

Environmental Committee
Community Board Ten
June 8, 2006

Present: Fran Vella-Marrone, Greg Ahl, Judith Grimaldi, Stella Kokolis, Gloria Melnick, Mary Nolan, Joanne Seminara., Anna DeMetz

Excused: Larry Stelter

Absent: Elaine Guido

A quorum was met.

Guests Present: Josephine Beckman (CB 10 District Manager), John Orlando (Senator Golden), Lillie Farrell (DEP).

Meeting Location: Community Board Ten Office

The Meeting commenced at 7:15 PM and closed at 8:30 PM.

This purpose of the meeting was to obtain an update from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding the Grit and Scum Building at Owls Head Pollution Plant.

According to the DEP representative, DEP is advertising bids for the project and bids should be opened on July 24, 2006. Construction should begin the 1st quarter of 2007 (January – March) and length of the project is 40 months. DEP will keep us apprised of the progress in this matter.

The DEP representative stated that all 311 calls pertaining to Owls Head will go directly from the 311 operator to the plant via the computer system. There will no longer be a middle step in which the call was diverted to another location before being sent to the plant via fax or phone call. This process has not yet begun. DEP will inform us of when this process will begin. The committee also asked that DEP look into ensuring that 311 callers receive a response to their complaint and that when a caller calls 311 for the disposition of the call that the 311 operator be prepared to provide the respective information. The committee also asked that DEP appear before the committee to provide a status report regarding the cleaning of the plant's digester tanks.

A discussion ensued regarding the status of cleanliness of our community's sidewalks and streets including the clutter and litter caused by street furniture such as newspaper boxes and clothing drop off boxes.

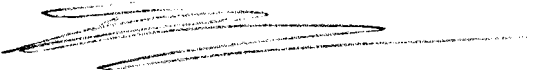
Community Board Ten
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Page 2

Committee member Greg Ahl who is also involved with the 5th Avenue Board of Trade announced that the waste baskets on 5th Avenue will be replaced. It was determined the existing baskets have designed flaws. The design for the new baskets is presently being discussed.

The problem of postering on street poles was discussed. The committee asked that the Community Board District Manager request that the Sanitation Department conduct blanket enforcement throughout Community Board Ten.

The Committee Chair provided a report regarding the noise complaints the Community Board has received from residents near the Bay Ridge Shore line. The Board has received the complaints for about the last year and has during this time tried to locate the cause of the noise some describe as a humming vibrating sound or foghorn like sound. It was thought that the noise was being caused by the Owls Head Pollution Plant, ships in the water, Bush Terminal Plant or trains. All have come up negative. The Board was then contacted by Andrew Bass, a professor of neurobiology and behavior at Cornell University who informed the Board that the noise could be caused by a fish called the oyster toad fish. The spawning season for the fish runs from April through October. During this period the males of the species will emit a low humming noise similar to a ships foghorn to attract females. It seems a community in California near the Golden Gate Bridge traced a mysterious humming noise to the toadfish in the 1980's. Mr. Bass, who has long studied the toadfish and the sounds they produce, plans to come to Bay Ridge to investigate the matter. In addition, Senator Marty Golden has asked that the NYS DEC conduct an investigation.

Respectfully submitted,



Frances T. Vella-Marrone
Environmental Committee Chair