

Meeting Minutes
Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board (QSWAB)
January 22, 2018 Meeting

The first meeting of the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board organizing committee was held on Monday, January 22, 2017, at 41-15 Queens Boulevard, Sunnyside, NY, beginning at 6:30 p.m. and ending at 8:00 p.m.

Attendance

People in attendance (in alphabetical order by last name): Tobias (Toby) Sheppard Bloch, Wylie Goodman, Robert Lee, John Maier, and Amy Marpman.

Order of Business

I. INTRODUCTIONS + REASON FOR INTEREST IN SWAB

Attendees introduced themselves and described their reason for interest in forming a Queens SWAB. Tobias Sheppard Bloch is a Board Member of Queens CB5 and Co-Chair of the Transportation Services Committee. Toby lives in Glendale, Queens and works for Sustainable South Bronx on workforce development. Wylie Goodman is the Development Board Member for Earth Matter NY on Governors Island and has a long-standing interest in reduce, reuse, and recycle. She is a Master Composter in Training and is earning her True Waste Certification through the Green Building Council. She recently moved to Ridgewood, Queens. Robert Lee is the Chief Executive Officer for Rescuing Leftover Cuisine, a national nonprofit headquartered in NYC that he founded three years ago. Robert is a life-long Queens resident and is interested in the Queens SWAB in order to connect with others working to reduce food and other waste in Queens. Robert lives in Long Island City. John Maier is a Board Member on Queens CB 5 and lives in Ridgewood, Queens. On CB5, John serves as Co-Chair of Public Transit Services. He is also active in CURES (Citizens United for Railroad Environmental Solutions) and Transportation Alternatives, and the Ridgewood Property Owners Association, among others. Amy Marpman is the Director of Sustainability for Recycle Track Systems, Inc., a waste and recycling technology company based in NYC. She previously worked at Sustainability Consulting firm Great Forest. She has experience with recycling programs and local compliance for commercial businesses, and familiarity with many private haulers in NYC. She lives in Queens Village. Not in attendance because she was traveling, but included on email communications for this meeting, was Rena Lee who is one of the coordinators of the Queens Night Market.

II. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE CODE LANGUAGE RE: THE CITIZEN'S SOLID WASTE ADVISORY BOARD TO RECONFIRM GUIDING PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE

QSWAB organizing members reviewed the New York City Administrative Code, Title 16: Sanitation, Chapter 3: Solid Waste Recycling, Subchapter 4: Recycling Advisory Boards (16-317 to 16-321) which lays out the membership, function, and disclosure requirements of the citywide SWABs for each borough.

See:

<http://library.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/New%20York/admin/newyorkcityadministrativecode>.

III. OVERVIEW OF RECENT/UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND FOCI OF MH AND BK SWAB FOR CONTEXT

Wylie Goodman and Amy Marpman discussed their knowledge regarding recent activities of the Manhattan and Brooklyn SWABs and brief research regarding mention of reduce, recycle, and reuse activities on the website of Queens BP Melinda Katz. See highlights below:

- A. Manhattan: <http://www.manhattanswab.org/>
1. Pros/cons of single stream (which DSNY seems to be moving toward)
 2. Increasing awareness of recycle-reuse (esp. organics) in multi-family buildings of 10-stories
 3. Accepting zero waste standard definition: <http://zwia.org/standards/zw-definition/>
 4. Supporting Bag II Coalition which calls for a fee on all carryout bags or a ban on thin plastic bags and a fee for other bags
 5. Exploration of establishing organics processing in all 59 community boards
 6. Support letter for Pharmaceutical Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws provide a sustainable funding mechanism for proper drug disposal by holding pharmaceutical companies accountable for managing their products throughout the entire product life cycle, instead of relying on taxpayers to fund management of these drugs at the products end-of-life
 7. Advocating for more reuse in 2018, in addition to continuing with Reuse and Repair grants.
 8. In terms of organizational structure, Amy Marpman noted that:
 - The MSWAB may be more formal than the BSWAB, although they had no treasurer before this year
 - They have a distinct focus for each calendar year
 - They have distinct committees based on interests
 - Their committees meet outside of the formal board general meeting
 - They work closely with MH BP Brewer with two ppl from her office always attend
- B. Brooklyn: <https://www.facebook.com/BrooklynSolidWasteAdvisoryBoard/> and <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/brooklyn-swab-general-public>
1. Presentation by man who has designed a bokashi-style commercial composter that can produce compost faster for restaurants and others
 2. Presentation re: the NYCHA recycling pilot program + Co-Lab Challenge in Brownsville: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycx/zerowaste/zerowastechallenge.html>
 3. Note that their FB page hasn't been updated in a while and last group announcement was for 10/17.
- A. Queens
1. Amy Marpman noted that the earlier incarnation of the QSWAB was run by Bob LoPinto (see: https://www.timesledger.com/stories/2011/27/ft_lopinto_retires_20110630.html). Bob

now lives on Long Island. Amy has been in touch with Bob (via phone call) and he is available to answer any questions or provide any additional history.

2. E-waste event at QBG was advertised on BP Katz website in December 2016; a search for the word “recycling” produced no new information
3. Potential contact for BP Katz’s office: Dir. of Constituent Services: Ann Marie Boranian: 718.286.2669, ABoranian@Queensbp.org
4. Queens neighborhoods with Organics Recycling:

QUEENS Community Boards 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14

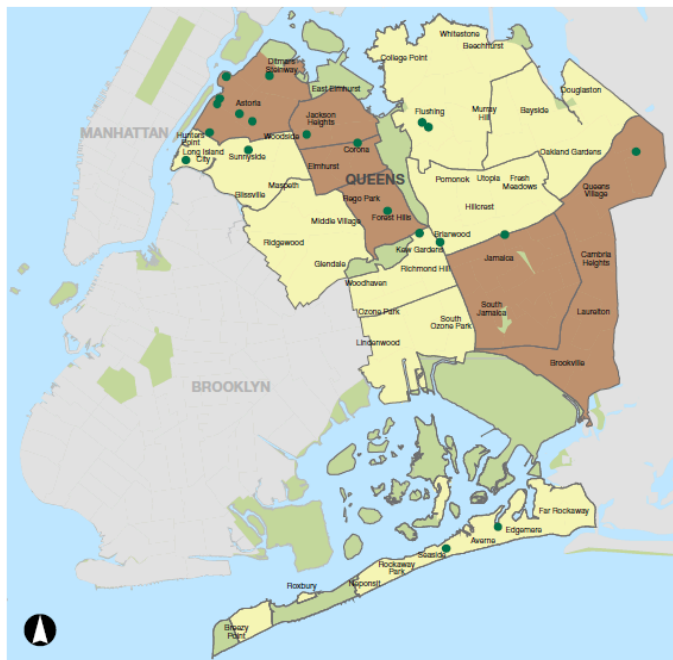
Averne, Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Bayside, Bayswater, Beechhurst, Belle Harbor, Breezy Point, Briarwood, Broad Channel, College Point, Douglas Manor, Douglaston, Edgemere, Far Rockaway, Flushing, Flushing South, Fresh Meadows, Glendale, Hamilton Beach, Hammel, Hillcrest, Hollis Hills, Holliswood, Howard Beach, Jamaica Estates, Jamaica Hills, Kew Gardens, Kew Gardens Hills, Linden Hill, Lindenwood, Little Neck, Long Island City, Malba, Maspeth, Middle Village, Neponsit, Oakland Gardens, Ozone Park, Queensboro Hill, Richmond Hill, Ridgewood, Rockaway, Rockaway Park, Roxbury, Seaside, South Ozone Park, South Richmond Hill, Sunnyside, Utopia, Whitestone, Willets Point, Woodhaven, Woodside

NYC Organics Expansion

QUEENS

Collection Service Starts

- Receives organics collection service
- Receives organics collection service in 2018
- Food scrap drop-off site



nyc.gov/organics | call 311
NYCSanitation - NYCzerowaste
12 Date Saved: 11/01/2017



IV. DISCUSSION OF QUEENS CBS AND THEIR ENGAGEMENT RE: SOLID WASTE/SANITATION

John Maier noted that Queens’ (QNS) largest export is waste/recycling. Maier noted that QNS handles North Brooklyn and Western QNS waste via trains which take both upstate, as well as NYC industrial and commercial waste which travel through QNS via the LIRR lines. Most traffic

on QNS rails is industrial waste and putrescibles. He noted that some upstate communities are unhappy about the City sending its trash to their landfills (e.g., <https://nypost.com/2015/10/16/vineyard-names-garbage-wine-after-de-blasio-in-protest-of-trash-plan/>; see also: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/32501.html>) and shared concerns expressed by CURES regarding the lack of fulfillment of an amendment signed by Thomas Prendergast, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer for MTA, in 1996 -- LIRR Transfer Agreement – made between LIRR and NYAR. The amendment was a “bi-partisan effort to protect the quality of life within Queens – while facilitating the advent of improved freight rail service to and from Long Island,” and concerns the hauling of waste by rail through Queens (see: <http://www.nydailynews.com/archives/boroughs/moratorium-waste-officials-article-1.756350>) and is relevant to the QSWAB effort. Maier also addressed the impact of waste hauling in QNS vis a vis the City’s Vision Zero goals because of death and injury caused by private waste haulers and the generally unsafe conditions under which they operate (e.g., <https://nyc.streetsblog.org/2010/07/13/see-a-pattern-of-deadly-dump-trucks-don%E2%80%99t-b-other-federal-safety-officials/>; see also: http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/downloads/pdf/studies-and-reports/Private_Carting_Study_Executive_Summary.pdf; see also: <https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2016/05/dirty-hands-the-unseen-world-of-new-yorks-private-waste-industry-102989>).

Discussion also focused on the SWMP (Solid Waste Management Plan) which was designed to address equity issues in waste disposal and transfer. If each of QNS 14 CBs contributed to the QSWAB, this would bring the group to the required minimum of 20 members. It was noted, however, that not all Civics and CBs are happy with organics collection and that more education around this is needed.

V. DISCUSSION OF RESCUING LEFTOVER CUISINE AND/OR OTHER QNS-BASED NONPROFITS WORKING IN SOLID WASTE SPACE

Robert Lee discussed the history of RLC and the difference between his organization and City Harvest, which works with volunteers to quickly pick up leftover food and bring it to homeless shelters around the city. His team is more nimble than larger nonprofits, which require a minimum poundage before they will pick up. Because his pick-ups are smaller and done by car and taxi / Uber/Lyft with volunteers, he can get food to its destination before there are spoilage or refrigeration concerns. From their website:

Rescuing Leftover Cuisine is a national 501(c)3 non-profit food rescue organization, operating in 12 cities and headquartered in New York City, that provides solutions to prevent excess wholesome cuisine from being wasted. RLC provides services such as food waste consulting, excess food delivery, co-branding services, and tax credit assistance.

RLC approaches the two large issues of hunger and food waste in three main ways.

- First, we localize the issues into sets of communities that can help sustain themselves. We crowdsource the solution of the transportation to the members of the public in these communities as volunteers. After identifying the homeless shelters of a needy community, we proactively find restaurants, hotels, and catering companies with excess food in that vicinity

that could help support these disadvantaged communities.

- Second, we leverage technology to facilitate the identification and handling of excess food. Thus, partner food providers report when excess food is occurring, and a web application is used to engage community members, because volunteering with us can be as easy as taking a brisk walk.

- Third, we tackle food waste at its root, aiming to eliminate as much food waste as possible and bringing the remaining excess food to where it is needed most. The data of when food waste occurs is used in our analysis of what types of food waste could be avoided, and RLC suggests ways that partner food providers can reduce waste at its root.

VI. DISCUSSION RE: GROWING ORGANIZING COMMITTEE TO REACH REQUIRED NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND ENSURE INCLUSION OF DIVERSE CONSTITUENCIES

We next had a general discussion about how to ensure broad outreach for the QSWAB to ensure a diversity of constituents. Note conversation above re: 14 CBs.

We discussed a need to identify the Queens constituent liaison for BP Katz. *This has since been done: Ann-Marie Boranian.

We discussed the potential need for borough-specific transfer sites for organics processing for businesses that generate organics periodically. Currently the only place that organics can be deposited at large-scale in the city is on Staten Island but businesses need a permitted vehicle to take material there. Except for SI, all other boroughs send compostable materials to regional compost sites outside New York City (see: <https://www.wastedive.com/news/nyc-organics-program-scales-up-with-new-47m-long-term-processing-contracts/423168/>). We noted too the environmental justice issue, in that southeast Queens is one of three neighborhoods in NYC that hosts the most transfer stations (others: South Bronx, North Brooklyn).

We noted that small businesses are struggling to comply with the organics recycling rules. How can we help them?

We briefly touched on the NYCHA 2017 Waste Characterization Study being done as a potential source of data for us to work with to identify goals (see: <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/about/sustainability-goals.page>).

We touched briefly on the need for information regarding commercial waste hauling information that is not currently available.

VII. DISCUSSION RE: POTENTIAL PROCESS/TIMEFRAME TO ENGAGE WITH QNS BP OFFICE

Questions raised as part of our organizing agenda but not resolved at this meeting:

A. Do we wait until we have a larger organizing committee before reaching out to BP Katz

or do we draft an initial outreach letter soon to alert her to our interest?

- B. Do we organize a meeting with leaders of MH and BK SWABs to learn what their organizing process was to inform our own? We are already in touch with them regarding bylaws, structure, etc.
- C. Do we identify and reach out to former QNS SWAB leaders to find out what they were working on and/or why the QSWAB was disbanded to better understand legacy, challenges, etc.? We agreed to do this.

VIII. NEXT STEPS

- A. Toby Sheppard Bloch will reach out to Joe Nocciro from BP Katz's office and Justin Green from BuildItGreen.
- B. Wylie Goodman will attend BP Katz State of the Borough talk and try to make contact with key people.
- C. John Maier will reach out to CM Antonio Reynoso, Chair of Sanitation Committee and CM Costa Constantinides, Chair of Environmental Protection Committee.
- D. Amy Marpman has had an initial conversation with Bob LoPinto. Before reaching out to him again we will collectively create an intent/agenda/collective set of questions to bring to him.

Our next meeting is scheduled for March 5th at a to-be-determined location.