

**QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS
VIRTUAL GENERAL MEETING
MARCH 21, 2023**

Officers present: Henry Euler, Kevin Forrestal, Richard Hellenbrecht, John McCaffrey, Ashook Ramsaran, Warren Schreiber, Sey Schwartz, Denise Winters, Elaine Young

Legislators and their Representatives:

City Council Member Vickie Paladino with Alie Ziraschi, State Senator John Liu with Ashley Liu, Tim Chubinidze representing Queens Borough President Donovan Richards

Others present, including Tomi A, Carin Bail, Angela Castellano, Maria De Innocentiis, Michael Feuer, Arlene Fleishman, Jackie Forrestal, James Gallagher Jr, Yuner Gao, Tila Hicks, Sylvia Johnson, Jon Karsten, Kathi Kennedy, Rhonda Kontner, Lorraine (?), Walter Magdan, Geoffrey Mazel, Suzanne Peritz, Bill Perkins, President BFHA, Sherry Reisner, Robert Scalzo, William Scarborough, Bobby Sher, Brenda Tow, Abdalih Wasel, Ed Westley, Alie Ziroschi for ALIE, Andrew, Johnny, and others.

Meeting opened at 7:40 p.m. by President Warren Schreiber

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report delayed. Jim Trent is away and could not join in time
Membership form and fees mailed. Everyone is urged to complete and return with \$35 fee per civic.

2 New Members

Beech Hills Shareholders LLC
We Love Whitestone
Membership approved unanimously.

Report by Attorney Geoffrey Mazel on the proposed law by Gov. Kathy Hochul

The proposed legislation included in the State budget is to be considered and comes up for a vote next week by the State Assembly. The Governor's housing agenda is represented as a strong response to encourage development to remedy the housing crisis. Touted as "streamlining" housing density limits, once in place, many more dense structures would be allowed to be constructed without having to go through the ULURP process. The proposal appears to view single family districts as problematic to increased development, and the ultimate goal is to eradicate those districts and allow multi-family structures to be constructed to ease the housing crisis. It is a trend in parts of the country.

Attorney Mazel noted that the proposed law would require that buildings reduce their fossil fuel consumption by 40%, or be fined. The goal is to get everyone to electrify. (Assuredly, there would not be enough electricity.) There would be exemptions for some categories, such as hospitals, electric plants, regulated buildings and more.

He noted that for many it would be impossible to comply and would be bankrupted in the effort to conform. Particularly buildings and homes built before 1950

Mazel has met with a number of elected Senate and Assembly officials and consulted with engineers in an effort to catch up and make the plan palatable and to work. Almost all do not have the courage to stand up to the issue. He noted Warren (Schreiber) and Bob (Friedrich) have instituted a law suit basically challenging the would-be penalties on constitutional grounds, and it is pending in court. It is designed to buy time and to push back the goal posts. The motion to dismiss awaits a decision. If past, the act would go into effect within seven months and would especially affect housing cooperatives.

There is the immediate need to be seen and heard in response. He urged that an all out effort be made by telephone calls and emails to our legislators within the next week to show our resolve and get them to act against the proposed legislation.

A number of questions to the speaker followed with expressions of strong indignation from the attendees. As an example, Warren noted that to comply it is estimated it would cost his

cooperative \$3 million. The expense would require a significant rental increase and the existing tenants would no longer be able to live there. It is killing the middle class once again, and in particular it will be the young people who cannot afford to stay. Warren added that the law suit's lead attorney is former NYC Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro, a specialist in dealing with housing and community issues.

On a motion by Kevin Forrestal, seconded by John McCaffrey, to authorize the QCC Executive Board to act upon the issue in behalf of QCC total membership, the motion was past unanimously.

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Proposal for \$30. Monthly Residential Street Parking Permits to raise funding for Metropolitan Housing Authority

The floor was opened for discussion and comments made were as follows:

When will the MTA stop asking us for money?

The revenue derived would not alleviate the parking crisis,

and the permit would not assure a parking spot.

Its only objective is to squeeze dedicated funding for the MTA.

We've been funding MTA over and over again. It's simply another user tax.

We have had no accounting for funds we provided over the years.

Where does all the money go?

The argument for money isn't enough.

What is needed is a full investigation of MTA funding and its expenditures.

From experience, if such a plan were to be instituted the price can be expected to eventually increase exponentially.

What if people cannot afford the fee?

If this goes down they will surely raise the subway fee.

We need our share of state and federal funds that goes to the rest of the state.

After additional discussion, Kevin introduced a motion. -

The motion was made by Kevin Forrestal and seconded by John McCarthy
The motion was passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Update: The City Field Proposal for a Casino and Related Facilities

Ashook stated that there is no update since the previous QCC Citifield Committee meeting held on January 31, 2023. Ashook reported that there are no further proposals in the works at this time. Another committee meeting would be held after the scheduled meeting at Citifield to be attended by Ashook & Kevin.

Kevin had previously attended a meeting with City Field's representatives for a skillful presentation of the proposal that would require the acquisition and use of public park land. Since then the high-powered lobbying team continues to steamroll the proposal to assure the support of legislators and community groups.

The Status of the Creedmoor Hospital land conversion

Richard Hellenbrecht reported that further meetings have not been continued. The ideas developed by the affected community groups and Community Board 13 at an earlier meeting are to come back to the community toward the end of July to develop a master plan that would include the following conditions: no big box stores, no high rise buildings nor shelters.

The next QCC Newsletter

Ashook reported the next newsletter is currently in design stage, and all civics are invited to provide material for publication. There is to be included a page on the work of one of our civic organizations. Ed Westley of Jackson Heights Beautification noted they will be celebrating the organization's 30th anniversary and he requests that the organization be so included.

Condolences:

Passing of Murray Berger

Passing of Mark Haken

Passing of Alan Ong's Mother

With no further business, the meeting was concluded at 9:10 p.m.

Submitted by Seymour Schwartz
March 28, 2023

Next meeting: April 18th