

DAILY NEWS

Attorney aims high as new leader of Queens Civic Congress

BY DONALD BERTRAND

Tuesday, October 23rd 2007, 4:00 AM



Bruno DeFranceschi

Corey Bearak (r.) is sworn in by Assemblywoman Barbara Clark as the new president of Queens Civic Congress.

The Queens Civic Congress, an influential umbrella group for more than 100 community organizations throughout the borough, has a new leader for the first time in its 10 years of existence.

Bellerose attorney Corey Bearak was recently elected as QCC president and formally took over the reins last week from Sean Walsh of Bayside.

"Sean told me about a year ago last summer that he planned not to run again and asked if I was interested," Bearak said.

The congress was formed in 1997 through the merger of the United Civic Council of Queens and the Eastern Queens Civic Council. At the time, it represented about 60 local organizations.

"We have always been a consensus organization, and I think we will continue in that way," Bearak said, noting that he hopes to better tap into the talent of the group's officers and committee chairmen.

"We will continue to make life in Queens better by taking stands [on issues] or trying to influence budget negotiations and policy," said Bearak, who also leads the North Bellerose Civic Association.

For example, getting libraries to open six days a week has been something the group has advocated for "budget after budget," he said.

The congress also has been pushing for zoning changes.

A lot of work needs to be done at "getting the attention of the Buildings Department. We still need a lot of work on code enforcement issues," Bearak said.

One high-profile initiative the group has opposed is congestion pricing.

But because he is involved in the issue professionally as a consultant, Bearak said he will recuse himself from discussions on that matter.

Other newly appointed officers of the group include Executive Vice president Patricia Dolan of the Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association, treasurer James Trent of the Creedmoor Civic Association and secretary Seymour Schwartz of the Briarwood Civic Association.

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