



City of New York Community Board #1, Queens

The Pistilli Grand Manor
45-02 Ditmars Boulevard, LL, Suite 1025
Astoria, N.Y. 11105
Tel: 718-626-1021, Fax: 718-626-1072
E-mail: qn01@cb.nyc.gov

Helen Marshall,
President, Queens
Barry Grodenchik,
Deputy Borough President
Vinicio Donato,
Chairperson
Lucille T. Hartmann,
District Manager

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Vinicio Donato
Chairperson
George L. Stamatiades
First Vice Chairperson
Norma Nieves-Blas
Second Vice Chairperson
Jean Marie D'Alleva
Third Vice Chairperson
Joseph Risi, Jr.
Executive Secretary
Peter Pallos
Sergeant-at-Arms
**COMMITTEES &
CHAIRPERSONS**
Airport Access
Rose Marie Poveromo
Capable Disabled
Daniel Aliberti

*Capital/Expense,
Community Development*
Elizabeth Erion
Consumer Affairs
Joseph Risi Jr.

Education
Linda Perno

Environmental Protection
Joan Asselin

*Health & Social Services/
Senior*
Jean Marie D'Alleva

Housing
Mary O'Hara

Industrial/Commercial
Edward Babor

*Parks & Recreation/
Cultural Affairs*
Richard Khuzami

Public Safety
Antonio Meloni

Street Festivals
Ann Bruno

Transportation
Robert Piazza

Youth
Jose Batista

Zoning & Variance
John Carusone

NEEDS STATEMENT FY 2015

INTRODUCTION

Community Board 1, Queens' District covers the area bounded by Bowery Bay on the north, on the south by Queens Plaza North, Northern Boulevard and the LIRR Tracks, on the west by the East River, and on the east along the west bound curve of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway to the Grand Central Parkway and 82nd Street. We service the communities of Astoria and portions of Long Island City, Woodside and Jackson Heights.

Our zoning is mixed with residential, manufacturing and commercial areas. There are two Industrial Business Zones within our boundaries, and two Business Improvement District. Major shopping areas along Broadway, Ditmars Boulevard, Steinway Street, 30th and 36th Avenues and Northern Boulevard.

The District abuts LaGuardia Airport, along with several major roads that provide access through our community to and from Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx. We also provide the only land access to Rikers and Roosevelt Islands. District 1 is home to the largest number of energy power plants that provide electricity to New York City.

We are the most culturally diversified District in New York City. We strongly feel that the results of the 2010 census do not reflect the accurate growth of the Borough of Queens and certainly not District 1.

BOARD MEMBERS (cont.)

Rose Anne Alafogiannis
George Alexiou
Gus Antonopoulos
Juanita Brathwaite
Gerald Caliendo
Joanna D'Elia
Dolores DeCrescenzo
Mary Demakos
Antonella DiSaverio
Dean O. Feratovic
Salvatore Gagliardo
Anthony Gigantiello
Evie Hantzopoulos
Pauline Jannelli
John C.V. Katsanos
Jerry Kril
Vincent G. Marsanico
Frances Luhmann-McDonald
Prabir Mitra
Kevin Mullarkey
Stella Nicolaou
Gus Prentzas
Thomas Ryan
Taryn Sacramone
Michael Serao
Rudolfo Sarchese
Danielle Tharrington
Marie Torniali
Judy Trilivas
Ben Wood
John P. Ziedonis

Our community has many desirable qualities, including the beautiful waterfront, cultural establishments such as the Museum of the Moving Image, the Noguchi Museum, Socrates Sculpture Park and a replica of an ancient Greek Amphitheater at Athens Square. We are also home to the Kaufman Astoria Studios, one of the largest film and television production centers on the east coast. Our cultural diversity provides an epicurean delight for the multitude of diners that live in and visit our District.

Department for the Aging

Our District has a large population of seniors, many of whom are homebound and depend on home delivered meals, home health care and visiting nurse services. Home care for our frail and elderly is less costly to our City and more desirable to many in need. These services must be maintained and expanded when fiscally possible.

Increased rents for those living on a fixed income are forcing many seniors to move from apartments, and the community, that they have lived in for many years, some a lifetime. The development of affordable housing for seniors and the physically disabled living within our District is great and we are very supportive.

Buildings

The need for affordable housing in our District has produced a market for illegal apartment conversion. It has long been our Board's opinion that legislation should be considered to legalize apartments that meet all safety regulations. This will provide safe, affordable housing and add to the City's tax base. Conversely, more inspectors are needed and stiffer fines must be levied to those who violate their building permits and Certificate of Occupancy.

Additional Building Inspectors are required, specifically on weekends and evenings, to address complaints regarding new construction and conversion sites that are not adhering to Building Codes. The community is often frustrated when a violation is found, summons issued and the violation is not rectified. The flagrant disregard for summons is of great consternation for our community. A stiffer means of enforcement would better serve the community.

Consumer Affairs

Our District has the greatest number of licensed and unlicensed Unenclosed Sidewalk Cafes in Queens. While the Board appreciates the ambiance that these cafes bring to our community, we realize that the quality-of-life of our residents must be maintained. We stress the need for Enforcement Agents, specifically in the evening and on weekends to monitor the licensing codes and padlocking of habitual violators. Those cafes that are unlicensed should be issued a summons and have their outdoor seating confiscated.

Economic Development

District 1's commercial/manufacturing/industrial areas play an important role in the stability of our community. Two Industrial Business Zones have been designated within our manufacturing/industrial areas, as well as, two Business Improvement Districts (BID): Steinway Street between 35th and 28th Avenues and the Long Island City BID which incorporates the Queens Plaza North area.

The commercial strips must be supported by City services e.g. curb and sidewalk repair and tree maintenance. Although cycling is encouraged it is important to recognize the need for parking spaces for the survival of our commercial area that must compete with malls and cyber shopping. Tax incentives are necessary to ensure that jobs are maintained and businesses remain.

Environmental Protection

New development has put a strain on our infrastructure, particularly on our combined sewer and storm systems. Multi-family dwellings are now being built where one and two family homes previously existed. Our current infrastructure is in jeopardy because of this increased population. The City must plan for the increase in higher density development.

Our District host the greatest number of power plants in the City, we abut LaGuardia Airport, the Grand Central Parkway, the Brooklyn Queens Expressway and the Robert F. Kennedy and Queensborough / Koch Bridges. Exhaust and air fuel fumes have contributed to our District's reputation as one of the highest respiratory distress related areas in New York City. Monitoring of our air quality is essential to our health and well-being.

Fire

Due to our close proximity to Manhattan, the Bronx and Roosevelt Island our Fire resources are stretched to supplement fire protection to the residential and business communities in those areas. The new development of high-rise and multi-family dwellings where 1 and 2 family homes existed has created an even greater demand on our fire resources. We must be vigilant in our support of our current Fire resources and the "Bravest" who put their lives on the line each time they respond to an emergency.

Forestry

We applaud the Mayor's Million Tree Initiative which seeks to plant a million trees throughout the City. Currently, Queens County has the greatest number of trees of all the boroughs. The removal of dead trees and large tree stumps must be given a priority in the City's budget. The pruning of our street trees, every 10 years, is insufficient for the benefit of the trees and safety of our streets. More frequent maintenance will save our City from lawsuits resulting from falling branches and trip hazards.

Housing

Our District has five New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) developments. They are Astoria, Queensbridge North and South, Ravenswood and the Woodside Houses. Funding from Federal/State/City sources for after school and senior citizen programs are essential to address the large population of both, resident age groups, in these housing units.

Parks & Recreation

Our increased population has created a greater need for the development of our open spaces. Many of our playgrounds require renovation with the inclusion of safety gates that would prevent, primarily toddlers, from leaving the playground. Bicycle paths along the waterfront, through our Parks, offer a safe and beautiful route for cyclist while providing a splendid view of the Manhattan skyline.

Thanks to the allocation of \$2,000.000 by Councilmember Peter Vallone, Jr a performance space will be created in the Landmarked Diving Pool area of the Astoria Park Pool and the Terrace roof will be repaired. The new outdoor performance area will utilize the dormant Diving Pool and create a venue for artistic performances.

Our Board strongly supports the hiring of additional personnel to maintain the City's investment in our recreational spaces.

Police

Residential development has increased in our District impacting on all services, particularly the Police. While statistically our District has had a decrease in crime, we have an increase in night life, approximately 160 establishments, that impacts on the quality-of-life of the surrounding neighborhoods.

We urge the enforcement of regulations pertaining to cabarets and bars i.e.: excessive noise, drugs and serving alcohol to minors. The MARCH Program (Multi Agency Response to Club Hotspots) has been effective in monitoring those establishments that violate the law. This program must continue. More Police are needed on the streets.

Sanitation

Our Board has supported the relocation or expansion of the existing QW-1 Sanitation garage. The facility was built in the 1930's and the population of our community's needs and has changed drastically since that time, as has the Sanitation's vehicles. Additional space is needed to meet an increase in the size and the number of vehicles utilized at this site.

More litter baskets are required on our commercial strips. Also, we need greater enforcement of litter laws. Merchants and property owners bear the burden of being ticketed for litter that is indiscriminately dropped by pedestrians or motorists.

Transportation

Community Board 1 acknowledges the need for safe passage of cyclists through the City and we support and encourage sidewalk bike racks to accommodate cyclist. However, we have serious concerns regarding the elimination of parking spaces, particularly in our commercial areas. This action creates a hardship for businesses that desperately need parking to accommodate patrons.

New development has brought more residents who depend on public transportation to commute to work. In addition, many commuters from Nassau and Suffolk counties drive as far as Astoria/Long Island City and park their cars and board the train to Manhattan. Additional cars are needed during rush hours to accommodate these commuters and to encourage public transportation.


Vinicio Donato
Chairperson


Lucille T. Hartmann
District Manager