

The City of New York  
**Queens Community Board 3**  
82-11 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 606, Jackson Hts, New York 11372

**BOARD MEETING REPORT**

**Thursday, April 21, 2005**  
**Armstrong School**

**at: I.S. 227, The Louis**

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

**N.Y. 11369**

**PRESENT**

Patrick Beckles  
Mizanoor Biswas  
Cristina Borrero  
Emma Brandt  
Richard Cecere  
Shiv Dass  
Howard Dent  
Vivian Dock  
Margaret Dozier  
Vasantraï Gandhi  
Luis Gomez  
Darryl Hoss  
Norma Jimenez  
Edward Kiernan  
Stephen Kulhanek  
Grace Lawrence  
Marta Lebreton  
Ana Lopez  
John Moran  
Ralph Moreno  
M.P.H.  
Mayo Peralta  
Hygiene  
Thomas Raffaele  
Joseph Ricevuto  
the Park  
Leoncio Romero  
Dispatcher Corp.  
Arturo-Ignacio Sanchez  
William Salgado  
Architects  
Felicitza Santiago  
Sorrows, R.C.C.  
Jimmy Smith  
Patricia Thomas  
District

**ABSENT**

Khaleeq U. Arshed, M.D.  
Jose Bernal  
Blanca Fonseca  
Ann Hicks Gill  
Judy Grubin  
Joyce Hucless-Julian  
Capers Johnson  
Lorraine Kresse  
Thomas Lowenhaupt  
Martin Maier  
Beryl Major  
Lisa Mesulam  
David Rosero  
Stuart Sears  
Arthur Teiler  
Orlando Tobon

**GUESTS**

Commissioner Thomas Frieden, M.D.  
  
N.Y.C Department of Health & Mental  
  
Mr. Phil Glotzer, Exec. Dir. Of A.C.Q.C.  
Mr. Andrew Ronan, Queens Theatre in  
  
Rosemary Guzman, Jubilee Radio  
  
Janice Cahalane, Esq., Sheldon Lobel  
Hiram Rothkrub, Vassalotti & Assoc.,  
  
Gladys Hernandez, Our Lady of  
  
Jaime Weisberg, Q.C.U.A.  
Hon. Jeffrion Aubry, Queens Assembly

Augusto Tiongson  
State Senator  
Edwin Westley  
Sears, City Council  
Hamlett Wallace  
Beninnida Yagual  
Ackerman, Congressman  
William Young  
Lafayette, Assemblyman  
Jorge Zamora  
Office

Chams Tarak, Rep., Hon. John Sabini,

Michael Teodora, Rep., Hon. Helen

Fior Rodriguez, Rep., Hon. Gary

Maureen Allen, Rep., Hon. Ivan

Lisa Atkins, Rep., Borough President's

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Richard Cecere, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7:40 p.m. He welcomed and introduced new Board members, Felicita Santiago and William M. Young.

The Chairman introduced Michael Teodora representing Councilwoman Helen Sears' office. Mr. Teodora sent greetings on behalf of the councilwoman and thanked C.B. #3 for approving her request to convert 37<sup>th</sup> Road between 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Streets from a two-way street to a one-way eastbound – a one-way street will dramatically improve traffic and make it safer for pedestrians, he said. City Budget Hearings begin on May 18<sup>th</sup> through June 6<sup>th</sup> at which time negotiations begin. The Councilwoman's proposals for this budget are as follows:

- Reinststitute the commuter tax so that the funds can be used for capital improvements for mass transit;
- An income tax surcharge for individuals making \$500,000 or more to provide extra funding for education;
- A Hearing was held addressing the problems of day laborers in our area – Coucilwoman Sears sponsored a bill to create a City commission to open job centers for day laborers. She and her colleagues are hopeful that an agreement can be reached on a bill that satisfies all parties involved.
- As part of the councilwoman's ongoing public awareness initiative, her office has published and mailed out thousands of bilingual fire safety cards.
- A town hall meeting on public safety affecting our community will be held on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. Police Commissioner Ray Kelly will be the guest speaker.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Richard Cecere introduced Andrew Ronan, Director of Audience Development of QueensTheatre in the Park. Mr. Ronan updated the Board on an upcoming event at the theatre:

- Beginning Wednesday, July 27<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, August 7, 2005, the ninth annual Latino Cultural Festival will present popular Latin music, dance, film / theater and a visual arts exhibition. Mr. Ronan distributed the Queens Theatre's schedule of events.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

The Chairman introduced Board Member Vivian Dock, Health & Social Services Co-Chair.

Vivian Dock advised that the Committee reviewed a proposal by the AIDS Center of Queens County for the Syringe Exchange Program (S.E.P.). On Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, the Committee toured an S.E.P. site administered by The Family Services Network Incorporated of New York, Inc., located in Bushwick, Brooklyn. The location houses an array of health and social service programs, including the S.E.P. The Committee met with the Director of the Center – it was observed that the site is run quite efficiently and the S.E.P area was very sanitary. The Committee recommends that the program be brought to our community. Vivian Dock introduced Phil Glotzer, Director of the AIDS Center of Queens.

Phil Glotzer stated that the AIDS Center of Queens County is the largest provider of HIV/AIDS services in the Borough of Queens. There has been a dramatic growth in HIV/AIDS in Queens, primarily through intravenous drug use. He stated that there are specific pockets of intravenous drug use in this area that are of concern. The initiation of a syringe exchange program is a public health intervention that works and saves lives, he said. In this community, 133 people were newly diagnosed with HIV in 2003 -- 3000 people were living with HIV/AIDS and the estimated number of IDUs living with HIV/AIDS is 800.

Chairman Richard Cecere introduced Commissioner Thomas Frieden, from the N.Y.C. Department of Health.

Commissioner Frieden introduced Dr. Scott Kellerman, Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Bureau of H.I.V. / AIDS Prevention & Control who recently joined N.Y.C. Department of Health from the Disease Control Headquarters in Atlanta.

Commissioner Frieden advised that New York City has the largest AIDS epidemic in the U.S., with more than 90,000 people living with the disease. N.Y.C. also has the highest number of injection drug users (IDU's) in the country – it is estimated that 10 to 15 percent of people who use injection drugs are H.I.V. positive. 90% of IDU's are infected with Hepatitis C; 900 people per year die in N.Y.C. of overdoses. The syringe exchange program is a mechanism to reach people who are destroying their lives and getting them to a healthier place. It's called "harm reduction", he said. Commissioner Frieden further provided the following power-point outline:

- SEPs have been operational in N.Y.C. since 1992;
- There are various models of SEPs – street-side, storefront, mobile van, churches;
- SEPs serve as a gateway to drug Rx and health care services – medical care, mental health and social services; screening for HCV, TB, and other infections;
- Syringe exchange programs work – reduce spread of HIV and HCV; accept and safely discard used syringes;
- SEPs are cost effective;
- There are more than 150 SEPs located throughout the U.S.;

- SEPs operate in 16 NYC neighborhoods; throughout Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn
- and Queens;
- There are not enough SEP services in Queens – Recently C.B. 1 and C.B. 12 unanimously approved the SEP;
- NYC SEPs must be licensed by the State to operate;
- Funding is available for SEPs in NYC;
- The role of the NYCDOHMH provides support and technical assistance to organizations seeking approval to establish a SEP. NYCDOHMH also provides information and assistance to Community Boards, political leaders and other community partners considering SEP's;
- People of all ages, races, ethnicities, and backgrounds use SEPs;
- SEPs do not bring more drug users into the community;
- SEPs do not increase discarded dirty needles in the community;
- SEPs do not increase crime.

The following comments and questions were posed:

- Such a program would encourage people to inject themselves.
- Has a proposed site been selected? How many days a week will the SEP be in operation?
- The map indicates that SEP sites are being put in neighborhoods that don't have significant problems;
- It has to be accessible to the people who need the service and acceptable to the community.

### **TLC / B02031 – 39-18 112<sup>TH</sup> Street**

An application for the establishment of a new for-hire base station (Taxi-Car Service).

Augusto Tiongson, Land Use Committee Chair, introduced Rosemary Guzman, the owner of Jubilee Radio Dispatcher Corp. Ms. Guzman stated that she is requesting the Board's approval to open a new car-service in a fast-growing community. A base-station car service is lacking in our community, she said. Furthermore, it is illegal for cab drivers to pick-up customers who hail cabs on the street because it causes traffic jams. A telephone call to the car service will not only avoid traffic problems, but is a convenience to the customer as well, she said. The service will be a 24/7 operation.

Mr. Tiongson advised that the dispatchers will operate the car-service from a store-front location by radio and intercom within that office. The cars will park in a rented lot in Corona.

In reply to a question about the problem of illegally parked black cars at various locations – Ms. Guzman stated that the office will operate from a new, efficient radio-dispatched high frequency system. The cars will not be cruising the streets waiting to pick up the next passenger.

In reply to questions posed about (1) the number of cars that will be used and (2) whether the people on the block were notified? -- Ms. Guzman advised that there will be a fleet of

approximately ten cars. (2) The block was notified and a petition was circulated; many signatures were obtained supporting the opening of the car service.

Further comments, questions and concerns were posed by Board Members, as follows:

- Queens is very populated and there is a shortage of taxis; she would like to see more car services operating in the community.
- Are the drivers' backgrounds checked before they are hired? -- *Ms. Guzman advised that her company does a thorough background check on submitted applications before hiring.*
- Drivers should be required to speak some English.

Augusto Tiongson stated that drivers should be required to follow a "rule-of-conduct" when hired.

### **DCA #0832521 – Armando's Italian Restaurant – 74-27 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

An application for the renewal of an enclosed sidewalk café with 12 tables and 24 seats.

Augusto Tiongson stated that the premises has no record of violations or complaints.

The following comments ensued:

- *The owner runs a terrific establishment and is generous to the community at large;*
- *The restaurant is a great asset in the community;*
- *The establishment has been in business over 30 years and is one of the first sidewalk cafes in the community. It is a great example of how a restaurant should be run.*

### **BSA 24-05-BZ -- 97-15 Northern Boulevard**

An application for a special permit to authorize the redevelopment of the Hess gas station and the creation of an accessory convenience store.

The Chairman introduced Janice Cahalane, Esq. of Sheldon Lobel, the attorneys representing the property owner.

Ms. Cahalane stated that the application seeks to permit the redevelopment of the existing gasoline station with an accessory convenience store on the site as well. The Community Board is requesting that street trees be provided and maintained. She stated that the curb-cuts along Northern Boulevard may prohibit trees to be planted there. The designers will look into this request. Ms. Cahalane added that an 8-foot strip of various plantings, which was not there before, will be provided.

Discussion ensued regarding the proposed application for an accessory convenience store:

- Will the convenience store take business away from the local stores?
- *Have the residents on 98<sup>th</sup> Street been notified? -- What do they say about the proposed accessory convenience store? -- Over 150 Public*

Hearing notices were sent out advising the residents that are going to be impacted on this issue. Further, a press release was faxed to the City Record and to the local newspapers for publishing.

- *Will alcohol be sold? -- Nothing other than beer will be sold.*
- *The store is a convenience for drivers to pick up staples, such as milk and bread;*
- *The redevelopment of the Hess gas station will upgrade the block and would be welcome in the neighborhood;*
- *The proposed landscaping will improve the appearance of the neighborhood;*
- *Will the convenience store cause an increase of vehicular traffic?*
- *Although not in favor of gas stations on Northern Boulevard, Hess gas station runs a good, clean establishment and favors the convenience store in the community. (Grace Lawrence)*

Augusto Tiongson stated that trees planted along Northern Boulevard will change the perception of the strip as only being a commercial area of gasoline stations and car services.

#### **BSA Cal. # 27-05-BZ – 91-11 Roosevelt Avenue**

An application to expand the term of variance for ten additional years.

Augusto Tiongson, Land Use Chair, introduced Hiram Rothkrav, representing Vassalotti & Associates, Architects, representing the Exxon gas station.

Mr. Rothkrav advised that the owner is solely requesting the re-establishment of the term of variance and an extension of time to ten (10) additional years. The variance expired in 2001 -- since that time the establishment has gone through five different ownerships; the reason why they didn't come to the Community Board sooner, he said. No changes are being proposed to the existing site. It is a 24 / 7 gas station / repair service and the hours of operation will remain the same.

In reply to a query about enlarging an existing accessory building -- Mr. Rothkrav stated that there will be no erection of any kind to enlarge.

Discussion ensued as follows:

- Fiore Rodriguez stated that she has lived across the street from the gas station twelve years. The gas station is a safe, clean establishment. Ms. Rodriguez recommended approval of the application and term of variance for ten additional years.
- The business has made donations to the Jackson Heights Action Group and has helped in the organization's clean-up efforts in the community. The gas station is an asset to the community.

Richard Cecere introduced Steve Kulhanek, Traffic/Transportation Chair.

**Speed Bump Requests – 104<sup>th</sup> Street between 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues; 105<sup>th</sup> Street between 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues**

Steve Kulhanek advised that speed bumps are being requested by Monsignor Healy, of Our Lady of Sorrows R.C.C. and our City Councilmember. He introduced Gladys Hernandez and Jaime Weisberg.

Ms. Weisberg acted as interpreter for Ms. Hernandez. Ms. Hernandez stated that she is a member of the Our Lady of Sorrows Church / School and is here this evening to represent the parents of the school children. Our Lady of Sorrows, in conjunction with the Queens Congregations United for Action, have been meeting to discuss traffic safety concerns around the church and school. Over 1700 school children pass through 104<sup>th</sup> and 105<sup>th</sup> Streets between 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues each week -- more children attend church mass and other activities. Car accidents have happened in the past at this location and every day these kids are in danger of being hit by drivers who speed and ignore traffic signals, she stated. Ms. Hernandez requested the Community Board's support for speed bumps at this location.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Richard Cecere, Chairman, opened Executive Session with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion #10 – 2005 Adoption of the Agenda**

Upon motion duly made by Grace Lawrence, seconded by Emma Brandt and unanimously carried, the April 21, 2005 Agenda was adopted.

**MOTIONS BY COMMITTEE**

**Health / Social Services**

Vivian Dock, Co-Chair, advised that Committee has had several meetings with the Department of Health and ACQC to establish the Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) in C.B. #3. She stated that after visiting a SEP site in Bushwick, Brooklyn, the Committee came away impressed with the operation of the program; further, it has proven to be very successful in saving lives. It is the Committee's recommendation that the proposal, on behalf of the Department of Health to establish a S.E.P. Program in C.B. #3, be approved.

The following questions and concerns were posed by Board Members:

- Has a specific site been chosen in C.B. #3? -- *Not at this time.*  
Is the data being shared with C.B. #3 by zip code? -- *Yes, the data is being shared with C.B.3.*

**Motion #11 – 2005 Syringe Exchange Program (S.E.P.)**

Upon motion duly made by Vivian Dock, seconded by Grace Lawrence and unanimously carried, the proposal for a Syringe Exchange Program in Community Board #3 was approved.

**LAND USE**

**T.L.C. / B02031 – 39-18 112<sup>TH</sup> Street** -- An application for the establishment of a new for-hire base station (Taxi-Car Service).

**Motion #12 – 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Augusto Tiongson, seconded by Mizanoor Biswas and unanimously carried, C.B. #3 approved the application with the following stipulations:

On-street parking, double parking, blocking driveways, congregating in front of the dispatcher's office is prohibited;

No horn-honking – customers must be contacted by telephone or, ring the doorbell;

Drivers are to made familiar with and issued the operator's do(s) and don't(s) on the establishment's operating procedures;

Further, a copy of the operation's regulations must be forwarded to the Community Board and will be kept on file;

The operator has invited the Board and residents to call the establishment to report complaints / infractions to be acted upon and addressed expeditiously;

The operator is in good standing and complies with all the requirements set forth by T.L.C.

**BSA 24-05-BZ – 97-15 Northern Boulevard** -- An application for a special permit to authorize the redevelopment of the Hess Gas Station and the creation of an accessory convenience store.

The following queries / concerns were posed:

- Will a full-service pump be available around the clock? *No; only during afternoon / early evening hours.*
- Has the owner accepted the conditions? *Yes.*

**Motion #13 – 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Augusto Tiongson, seconded by Mizanoor Biswas and unanimously carried,

C.B. #3 recommended approval for the redevelopment of the Hess gas station and accessory convenience store with the following proviso:

- Provide a full-service pump for accessibility to the elderly customers during daytime hours;
- Provide and maintain trees at both sidewalks;
- Instead of proposed shrubbery, recommend planting Hemlocks or similar tall evergreens to serve as a noise buffer for the house located northeast and adjacent to the property;
- Provide lamp-posts that are properly shielded to avoid glare to residential homes in the immediate vicinity.

**BSA CAL. #27-05 BZ – 91-11 Roosevelt Avenue** -- An application to extend the term of variance for the Exxon Gas Station for an additional ten (10) years.

**Motion #14 – 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Grace Lawrence, seconded by Emma Brandt and unanimously carried, C.B. #3 recommended approval of the application to extend the term of variance for ten additional years with the following proviso:

- That the paving be restored and that the storm drainage catch basins meet codes and are properly maintained;
- the establishment is not to exceed the previous parking space and; further no parking space rentals are permitted.

**DCA #0832521 / Armando's Italian Restaurant – 74-27 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue** -- An application for the renewal of an enclosed sidewalk café with 12 tables and 24 seats.

**Motion #15 – 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Ed Westley, seconded by Tom Raffaele and unanimously carried, C.B. #3 approved the application for the renewal of a sidewalk café.

**TRAFFIC / TRANSPORTATION**

**Speed Bump Requests** – (Our Lady of Sorrows Church and School) 104th Street between 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues; 105<sup>th</sup> Street between 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

Ana Lopez stated that it is high time that speed bumps are put down at this location. A serious accident has already happened to one child; we do not want another child injured or killed. The community is obligated to protect the children, she said.

The following discussion ensued:

- Cars and motor cycles are always speeding at this location and is in support of speed bumps;
- Ticket drivers who are speeding and/or not paying attention because they are on cell phones.

**Motion #16 – 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Steve Kulhanek, seconded by Grace Lawrence and unanimously carried, C.B. #3 unanimously approved the request for speed bumps at both locations.

**Adoption of the February and March 2005 Monthly Minutes**

Ralph Moreno requested that the February Minutes be amended to reflect the following: At the February 2005 meeting, Councilman Monserrate spoke on traffic problems in our area. Ralph Moreno requested that his question about what the Councilman intends to do about the severe traffic problems in the area, particularly on 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue be included in the February minutes.

**Motion #17—2005**

Upon motion duly made by Richard Cecere, seconded by Emma Brandt and unanimously carried, the amended February Minutes and the March, 2005 Minutes were adopted.

## **Chairman's Report**

Richard Cecere advised that an Ad Hoc By-Laws Revision Committee has been formed. Tom Lowenhaupt will Chair the Committee. Board Members who would like to take part in this committee commit should contact Tom Lowenhaupt.

## **District Manager's Report**

Giovanna Reid welcomed the new Board Members.

She invited everyone to participate in the American Diabetes Association's Walk-a-Thon on April 24<sup>th</sup>, at the Queens Center Mall.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Health / Social Services**

Vivian Dock, Co-Chair, advised that Committee met with the New York State Department of Health on April 20, 2005 to discuss public health concerns raised at the March 16<sup>th</sup> public meeting regarding the Bulova site. More than 75 members of the community came out to meet with D.O.H. to discuss cancer. The Department of Environmental Conservation is conducting a study of the area to determine whether there are contaminants in the soil vapors. The preliminary results of the study indicated that there was no evidence of air contamination. In roughly six weeks they will have the results of the study and make a final determination. Any additional information that becomes available will be posted on the C. B. #3 website. Ms. Dock further advised that further discussions on this issue will continue and the Community Board will keep everyone posted.

Vivian Dock reminded everyone that C.B. #3's annual Leon Von Holden Health Care Expo will be held on Saturday, June 11th, in front of the Corona Health Center on Junction Boulevard.

### **Airport**

Mizanoor Biswas, Co-Chair, advised that Committee will meet with Councilman Hiram Monserrate on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m. in his office.

### **Technical Advisory**

Acting on Committee Chair Tom Lowenhaupt's behalf, Richard Cecere presented the following Resolution to the Board:

### **RSS Resolution**

"RSS is computer software that enables the automatic distribution of information over the internet. Any computerized data can be distributed using RSS, i.e the recent changes made on the City's website – 311 or 911 statistics; City Council bills; comptroller audits; disease reports from hospitals, etc. can be made more accessible using RSS. Once the information is made available using free RSS software, can check for changes and react in a specific way -- i.e. the Community Board would program the RSS software reader weekly to check the police department's website. Any new crime

statistics posted would, in turn, be posted on the Community Board's website. If RSS is used by all city agencies, the Board could then program its RSS Reader to automatically consolidate updates from all city agencies on its community website."

BE IT RESOLVED, RSS makes it possible to review information from a larger number of city websites in a very short time. RSS permits the simple, rapid and inexpensive distribution of reports, alerts, calendar listings and other information to residents.

BE IT RESOLVED, that better communications between city agencies and the public can be facilitated by the use of RSS. Therefore, Queens Community Board #3 requests that all public information be made available in RSS and/or in comparable syndication formats.

*The Board unanimously approved the resolution.*

Richard Cecere introduced Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry.

### **Legislators Report**

Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry updated the Board as follows:

- As of April 1<sup>st</sup> the State of New York has a budget – the first time this has happened in a long time.
- Tuition was not raised in City and State universities – there was no decrease in the T.A.P. commitment;
- N.Y.C. gained money in the state education expense budget -- Changes were made in the reimbursement rate for capital expenditures, i.e. the building of schools;
- Critical programs that provide health care and day care are still being funded and in place;
- This past fall/winter the Assembly conducted five hearings around the state on the death penalty. It was ruled unconstitutional in New York State last year. Discussions included the impact, the cost and what to do about the constitutional infirmity that existed. The polls concluded that people preferred life without parole as opposed to reinstating the death penalty. With the death penalty the state spent 170 million dollars in the ten years. Because of the constitutional requirements, no inmate was ever executed. Compensation was finally resolved for workers, as well as inmates, who were hurt in the Attica prison riot some years ago;
- Governor Pataki signed into law legislation to strengthen D.W.I. penalties. Under Vasean's Law, the driver may be charged with a felony.

Richard Cecere introduced Chams Tarak from State Senator John Sabini's office.

Mr. Tarak updated the Board as follows:

- The Senator contacted the Deputy Commissioner of D.E.P. about the constant flooding in East Elmhurst on Astoria Boulevard in the mid to high eighties. A custom designed duct bill (valve) will be installed under the street on Astoria Blvd. and 82<sup>nd</sup> Street some time in June or July.
- D.E.P. is looking at long-term solutions to the flooding problem, as well. Installing more sewers in the area at a cost of a half million dollars per block is being contemplated. Installing tide-gates in Flushing Bay would be another long-term solution. A private firm is studying the situation.
- Senator Sabini participated in fire safety demonstrations / education in Corona. Free carbon monoxide and smoke detectors were given out.
- Critical Information Dispatch System (CIDS) is a city-wide computer data base system that stores information about buildings/apartments that might store hazardous materials. Firefighters responding to a call can check the computer on the fire truck en route to a fire.

Grace Lawrence stated that the public is being inundated with telemarketers who solicit real estate.

Mr. Tarak advised that a registry form is available from the Attorney General's office prohibiting realtors from soliciting and showing up at your door.

Richard Cecere thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Irene Voss, Recorder