

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, February 17, 2005**

**at: The Salvation Army Center**  
**86-07 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
**Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11372**

**PRESENT**

Patrick Beckles  
Jose Bernal  
Mizanoor Biswas  
Cristina Borrero  
Emma Brandt  
Richard Cecere  
Howard Dent  
Vivian Dock  
Margaret Dozier  
Blanca Fonseca  
Vasantrai Gandhi  
Ann Hicks Gill  
Council  
Luis A. Gomez  
Judy Grubin  
Darryl Hoss  
Park  
Joyce Hucless-Julian  
Capers Johnson  
Edward Kiernan  
Helen Sears  
Lorraine Kresse  
Stephen Kulhanek  
Crowley  
Grace Lawrence  
Marta Lebreton  
Ackerman  
Ana Lopez  
Aubry  
Martin Maier  
B.P.  
Lisa Mesulam  
John Moran  
Ralph Moreno  
Mayo Peralta  
Thomas Raffaele  
Joseph Ricevuto

**ABSENT**

Shiv Dass  
Norma Jimenez  
Ana Lopez  
Thomas Lowenhaupt  
Beryle Major  
Stuart Sears

**GUESTS**

Dorothy Phelan, 115 Comm.  
  
Philip Glotzer, ACQC  
Julie Bagu, ACORN  
Andrew Ronin, Queens Theatre in the  
  
Hon. Hiram Monserrate, Councilman  
Rosemary Parker, U.F.T.  
Alfonso Quiroz, Chief of Staff, Hon.  
  
Marc Barbieri, Dept. of Health  
Barbara Jackson, Hon. Joseph  
  
Maureen Allen, Hon. Ivan Lafayette  
Fior Rodriguez, Hon. Gary  
  
Murlaina Tindall, Hon. Jeffrion  
  
Ellen Raffaele, Hon. Helen Marshall,

*Approximately 70 Residents*

Leoncio Romero  
David Rosero  
Arturo Ignacio-Sanchez  
William Salgado  
Jimmy Smith  
Arthur Teiler  
Patricia Thomas  
Augusto Tiongosn  
Orlando Tobon  
Edwin Westley  
Hamlett Wallace  
Beninnida Yagual  
Jorge Zamora

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Richard Cecere, Chairman, opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. He introduced Dorothy Phelan, President of the 115<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Dorothy Phelan advised that high school seniors graduating in 2005 can become candidates for the “Jacob Govan Good Citizenship Award”. The application will be based upon eligibility requirements and must be received no later than May 25, 2005. The winners will be selected on the basis of academic achievement and community service. The award will be presented at the June 21, 2005 meeting of the 115<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council. Ms. Phelan distributed applications – for questions call (718) 424-2162.

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION**

The Chairman introduced Philip Glotzer from the AIDS Center of Queens (ACQC) to discuss the “Syringe Exchange Program”.

Mr. Glotzer stated that the program’s mission is to help people with AIDS and other related health problems as well. The program’s main goal is AIDS and Hepatitis C prevention and this can only be done by educating the people, he said. ACQC provides comprehensive social services for Queens residents living with HIV / AIDS, their families, partners and care givers. One of the program’s many services is the, *harm reduction & syringe exchange*, providing syringe exchange for injection drug users in Long Island City, Rego Park and Jamaica. Over fifty percent of the program’s new clients are infected through intravenous drug use and is reaching epidemic proportions in our communities. There has been a dramatic increase in clients who are women of color with children. Mr. Glotzer stated that the proposed plan is to open up a site in the C.B. #3 district.

Studies have indicated that it is the community’s responsibility to identify where the program is needed the most and subsequently, to work with ACQC on setting up a site. The program is monitored regularly by the State – it saves lives, it changes lives and it is the most cost effective intervention available today, he said. Mr. Glotzer

requested the Community Board's support for the implementation of the Syringe Exchange Program in this district.

**ACORN** (The largest membership organization of low and moderate income families in the country.)

Julie Bagu advised that ACORN, along with C.M. Monserrate, combined forces and will offer free tax preparation for people in the community who earn under \$35,000 per year. Councilman Monserrate has extended his office as a tax preparation site. ACORN's local office is located at 40-53 99<sup>th</sup> Street, Corona. Ms. Bagu distributed applications to be filled out for anyone requiring assistance for free tax preparation and /or housing and immigration issues.

### **Queens Theatre in the Park**

Andrew Ronin, Director of Audience Development, updated the Board on a great play that is coming to the Theatre entitled, "Two Can Play". He distributed "First -Time Free" flyers for two 2 free tickets when presented at the box office. He welcomed all to partake in the rich cultural programming at the Theatre

-- there is something for everyone, he said. Andrew Ronin thanked Giovanna Reid and Richard Cecere for their support in serving on the Gala Committee. He further advised that theatre workshops will begin in C.B. #3 at participating schools and churches in April.

Richard Cecere welcomed Councilmember Hiram Monserrate.

Councilmember Monserrate noted that people are always apprehensive when first introduced to the needle exchange program. He added that the program truly does save lives by deterring HIV / AIDS.

He urged the community's support in setting up a site in a location where it is seriously needed.

Councilmember Monserrate noted that this year is the fortieth anniversary of Malcolm X's death. He appreciates the support of the Community Board in commemorating his legacy by naming a street after him.

Last year 600 free tax returns were prepared at his Corona site, he said -- this year more than 1000 tax returns will be prepared. ACORN has a site in Jackson Heights and Flushing. The "Earned Income Tax Credit" (EITC) is a refundable tax credit for working people who earn a low to moderate income. He urged families with incomes under 35,000 per year to avail themselves of this service.

Hiram Monserrate advised that hearings were held at City Council on two bills that he introduced:

- *Graffiti Bill* – a proposal that landlords have some responsibility to clean graffiti in a timely fashion from their buildings. Further, to provide a mechanism allowing city-based community organizations to clean graffiti without consent. These organizations will be given the authority to issue fines and penalties to "bad" neighbors.

- *Roll-Back of Parking Meters on Sundays Bill* -- C.M. Monserrate thanked Board Member Vasantrai Gandhi for testifying at the City Council Hearings on this issue. He has received hundreds of calls from local church leaders, merchants and residents who are supportive of the bill. He added that the Mayor does not support the bill -- D.O.T. Deputy Commissioner testified that it was a measure to move traffic and make more parking space available. Councilman Monserrate corrected him by stating that this was a revenue producing measure – it is an indirect tax on working class people on their day of leisure, he said. Millions of dollars are being generated in summonses that are issued to people who can't get to the meter on time. He urged everyone to write or E-Mail to the Mayor stating that the people don't want to feed parking meters on Sundays.

Councilman Monserrate spoke on traffic problems in our area – Board Member Ralph Moreno questioned how he proposes to handle the severe traffic situation, particularly on 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

In reply to a question posed by Giovanna Reid about the city-wide moratorium on awnings and signs –

C. M. Monserrate stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission advised that the new rules will take effect before this summer.

Lastly, C.M. Monserrate cordially invited everyone to a celebration of Black History Month at the Langston Hughes Library on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Flyers were distributed for further information.

### **United Federation of Teachers**

Rosemary Parker, U.F.T District 24 Representative, stated that the public, particularly the parents of children in public schools, deserves to be educated on what is really taking place in our schools today. U.F.T.'s goal is to get the message out into the communities. She updated the Board as follows:

- *Balanced Literacy – “The Workshop Model” in the schools.* A teacher instructs a class of kids on a specific subject for ten minutes. To execute the skill that the teacher taught that day, he/she instructs the class to work in groups. The higher functioning kids know what to do; the lower level kids do not. “The Workshop Model” is applied starting in elementary school through high school; many subjects are not conducive to work in the “Workshop Model”. When kids are put into groups, it is known that they will talk to each other about everything other than what they should be talking about. Are the children really learning?

A teachers rally was held on February 2nd. U.F.T. is asking for flexibility to teach which they are not being allowed to do. They are requesting that a meeting be held in the near future with the principals, the chapter leaders and the union leaders. The New York City Schools have done away with readers and grammar lessons; workbooks and correction marks are out. In their place are regular books which have become the basis for all instruction in reading and writing in an approach called “balanced” literacy. Vocabulary has been taken away. Children from foreign countries, with little or no English, have to sit in classes and work in

“The Workshop Model” – how can they learn under this method? You cannot teach a lesson once for ten minutes and expect the children to remember it, she said.

Ms. Parker requested that the community get involved in the education process by writing to their legislatures. Every school should be a school where parents want to send their kids and teachers want to teach, she said.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Street Conversion – 37<sup>th</sup> Road between 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Streets** -- A proposal to convert 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Streets to one-way eastbound.

Stephen Kulhanek, Traffic/Transportation Chair, introduced Alfonso Quiroz, Councilwoman Helen Sears' Chief of Staff.

Alfonso Quiroz advised that the Councilwoman viewed the area with the Department of Transportation for them to see first-hand the hazardous and congested area. Because it is a dangerous situation she believes that changing the street to one-way eastbound is the right thing to do. The Councilwoman requested the Community Board's support.

**Malcolm X Place** -- A proposal for additional street signage at 97<sup>th</sup> Street between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenues in honor of the memory of Malcolm X.

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Stephen Kulhanek advised that Malcolm X resided on this block in the fifties and early sixties. He added that this proposal was introduced by Councilman Hiram Monserrate.

Jerii Durant, a long-time resident of East Elmhurst and former staff member of Community Board #3, stated that she is very excited about the dedication of a street named in his honor. She knew that he was a resident of East Elmhurst but, what is important, is what he stood for. She stated that she hopes the Board will pass the proposal.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Chairman opened Executive Session with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Motion #3 – 2005 Adoption of the Agenda**

Upon motion duly made by Grace Lawrence, seconded by Emma Brandt and unanimously carried, the February 17, 2005 Agenda was adopted.

## **MOTIONS BY COMMITTEE – Traffic Transportation**

**Street Conversion – 37<sup>th</sup> Road between 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Streets** -- A proposal to convert 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Streets to one-way eastbound.

Steve Kulhanek, Chair, advised that the Traffic/Transportation Committee recommends that the street conversion be approved.

Tom Raffaele stated that the conversion be endorsed as a school safety precaution.

Mizanoor Biswas stated that D.O.T. needs to give C.B. #3 more information -- he further stated that he can't vote on something he doesn't know much about.

Visantrai Gandhi stated that the street is too narrow -- it creates gridlock every day.

**Motion #4 -- Street Conversion -- 37<sup>th</sup> Road between 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Streets**

Upon motion duly made by Stephen Kulhanek, seconded by Tom Raffaele, with a vote of 41 in favor and one abstention, the street conversion to one-way eastbound was passed.

**Malcolm X Place -- A Proposal for Additional Street Signage at 97<sup>th</sup> Street Between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenues**

Steve Kulhanek stated that the Committee's recommendation was in favor of the additional street signage commemorating Malcolm X.

In reply to a query by Judy Grubin on whether family members of Malcolm X were informed about the proposed commemoration -- Councilmember Monserrate stated that his office did contact the family.

Tom Raffaele stated that he strongly endorses the commemoration of Malcolm X.

Grace Lawrence stated that Malcolm X was a renowned lecturer and he brought a great deal of knowledge to the people. Many programs have been held at Langston Hughes in honor of Malcolm X; she thanked C.M. Monserrate for his contribution to make these programs possible.

**Motion #5 -- 2005 Malcolm X Place**

Upon motion duly made by Steve Kulhanek and seconded by Grace Lawrence, C.B. #3 unanimously approved the proposal for additional signage at 97<sup>th</sup> Street between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenues, East Elmhurst in honor of Malcolm X.

**Motion #6 -- 2005 Adoption of the January 20, 2005 Minutes**

Upon motion duly made by Richard Cecere, seconded by Judy Grubin and unanimously carried, the January 2005 Minutes were adopted.

**District Manager's Report**

Giovanna Reid advised that included in each Board Members package is a note from Daniel Doctoroff pertaining to activities surrounding the 2012 Olympics. The International Olympics Committee Evaluation Commission will visit New York City to observe the City's proposed facilities. From February 21<sup>st</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup> there will be a series of events going on in the city as part of the celebration. Giovanna Reid encouraged Board members to participate in the events.

Richard Cecere noted that he was invited by Columbia University School of Journalism to sit on a radio show panel. The 2012 Olympics will be discussed and how it will impact our community. He will advise Board members when it will be aired.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Youth Services Committee**

Vivian Dock advised that "Youth Fair 2005" will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2005, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at I.S. 227.

### **Business / Economic Development**

Mr. Vasantrai Gandhi, Chair, advised that he attended a City Counsel hearing this morning regarding a bill introduced by C.M. Monserrate on the roll-back of parking tickets on Sundays. He hopes that the bill will pass shortly.

He further advised that a proposed project is under way to conduct a profile of commercial strips on Roosevelt Avenue, 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Northern Boulevard, between 69<sup>th</sup> and 114<sup>th</sup> Streets.

Dr. Arturo Sanchez provided a brief overview of the upcoming GIS (Geographical Information Systems) Business Mapping Initiative as follows:

The mapping initiative will build up the lessons learned and the hard data generated by two previous and successful CB #3 college / community collaborations: 1) The Hunter College/103<sup>rd</sup> Street Corona Plaza Urban Affairs and Planning Studio (*a one-year planning studio with graduate students conducted a year and a half ago — the economic and urban revitalization of Corona Plaza*); and 2) the Pratt Institute / 74<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Design Studio (*a partnership with the 74th Street Merchants Association to do a six-month urban planning / urban design studio with 15 graduate students and 2 professors. The project was to develop a model of economic development that would revolve around tourism*). The study is now in its final stages of completion and it will be presented to Community Board #3 and to the 74<sup>th</sup> Street Merchants Association.

The GIS Business Mapping Initiative acted as a pre-cursor to the project which is presently being proposed. Community Board #3 is probably the most far-reaching, far-visioning Community Board in New York City, Dr. Sanchez said. Our Board is the beta project for the OASIS (a community based project in association with the Municipal Arts Society, is a demonstration project for the use of computers and computer-based planning through mapping processes.) The proposed project will be initiated through LaGuardia Community College, the New York Public Research Interest Group, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Queens and C.B. #3 are the prospective partners and the beneficiaries of the study. The three commercial corridors that will be surveyed are: Roosevelt Avenue, 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Northern Boulevard, between 69<sup>th</sup> to 114<sup>th</sup> Streets. The GIS Business Mapping Initiative is a two-year project that will survey and create maps identifying all small businesses located along the 3 commercial corridors within C.B. #3. The survey design, implementation and analysis will be carried out by students from LaGuardia Community College who will be supervised by faculty members. The students will survey all of the businesses and will ask questions, i.e. – the type of business; the ethnicity of the business; hiring practices; the labor market and

subsequently, household and individual income. The GIS Project is scheduled to start in March 2005. The first phase of the beta project will initially be tested in the most densely packed and problematic commercial corridor, namely, Roosevelt Avenue from 69<sup>th</sup> to 82<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Dr. Sanchez stated that for the first time, C.B. #3 will have timely and adequate social-scientific data, economic data, commercial data, market analysis and demographic data that will provide a clear view of where we are as a community. Further, the data will be made available to any member of the community. It places the Community Board in the forefront of being a proactive institution that will manage with hard-core data of economic changes that is sweeping our community, he said.

Dr. Sanchez welcomed questions from Board Members and residents.

Joyce Julian inquired whether the survey will collect data on the kinds of superfluous businesses that occupy the community, i.e. "99 cents" stores, liquor stores, etc. Dr. Sanchez stated that the data survey will not take a "good" or "bad" position on the types of businesses. He added that one can use the data as a tool for whatever public policy initiatives you want to use them for.

Emma Brandt inquired how long the project will take -- Dr. Sanchez stated that the project will take two years, but it will be done in stages. The beta project (the first stage on Roosevelt Avenue) will be completed by the beginning of this summer; the maps and accompanying data will be available to all of the beneficiaries. Further, many of the students will do an economic analysis using census data.

In reply to another question posed by Emma Brandt about follow-ups after the project has been completed -- Dr. Sanchez stated that launching this project opens up a door for additional finance for follow-up projects as well as other projects.

Jimmy Smith stated that there are issues that need to be addressed regarding this project.

The Community Board needs to know the legalities involved in the project, i.e. where the money is coming from and how it will be distributed, he said. Although the project sounds good and he is not opposed to it, we are getting involved in complicated long-range plans. The future of our community is at stake; we need to know the whole deal and not just a partial one. Mr. Smith added that C.B. #3 cannot make a final decision on the project or move forward until we have all of the information and documentation. If the Board is to support the project, all the information and documentation that we requested must be presented at the next Executive Committee before we make a final decision.

Dr. Sanchez stated that he agrees with Mr. Smith one hundred per cent -- "we need full transparency on the issue". We need to know the functional obligations and responsibilities of all institutional actors involved, he said. He stated that he will get the appropriate documentation from all of the beneficiaries to the Executive Board before March 15<sup>th</sup>.

Judy Grubin stated that this is a school project. There is no reason for the Board to be its sponsor. We have no way to monitor it, nor do we have the resources to be involved in any way. It is not the province of this Board to get involved in this -- we should be concerned with direct services to the members of this community and to plan projects to

enhance the quality of life for all residents. This is wrong. There is a proper process and as a City agency, we should follow it.

In reply, Dr. Sanchez stated that CUNY is a major research institution that is asking to partner with Community Board #3.

Patricia Thomas questioned how the three commercial strips were selected? Why wasn't Astoria Boulevard included?

Dr. Sanchez stated that the three commercial strips selected are the most densely populated. Astoria Boulevard does not have the commercial density.

Edwin Westley stated that Astoria Boulevard is an excellent prospect. It should be added. He further stated that we need to attract stores that the community is interested in seeing.

Vasantraï Gandhi stated that C.B. #3 is not shedding any expenses and we do not have to give any administrative assistance. C.M. Monserrate has initially offered \$8000. Funding for the mapping project will be administered by the university's "grant office". C.B. 3's role is only as beneficiary. Studies are always necessary to create economic growth and development – i.e. a proliferation of banks are once again opening up because of studies that were done, he said. Mr. Gandhi stated that he strongly supports the proposal.

Grace Lawrence stated that she is concerned that Northern Boulevard and Astoria Boulevard are always the lowest on the totem pole. East Elmhurst and Corona residents feel that they are underserved, she said.

### **Motion # 7 -- 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Richard Cecere, seconded by Vasantraï Gandhi, with a vote of 25 in favor, 9 opposed, 5 abstentions and 2 *recusals*, the motion was carried. C.B. #3 will support the GIS Business Mapping Project conducted by LaGuardia College, contingent upon the Executive Committee receiving all of the information outlined by the full Board at its next meeting.

### **Landmarks**

Martin Maier, Chair, stated that the biggest complaint regarding the Landmarks Preservation is their unwillingness to establish standards with public input. Many co-op boards have battled with LPC regarding the fence issue. LPC contends that when most of the buildings were constructed in the 1920's or 1930's, fences did not surround the gardens. Originally there were no standards for fences. LPC has arbitrarily decided that 28" fences are acceptable. Landmarks has made an unrealistic decision without public input.

Martin Maier stated that Helen Sears will hold a Town Hall Meeting with L.P.C. 's Commissioner Tierney on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Tom Raffaele stated that L.P.C. must recognize that fence standards must be re-evaluated and make security its first priority.

Martin Maier asked the Board to support the following resolution:

**Motion #8 – 2005**

Upon motion duly made by Martin Maier, seconded by Judy Grubin and unanimously carried, the following resolution was passed:

- C.B. #3 recognizes that L.P.C.'s guidelines focus exclusively on aesthetics;
- C.B. #3 recognizes that L.P.C.'s regulations pertaining to fences are outdated, thus requiring all fences to be no higher than 28";
- L.P.C. regulations are based on the 1920's model – when life was simpler;
- Our residents in response to security concerns have erected 87 fences;
- Further, of the 27 homes and apartment buildings that are in compliance, 18 are chain linked fences, which are hazardous and provide no security;
- While we desire to preserve the historic character of our neighborhood, attention must be given to the safety needs of our residents.

John McGloughlin, a landmarks district co-op resident, stated that the Landmarks Preservation Commission is an authoritative body and has power beyond what many of us want to believe.

L.P.C.'s stance is, "*it's our way or the highway*", he said.

**Borough President's Report**

Ellen Raffael advised that an obsolete "red bird" #7 subway car is now stationed on the outside corner property in front of Borough Hall. She stated that the Borough President has done much to promote tourism in Queens and the train car will serve as a visitors' center. She further advised that volunteers have set up a table in the lobby of Borough Hall for the Tsunami relief effort. Visitors are requested to make donations.

Richard Cecere, Chairman, apologized for the late hour, thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 10:25.

submitted,

Respectfully

Irene Voss,  
Recorder