Grace Lawrence for the establishment of the Landing Lights Project Committee, with a vote of 6 in favor, 23 opposed and 4 abstentions, the motion did not pass.

Immigrants / Newest New Yorkers

Mr. Gandhi introduced a proposal for the Immigrants/Newest New Yorkers, the Committee will access and use a wide-range of public databases to document and analyze the changing demographic profiles in C.B. #3, Queens County and City-Wide. The demographic data collected will be used to support and strengthen the Board’s technical decision-making capabilities.

Motion #24 – 2006

Upon motion duly made by Vasantrai Gandhi to establish “Immigrants / Newest New Yorkers”, with a vote of 15 in favor, 5 opposed and 8 abstentions, the motion was passed.

At the conclusion of this action the meeting was closed at 10:45 p.m. and the remaining agenda items will be reviewed at the June 15, 2006 Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Voss