

**Re: Summary of the Borough-Based Jails Queens Advisory
Committee – Fifth Meeting**

Date: March 19, 2019 6:30 pm

Location: Queens Community House- Kew Gardens Community
Center, 80-02 Kew Gardens Road Kew Gardens, NY 11415

Prepared by: Kathryn Kramer and Arnold Bloch

Attendees:

QAC Members

Murray Berger	Kew Gardens Civic Association
Al Brand	Kew Gardens Civic Association
J. Carter	Kew Gardens Improvement Association
Kendra Clark	Exodus Transitional Community
Andrea Crawford	Community Board #9
Mara Einstein	Kew Gardens Civic Association
Joseph Faraldo	Kew Gardens Improvement Association (for Steve Bell)
Laraine Fletcher	Kew Gardens Civic Association
Malka Frankel	Kew Gardens Civic Association
Sylvia Hack	Community Board #9
Dominick Pistone	Kew Gardens Civic Association
Roslin Spigner	District Leader
Aida Vernon	Briarwood Speaks Up
Seth Welins	Community Board #9

Members of the Public

Michael Cohen	Council Member Karen Koslowitz's Office
Anayeli Gomez-Brittain	Queens Borough President's Office
Renee Levine	Kew Gardens Civic Association
Aghogo Okrokoto	
O. Okrokoto	
Daniel Monti	Forest Hills South
Jessie Schwartz	
Mark Wright	
Zing Zharf	

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Jerry Li	
Mindy Jia	
Barry Wollner	
Parti Dalal	
Peter Hass	
Charlotte Picot	Forest Hills South
Shan-Han Chang	Forest Hills South
Eleanor Flannery	Forest Hills South
Sherman Kane	Community Board #9
Wen Ling	Forest Hills South
Andre Deazle	Silver Towers
James Wen	
Yu Jin Hong	
Marija Sajkas Tomic	
Katarina Jokic	
Yma Sherren	
Mr. D.	
Joel Schwartz	Forest Hills South
Rosaid Eslava	
Karen Eslava	
Karen Hogler	
Edgardo Galdamez	
Yang Zhang	
Mary Abate	Queens Community House
B. Kinsky	
R. Kinsky	
Paul Hudon	
Cinch Ocho	
Wendy Acosta	
Iris Lebron	
Sandeep Mahale	
Lauren Bellard	Silver Towers
David Downs	Forest Hills South
Crystal Courts	
Donghi Zaney	NYC Residents Alliance

City/Consultant Team

Arnold Bloch	FHI
Chelsea Davis	MOCJ
Jessica Douglas	CAU
Patrick Gallahue	MOCJ
Kathryn Kramer	PE
Hilary Semel	OEC
Lindsey Shields	DMOPS
Joseph Thomas	CAU

MEETING SUMMARY:

- The majority of the meeting was spent having QAC members and members of the public ask questions, provide comments, opinions, and raise their concerns.
- The QAC members had many questions and comments about the CEQR/ULURP process. The City responded accordingly.
- A vast majority of QAC members agreed to incorporate two statements submitted by community groups as addenda to the Queens Guidelines and Principles.
- The QAC members inquired why members of the Press were not allowed to attend this meeting.
 - The City explained that the QAC meetings are additive to the formal ULURP/CERQ process and are not part of the public review process. The City explained that QAC meetings were intended to be invite-only gatherings that lend themselves to thoughtful dialogue and open discussion. QAC meetings have also included personal stories and experiences with the criminal justice system. The City wanted to ensure everyone was comfortable and able to speak freely. All QAC meeting summaries and presentations are available on MOCJ's website. QAC members remarked that there has been a lack of transparency to the process.
- NAC members asked how the City intends to notify the public of future QAC meetings or other engagement meetings that are not formally part of the ULURP process.
 - The City responded the NACs and the QAC are one component of community engagement. Additionally, the

- City is committed to continuing to meet with community-based organizations to discuss criminal justice reform. The City has also been conducting ongoing meetings and focus groups with advocacy organizations, service providers, formerly incarcerated individuals, their families and Working Groups of the Justice Implementation Task Force. The City remains eager to meet with everyone.
- A member of the public asked whether the Specialized Medical Annex would be removed from the proposed Queens facility and whether the City has reduced the maximum allowable building height for the Queens site.
 - The City responded that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) would consider the maximum envelope of the proposed Queens jail and inclusion of the Specialized Medical Annex in the Queens facility.
 - It was raised by a QAC member or a member of the public that the DEIS would be certifying a proposed maximum building envelope and that there needs to be much more detail about the proposed jail building. QAC members were concerned and voiced a lack of trust in the City's commitment to reduce the height and bulk of the proposed facility once the ULURP/CEQR processes were completed.
 - Some QAC members and members of the public cited the Lippman Commission as stating, "No jail should be built in a residential neighborhood." Many QAC members and members of the public indicated that Kew Gardens is not the right neighborhood for a jail.
 - Some QAC members and members of the public expressed their opinion that the jails on Rikers Island should be rebuilt to accommodate detainees in a more humane environment. They also stated that transportation to Rikers Island should be improved to make visitation easier. Furthermore, some QAC members and members of the public commented that the criminal courts should be built on Rikers Island to allow for speedier adjudication of pending criminal cases.
 - Some QAC members and members of the public expressed frustration, indicating that they believe the City never asked the public for its input on the proposed plan before it was presented in

the CEQR Scoping Document. These individuals indicated that they also believe the City's public engagement that has occurred since the release of the Draft Scope of Work has been "catching up" and stated they believe the process feels like a "farce."

- A QAC member stated that he believes this project will cost \$10 billion and when financed, it would have a total price tag of \$30 billion. A QAC member remarked that money would be better invested in schools and public housing.
- There was much discussion amongst many QAC members and members of the public about how to best oppose this project.