

COMMUNITY BOARD #1 BOARD MEETING JANUARY 8, 2008 – 8:00 P.M.
BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH, 1091 FOREST AVENUE

Sean Sweeney, Chairman

MEMBERS

Vincent Accornero
Anjail Ameen-Rice
Michael Arvanites
Lloyd Bacchus, Excused
Larry Beslow, Excused
Loretta Cauldwell
Ajmal Chaudhry, Absent
Anthony Cosentino
Megan Delmar
George Doyle
Linda Eskenas
Timothy Forsyth
Grace Ferranti, Excused
Rajiv Gowda, Excused
John Guzzo
Jeanne Hogan
Sunny Jain, Absent
Wilma Jones
Dominick Lambert, Excused
Lisa Lattanzio
Adena Long
Anthony Marra
David Martin, Military Leave
Jacob Massaquoi, III, Excused
Sheila McGinn, Excused
Daniel McOlvin
Mary Mitchell, Excused
Friday Ogbewe, Absent
John Pabone, Absent
Joseph Pancila, Absent
Terry Player, Excused
Leticia Remauro
Chris Rooney
Debi Rose
Nicholas Siclari
Sean Sweeney
Ken Tirado
John Vitucci
Harold Wagner
Mark Washington
Curt Ward
George Wonica, Jr.
Camille Zarrelli
Richard Zichettello

GUESTS

Victoria Larsen, Rep. Mayor Bloomberg
Jason Razefsky, Rep. B.P. Molinaro
Robert Vaillancourt, Rep. Cong. Fossella
Priscilla Marco, Rep. Sen. Savino
Mark Zink, Rep. MOA Titone
Ann Clinton, Rep. MOA Hyer-Spencer
Ken Mitchell, Rep. Councilman McMahon
Michael Tannousis, Rep. Councilman Oddo
Leonard Garcia-Duran, Director, SI City Planning
James Miraglia, SI City Planning
Jeffrey Sperber, NY Public Library
Philip Craft, City Parks Foundation
Sheila Hosni, NYC League of Women Voters
Michael Morell, Pres. Westerleigh Improv. Society
James Smith, President Houston Lane Homeowners Assoc.
Patricia Schwimer, Clove Lake Civic Assoc.
Phyllis Savarese, Clove Lake Civic Assoc.
16 Houston St. & Houston Lane Residents on File at the Bd. Office
8 Westerleigh Improv. Society Members on file at the Bd. Office
3 Snug Harbor East Residents on file at the Board Office

OFFICE STAFF

Joseph Carroll, District Manager
Lisa Crosby, Community Associate

Chairman Sean Sweeney called the meeting to order at 8:03 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Secretary Camille Zarrelli took roll call attendance.

Mr. George Wonica, Jr. made a motion to accept December 2007 Board Minutes, Mr. George Doyle seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

A moment of silence was given to Lt. John Martinson of the New York City Fire Department who gave his life fighting a fire

Chairman Sweeney introduced Mr. Leonard Garcia-Duran, Director of the Staten Island Department of City Planning and Mr. James Miraglia, Department of City Planning.

Department of City Planning Application for the Westerleigh Zoning text amendment from an R3X district to an R2 district an approximately 75 Block area. The proposed reasoning area is bordered by R3X to the north, R2 and R3X zoning districts to the east, R3X to the south and R2 to the west.

Mr. Miraglia explained a presentation was given to the Silver Lake/Sunnyside and Westerleigh/Willowbrook Area Committee in December and the Land Use Committee in January. Both committees approved the application for the zoning text amendment. The Westerleigh Improvement Society has been working on the application for a number of years. The application preserves the existing character of the neighborhood by encouraging construction of new homes that reflect and preserve historical character. The zoning change would prevent teardowns of single family detached homes to build two family attached homes allowed by the current R32 zoning district.

A map was shown illustrating the areas to be zoned R3X from R2. Almost all of the homes surrounding the proposed zoning change are single family detached homes.

The area proposed to be changed from an R2 to an R3x is bounded by:

- College Avenue, Bidwell Avenue, Lathrop Avenue, St. John Avenue, Watchogue Road, and a line midway between Glascoe Avenue and Woolley; and
- A line 150 feet southerly of Forest Avenue, Manor Road, Maine Avenue, South Greenleaf Avenue, Crowell Avenue, Wescott Boulevard, Kemball Avenue, a line 120 feet easterly of Jewett Avenue, Chandler Avenue, Jewett Avenue, Markham Place, Deems Avenue, The Boulevard, Wardwell Avenue, a line 100 feet northerly of The Boulevard, a line 100 feet westerly of Jewett Avenue, a line 135 feet southerly of Maine Avenue, Wardwell Avenue, College Avenue, North Avenue, Shaw Place, Burnside Avenue, Jewett Avenue, a line 90 feet northerly of Kingsley Avenue, Elias Place, Ravenhurst Avenue, Mundy Avenue, Egbert Avenue and a line 170 feet easterly of Greenleaf Avenue.

Mr. Garcia-Duran and Mr. Miraglia gave a second presentation regarding the Department of City Planning Application for Stairwells Text Amendment – The Department of Buildings adopted a new Building Code in July 2007. The new Code will be phased in over time and become fully mandated in July 2009. Many provisions of the new code address building safety measures. One provision requires wider stairwells in residential buildings taller than 125 feet.

Currently the Building Code requires stairwells to be at least 36 inches wide. The amendment would require stairwells to be a minimum width of 44 inches to better ensure adequate egress in the event of a fire or other emergency. The Zoning Resolution counts stairwells towards the allowable floor area. The proposal is a Citywide Text Amendment.

Mr. Ken Mitchell, Chief of Staff for Councilman McMahon read a statement of objection to the issuance of variances for 63, 65 Houston Street and 104, 106 Willowbrook Road.

“I strongly urge Community Board #1 to vote against the variance. Construction on these homes stopped prior to the adoption of the Lower Density Growth Management Text Amendments. The owners of this property have exploited the permit process since 2003 and have reapplied on several occasions.”

Mr. Mitchell read a statement on behalf of Councilman McMahon asking support and approval of the Westerleigh Rezoning Text Amendment.

“The current designation of R3X allows one and two family detached homes. The new R2 will limit new construction to one-family detached homes only, which is more consistent with the character of the neighborhood.”

Full testimony of Councilman McMahon on both applications on file at the Board Office.

Mr. Eric Palatnik, PC showed plans of the property and said a request for a special permit is request to allow an automotive service station, which has continuously operated at the premises since 1956. If approved, the application will include a 2100 square foot accessory convenience store and 6 multi-product dispensers.

The proposal is to demolish the existing structure and redevelop the premises as a new automotive service station. Accessory parking will be for 14 motor vehicles. A new chain-link slated fence will abut the homes which are zoned commercial. As requested by the Land Use Committee, a landscape buffer will be planted along the chain-link slated fence.

Mr. Palatnik previously gave a presentation to the Mariners Harbor/Port Richmond Area Committee and Land Use Committee. Both committees denied the vesting application.

The lot is 23,814 square feet. Mr. Palatnik claims the buildings are approximately 85% complete. The original owner of the property was Mr. Forte; Mr. Brady is the third owner of the property.

In August of 2004, the City Council adopted the Lower Density Growth Management Text Amendments. The new regulations limit the number of homes that can be built.

As of August 14, 2005, the foundations on each of the subject buildings were complete, thus, each development achieved the right to complete construction and obtain a certificate of occupancy.

The Department of Buildings issued building permits and renewed consistently until July of 2007.

According to documents the owner has expended \$267, 275 restoring and completing the buildings. The Board of Standards and Appeals has the authority and jurisdiction to render a decision on a vested rights issue. The owner of the property acted in good faith in that the issued permits were valid and continuously renewed until July 14, 2007 by the Department of Buildings.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

FIRST VICE CHAIRWOMAN, Sheila McGinn – Mr. Sweeney announced Ms. McGinn has an excused absence.

SECOND VICE CHAIRMAN, John Vitucci – No report.

THIRD VICE CHAIRMAN, George Wonica, Jr. – No report.

TREASURER, Daniel McOlvin – “The Treasurer’s report is in the packet. One of our fellow Board Members, Dominick Lambert, suffered a stroke last year. He has been in rehabilitation in Clove Lakes Nursing Home.

He was moved this morning, as per Ms. Debi Rose, to Eger Nursing Home. He would love to see everyone. Please go visit him.”

SECRETARY, Camille Zarrelli – Ms. Zarrelli wished everyone a Happy New Year. Ms. Zarrelli reminded Board Members if they are unable to attend a meeting they should call the Board Office prior to the meeting, even if it is after 5:00 PM, a message can be left on the answering machine. Ms. Zarrelli welcomed back Lisa Lattanzio and Ms. Leticia Remauro who were both recently in the hospital.

DISTRICT MANAGER, Joseph Carroll – Mr. Carroll mentioned “Ms. McGill has an excused absence because she is somewhere very important. Her brother was a Captain in the new York City Fire Department and the American Academy in Rome is endowing \$100,000 dollar scholarship in Captain McGinn’s name.

This Sunday, Community Church located at 51 Van Duzer Street is presenting the Dr. Reverend Marin Luther King Jr. Awarded to our Chairman, Sean Sweeney.

PUBLIC SESSION

Mr. James Smith, President of the Houston Lane Homeowners Association said the property at Houston Street was purchased in August of 2003; the zoning was about to change. Mr. Smith approached the new owner, Frank Forte and asked him what his plans were. He stated he was building two multi-unit rentals containing approximately 13-15 apartments. The zoning was changed prohibiting this type of high-density building. Building continued at the site. The application should be denied by the Community Board and the Board of Standards and Appeals.

Full testimony of Mr. Smith is on file at the Board Office.

Ms. Kim McEvoy, Houston Lane Homeowner’s Association spoke opposing the completion of the homes on Houston Street and Willowbrook Road and asked Community Board #1 to deny the application.

Mr. Michael Morrell, President of the Westerleigh Improvement Society thanked the Elected Officials; the Department of City Planning Silver Lake/Sunnyside/Westerleigh Area Committee, the Land Use Committee and Community Board #1 for all their help with the Westerleigh Down zoning Application and after three years making it become reality.

Mr. Phillip Craft from the City Parks Foundation explained the Foundation offers a wide range of free programs in the City Parks, mostly over the summer. There are free concerts, dance programs, sports programs, workshops etc. You can reach Mr. Craft at the website at Cityparksfoundation.org or by calling 212-360-8162 to inquire about the programs and sites.

Mr. Leonard Labita spoke opposing the proposed Key Food Supermarket located at Victory Blvd & Manor Road. “The traffic at the corner is already congested. Many stores have to vacate to make room for the supermarket. The Manor Road Post Office cause heavy delays in traffic and delivery and waste removal trucks for the supermarket and customers will only make the traffic worse.”

FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

LAND USE – CHRISTOPHER ROONEY – Mr. Rooney stated the Land use Minutes are in the packet. There are four motions as follows:

MOTION

Motion made and seconded to approve Department of City Planning Application No.C080202ZMR – Westerleigh Zoning Text Amendment.

Roll call vote taken. Vote passed unanimously.

Chairman Sweeney asked the members for the Westerleigh Improvement Society to stand up and wished them sincere congratulations.

MOTION

Motion made and seconded as follows for BSA Cal. Nos. 251-07-1, 252-07-A, 253-07-A and 254-07-A 63, 65 Houston Street and 104, 106 Willowbrook Road.

Whereas the applications contains substantial misrepresentations in that it suggests all four building on both sides of the project are all substantially complete and they are clearly not; and, Whereas, the building construction that has been done on one side of the project has all been done in 2007, and the corresponding investment by the applicant, as the representative stated was after the adoption of the Staten Island Amendments to the Growth Management Task Force which further limited the permitted density; and, Whereas, the buildings do not comply with the existing zoning;

Be it hereby resolved that the application for vesting rights that would permit the project to go forward be denied.

Vote passed to deny application unanimously.

Mr. Accornero said there should be some mechanism in place where the property owner could re-coup some of his money. The Buildings Department issued permits even after the zoning was changed.

Ms. Remauro, Acting Rules Chairperson said the Rules Committee would review the issue as the January 28, 2008 Rules Committee Meeting.

MOTION

Motion made and seconded to approve Department of City Planning Application No. N080149 ZRY- Stairwells Text Amendment.

Vote to approve failed the Land Use Committee 2-2.

MOTION

Motion made and seconded to deny Department of City Planning Application No. N080149 ZRY – Stairwells Text Amendment

A discussion was held regarding the Stairwells Text Amendment on a number of topics including but not limited to: Variance requests for higher building heights air rights, larger buildings due to less square footage of floor area and not expanding stairwells in commercial buildings.

Roll call vote taken. Vote passed to deny 19-11-1

Mr. Doyle mentioned the Mobil Gas Station on Bay Street and Vanderbilt Avenue still has cars parked on the sidewalk. When the variance application was heard a few months back, a letter was to be written to the Police Department asking to ticket any cars on the sidewalk including the tow trucks that occasionally park in the bust stop.

Mr. Carroll replied, “a letter was written at the time and the no parking of cars and the no parking of cars and the tow truck was part of the Board’s recommendation to the Board of Standards and Appeals to be included in the variance.

PUBLIC SERVICES – LLOYD BACCHUS – No meeting, no report

YOUTH SERVICES – LARRY BESLOW – Mr. Beslow had an excused absence. Ms. Joanne Pentangelo chaired tonight's meeting jointly with the Human Resources Committee. Minutes will be included in the packet next month.

HUMAN RESOURCES – LISA LATTANZIO – Ms. Lattanzio reported Ms. Sussman, Daytop Village was in attendance at the meeting tonight. Minutes of the meeting will be in the packet next month. Ms. Lattanzio thanked the Board for the flowers that were sent to her in the hospital.

SANITATION SITING COMMITTEE – ANTHONY COSENTINO – Mr. Cosentino reported anyone who is interested, a new Sanitation Garage has just been built in the Rockaways. A trip is planned on January 30, 2008. We will meet at the Board Office at 10:45AM and will be picked up by Mr. Daniel Klein to tour the Rockaway Sanitation Garage at 11:00AM. Anyone interested must notify the Board Office at least one week prior to the departure date. Mr. Klein must know how many people will be attending.

RULES & LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS – LETICIA REMAURO – No report.

TRANSPORTATION – DANIEL McOLVIN – There was no December Transportation Meeting. In December's Board packet November Transportation minutes included an update of the Clove Road Water Main project and other major projects on the north shore. Members of the Committee are asked to bring information back to their respective area committees. If anyone has any transportation issues, please attend the meetings. The next Transportation meeting will be on January 31, 2008, 7:30 at the Board Office. The X16 Express bus service has improved significantly. They have added another bus in the evening. There is a 4:45 pm bus and a 5:40 pm bus.

BUDGET & FINANCE – TERRY PLAYER – Mr. Carroll reported the Statement of Needs meeting will be held on February 7, 2008 at the Board Office.

WATERFRONT – CURT WARD – No meeting – no report.

AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS

MARINERS HARBOR/PORT RICHMOND – DEBI ROSE – Ms. Rose thanked Mr. George Wonica Jr. and Ms. Sheila McGinn for running her December Meeting. Minutes of the meeting are in the packet.

CLIFTON/CONCORD/STAPLETON – LARRY BESLOW – Mr. Beslow has an excused absence. Mr. Doyle chaired the meeting and a quorum was not present.

SILVER LAKE/SUNNYSIDE/WESTERLEIGH – KEN TIRADO – Mr. Tirado said a joint meeting was held with the West Brighton Area Committee. Minutes of the Silver Lake/Sunnyside/Westerleigh meeting are in the packet. Mr. Tirado apologized for the wrong date on the minutes and for not including a number of people who were in attendance. The names are included in the West Brighton Area Committee minutes.

Mr. Tirado thanked all the elves and the generous gifts that were given in December for the annual Santa visit to Richmond University Medical Center. It was a big success.

ROSEBANK/FORT WASDSWORTH – JOHN GUZZO – No report. The Rosebank/Ft. Wadsworth Committee will meet this Thursday January 10, 2008 at Mt. Carmel Hall 7:30 pm. Chairman Sweeney asked the Elected officials representative to introduce themselves and informed the members and the public that the representatives of the Elected Officials, listed on the attendance list bring the concerns and issues back to the Elected Officials. "Your voices are being heard by the Elected Officials."

OLD BUSINESS
NEW BUSINESS

Meeting adjourned at 9:23pm