



Queens Civic Congress

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QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS QUESTIONS CONCESSIONS CHANGES City needs review of private uses in public spaces – especially our parks – need more sunlight, not relegation to dark shadows.

The Queens Civic Congress (QCC) called on the City Franchise and Concessions Review Committee (FCRC), arcane entity that has already allowed more giveaways of public spaces outside the normal public community and legislative review processes established in the City Charter for most significant land uses, to reverse plans to make its operations even more shadowy, announced Sean M. Walsh, President of this umbrella group of 100 civic, cooperative, condo, tenant and other community associations throughout the borough of Queens. “While borough presidents and the City Comptroller participate on this city board, its members are dominated by appointments from City Hall,” stated Corey Bearak, Executive Vice President for Public Affairs of this borough-wide organization whose membership represents almost every community in Queens. “City Hall seems to have decided to deal with the pesky problem of franchises and concessions, which exist mostly in parks and other public spaces, by shutting the public out of the public review process,” stated QCC Executive Vice President for Planning Patricia Dolan who who helps coordinate a grassroots citywide effort to highlight the need to introduce transparency into the process for approving private operations in public parks.

“With but 30 days notice, in the middle of summer, which effectively deprived elected officials, community boards and the public or any meaningful opportunity for thoughtful review, the Franchise and Concessions Review Committee announced that it would vote on August 16 to eliminate rules requiring the Agency to inform the public and affected agencies like community boards of new or renewed concessions--all in the interests of governmental efficiency,” explained Ms. Dolan.

“Public review provides the people's only recourse from a self appointed, all-knowing government,” declared Ms. Dolan, who has long followed City Charter and governance reform matters. “The bedrock of our New York City government is the public's right to know and that means the public must have timely information about the things that really matter in this city--like who controls our public spaces. The Mayor's PlaNYC2030 includes monumental changes in how government will treat our parks. Now is not the time to keep the people in the dark about how their parks will be managed.”

“The Queens Civic Congress platform, currently in its 2007-2008 edition, *CIVIC2030*, strongly supports community and legislative review of most concessions and that process would take no longer than the existing, closed, FCRC process,” explained Mr. Bearak.

[Editor's Note: reach QCC executive vice-president Patricia Dolan at (718) 263-1760]

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