

QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS, INC.

The Queens Civic Congressional
PO. Box 238, Flushing, NY 11363

David Kulick, Editor

Corey Bearak, President



www.queensciviccongress.org

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The Queens Civic Congress

Upcoming Events:

Monday May 12th at 2:00 p.m.

Rally: *Unfinished Business*

(See page 3 and 4)

Sunday May 18, 2008, 9:30 a.m.

"Real Property Tax Reform"

(See page 5)

Articles Inside This *Congressional*:

President's Message (page 2)

Meetings and More (page 6)

On line at QueensCivicCongress.org/Media (page 6)

Nominating Committee (page 7)

On Losing a Buildings Commissioner (page 7)

President's Message

I start with a thank you to QCC Executive Vice President Patricia Dolan for her efforts pulling together our Unfinished Business zoning forum, also the title of our May 12 rally. Hope to see many of you at 2:00 p.m. at borough hall as we advocate for the zoning and landmarking our communities merit. May 18 features an opportunity to address **REAL** Property Tax reform; the 9:30 a.m. forum includes a free breakfast. On May 6, I testified against the outrageous 14.5% water and sewer rate gouge. Enough of unelected boards making key decisions that directly impact our pocketbooks. Thank you to everyone who attended the April 6 Luncheon honoring past-president Sean Walsh – a most-deserving honoree, and the Sunnyside Preservation Alliance and our parks partner, Queens Coalition for Parks and Green Spaces. Former Borough President Claire Shulman and QCC Foundation board member Claire Shulman joined me in the presentation to Sean; Pat Dolan presented to Sunnyside and our able Parks co-Chairs – VP Barbara Larkin and Kim Ohanian presented to QCP & GS. Jim Trent did a great job pulling the luncheon together. QCC appreciates the support of our Borough President Helen Marshall who also made clear her opposition to the congestion tax. Thank you to Senator Schumer for spending the afternoon with us. Please view the photos and more information on this wonderful event on our website's Media section.

Congratulations Juniper Park Civic Association and the concerned community members who successfully intervened to save the St. Saviours church structure at a new location. We thank our Borough President Marshall, for \$100,000 in funding to support the move. Historic Districts Council honors JPCA May 15. QCC is working with HDC and area civics on "League of Preservation Voters" questionnaire to educate voters in the 30th Council District (June 3 special election) on the the candidates' positions. I also served as a panelist at a May 1 forum sponsored by the Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association. QCC Health & Human Services Chair Kevin Forrestal testified at a NYS Assembly hearing April 18 on senior citizen programs.

Now a bit of commentary I also posted on the website concerning PlaNYC 2030. In Queens and in much of the real civic movement - I mean the civic movement that involves our nabes and not just some large organizations with big pocket board members, City Hall's PlaNYC failed us. They talk of zonings. Well, we did not want the zoning they forced on Jamaica with greater density extending along Hillside Avenue into part of eastern Queens. We wait for some two dozen downzoning and many more landmark reviews and designations. The underlying premise of PlaNYC - the increase in our population by 1,000,000 remains a FRAUD and that false assumption touted as a reality – begat City Hall's 2030 development scheme. While that scheme contains some nice initiatives, its premise and goal remains to justify development when we need to preserve and support. They want to build and build at all costs. Queens Civic Congress proposed CIVIC2030 last June and this superior plan ought to be the basic of any further strategic planning in our city.

Sincerely,

Corey

Corey B. Bearak (718-343-6779; Bearak@aol.com)



Rally

With

Queens Civic Congress
Queens Preservation Council
Civic & Community Associations*
Concerned Community Boards
As we fight to focus City Hall & City Planning on

Unfinished Business

- **Neighborhoods waiting for re-zoning and/or landmarking**
 - **New zones to protect under-protected neighborhoods**
 - **Neighborhoods that don't get the zoning plan they need**
- **A City Buildings Dept. that follows – rather than makes new versions of – the law**

Monday May 12 – 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.
Outside Queens Borough Hall, 120-55 Queens Blvd

Speakers (in formation):**

Corey Bearak, Esq., *President Queens Civic Congress*

Patricia Dolan, *QCC Exec VP & President Kew Gardens Hills Civic Assn*

James Trent, *President, Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation Alliance*

Henry Euler, *Queens Preservation Council*

- ◇ Bring your Civic Banners ◇ Bring posters stating your community concerns ◇ Most Important – **bring your community members**

*To be listed as a co-sponsor on QCC's website and other media, please call (718) 343-6779 or (718) 229-5505 or email bearak@aol.com

**Elected Officials and Community Board chairs who wish to speak must first sign a "commitment" letter available at www.queensciviccongress.org and on page 4.

Read the Queens Civic Congress Land Use and Zoning recommendations in our CIVIC 2030 Platform (<http://queensciviccongress.org/platform/CIVIC2030.pdf>). See pages 5 through 8

Commitment Letter (Please make sure your elected officials signs this letter if they wish to speak on May 12):

Dear Queens Civic Congress:

The undersigned hereby commits to the following Land Use and Planning items covered in the CIVIC 2030 Platform of the Queens Civic Congress:

1. Immediate City Planning Certification for ULURP of all pending and proposed rezonings not later than June 30, 2008. City Council adoption of all contextual community downzoning (including but not limited to: Auburndale, Dutch Kills, Floral Park, Glendale, Hollis Hills, Kew Gardens Hills, Laurelton, Maspeth, North Flushing, Oakland Gardens, the entire Rockaway peninsula, Rosedale, Waldheim/Holly and sections of Bayside and Bellerose) applications not later August 31, 2009.
2. City Council and City Planning Department file joint zoning applications within 30 days for additional contextual districts to cover un-protected and under-protected residential communities that lack appropriate or protective zoning designation(s) including but not limited to new One-Family Narrow Lot, One Family Row House, and "R1A" zones.
3. Landmarks Preservation Commission Calendaring of the Queens locations for landmark designation as historic buildings, historic district and/ or historic spaces (See list).
4. Allocate sufficient funds to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Department of City Planning for staff to initiate and complete zoning studies and landmark designations.
5. End Self-Certification and Self-Inspection and require the Department of Buildings to follow zoning regulations and building codes rather create new interpretations that require new legislation to achieve the original intent meaning of laws. Even if the Department of Building implements this, pass legislation not later than August 31, 2008 to make this permanent.
6. Require an independent annual audit by the City Comptroller of all R1 through R6 NB and Alt applications to determine Building Department compliance with the requirement to end creative and new interpretations of zoning and codes.
7. Reform Community Facilities zoning to require a special permit for any bulk beyond what the existing zoning allows, not later that August 31, 2009.

signature _____

name/title _____

telephone _____ email _____

dated _____

Queens Civic Congress



Presents

"Real Property Tax Reform"

Sunday May 18, 2008, 9:30 a.m.

Samuel Field Y, 58-20 Little Neck Parkway

Speakers:

*State Senator **Frank Padavan** (author S.7000A)*

*Assembly Member **Mark Weprin** ("prospects for legislative reform")*

*City Council Finance Chair **David Weprin** ("assessment reform")*

*City Council Environmental Protection Chair **James Gennaro** ("water taxes")*

*President **David Moog**, City Assessors and Appraisers Local 1757, DC37
("fairness in City Assessment Policies")*

(in formation)

Moderator: **Corey B. Bearak, Esq.**, President, Queens Civic Congress

Legislative Forum 2008 Sponsors:

Queens Civic Congress

Northeast Queens Jewish Community Council

Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater New York

Parker Jewish Institute for Health Care & Rehabilitation,

Queens Hadassah

The Samuel Field Y

[In Formation]

For background on the issue, please look at

[www.queensciviccongress.org/Media/files/2007/2007-03-02 City Council Finance Hearing R-E Assess.pdf](http://www.queensciviccongress.org/Media/files/2007/2007-03-02%20City%20Council%20Finance%20Hearing%20R-E%20Assess.pdf)

Program Chairs: William Rapfogel ("Met Council") & Jack Friedman (NEQJCC)

****A light FREE breakfast courtesy of Parker Jewish Institute will be served****

Admission FREE

Advance Reservations Recommended

RSVP (718) 225-6750 x247 or email [Bearak@aol.com](mailto: Bearak@aol.com)

Queens Civic Congress Calendar

All meetings, excluding Legislative Reception, unless otherwise noted take place at: Union Plaza Nursing Home, 33-23 Union Street [five blocks north of Northern Boulevard]

Meetings of the Executive Committee are open to all QCC members and take place at 8:00 p.m. (unless otherwise noted) If you wish to add an agenda item, please call Corey Bearak (343-6779) or email Bearak@aol.com at least 24 hours in advance.

Wednesday, May 14, 2008, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Sixth Annual Parks Advocacy Day

sponsored by New Yorkers for Parks and supported by Queens Civic Congress and Queens Coalition for Parks & Green Spaces

at New York County Lawyers Association 14 Vesey Street (between Broadway & Church)
Queens Civic Congress President Corey Bearak will moderate the "Town Hall meeting" with Queens Council Members

To RSVP please contact: EMILY ANTONIADES at emilya@ny4p.org or call (212) 838-9410x313, or [Register](http://www.ny4p.org) on line at <http://www.ny4p.org>

Monday, June 16, 2008, 8:00 p.m.

Queens Civic Congress Executive Committee

Guest Speaker: Council Member Peter F. Vallone, Jr, chair, Committee on Public Safety.

Topics: "The lack of Police Officers in our Precincts and its affect on Queens" and "An Update on the Graffiti Wars".

QCC Foundation meets at 7:00 pm before the regular meeting

Queens Civic Congress Officers

President:	Corey B. Bearak (North Bellerose Civic Association)
Executive Vice President:	Patricia Dolan (Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association)
Treasurer:	James Trent (Creedmoor Civic Association)
Secretary:	Seymour Schwartz (Briarwood Community Association)
	Tyler Cassell (North Flushing)
	Richard Hellenbrecht (Bellerose-Commonwealth)
	Paul Kerzner (Ridgewood Homeowners and Property Owners)
	David Kulick (Flushing on the Hill)
Vice Presidents:	Audrey Lucas (Southeast Queens Concerned Neighbors)
	Nagassar Ramgarib (Queens Village Civic Association)
	Edwin Westley (Jackson Heights Beautification Group)
	Dorothy Woo (Holly Civic Association)
	Harbachan Singh (Holliswood Civic Association)
	Barbara Larkin (Belle Harbor Property Owners Association)
	Kathy Masi (Glendale Civic Association of Queens)
	President Emeritus Sean M. Walsh (Douglaston Civic Association)
Founders:	Albert Greenblatt, Esq.
	Robert I. Harris (West Cunningham Park Civic Association)

On line at www.QueensCivicCongress.org/Media: Why not apply the extension of the expiring one percent Sales Tax for MTA projects that benefit the City? (5/1) ♦ Steep Fines for Flyers and Posters (4/24) ♦ On the loss of a City Buildings Commissioner (4/23) ♦ Civics Can Fight Graffiti (4/21) ♦ Department for the Aging's plans to restructure how the City delivers services to the elderly will affect not only seniors (4/18).

Nominating Committee

The QCC Officer Nominating Committee will be elected in June. According to our bylaws, The officers are: President, Executive Vice President, Vice Presidents (no less than one and no more than eleven, as determined by the Congress), a Treasurer, a Secretary, and the two Founders. All officers sit and vote as members of the Executive Committee. Save for the Founders, all officers shall serve one-year terms. CC's Nominating Committee consists of five persons, of which three shall be elected by the Executive Committee (including its Chair) and two by the Regular Members.

The Committee shall prepare a list of nominees for the election of officers and send by regular mail its report on or before July 1 to the Executive Committee and Regular Membership. Nominating Petitions for the candidacies of persons not nominated by the Nominating Committee may be submitted to the Chair of the Nominating Committee with the signatures of 15% of the Regular Members no earlier than July 15 and no later than August 15. Anyone nominated must be a delegate representing a Regular Member to the Congress. Candidates for President must have served on the Executive Committee in the year prior to their nomination. The election is planned for next fall.

Notes from the March 31 QCC *Unfinished Business* zoning forum

Queens Civic Congress (QCC) held a very exciting, enlightening and educational Zoning meeting Monday, March 31, at the Kew Gardens Community Center. The Zoning Panel was made up of Henry Euler from Auburndale Civic, professional urban planner Paul Graziano, Sandra Atwell, President, Hollis 11423 Block Association, Paul DiBenedetto, President, Bayside Civic Database, John Young, Queens Director of City Planning and Councilman Tony Avella. The meeting, moderated by Sean M. Walsh, Esq., QCC Founder, was well attended by many civics with about 100 people filling the room.

Queens Director of City Planning John Young became the obvious target for the long delay that many neighborhoods are experiencing in their quest to get rezoned. John explained that the recent outburst of those objecting to down zoning has slowed the process significantly. It remains important that those seeking to preserve their neighborhoods stay strong in opposing those resisting zoning improvements for the sake of immediate financial gain. Tony Avella strongly urged City Planning to get back on track because many neighborhoods are years beyond the dates promised by City Planning for their rezoning. He understood that City Planning needs more staff but his recent efforts to acquire additional funds for staffing were not successful. Pat Dolan, QCC Executive Vice President, suggested that more zoning classifications are needed, especially one related to single-family row houses. After each panelist spoke the floor was opened for questions from the various civic groups resulting in a barrage of lively discussions. Although many civics had an opportunity to speak there were many who could not because of time constraints.

QCC President Corey Bearak noted that some rezoned areas still see out-of-character construction in progress with DOB permits that should not have been approved under the new zoning regulations. All panelists agreed that citizens and civics must be on alert to protest any DOB issuance of permits in error. Enforcement can only be accomplished by caring citizens. – *Joe Amoroso, QCC Zoning and Code Enforcement co-chair.*

2008 Committee Chairs

Audit / Phil Ragusa, CPA
By Laws / Albert Greenblatt
Aviation & Noise / Seymour Schwartz
City Infrastructure & Capital Program / Dorothy Woo
Community & Civic Outreach / Robert Harris & Audrey Lucas
Community Facilities / Tyler Cassell
Congress Platform / Richard Hellenbrecht
Co-ops & Condos / Marc Haken
Creedmoor Task Force / Bernard Aquilino
Economic Development / Chris Collett
Education / Edwin Westley
Health & Human Services / Kevin Forrestal
Historical Preservation & Landmarking / Kathy Masi
Legislation / Paul Kerzner
Newsletter / David Kulick
Nominations/ Helene Zaro
Parks & Cultural Affairs / Barbara Larkin & Kim Ohanian
Planning & Land Use / Patricia Dolan
Public Safety / Nagassar Ramgarib
Tenants & Affordable Housing / Florence Fisher
Transportation / Jim Trent
Zoning & Code Enforcement / Joseph Amoroso & Harbachan Singh

Queens Civic Congress Membership

Association of Old Forest Hills ♦ Auburndale Improvement Association ♦ Bayside Civic Database ♦ Bayside Clear-Spring Council ♦ Bayside Hills Civic Association ♦ Bayswater Civic Association ♦ Bay Terrace Community Alliance, Inc. ♦ Bellaire-BellVill Civic Association ♦ Belle Harbor Property Owners Association ♦ Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association ♦ Bellerose Hillside Civic Association ♦ Bell Park Manor Terrace Community Council ♦ Bowne Park Civic Association ♦ Briarwood Community Association ♦ Cambria Heights Civic Association ♦ Civic Association of Utopia Estates ♦ C.O.M.E.T. (Communities of Maspeth-Elmhurst Together) ♦ Concerned Citizens of Laurelton ♦ Cornucopia Society ♦ Creedmoor Civic Association ♦ Deerfield Area Association ♦ Doug-Bay Manor Civic Association ♦ Douglas Manor Association ♦ Douglaston Civic Association ♦ Dutch Kills Civic Association of Long Island City ♦ East Flushing Civic Association ♦ Federated Block Associations of Laurelton ♦ Federation of Civic Associations of Southeast Queens ♦ Floral Park Community Council ♦ Flushing Heights Civic Association ♦ Flushing on the Hill Taxpayers Association ♦ Forest Hills Chamber of Commerce ♦ Forest Hills Crescents Association ♦ Forest Hills-Van Court Association ♦ Fresh Meadows Homeowners Association ♦ Georgetown Mews ♦ Glendale Civic Association of Queens ♦ Glen Oaks Village Owners, Inc. ♦ Greater Astoria Historical Society ♦ Greater Whitestone Taxpayers Civic Association ♦ Harding Heights Civic Association ♦ Hillcrest Estates Civic Association ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #1 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #2 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #3 ♦ Hilltop Village Co-Op #4 ♦ Hollis 11423 Block Association ♦ Hollis Hills Civic Association ♦ Holliswood Civic Association ♦ Hollis Park Gardens Association ♦ Holly Civic Association ♦ Hyde Park Gardens Cooperative ♦ Jackson Heights Beautification Group ♦ Jamaica Estates Association ♦ Jamaica Hill Community Association ♦ Juniper Park Civic Association ♦ Kew Gardens Civic Association ♦ Kew Gardens Hills Homeowners Association ♦ Kew Gardens Improvement Association ♦ Kissena Park Civic Association ♦ Little Neck Bay Civic Association ♦ Little Neck Pines ♦ Long Island City Alliance ♦ Malba Civic Association ♦ Meadowlark Gardens Owners ♦ Middle Village Property Owners Association ♦ Mitchell Linden Civic Association ♦ Neponsit Property Owners Association ♦ Newtown Civic Association ♦ North Bellerose Civic Association ♦ North Flushing Civic Association ♦ North Hills Estates Civic Association ♦ Northwest Clearview Homeowners Association ♦ Norwood Neighborhood Association ♦ Oakland Terrace/ Gardens Community Council ♦ Off Broadway Homeowners Association ♦ Our Neighborhood Improvement Association ♦ Our Neighbors Civic Association of Ozone Park, Inc. ♦ Parkway Village Historical Society ♦ Queensboro Hill Neighborhood Association ♦ Queens Colony Civic Association ♦ Queens Community Civic Corp. ♦ Queens Village Civic Association ♦ Ramblersville-Hawtree Civic Association ♦ Richmond Hill Historical Society ♦ Ridgewood Property Owners and Civic Association ♦ Rockaway Park Homeowners/Residents ♦ Rocky Hill Civic Association ♦ Rosedale Civic Association ♦ Royal Ranch Association. ♦ Southeast Queens Concerned Neighbors ♦ South Ozone Park West Association Civic ♦ Springfield/Rosedale Community Action Association ♦ Station Road Civic Assoc. of Auburndale ♦ Sunnyside Gardens/Harrison Place Homeowners ♦ Surrey Estates Civic Association ♦ Union Turnpike Merchants Association ♦ United Forties Civic Association ♦ United Mutual Veterans Housing, Inc. ♦ Waldheim Neighborhood Association ♦ Wayanda Civic Association ♦ West Cunningham Park Civic Association ♦ Westmoreland Association ♦ Woodside Community Council