

Bayswater Breeze



70th Year

BAYSWATER

September 21, 2015

BAYSWATER OPEN MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2015 AT 8:00 PM

BAYSWATER JEWISH CENTER, CORNER HEALY AVE. & DICKENS ST.

GUEST: NYC COUNCILMAN DONOVAN RICHARDS

BAYSWATER CONCERNS

This editor found two articles in THE WAVE which seriously pertain to Bayswater and our towns of Far Rockaway. They are being rerun here for the importance to us and Bayswater.

Beach 20th Plaza Work to Begin

By Miriam Rosenberg

From THE WAVE, JULY 31, 2015

Far Rockaway's business district will finally see improvements as a result of money from an airport lease extension signed in 2004.

In 2006, it was announced by then-Mayor Bloomberg that as a result of an airport extension lease signed by the Port Authority, the city would be getting \$100 million for capital projects. As the Wave reported then, the first phase of projects provided \$39.5 million to Queens communities that have been negatively affected by JFK International and LaGuardia Airports. As a result of his being chair of the Airport Community Advisory Board at the time then-Councilman, now State Senator, James Sanders Jr. was able to get funds allocated to his district.

After years of waiting, the first project in Rockaway, the redesign of the Beach 20th Street Pedestrian Plaza, located between Beach 20th and 21st Street, is about to begin.

The Department of Transportation, who will be the lead agency on the project, put gates up at each end of the Plaza on July 24. This follows a meeting Councilman Donovan Richards had with the DOT just last week.

"They told us they literally were going to start, finally," Richards told The Wave on July 26. He added, "They're saying it should be done by Sept [or October], but it (should be) done before the summer of 2016, so next year we can start doing events there."

Among those at the meeting were representatives for Rockaway Development and revitalization corp and Community Board 14.

In an email to The Wave, the president and CEO of RDRC, Kevin Alexander explained his organization's role in the plaza project.

"RDRC is the community partner that worked with the New York City Economic Development Corporation in the redesign of the Plaza," Alexander said. "RDRC was responsible for developing a comprehensive design plan that the New York City Public Design Commission required as a condition for the approval of the Beach 20th Street Pedestrian Plaza."

Alexander also wrote, "RDRC was responsible for identifying additional capital funds to demonstrate the project was 100 percent funded."

Originally, \$1 million was set aside from the airport money for the project.

The plaza project was first proposed in 2005. At that time while touring the business area with

See Bayswater Concerns on Page 2

COMMUNITY MEETING

Monday, September 21, 2015

BAYSWATER JEWISH CENTER

Corner

Healy Ave. and Dickens St.

Time: 8:00 p.m.

JOIN US

We look forward to seeing you this September as we begin a new season and as we all hope that we will have a lovely autumn and a kind winter. But start here with us as councilman Donovan Richards informs us as to what is happening in the Rockaways. It is your opportunity to ask questions about our library, the new apartments going up at our end of peninsula, and anything else you might wish to discuss. Bring your friends and neighbors. It's important to know what is happening in our political world.



THE BAYS WATER BREEZE

Published By
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BAYSWATERCIVIC.ORG - CONTACT US

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Doesn't the time fly? Here we are starting a new season. We're pleased to begin our first Open meeting with Councilman Donovan Richards as our guest speaker. Hopefully, he will bring us up to date with good news on the Rockaway front. We want to hear some encouraging words about downtown Far Rockway, Michaelis-Bayswater Park, St. John's Hospital. Please come out and show him Bayswater cares and is the active and interested place it has always been. Perhaps you have some questions and concerns you'd like to talk about. See you on Sept. 21.

BAYSWATER CONCERNS (Con't. from pg. 1)

Sanders and then-Small Business Commissioner Robert Walsh, business owner and Rockaway East Merchants Association president LaVida Jervis presented the idea for a park in the plaza. Once Sanders left office it was up to Richards to ensure that the park idea was not forgotten.

While the plaza is finally getting an overhaul, it will not be the only improvement coming to the business district. The Councilman is also waiting for the final redesign of Mott Avenue. "There's going to be a brand new Mott Avenue," Richards said. "(It will have) new infrastructure and sewers, as well as a raise of the sidewalks; a new design. It's a multi-agency effort."

Eye On Rockaway

From THE WAVE, August 21, 2015

It's More Than A Dunkin'

Donuts

Commentary by Miriam Rosenberg

It was amazing to read some of the reactions after Councilman Donovan Richards posted photos of the Dunkin' Donuts / Baskin Robbins sign going up in the Thriftway Shopping Center last week. I say some, because most were positive and people were glad to hear the news.

Negative comments included: "Really???" Another Dunkin' Donuts??? BTW there are seven others on the peninsula" and "We need more jobs! People of color need to have their own businesses in their own community! The money is being taken out of our community! Who owns the Dunkin' Donuts?" and "WE don't need any more DUNKIN' DONUTS! WE NEED HEALTH FOOD!"

While these may be valid concerns, this is not just another Dunkin' Donuts, which will be the sixth on the peninsula.

It is not just another chain store. Even who the owner is doesn't matter. What it represents is more important. It represents the rebirth of the Shopping Center, a place that for decades was home to many types of stores. From an eye doctor to a furniture store, to a clothing store, there was a Martin's Paints and more. Many who live here now may not remember back to the '60s and 70's when these stores populated the mall. A new

store opening in one of these shuttered storefronts is a sign of an upswing for the future of downtown Far Rockaway.

No one knows what other enterprises are yet to be brought in, though there are so many possibilities. Negotiations are ongoing right now. From what I hear, there may be some pleasant surprises in store. So hold off the criticism. As for jobs and local ownership of businesses, without somebody willing to take a chance on the rebuilding of Rockaway, others will not follow. Until now opportunities have been slow to develop, especially for area residents. This should be just the beginning of new businesses, hopefully many owned by locals, and jobs in the area.

The shopping center is the lynchpin to the downtown Far Rockaway business area. As it goes, so goes the rest of the area. So let's hope this is just the beginning of something great. Oh, as for needing more health food in the area, I agree. If you really want to find organic you need to hop, skip, and jump among the east end stores. A health food/organic shop in the mall is not a bad idea.

The downtown Far Rockaway business district has a lot more to look forward to than just the revitalization of the shopping center. Rockaway Development and Revitalization Corporation's new home will be directly across from the mall. In addition, Richards has said that he is awaiting final word on plans for new infrastructure — from sewers to raised streets — for the area. And

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OUR FAR ROCKAWAY LIBRARY

A library is a wondrous lpace. One can sit in a chair and travel the world, learn about science and health, music and art, community events, job research, and so many other things just by sitting in that chair in the library.

So, it is exciting to report that the rebuilding of our Far Rockaway branch has finally been fully funded thanks to Borough President Melina Katz and the City Council.

It is good to know that our Far Rockaway library is one of two library recipients of an allocation by Assemblyman Philip Goldfeder who will share in \$250,000 in state capital funds. The Assemblyman's proposal is based on a health resource program found in the Los Angeles County Public Library's Consumer Health Information Program. This websited program helps people with medical research by providing books, magazines, and online databases related to health topics.

FAR ROCKAWAY AND OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Yes, we are concerned with having a ferry back in our transportation world. But, we are not sure that we are happy with plans that seem to be coming out of NYC's Department of Transportation (DOT) which will affect our bus and car traveling.

Had you been at our open meeting with Philip McManus (PhilAMcManus@gmail.com), you would have heard that DOT wants to make some changes in the Rockaway bus routes which may include removing some bus stops via Select Bus Service (SBS) also known as Bus Rapid Transit. DOT also wants to change Cross Bay Boulevard and Woodhaven Boulevard by having a dedicated lane for Select Bus Service, effectively cutting down lanes for cars and trucks along with eliminating left turn lanes, making traffic very slow and difficult to negotiate. Emergency vehicles will use only the dedicated bus lanes, but what will happen if there are buses and there's no room to maneuver by other traffic on the roads? How will SBS buses pass local buses on the peninsula with traffic lanes already reduced?

It behooves us to get all the facts and write or email our councilman, DOT, Queensborough President M. Katz, etc. to voice our opinions and needs. (cont'd below)

Following is the information given us by Mr. McManus on June 22nd:

We, the users of Woodhaven and Cross Bay Boulevards, oppose the introduction of Select Bus Service (SBS), sometimes called Bus Rapid Transit, for the following reasons:

- SBS was pre-determined by the city and the Department of Transportation as the solution to traffic and transportation problems. Funds were allocated for SBS prior to the first Community Meeting where it was presented merely as an "alternative." **There has been no meaningful community participation!**
- Meetings and workshops were then held in which only the positive aspects of the plan were presented. One had to closely inspect the diagrams at the workshops to ascertain some of the negatives. Others were never disclosed

It is Bad for Drivers:

- On the northern portion of Woodhaven, two of the eight thru lanes will become local lanes only, separated by new islands, which will narrow the lanes making it difficult to

pass large trucks and buses.

- Two lanes will become bus lanes at all times. Right and left turn lanes will be eliminated slowing traffic.

- This means that at major intersections such as Metropolitan Avenue, Myrtle Avenue, Jamaica Avenue, and Rockaway Boulevard, 10 travel lanes will be reduced to 4 lanes for cars and trucks at all times. That's a 60 percent reduction in the capacity for traffic to enter and go through major intersections.

- 23 left turn movements on Woodhaven will be banned, in addition to the 60 that are already banned. You will be able to turn left about once every mile and probably not until the third turning cycle.

- All left turn lanes on Cross Bay will be eliminated, forcing you to change lanes to go straight, slowing traffic.

- Bus stops will be lengthened eliminating many parking spaces.

- At Metropolitan Avenue all left turn traffic will be redirected to the narrow residential Trotting Course Lane, which will become a two-way street and will have to accommodate large trucks.

- Emergency response times will increase since emergency vehicles will get stuck behind buses picking up passengers at bus stops. They will have to cross to clogged

lanes of traffic before being able to jump the divider into the opposing traffic lane. New trees will prevent them from easily crossing into the service roads.

- The new lower speed limit of 30 mph has already gone into effect on Woodhaven. It will increase travel times and expenses since speed cameras will issue large fines. Police officers with radar guns will be able to issue summonses to vehicles traveling at just 32 or 35 mph. The speed limit on the bridges may also be reduced.

- Travel times will double with heavy traffic at all times instead of only during rush hours while bus lanes will be largely unused. Your average speed will be reduced to 10 or 15 mph.

It is Bad for Bus Passengers:

- Promises of faster passenger travel are a myth. During the off-peak hours when there are few buses on the road and traffic currently moves rather quickly, bus travel times will increase. There isn't a shred of evidence that travel times will be improved by 35% as alleged.

- A lower speed limit will mean buses will have to travel more slowly which will

increase operating costs.

- Longer buses will mean fewer buses since service levels are based on crowding levels.

- Local Bus Service will be reduced as riders shift to Select Bus Service (SBS).

- It will be impossible for express and SBS buses to pass local buses at most bus stops during the rush hour.

- Fewer bus stops in Broad Channel and the Rockaways will result in longer walks to bus stops and will overcrowd beaches near remaining bus stops. Boardwalk businesses near Beach 105 Street will be harmed.

- Current SBS routes exhibit major problems that the MTA is keeping secret, such as broken fare machines that are not repaired in a month's time and passengers receiving fines in excess of \$100 although the bus driver tells them they can board the bus. Pavement markings are not maintained and wear out after only one year.

- **Ridership is down on in the past year on most SBS routes** or fewer riders are paying their fare.

WHY YOU SHOULD PAY YOUR CIVIC ASSOCIATION DUES

Bayswater has an astounding group of volunteers who do yeoman service in caring for this community. It is an amazing community or you would not have chosen to live here. But it is a community that has to be cared for or it can be run over by private interests and agencies or public interests or agencies which do not necessarily mean that Bayswater's interests are being cared for

NEW CEO FOR ST. JOHN'S

St. John's Episcopal Hospital, 110 years old, has a new chief executive, Gerald Walsh, whose appointment is the first time in at least 20 years that the hospital has a person who works directly with the Board of Directors. He is part of the hospital staff. Up until this point, the Episcopal diocese of Long Island hired outside companies to manage the hospital.

Bishop Lawrence Provenzano stated during his introduction of Mr. Walsh that St. John's is here for the people of the Rockaways and the Five Towns. He indicated that the rebuilding of the Emergency Room is on its way to completion but will still need monetary input. Noted by Michael Gliner who is on the hospital board, is that the new Pediatric Center is ready to open toward the end of September, and that Emergency Room funding is coming in.

Mr. Walsh started his career at LaGuardia Hospital and prior to coming to St. John's was Senior Vice President and CEO at Shore Regional Health, a three hospital system in Maryland. (From article by Dan Guarino in July 21' WAVE)

DETECTIVE DENNIS GUERRA HONORED IN STREET NAMING

Councilman Richards introduced a street renaming bill which was passed by the city council. The intersection of 1490 Granada Place and Faber Terrace will be co-named Detective Dennis Guerra Way. Detective Guerra was killed in the line of duty when he died from injuries he sustained after responding to a residential apartment building fire. He was the married father of four who served with the New York City Police Department for eight years.

SKATING RINK FOR BAYSWATER PARK

At a meeting at Bayswater Park on Beach Channel Drive and Bay 32nd St, it was said by the Parks Department's Rockaway representative that there was money allotted for a skating rink similar to the one at the Beach 9th boardwalk location

Eye on Rockaway (cont'd from pg 2)

pleted in the fall, on the renovation of the Beach 20th Street Pedestrian Walkway. Stay tuned folks. Things may actually be a-changing.

Congratulations to the new board of the 101st Precinct Community Council for putting together one whale of a National Night Out Against Crime celebration at O'Donohue Park on Aug. 4. While the new board had less than

a month to plan the Aug. 4 event, everything went off without a hitch. It included bounce houses, a water slide, face painting, entertainment, Zumba, and for the fourth year in a row, Applebee's provided the food. And while it was not part of the NNOAC events, that same evening New York Restoration Project presented a showing of Back to the Future II at the park's stage.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SEND IN YOUR DUES FOR 2015

We need each other. YES, I'll send my dues!

**Bayswater Civic Association
1022 Bay 24th Street
Bayswater, New York 11691**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Print Clearly please, so we can

send messages!
Yes, we have been sending
messages.

YES, I will joining my neighbors for the betterment of Bayswater community.

Enclosed \$25 for the year 2015

Do you have a skill BCA can use? Join us.

FROM THE EDITOR

If there are any topics you would like addressed or any speakers you would like invited to our next open meeting, please contact Michael Gliner at 516-239-9500. We will do our best to address your concerns and have speakers of interest.

YOUNG ISRAEL SENIOR CENTER

In each Breeze, there is an article about the Senior Center at the young Israel on Healy Avenue in Bayswater. If you stop by the center, you can obtain a monthly schedule of events along with the monthly menu. Doors are generally open after 9:00AM with many activities starting at 10:00AM. There are also AARP SAFE DRIVING classes monthly. Call 718-327-0997 for information. Also, great exercise classes.

If you were to eat lunch there, it would cost \$2.00 per lunch and be a very good value. A meal includes soup, juice, freshly cooked vegetables, bread and margarine, dessert, fruit, and milk (frozen because the facility is kosher). Some entrees offered during the month may be turkey breast, roast chicken, baked tilapia, baked flounder, meatloaf, eggplant rolatini, pot roast or stuffed cabbage.

Everyone is welcome. It is a good community resource.

The senior center provides a place to go to and share activities and a wholesome meal besides. It's well worth becoming part of the center. There is also a pickup service. Call for info.

BY REQUEST OF ROCKAWAY
CITIZENS SAFETY PATROL

RCSP



**ROCKAWAY SHOMRIM
24 HOUR HOTLINE**

917-727-7306

POLICE - 911

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