



# COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 9

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## **DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT FY/2013** **COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 9**

Community Board No. 9 consists of four communities, Kew Gardens, Richmond Hill, Woodhaven and Ozone Park. Each has distinct characteristics.

**KEW GARDENS** is an enclave of tree-lined streets and large homes. The colonial and Tudor style homes are pre-World War II with plots generally 50' by 100' or larger. Mingling with the approximate 1000 private homes are Tudor style apartment buildings of the same vintage, with massive facades, enormous lobbies and inner court yards. There are six story apartment buildings built later. The community is stable.

**RICHMOND HILL** is a community with many multi-generational families. Grandparents, Parents and children reside under one roof or within proximately to one another. This is a Working-class community with strong family and community ties. In the early 1900's, the area was mostly German, Italian and Irish. They are joined by new neighbors from Latin America, Asia and India. The area is rich in tradition and history. Many historic Victorian type homes give one the sensation of slipping back into time. The Richmond Hill community east of Lefferts Boulevard is in transition. Large Asian populations, including Guyanese, Hindu and Indian groups have settled in Richmond Hill East. This area is in need of particular attention and assistance to aid in their assimilation into our culture.

The **WOODHAVEN** community can attribute its growth to Jamaica Avenue that in the early 1800's was a toll road. Many wealthy individuals had summer estates in Woodhaven. It was home to the Union Course Raceway. The area contains a well - maintained housing stock of one and two-family homes. Today, the Jamaica Avenue shopping strip is well known throughout Queens.

**THE OZONE PARK** community is one of private homes that experienced major growth decades ago and settled into a longstanding period of stability. Those who settled were of Irish, Polish and Italian extraction. The 101st Avenue commercial strip has the several remaining Italian - American specialty shops, and the area surrounding St. Stanislaus Church still has many residents of Polish extraction.

The Ozone Park commercial strip is in need of assistance. Businessmen in the Ozone Park area have re-established the Ozone Park Merchants Association. We are certain that this group will inject new life into the area and help to stabilize the commercial strip. This mom and pop area offers specialties that the local chain stores cannot duplicate coupled with personal attention. The small businesses must compete with the Pathmark Mall and the former Service Merchandise Mall located on Atlantic Avenue between 102nd and 104<sup>th</sup> Streets. The owner has been put in touch with the Borough President's Economic Development Office to seek assistance. It is therefore imperative that additional assistance be forthcoming.

## **LAND USE**

The Kew Gardens and Richmond Hill Community prepared and published a history, with landmark designation for both areas as their goal. We met with the Department of City Planning to facilitate the landmark request and a portion of the Richmond Hill Community was in whatever way possible. The Department of City Planning has combined these proposals. In Richmond Hill particularly, many of their Queen Anne homes are in danger as developers buy and demolish them to create attached row housing. In an effort to facilitate this process the Board in conjunction with the Richmond Hill Historical Society proposed a portion of Richmond Hill for a down zoning. After numerous meetings with the Department of City Planning, the community's the City Council enacted this rezoning effective March 9<sup>th</sup> 2005.

The Woodhaven/Ozone Park community's agreed to work with City planning to survey the areas. The survey was submitted to City Planning and John Young is in the process of reviewing the recommendations. We are hoping to see the Down zoning scheduled for ULURP by early next year (2012).

## **DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION**

**Forest Park** The rehabilitation of Forest Park continues to be a priority of Community Board No 9. It is time for proposals put forth for Forest Park to come to fruition, e.g., security for Oak Ridge, correcting erosion along the Bridle Path. All can be completed with an insignificant outlay of funding. Consideration must be given to concessioning the Bridle Paths. Private for-profit riding stables use Park trails and complain that the trails are not maintained. Without the park to profit from, these stables would not exist. I am again recommending that the trails be operated through a concession agreement.

Continuation of the Forest Park renaissance is a priority. We cannot slide back to the devastation that occurred after the 1975 fiscal crisis. The renovation of Victory Field track is a necessity and we need a multi-use field as soon as possible.

We urge increased funding to Cultural and Art programs particularly to those whose cuts exceed fifty percent. A community without art and culture is a dead community. During the past year the once vibrant, lively Tennis Court area has seen a drastic decline in use. This is due to the deterioration of all the facilities. The Tennis Courts need resurfacing, new netting and plantings. We are witnessing a decline in our parks facilities

that we have not seen since the early 1980's. These issues must be addressed immediately if we are to recover at all. One of our Parks priorities is Funding to restore the one hundred-year old greenhouse for use as a science curriculum education center. The Forest Park Greenhouse is a unique facility within the 543-acre park. The nursery propagates 450,000 plants annually for use throughout the city. Built in the early 1900's, the antiquated houses need to be refurbished. A modernized facility would allow us to offer school and senior groups "hands-on" educational programs.

The Greenhouse provides a safe environment for learning to take place. The Program includes growing and planting in Forest Park. Last year 1.1 million dollars was allocated through Borough President Marshall and former Councilmen Joseph Addabbo and John Liu. Rebuilding of the existing facility insures a secure and structurally safe learning environment and restores the historic value of the greenhouse. Forest Park needs a sustainable landscape management program to rehabilitate park entrances, maintain landscaped areas, restore woodlands, and nature trails and supervise a volunteer program. Funds are sporadically available for this program. To secure this investment and continue to restore Forest Park's 543 acres, the Administrator's office recommends continued support for the Landscape Management Program. The program will address the major natural resource problems, maintain and create formal landscaped areas. It will consist of a crew chief, foreperson, and candidates from the Parks Job Training Program.

The Forest Park Trust is committed to this project and will continue to raise private monies to help support it. WE REQUEST FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT. The Jackson Pond Basketball courts and Playground, and Buddy Monument rehabilitations are all complete. Phase II of this rehabilitation should move ahead quickly. The path and stairs around Sgt. Schaeffer Bullet needs funding for restoration. Rehabilitation of the Marco Giovanelli Playground located on Park Lane South and 102<sup>nd</sup> Street is an absolute necessity. The park has only received routine maintenance and requires a full rehabilitation all play equipment is in dilapidated, dangerous condition. Both Mary Whalan and Marco Giovanelli playgrounds are listed in the top ten priorities of our Capital and Expense Budget for five years. The importance of playgrounds to a community cannot be overestimated. A deteriorated playground suggests and contributes to the deterioration of the surrounding neighborhoods. Conversely, a new, clean, modern playground that provides activities for children and adults, or simply an esthetic place to sit and rest, enhances the entire community. These two playgrounds reflect horribly on our community. They are safety and health hazards safety because they are in need of paving to correct trip hazards; health, because they both lack basic toilet facilities. Children are forced to relieve themselves by using the park area. Monies must be made available at once to correct this disgusting situation. Consideration should be given to the use of the Street Furniture Franchise that includes 20 Automatic Public Toilets. The APT's could be utilized in Mary Whalan and Marco Giovanelli Playgrounds and would be more feasible financially.

Hopefully we can expect completely rebuilt playgrounds and a lovely new Forest Park. The question than arises how will we maintain them. Maintenance and recreation personnel are minimal.

Unless new personnel are hired soon, all the rebuilding will have been for nothing. We no longer have RD's and Parks M&O personnel are in short supply. Our Forest Park Free

**Sports Clinic was eliminated. The program provided instruction in, Karate, Basketball, Skating and had recently added, New Bike-Driver Education Program.**

**Policing of parks to preserve and protect citizens and equipment requires the hiring of Park Enforcement Officers. When they are on the job our parks are safe and secure. We request additional officers and consideration of peace officer status for their title. PEP Officers patrol Forest Park on a limited basis. Vandalism, graffiti and illegal dumping occur regularly. We need 2 PEP Officers year round to prevent these problems. We must have at least two additional officers to work along with the 102 Pct. in patrolling the park.**

**Our Forest Park Carousel continues to deteriorate. We request a new RFP and urge Parks to assure the Community that a qualified concessionaire be selected quickly before the carousel crumbles into dust and is lost forever.**

**This Board boasts some of the oldest and largest trees in New York City. Tree lined streets are an attractive amenity to any community but not properly cared for and maintained they become deteriorating relics. Funds must be allocated for tree pruning and removal of dead trees. Forestry Division cannot perform the monumental task of tending to our district's trees without the manpower and equipment needed. The reduction of the climbers and pruners is devastating .We urge funding, equipment and manpower to enable them to tackle the growing backlog**

**.A top priority is a request for the restoration and preservation of "Civic Virtue" a monument next to Queens Borough Hall by Frederick MacMonnies. This monument is now in an advanced state of decay and has been for years. The Community Board voted to include the project in its top 10 Capital and Expense priorities at it's meeting of June 13, 2006. The Fine Arts Federations sent a letter of strong endorsement for this action on April 7, 2007. It continues to be a top priority of this Board in 2009/10. To date it stands deteriorating at the corner of Queens Boulevard and Union Turnpike a Public testament to the lack of interest on the part of the legislators who pass it every day.**

## **BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT**

**The computerization of the Department of Buildings has eliminated an enormous amount of paperwork. The Community Boards' access to information is as close as the BIS system. The policy established to inspect sites with a District Manager or staff member, once a month is working. Hot spots for each Community Board are personally addressed by an individual who is aware of the circumstance. The program needs expansion.**

**The follow-up on The Department of Building Safety violations is non-existent.. We need a system of follow-up that does not only issue fines and violations, but a one that corrects and cures them. Illegal conversions severely and adversely impact all city services. Single family homes on a residential block of fifty homes converted illegally to three family houses result in three times the amount of garbage, a serious lack of on street parking facilities, and overcrowded schools that cannot provide the proper services to their students. Public transportation problems escalate and most importantly, close living conditions create animosity, adversity and additional problems for the police. This all occurs without the city's knowledge.**

From 2000-2003 the Queens Department of Buildings issued 4,860 permits for new two family Privately owned residential buildings, and 3,424 permits for three and four family buildings. Our Borough continues to grow at an alarming rate. These numbers are for legal construction. The Board continues to seek out and report illegal construction. Stop work-orders on illegal construction must be diligently enforced and acted upon.

## **COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION**

The Reconstruction of Jamaica Avenue provided new streets, curbs, sidewalks and trees. The Jamaica Hospital Medical Center has worked hand and hand with this Board to build up Jamaica Avenue. They constructed a Women's Center in the abandoned post office and Rehabilitated several abandoned buildings for use as office space. All this was accomplished cooperatively with the Community Board.

Boundary Fence sits in the middle of the Avenue, they have purchased the property through a Land Use Agreement (ULURP) In December 2009 Community Board 9 passed the following resolution:

Community Board 9 approves the sale of this property to Boundary Fence and Railing Systems only on the commitment of Boundary Fence to the terms and conditions they have agreed to as stated on the document outlining the physical improvements to the street scrape of the property. The improvements include screening, planting of street trees and trellis, signage improved lighting.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION**

Since welfare reform initiatives began, the City has had great success in moving people from decreased from nearly 1.2 million to 429,900 in June 2003. As more people find jobs, those remaining on public assistance have more barriers to employment. The percent of public assistance cases that are partially or fully unable to work rose from 54.7 percent in June 2002 to 56.4 percent in 2003. These hard core welfare recipients must be to re-evaluated, re-categorized and placed in a work environment to become productive workers.

## **DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING**

Community Boards Nos. 9 & 10 have a large senior population and four Senior Centers located in Woodhaven, Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park and Ozone Park serving 500 meals daily. Our homebound elderly population relies heavily on the "Meals on Wheels" Nutrition Program.

This program delivers well-balanced meals to the frail elderly who are unable to prepare nutritional meals for themselves. The program must be increased to meet the demand of our ever growing senior population We are in desperate need of additional vans and drivers to deliver these meals.

There is a need to support the many churches, synagogues and private organizations that

fund senior programs. The programs also provide recreation, social and educational programs to the senior population. Without these groups many seniors will spend lonely days shut-in at home with nothing to do. Funding must be made available for our seniors.

## **CHILD CARE**

For years we searched in an effort to bring affordable Day Care to Board 9. We are still searching for help. There are several small programs and some Home Day Care slots but they are insufficient and cannot fill the need. At a time when two parents must work to care for the family, affordable day care is a necessity.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Queens continues to be short-changed on several Fire Department programs, i.e. a dedicated Juvenile Fire setter Program and an Arson Task Force for Auto Crimes. Last year we noted that the Borough lagged far behind Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx in the installation of Emergency Reporting System Boxes.

Many of our 221 firehouses are turn of the century buildings that need upgrades such as new roofs; apparatus floor replacements, waterproofing, pointing, etc. We request specific consideration be given to these requests.

This Board has a large immigrant population, many living in illegal conversions ripe for Fire, we need a Fire Prevention Task Force to deal with this.; the task force should include Department of Buildings, Consumer Affairs, Police, etc.

Funding is requested to purchase smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors for distribution to the public throughout the year. Also, the Fire Department has developed a CPR Training course for the public. This is a life-saving program offered free of charge. We support the FDNY requests for funding to purchase 10,000 "CPR Kits" to be given to each individual taking the course. Use of the kits will enable the fire Department to "train the trainer" as the kits can be used by the public to teach CPR as well.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Board seeks a change in the allocation formula for the assignment of Police Officers. The current allocation is based upon an analysis of statistics that excludes many Quality-of- Life complaints.

Pocket problem areas in the 102 Pct. require special attention. Jamaica Avenue, 85th Street to the City Line 101 Avenue, 75th Street to City line and are areas that have drug activity and Quality of Life issues. The 2002 Annual Report on Social Indicators shows the 102nd Pct. Ranking 18th out of 123 Precincts, Citywide in crimes against properties and persons. We have a total of 3876 major crime index for the year ending 2003. We finished the year with a 3.2% reduction in crime vs. 8% in 1998. We require the assignment of a sufficient number of officers to the 102 Precinct Detective squad to investigate Robberies. Despite the decrease in crime, the 102 Pct. recorded 136 Robberies just six months into 2006. If the trend continues by December of this year we will have a record of 672 robberies. Due to this large case load additional Detectives are required to investigate and further reduce crime.

**Allocation of radio cars for supervisors and police officers is a necessity. The supervisors do not have supervisory capabilities without autos. An increase of eight vehicles is required in order to maintain a running fleet for patrol. Currently the 102 Pct. has between 10 and 15 RMPS assigned. The 102 Pct. receives one of the lowest allocations of RMP'S (radio motor patrol vehicles).**

**The precinct requires unmarked vehicles for special operations i.e. prostitution, surveillance, etc. One additional van is needed to transport Youth truants and an unmarked nondescript vehicle for undercover officers. In order to curb Grand larceny auto a vehicle equipped with Lo-jack is needed to track and arrest the perpetrators.**

**The two youth officers and the 3 Domestic Violence Officers, and one Domestic violence Sgt. share one vehicle. We need two additional vehicles to better serve the community. The Community Policing Unit needs two additional Officers and one for the Domestic Violence Unit.**

**We again request additional scooters for the 102nd Precinct Currently we have only 1 Two wheel and 3 three-wheel scooters assigned. Our regular patrol has 12 to 15 cars. The Precinct is responsible for patrolling 543 acres of Forest Park. Three wheel-scooters are required for this patrol. Scooters are effective during the school year at Franklin K Lane High School and JHS 210. These vehicles add to the effectiveness of crime prevention on our commercial strips; Jamaica Avenue, 101st Avenue, Queens Boulevard and Lefferts Boulevard. We request A minimum of nine scooters, three for summonses, three for traffic and three for Forest Park. Bicycle patrols of Forest Park help the Police fight crime in areas inaccessible to scooters, horses and cars. The Bike Patrol increased to everyday from 8 am to 4 pm and 4 pm to 12am. Increase in patrol brings a need for additional equipment. We require twenty-three Marked Bikes for patrol access and visibility. Our Civilian Patrols throughout the precinct brought about a 30.10% reduction in Grand Larceny and Grand Larceny Auto last month. We request four (4) radios to assist the volunteers in providing information during surveillance. This saves precious time by not calling 911 but calling the Precinct direct. With the Narcotics Initiative in the 103rd on our eastern border and the 75th on our western border the 102nd Precinct shows a demonstrable increase in drug trafficking. Our borders are under siege and we need to fight back. We must have the Narcotics initiative now.**

### **Quality of Life Enforcement**

**The number of Quality-of-life enforcement complaints increased over the years. Complaints given to the local Police Precinct are assigned a "Low Priority" and the complaint is not responded to. The result is that many illegal actions remain uncorrected and unchallenged which encourages the proliferation of these violations. To resolve the problem, I recommend expanded traffic control and enforcement.**

### **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**CB #9 students deserve the same amenities and services extended to other students in the**

City of New York. They deserve education in a building that is at least up to minimum standards. We continue to advocate for monies to be allocated for construction & maintenance of Schools. In District #27 we have more than 44,000 students who are in overcrowded & run down school facilities. The Youth & Education Committee is concerned with the impact continued budget cuts have on the districts ability to provide basic services to our students. We continue to advocate for affordable Day Care (which is non-existent in CB#9) and Pre-K programs in our public schools.

### **THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

As stated in the past, community organizations have seen decreases in their funding due to the restructuring of the Department's funding streams and how funds are allocated. The allocations to the district are miniscule and we have fewer services. In addition there are outside groups and large super agencies that now run programs in our district and they have never reached out to this board to inform us of the services they provide.

DYCD claims its Out of School Time system focuses more attention on full service programming with accountability and quality, in lieu of spreading resources thinly to serve large numbers of children in one shot programs. The notion that resources are spread to thin is a farce. The fact is there are fewer programs and they are very limited to meet the needs of our ever increasing youth population.

It is not clear as to what system DYCD looked at before, but in CB#9 and many Communities in NYC; Community Based Organizations that were funded through the department were always accountable to DYCD. It is DYCD who has neglected their responsibility to monitor programs that they funded. Instead, Communities throughout the City are now suffering because DYCD feels that those programs funded in the past, are not in communities of need. How absurd!!!

We are concerned that Community Boards have been cut out of the Planning process and have lost their Community Share/ YDDP allocations. Community Boards have been involved in comprehensive planning for youth services in their districts for over 20 years, and have worked closely with Community Based Organizations and DYCD. One thing we must not lose sight of is that YDDP Funding was set up for all youth in NYS/NYC no matter what their income level may be, and is based on Community Based programming to meet the ever changing needs of that community, and to provide positive places for recreation, tutoring, cultural education, delinquency prevention, special needs populations, i.e. Immigrant youth, disabled youth, etc. It is imperative that Community Boards and the Community Citywide retain a voice and role in this process.

Community Boards know the needs of their communities and have a charter mandate to plan for youth services. Community Board's possess unique knowledge of its neighborhoods and have connections to community groups, civic organizations, schools, local government, hospitals, libraries, community based organizations, etc. There must be a place for the Community Boards and the Community in the planning of youth services that will after all, be serving the youth of our neighborhoods.



**It is the Charter Mandate of the Community Board to assess the impact of local services in their districts, and it is The Department of Youth and Community Developments Charter Mandate (Section 733c- Powers and Duties) to plan and coordinate neighborhood services in conjunction with Community Boards and Youth Services Planning Committees. Not just through quarterly Joint Planning Committee Meetings**

**The Community Board and the Education & Youth Services Committee believes in the concept of Comprehensive Planning for Youth Services at the local level as mandated by the City Charter. We support the Comprehensive Planning Initiative, the Letter of Agreement and the prerogative to hire a Youth Coordinator specific to each individual Community Board. This independence is necessary to preserve and ensure that each Community Board has the capability to plan for and coordinate youth services across agency lines. In turn it enables the youth and families in each community board to access their fair share of available services.**

**In July 1995, the Youth Coordinator line was cut from the city budget. We are a community with an ever growing and diverse population. This has impacted on the services in our communities. Our needs changed with our population. Although we were able to re-hire our Youth Coordinator she has additional responsibilities and we maintain that the Youth Coordinator position is a full time unique position.**

**CB #9 requests an increase in both City and State funds to address the presence of drugs violence, and bullying. We need school programs to deliver preventive and educational services to address alcohol and substance abuse and violence prevention to our residents.**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

**The Needs Assessment conducted by the Youth Coordinator among existing Youth Programs and services for youth in this district found that C.B.#9 receives no cultural workshops, exhibits or performances throughout the schools. Although there is an abundance of agencies throughout the City which perform at various schools, C.B.#9 is excluded year after year. The limited amount of Community Share allocation through the NYC Department of Youth Services does not allow the Community Board to fund all needed programs. We request the Department of Cultural Affairs arrange for C.B.#9 to be served within its City contracts with cultural service providers.**

**The Kew Gardens community is the only community in Board 9 that does not have a library. We request an inspection of the community with a view toward site selection.**

#### **DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION**

**For several years we requested The Home Base Communication System for Sanitation District 9. I am happy to report that in November of last year it was provided to them. In an effort to help our Sanitation District into the age of technology we donated our old used equipment to them. Our antiquated copy machine somehow lasted a few more years**

at Sanitation thanks to several talented workers. We request continuation of manpower and the basket truck seven days a week. Many commercial strips are open Saturday and Sunday. With the basket collection our scorecard rating remains about 93%. The Department has a need for a mechanical broom three times a week, in addition to the one we have, to maintain the industrial areas. Department of Sanitation Enforcement is important to any community. The Department of Sanitation Police are effective in ensuring the cleanliness of the area. An increase in their numbers is requested. This Board has malls that require year-round cleaning. Atlantic Avenue from the Brooklyn Queens Border to Van Wyck and Woodhaven Boulevard are cleaned an average of once a year. Mall Cleaners must be provided to QW9 on a regular spring and summer we need regular spraying of the Weeds that still spring up on the center mall on Atlantic Avenue, particularly between Lefferts Blvd. and the VanWyck Expressway.

District 9's Garage is home to all their personnel and equipment. The current garage, is in a state of disrepair and does not meet their needs. It is antiquated, falling apart, the garage door jams and the building is an eyesore to the surrounding community. After a five year search we located a suitable location for our garage. It is a large unutilized parcel of on 121 Street between 89 Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, (entrance next to the Fire Department at 91-45 121 Street). We request an immediate survey of the site with a view toward purchase or condemnation. Since my last Needs Statement there was some improvements made to the DS garage and hopefully the needed repairs will be made.

C.B.#9 looks forward to today's needs becoming tomorrow's reality.

**SUPPORT A DRUG FREE COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 9'**  
**Kew Gardens, Ozone Park, Richmond Hill & Woodhaven**

*Mary Ann Carey*  
District Manager