THE BAYSIDE HILLS BEACON

ISSUE 191, VOLUME 20, June 2024 | OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE BAYSIDE HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.



Save the Date

Bayside Hills Civic Association GENERAL MEETING Tuesday, June 18th, 8pm at the Colonial Church of Bayside

Future Dates

BHCA 9/11 Observance Wednesday, September 11 • 7pm Bell Blvd. & Horace Harding Expressway

BHCA October General Meeting October 29th, 2024 • 7:30pm Candidates' Night at the Colonial Church of Bayside

Election Information

Dear BHCA Community, If anyone is interested in a position as an Officer or BHCA Board of Director for the term commencing January 2025, please contact Eileen Feiner, Election Chair, at baysidehillscivic@gmail.com. Thank you!



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Bayside Hills neighbors.

It is that time of year when we are experiencing unusual weather. Some days the sun is shining, and the weather to thank all those who contributed to is warm. The next day it is raining, and the air is chilly and damp. As I write this, attended the event. it is one of those chilly damp days.

The BHCA Board was very happy with the turnout at our last BHCA General Meeting which took place on Tuesday, April 30th in the basement of the Colonial Church. Our guest speaker was NYC Sheriff Miranda who provided a presentation on his department's approach to addressing the illegal marijuana shops that are opening all over the city. He discussed staffing, funding, and changes to laws designed to address the growing issue of these illegal stores. The Sheriff and his staff answered questions from the attendees.

the community's stance on the "City of Yes" and the proposed bike lanes planned in Bayside Hills. The presentations were based on input we received from several community members. The presentations were well received by the attendees and the audience discussed their concerns with these two programs. Visit the BHCA website and Facebook page (addresses in the below footer) for information on how you can let our elected representatives know your position on these issues.

We continued the Bayside Hills' tradition staff contacted me to advise she will be of observing Memorial Day on Saturday, May 25th. It was an honor to host the event along with the other members of the BHCA Board. It is important as a community to observe this holiday and to

pay tribute to those who gave their lives to provide us the freedoms we enjoy every day. The BHCA Board would like helping with the event and all those who

New NYPD Program for Online Shopping

I would also like to bring to everyone's attention that the NYPD launched 24/7 "E-commerce Exchange Zones" to combat online shopping risks. These areas located inside the police precincts are designed to be used by people who want to purchase from web retailers like Facebook Marketplace, Next door, and Craigslist and need a safe location to execute the sale. If you are selling or buying a bike or an electronic device and you need to meet the potential buyer or seller, you can use these designated Board members provided an overview of areas for the transaction. Each location is secure, well-lit, and well-monitored by the NYPD. A total of 98 exchange zones will be spread out across the 5 boroughs.

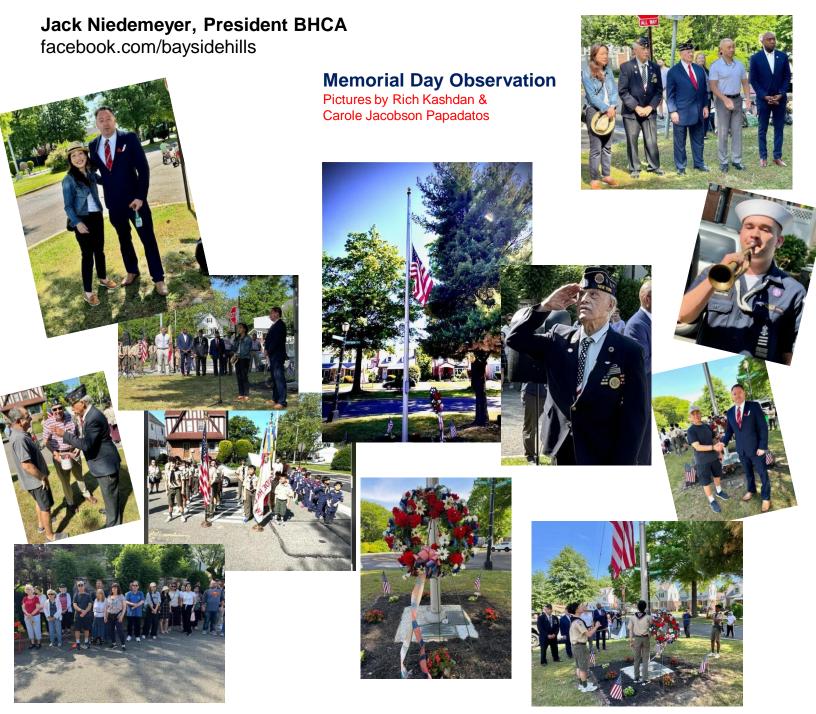
Announcements

Our next general meeting will be on Tuesday, June 18th. Senator John Liu has been invited and agreed to speak to the community regarding the NYS budget. This will be an excellent opportunity for the community to attend and ask the Senator questions regarding the budget. Also, Council Member Lee's attending our next general meeting. She will provide her thoughts on the proposed bike lanes and the "Čity of Yes." Please join us and please invite your neighbors.

President's Message Continued

Refreshments will be served, and it is a great opportunity to meet with your neighbors and other members of the community. Also, if you have not done so already, please mail in or use PayPal to send in your BHCA membership dues. The funds support the various activities we do to preserve and maintain our beautiful neighborhood.

Best wishes to all the Bayside Hills families for a safe, healthy, and enjoyable summer and please enjoy your Fourth of July. I look forward to hearing from you and working together to make Bayside Hills safer and more livable.



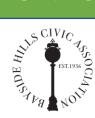
BHCA Annual Spring Festival Captain Dermody Triangle

What an extraordinary experience at Bayside Hills Civic Association Spring Festival. Wonderful to have my family present. Special surprise for me was when District 26 School Superintendent Anthony Inzerillo presented me with an education award. Honored to have Queens Borough President Donovan Richards! Elected officials who joined us were Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Councilwoman Linda Lee, and State Senator John Liu.

Our entertainment was sensational: Zabo Circus put on an incredible circus show, Master Joseph Lupo and New York Black Belt Center gave a magnificent demonstration, and the music of Michelle Marie was enjoyed by the children. Throughout the event there was Girl Scout Troop 4279 from St Robert's with their games. Most important was to see the joyful faces of the children and their appreciative parents! I think this was one of my most rewarding experiences I was ever involved in since I've been with the BHCA. Thanks also to Michael Cillis our 111th Precinct Community Affairs Officer, and BGOVAC Volunteer Ambulance Corps headed by Jerry Gelbard. They made a very impressive appearance. We also appreciated the personnel from the Ridgewood Savings Bank who were also on hand. Once again thank you everybody and thank you Rich Kashdan & Carole Papadatos for your terrific photography! BTW: Further BHCA Spring Festival coverage can be seen on our Bayside Hills Civic Association Facebook page.

BTW: Special thank you to Rita Kashdan for her tireless efforts in making sure everyone received their refreshments and Rich Kashdan for helping with the setup! A big time thank you to the Liao family for their generous contribution





Good afternoon:

The City of Yes (CoY) Economic and Housing Opportunity proposed zoning amendments that have garnered the attention of single-family homeowners throughout the city. The issues being debated can be confusing, and some reports are misleading. Below, is a message from BHCA that details the CoY plan elements and their potential consequences for our community. The content borrows from an action plan developed by Councilwoman Paladino's office and endorsed by the BHCA Board of Directors.

We aim to raise homeowner awareness of the plan and encourage everyone to write to our City Council member(s) urging the plan to be voted down. A sample letter that you can edit as you think appropriate and send to Councilwoman Linda Lee is included.

Sincerely.

Bayside Hills Civic Association Board of Directors

Dear Concerned Community Member,

Re. CITY OF YES

We are reaching out regarding the City of Yes Zoning Text Amendments, which the NYC Department of City Planning is proposing.

If passed, these amendments to the zoning code would upend our community, do away with the single-family zoning of Bayside Hills, and degrade the quality of life that we have fought to uphold.

The changes being proposed in the City of Yes are divided across two separate proposals, which are in different phases in the rezoning process. The first, City of Yes for Economic Opportunity, is going through public hearings now and will be voted on by the City Council in the near future. The second, City of Yes for Housing Opportunity, will arise later as it is still in its early stages.

The City of Yes for Economic Opportunity will:

- Allow owners of houses and apartments to open business establishments including massage parlors, nail salons, and barbershops, which will disrupt the quality of life in neighborhoods across the city and negatively affect the residential atmosphere that we have fought to maintain.
- Allow businesses to open in commercial areas where they should not be able to locate, creating dangerous conditions on neighborhood retail commercial strips.
- Expand the areas where cabaret licenses will be granted which will diminish the quality of life in residences that are in close proximity to these areas.
- Allow retail/office/storefronts, such as corner stores. Up to 2,500 square feet on all properties within 100 feet of every corner on every residential block, transforming the quieter areas of our city into an unrecognizable commercial nightmare.

The City of Yes for Housing Opportunity will:

Eliminate one- and two-family zoning.

Allow accessory dwelling units (ADU's) such as basement apartments, garage apartments, and more to be built on all one- and two-family properties.

- Creates high-density residential zoning in "town centers," which will allow apartment complexes to be built on top of street-level retail.
- Eliminates or significantly reduces density and height limitations, front and rear yard requirements, parking requirements, and green space requirements.

Both of these proposals will have disastrous effects on our city and our community.

The Bayside Hills Civic Association requests that each member of your household respectfully contact our Councilwoman, Linda Lee, via phone, email, U.S. Mail, and/or in-person to express your concerns about these two proposals and ask her to vote against them. These zoning text amendments will impact all New Yorkers. Please share this Call to Action with other New Yorkers. We must all come together to protect our neighborhoods. We thank you for your time and dedication to this cause. Your help is invaluable, and we could not do it without your support.

Please feel free to use the below-suggested letter to inform Councilwoman Lee of your thoughts on this matter.

The contact information for Councilwoman Lee is:

Council District 23 - Linda Lee - 718-468-0137 - District23@council.nyc.gov - 73-03 Bell Blvd., 1N, Oakland Gardens, 11364 Thank you for your community concern,

Board of Directors

Bayside Hills Civic Association

Dear Councilwoman Lee:

I am writing today to urge you to oppose the City of Yes proposals that you will be voting on soon. These proposals will have negative impacts in both low-density and high-density areas of our city. While the City of Yes — Housing Opportunity proposal will frankly have catastrophic consequences on our residential communities, the matter at hand now is the City of Yes — Economic Opportunity proposal, which, if passed, will allow unregulated commercial uses throughout all of our neighborhoods. This pressing matter must be rejected to help preserve communities across the city and allow us to consider better solutions that will get our city back on its feet — the right way.

While many of the aspects of these proposals will have dire impacts on our community, some of the worst include:

- Allowing owners of houses and apartments to open business establishments, including massage parlors, nail salons, and barbershops, will disrupt the quality of life in neighborhoods across the city and negatively affect the residential atmosphere that we have fought to maintain.
- This proposal will allow businesses into commercial areas where they shouldn't be able to locate, creating dangerous conditions on neighborhood retail commercial strips.
- Expanding the areas where cabaret licenses will be granted will diminish the quality of life in residences that are in close proximity to these areas.
- Allowing retail/office/storefronts such as corner stores
- Up to 2500 square feet on all properties within 100 feet of every corner on every residential block, transforming the quieter areas of our city into an unrecognizable commercial nightmare.

These changes, along with many others proposed alongside them, will lead to a need for increased enforcement from various city agencies that are already not equipped to take on the volume of issues we have today, let alone in the future. Between staffing shortages and newly announced budget cuts, these changes are all but guaranteed to place the burden of enforcement on already strained city workers. In addition, when considering zoning proposals with a citywide impact like these to the zoning code, collateral damage must be taken into consideration. In this instance, the myriad unintended consequences that would occur from adoption of these zoning changes are immense — and unacceptable.

As a resident of New York City that will unquestionably be affected by the negative impact of these proposals, I urge that you take these points into consideration, and that you further research and weigh how these proposals can affect myself as well as all of your constituents. Sincerely, your constituent,

Name			
Address			
Email			
Phone			



The planning documents for City of Yes for Housing present a rosy picture in which thousands of affordable new homes flood the market, eliminating the housing shortage and reducing costs, with no drastic changes to any of our neighborhoods. That picture is not accurate at all, and the rampant disinformation needs to be refuted before this ill-conceived proposal comes to a vote. If passed, the City of Yes for Housing will permanently destroy many neighborhoods – especially, but not limited to, historic neighborhoods in eastern Queens.

There are 5 basic myths at the foundation of the proposal:

A little more housing everywhere. The proposal claims that no neighborhood will be overly burdened, and that all of our communities can easily absorb just a few more homes to solve the crisis. There are no limits built in to this proposal, however – there is nothing that would prevent "a little more" from becoming "a lot more" once developers target a neighborhood. None of that new housing may be affordable if developers see an opportunity to build market-rate or even luxury units instead. The character of your neighborhood won't change. A high-density neighborhood that is already filled with apartment buildings may not feel different once a few more buildings are added. But it's disingenuous to suggest that a low-density neighborhood now made up of single-family homes will not have a different character once it starts filling up with apartment buildings. We are not eliminating single-family zoning. That is simply not true. Once accessory dwelling units are allowed in single-family zones, no builder will ever erect a single-family home again. Even if the zoning on the books remains the same, in fact the neighborhood would become a multifamily zone. Why not say plainly that New York City no longer wants anyone to live in a single-family zone, rather than hiding that intention behind the myth?

Single-family zoning is racist, exclusionary, and outdated anyway. New York City has a marvelous diversity of housing and neighborhoods to suit many different needs, for people of all kinds. It is untrue and insulting to imply that our single-family zoning is racially exclusionary. In my current Zip code, 11361, the population is half White, a third Asian, and the remainder a mix. In the nearby neighborhood where I grew up, Zip code 11429 is 80 percent Black, with the remainder a polyglot. What we have in common is that we want, and have earned, our little patches of green and tiny plots of land. With only 15 percent of New York City zoned for single-family homes, why would we want to eliminate housing diversity and deny it to those of us who have worked our way up to homeownership?

It's only fair to treat the whole city the same way. The only truly fair way is to treat communities as the unique entities that they are. For example, eliminating the off-street parking requirement may be workable where car ownership is low and there are commercial garages available for those who need parking. In neighborhoods like mine, people need and have cars — and wishing they didn't doesn't make it so. Allowing developers to build multi-family buildings without off-street parking will lead to predictable results: more cars, with nowhere to park them. A developer can walk away and leave a neighborhood to deal with more cars on the street. That is not an issue to be shrugged off, but a real consequence, and it's why the entire city cannot be treated the same.

City planners who are trying to solve a real problem – a need for more housing – are trying to do so by destroying historic neighborhoods when there are alternatives. Thousands of empty NYCHA units, luxury investment units that stand empty, landlord-held unoccupied apartments, deserted shopping malls, empty office buildings, outdated industrial buildings – these all have potential for conversion to housing. It may be easier to just demonize homeowners who want to preserve their communities, but once our historic neighborhoods are gone, they are gone forever. If the planners behind the City of Yes for Housing were honest, their PowerPoints and webinars would admit candidly that they are deliberately targeting our neighborhoods for urbanization.

Not since Robert Moses imposed his vision of a car-friendly metropolis, decimating neighborhoods in the process, has there been such a threat to our neighborhoods. We are not "housing units" – we are homes, and neighbors, and communities. The City of Yes for Housing is a crude cudgel that would destroy our communities, hidden behind the myth that it would creating affordable housing.

Roseann Henry is immediate past president of the Bellcourt Civic Association in Bayside, Queens.

Stop the Bike Lanes

Bike Lanes in the News

Stop the unilateral expansion of the bike lane network and roll back the parking ban. By largely ignoring input from the community and homeowners along the proposed routes, the new bike lanes pose risks for all roadway users.

Our neighbors along Oceania Street have created a petition, in conjunction with the Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs located on the corner of the Horace Harding Expressway and Oceania Street appealing to the NYC DOT to redesign the lanes on Oceania Street to restore parking.

The BHCA is urging members to consider signing the petition which can be found by clicking on the link:

Bike Lane Petition

ACE Aced It

Council Member Linda Lee's office is partnering with ACE – Empowering the Homeless Improving Communities to help maintain and clean up the unique Bayside Hills avenue malls. ACE, at the same time, is extending a helping hand to individuals grappling with homelessness, incarceration, and addiction. Many ACE graduates credit the organization with turning their lives around by providing job training, counseling, and work experience. Participation often leads to family reunification, and permanent employment. One hundred percent of graduates transition off public cash assistance.





The BHCA helping to keep our community beautiful.

Thank you to Council Member Linda Lee for your attention to these matters and continually assisting us in our efforts to maintain the integrity of our Bayside Hills neighborhood.

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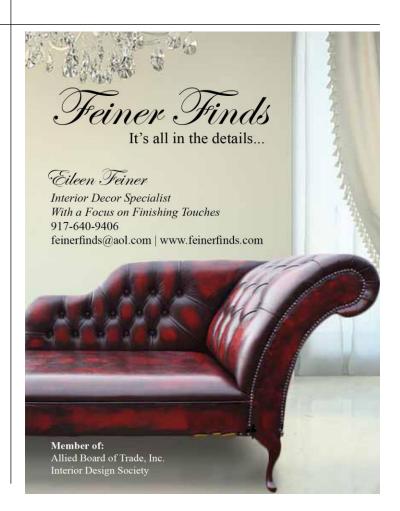
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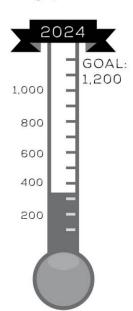
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MEMBERSHIP DUES

BHCA

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR 2024 DUES DONATION TODAY!

We appreciate your generosity. The Bayside Hills Civic Association is an open homeowner membership organization representing over 1,200 households within the boundaries of Bayside Hills. Our mission is to promote a safer, more livable community. The BHCA Board is volunteer-powered and service-driven. Its advocacy, beautification, and communication work rely solely on the support of members, sponsors, Beacon advertisers, and participating discount merchants to maintain and improve our neighborhood. Here is a simple infographic to show how some of our dues were spent in 2023.





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Administrative supplies, refreshments, holiday gift bags for children

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