

Nov. 13, 2016

CNG

Amtrak nixes huge hikes for Astoria renters

BY BILL PARRY

The Paratore family and other residents of the Ditmars section of Astoria are breathing a sigh of relief after Amtrak decided to temporarily halt any further actions or negotiations regarding properties many homeowners have leased for decades. Under the existing agreement, Amtrak leases out the property underneath the trusses of the Hell Gate Bridge for a nominal fee which releases it from the burden of maintaining the premises.

In a letter sent to homeowners in August, Amtrak issued a 30-day notice to accept an annual increase that in some cases was as much as 100,000 percent or tens of thousands of dollars.

Anthony Paratore, 61, has lived his entire life at 22-38 23rd St. His rent was slated to rise from \$25 a year to \$25,560.

"It blew me away," he said. "I thought it was a scam."

His neighbor, 71-year-old grandmother Loretta Csikortis, has lived her entire life at 22-

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Turner revitalizes GOP in Queens

BY MARK HALLUM

Queens County GOP chairman Bob Turner, a former congressman from southern Queens, has rebuilt the party in a predominately Democratic borough and put forth a large group of candidates to challenge incumbents in the Nov. 8 election.

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Central Ridgewood was officially named an historic district Nov. 4.

Photo by Michael Shain

Ridgewood nabe designated historic

BY MARK HALLUM

The beige brick row houses of central Ridgewood are now officially recognized as an historic district by the Landmark Preservation Commission, a designation which will maintain the character of the neighborhood for gen-

erations to come. Many of the residents in the community have roots as old as the distinct buildings themselves, and with the changing character of the neighborhood were enthusiastic with the new status of their area.

City Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley (D-

Middle Village) unveiled the Central Ridgewood Historic District sign on the corner of 70th Avenue and Fresh Pond Road last Friday with LPC Chairwoman Meenakshi Srinivasan, LPC Foundation Chairwoman Christina Davis and Ridgewood Civic

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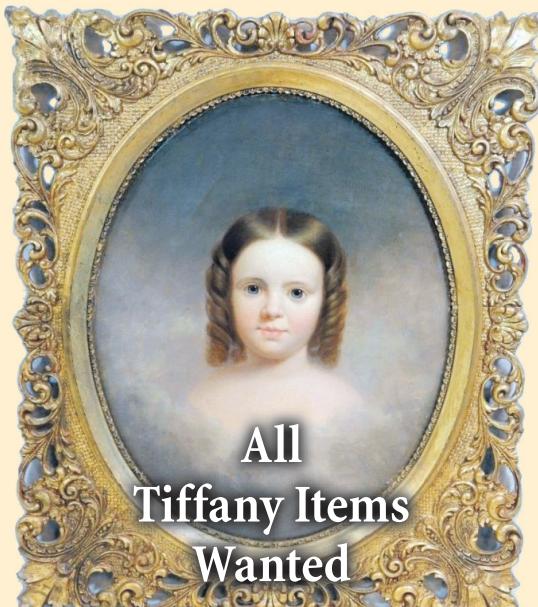
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160-year-old mummy finally gets proper burial

3

BY BILL PARRY

Five years after a 160-year-old mummy was torn from the earth at a construction site in Elmhurst, the Iron Coffin Lady was given a proper burial Monday by the elders of a Jackson Heights church. A dozen of the faithful from Saint Mark African Methodist Episcopal Church gathered at her grave site at Flushing Cemetery after a weekend celebration that featured historical exhibits and lectures Saturday.

"We wanted to preserve our history and know her history at the same time," Rev. Kimberly Detherage said. "We had no idea we would keep her from her resting place for so long. Her body was disturbed and poked and prodded and DNA'd. We just wanted to give her a proper send-off."

Saturday's featured speaker was archeologist Scott Warnasch, who was working out of the New York City Medical Examiner's Office identifying 9/11



Rev. Kimberly Detherage (l) presides over the funeral of the Iron Coffin Lady following a weekend celebration of the 160-year-old mummy.

Photo by Michael Shain

remains in October 2011 when he was called to the construction site at 90-11 Corona Ave. to investigate a homicide.

"The operator of a backhoe shattered the coffin and dragged the body out," Warnasch said. "The construction crew headed for the hills and called us and

that's where I came in. She was so well preserved, we discovered lesions on her skin."

The archeologist knew the woman had died from smallpox and he was intrigued by her casket, which resembled an Egyptian sarcophagus. Warnasch knew it was the type of

coffin that was very expensive and used to bury elites

the likes of Dolly Madison, Daniel Webster and President Zachary Taylor, not an African-American woman in her 20s or 30s.

Warnash began years of research and discovered from an 1850 census on Newtown that the woman,

who was likely named Martha Peterson, did domestic work in the home of the man who produced the special caskets in a Woodside foundry.

"Clearly the Iron Coffin Lady was loved by her community and was given everything she needed for a proper burial despite the fear of smallpox," Warnasch said. She was buried in the cemetery at the original location of St. Mark, and Rev. Detherage was determined to pay her back for the indignities of her unearthing.

"She reminds us of where we come from and where we are going as a people and a community of faith," Detherage said. "When people don't know their own heritage, they are discounted."

More than a hundred church members listened to lectures by Warnasch; Michael Hutchison Frazier, the historian at the National African American Burial Ground National Monument in Lower Manhattan;

and others. Detherage was disappointed that there weren't any young people in the room.

"Maybe that's our fault. We should have sent word to the schools instead of just colleges and community organizations," she said. "That's why we're video taping this as well and we'll have a future school day."

Detherage is in negotiations with the developers of the site for a proper memorial for the woman as well as the remains of 15 others found at the site. Detherage was appreciative for the experience of this past weekend.

"It was wonderful. It was such an honor to pay respects to her," she said. "And it was wonderful for our church members, some of whom were skeptical of the endeavor. It helped them to appreciate themselves more."

Reach reporter Bill Parry by e-mail at bparry@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4538.

Queens Library settles lawsuit with ex-CEO

BY GINA MARTINEZ

The lawsuit filed by former Queens Library CEO Thomas Galante against the institution and two of its trustees has ended in a \$1.5 million settlement.

Galante, who worked with the library for 27 years, was fired in December 2014 amid an FBI investigation of his outside consulting business and audit by City Comptroller Scott Stringer that determined Galante was using the Library to pay for personal expenses. Galante went on to sue the library for \$2 million in November 2015 for breach of contract, claiming he was fired without cause.

Queens Library President and CEO Dennis M. Walcott, released a statement on the settlement and dismissal of the case.

"It's in the best interest of this institution and the public to put our time and resources towards our future, rather than litigate this matter to conclusion," Walcott said. "I look forward to continuing our work of providing outstanding service to all of our customers."

Of the \$1.5 million half is covered by insurance and \$300,000 is being paid out to Galante. The remaining \$1.2 million will pay for legal fees.

Queens Library countersued Galante and sought \$200,000 from him for questionable expenses on his library corporate credit card in the span of two years. Galante allegedly charged to the card meals, alcoholic beverages, parking tickets, concert tickets, furniture for his office, office roof

deck or home, and books he bought on Amazon for his Kindle. The library also wanted an additional \$260,000 to cover the money the library had to spend on legal fees that began accruing when the FBI started investigating Galante in 2014. To date there has been no indictment.

The library also claims Galante was working full time for another employer in violation of his obligations to the library. It claims he conducted personal business on library time and utilized the legal services of the library's outside counsel for his own personal benefit. Additionally, the suit claims he has refused to return property that belongs to the library.

Galante denied all allegations, claiming the expenditures were for the



Queens Library has settled the lawsuit filed by its former president, Thomas Galante.

benefit of the library and that the library was aware and approved his outside consulting work and he has not kept any property belonging to the library.

"After giving 27 years

of my life to the Queens Library and raising millions of dollars to make it better, the political winds changed overnight and my name was dragged through the mud," Galante said. "I'm

filing this lawsuit to set the record straight."

In September Brooklyn Federal Judge Allyne Ross ordered the Queens Public Library to pay for the defense of Galante. Ross ruled that under the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law the library was required to provide Galante with reasonable litigations expenses for his defense against its counter claims. Ross said the law "allows the director or officer of a not-for-profit corporation to seek advancement of legal fees when a lawsuit is filed against him for which he may ultimately be entitled to indemnification."

Reach Gina Martinez by e-mail at gmartinez@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4538.

EmblemHealth facility to remain open

After several hospital closures in Cambria Heights, area residents depend on wellness programs

BY PATRICK DONACHIE

An EmblemHealth Neighborhood Care facility in Cambria Heights will remain open despite initial fears of closure, according to state Sen. Leroy Comrie (D-St. Albans). He made the announcement during a news conference outside the facility last Friday.

"This success is due to the hard work and engagement of our community," Comrie said to the crowd at the facility, located at 206-20 Linden Blvd. "Because you rallied support and collected signatures, this vital resource for the community will not be closing its doors to the people who rely on it."

Comrie said EmblemHealth had contacted him prior to the start of the news conference to pledge to work with the commu-

nity and find a way to keep the Cambria Heights site open for services.

The facility opened nearly four years ago and is the only EmblemHealth facility of its type in the borough. It offers a variety of free services and programs, including nutritional advice and help in quitting smoking, according to its website.

The facility is located in southeast Queens, which bore the brunt of several hospital closures in recent years, including the shutting of Mary Immaculate Hospital in Jamaica in 2009, Peninsula Hospital Center in Far Rockaway and Holliswood Hospital in 2013.

Comrie said people who used the care center were notified about three weeks ago that the facility would likely close at the end of this month, citing the economic cost due to a lower



State Sen. Leroy Comrie speaks outside of the EmblemHealth facility in Cambria Heights.
Courtesy of Sen. Comrie's office

number of medical visits as opposed to preventative or lifestyle care.

"A lot of people have had their lives changed as a part of the wellness programs," Comrie said. "Community members came to my of-

fice and requested our assistance because they were very distraught about losing this location that had positively impacted them."

Comrie said the continuous loss of in-house medical facilities in the area

made the EmblemHealth facility all the more essential for community members. Comrie pledged his office would work with the community to alert them to the medical services available at the facility, and EmblemHealth promised to get back to Comrie within the week about the next steps forward.

Nazneen Rahman, the director of EmblemHealth's Neighborhood Care, also said the facility in Cambria Heights would remain open.

"Our commitment to community is unwavering, and we will balance the factors that led to our initial decision by offering a new experience in 2017," she said. "EmblemHealth is in the middle of an exciting business transformation, and improving access to care and care coordination

are factors we're focusing on. We are actively working with community leaders to determine the best ways in which to assist the health and wellness for all those we serve."

Community activists Joan and Michael Gore collected hundreds of signatures to pressure the health organization into keeping the facility open. Michael Gore said the neighborhood care center offered vital services to the community.

"I have been in these classes for over two years and have witnessed success stories of diabetics who are off of their medications and patients who have taken control of their high blood pressure," he said. "In a community with so many dialysis centers, we would be going backwards if these programs were to be taken away."

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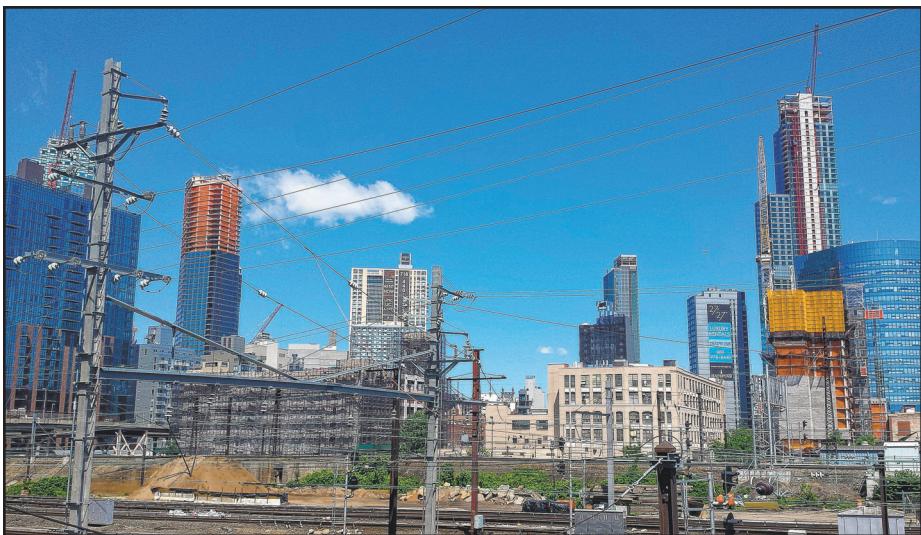
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Plan addresses growth of Long Island City



The LIC Partnership developed a plan to manage the neighborhood's explosive growth.

Photo by Bill Parry

BY BILL PARRY

The unprecedented growth taking place in Long Island City, with 11,000 condominium and rental units built in the last decade with another 22,500 being developed, has been well documented by the LIC Partnership. For nearly a year the development organization has been working on a far-reaching, cross-sector business and organization survey, the first phase of which was released Monday.

The "Long Island City Comprehensive Plan: Phase 1" addresses how to leverage the district's tremendous market potential and guide public and private-sector investments in LIC to balance growth across sectors. Despite its current development boom and historical economic importance, LIC has never been studied across its full geography and across its many sectors.

"Thanks to the hundreds of area businesses and organizations that participated in the development of this report by providing essential input and guidance," LIC Partnership President Elizabeth Lusskin said. "Implementing these recommendations will impact all sectors and help maintain and

foster an equitable, mixed-use, culturally robust, full-service community in LIC. Through targeted interventions and partnerships at the local, city, state and federal levels, LIC can be a model 21st century mixed-use neighborhood for communities in NYC and throughout the country."

The study found that LIC's location, cultural vibrancy and the interdependence and collaboration among entities are seen as the district's greatest assets. The study also found that LIC's businesses and organizations are optimistic about their longevity in LIC and want to expand operations there, yet cite affordable and properly sized space as a concern.

"We strongly support LIC Partnership's vision for ensuring that employers can find adequate, reasonably priced commercial and retail space in order to establish and expand their businesses here," LaGuardia Community College President Gail O. Mellow said. "This will fuel Long Island City's continued growth as an economic and education hub. With over 50,000 students annually, LaGuardia is a vital part of this thriving ecosystem, and we are looking forward to working with companies

throughout LIC to identify and meet their education and training needs."

The study highlighted nine recommendations to foster continued and expanded success while addressing real neighborhood challenges including relieving the commercial parking strain. The findings also confirmed that movement within the neighborhood needs to be improved to allow residents, workers and visitors to take advantage of LIC's numerous resources including arts and culture.

"This administration is catalyzing Long Island City as an economic hub for the 21st century by continuing to make key investments in transportation, infrastructure, and growing strong middle-class jobs," New York City Economic Development Corporation President Maria Torres-Springer said. "With valuable input from residents, businesses, our partners in government and local organizations on the ground, the LIC Comprehensive Plan provides a blueprint for the bright future of this community."

Reach reporter Bill Parry by e-mail at bparry@cnglocal.com or by phone at (718) 260-4538.



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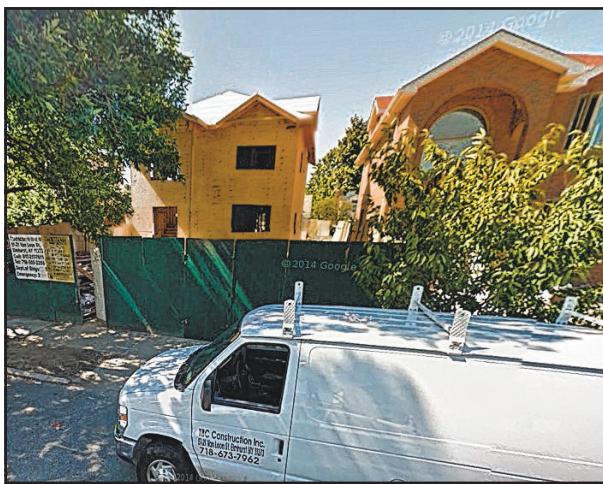
Grodenchik aims to end idle construction sites

BY MARK HALLUM

With idle constructions sites taking over residential neighborhoods across Queens, Councilman Barry Grodenschik (D-Oakland Gardens) introduced legislation which would create a public registry of abandoned building projects and use the fines collected from owners to finance the registry. Inactive construction sites are described in the bill as a location where permits are expired with no work taking place during two Dept. of Buildings inspections within 30 days of one another.

"Idle sites create a quality-of-life issue. Some sites remain in construction for a decade or longer, creating an eyesore and a nuisance for neighboring owners," Grodenschik said. "This bill would require the Department of Building to create a public registry of inactive sites, and the registry would be financed by the owners of the sites. The purpose is to encourage inactive site owners to complete their projects in a timely fashion."

A home at 75-50 193rd St. is just one location where construction at the site has sat idle for 14 years, according to Steve Behar, legislative council to Grodenschik. The neighborhood sits close to the edge of Cunningham Park, where homes are



Councilman Barry Grodenschik introduced legislation which could resolve the issue of idle construction sites in the city.

Google Earth

well-manicured. The building is mostly wood frame and particle board.

The address has an extensive list of violations on the Buildings website involving safety, debris, work taking place without a supervisor, demolishing beyond the scope of approved plans and permits on two occasions as well as illegal electrical work taking place without a permit.

Idle sites are defined by the bill as a "site for which a permit has expired or a construction site for which there is an unexpired permit but no construction activity is visible on the site on two consecutive inspections by the department within a 30 day period."

Idle sites are a common complaint from civic associations, according to Behar.

Stalled sites are often the result of owners who choose to do the work themselves, run out of money or have family issues, he said.

These sites pose a similar risk as zombie homes to neighboring residents. Rodents such as raccoons are a common concern for residents who live near neglected properties, and worries over fires and children wandering into dangerous settings are often expressed.

The bill is currently waiting to be approved by the Council's Committee of Housing and Buildings

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Counting the votes

Results for the 19 Queens races for Congress and the state Legislature (all results are from NY1.com, with the exception of U.S. House District 6, which is from the NYC Board of Elections website):

U.S. House District 3

Thomas Suozzi (D) **52.4%**
Jack Martins (R) 47.6%

U.S. House District 5

Gregory Meeks (D) **85.5%**
Michael O'Reilly (R) 13.0%
Frank Francois (G) 1.5%

U.S. House District 6

Grace Meng (D) **71.8%**
Danniel Maio (R) 26.9%
Harris Bhatti 1.1%

U.S. House District 12

Carolyn Maloney (D) **83.0%**
Robert Ardini (R) 17.0%

U.S. House District 14

Joseph Crowley (D) **82.6%**
Frank Spotorno (R) 17.4%

State Senate District 10

James Sanders (D) **96.5%**
Adrienne Adams (Women's Equality) 3.5%

Counting the votes

**ELECTION
2016**

Senate State District 14

Leroy Comrie (D) **92.3%**
Jarret Freeman (R) 7.7%

State Senate District 15

Joseph Addabbo (D) **63.1%**
Michael Conigliaro (R) 36.9%

State Senate District 16

Toby Ann Stavisky (D) **77.8%**
Carlos Giron (R) 22.2%

State Assembly District 23

Stacey Pheffer Amato (D) **67.4%**
Alan Zwirn (R) 32.6%

State Assembly District 24
David Weprin (D) **82.5%**
Ira Harris (R) 17.5%

State Assembly District 25
Nily Rozic (D) **76.1%**
Usman Ali Chohan (R) 23.9%

State Assembly District 30
Brian Barnwell (D) **67.8%**
Anthony Nunziato (R) 32.2%

State Assembly District 33
Clyde Vancl (D) **88.2%**
Goldy-Francois Wellington (R) 9.8%

State Senate District 15
Joseph Addabbo (D) **63.1%**
Michael Conigliaro (R) 36.9%

State Assembly District 38
Michael Miller (D) **80.4%**
Joseph Maldonado (R) 19.6%

State Assembly District 40
Ron Kim (D) **75.2%**
Miriam Rodriguez (R) 24.8%



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Amtrak

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52 23rd St. Her rent was poised to climb from \$50 to \$45,000.

"I thought it was a typing error," she said. "I was born here and I'd like to die here, but under these conditions I could never afford to live here."

In August, U.S. Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-Jackson Heights) joined forces with state Sen. Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria), Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas (D-Astoria) and City Councilman Costa Constantinides (D-Astoria) to denounce the agency's exorbitant rent increase. Two months later, Amtrak backed down — at least for now.

"Following discussions with Congressman Crowley, his staff and others in

the community, Amtrak has decided to temporarily halt any further action or negotiation involving residential lease agreements in the area near the Hell Gate Bridge," Amtrak spokesman Craig Schulz said. "We appreciate Congressman Crowley's involvement and attention to this matter and look forward to working with him and others on a mutually agreeable course of action going forward."

Crowley and the Astoria elected officials cheered the announcement last week.

"Amtrak's decision to hit the brakes on an unconscionable rent hike for working families in Astoria is not just welcome news, but also a great victory for the community," they said in a joint statement. "Together, we raised our voices to ensure the time, effort, and money

that these homeowners have put into maintaining these properties over the years are recognized. This news lifts a huge weight off the shoulders of people who love their neighborhood and comes at the right time as we approach the holiday season."

As for Amtrak's "agreeable course of action going forward," the electeds said, "as it pertains to terms of the lease moving forward, we hope Amtrak will consider the value these homeowners bring as stewards of the property when determining a mutually agreeable course of action in the future."

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GOP

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Despite the fact the Democrats were able to hold off their opponents, the newly struck unity among Republicans is a far cry from the polarization which existed among its members up until very recently and divided loyalties to the party's leadership.

"Running a Republican in Queens is not easy since you have about a four-to-one registration disadvantage," said Turner, who pointed out that Republicans still have not been competitive in getting their message out in comparison to their liberal counterparts. But the right demographic is still in Queens, untapped by the GOP, in the form of suburban homeowners whose values mirror that of what is commonly referred to as the "party of family values," he said.

Although none of the Republican candidates got through in this election at the state and federal level, Turner was happy with the numbers coming back on Election Night.

In Queens, where Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump was born, he captured 22 percent of the vote - second to Staten Island among the five boroughs.

In the area from Howard Beach to Maspeth, Republican Michael Conigliaro had 34 percent of the vote in the race against incumbent state Sen. Joseph Addabbo (D-Howard Beach), who walked away with 59 percent. Republican Tony Nunziato lost with 29 percent of the vote to Democrat Brian Barnwell in the race for deposed state Assemblywoman Margaret Markey's (D-Maspeth) seat. These were districts where residents have been in upheaval over City Hall's policy of placing the homeless in motels.

According to Turner, bringing the party back together was a challenging ordeal which involved giving out resources to field candidates, many of whom had little to no experience in politics, and going big for long-shot victories. Turner admitted the GOP would be in the minority for a while, but getting candidates out into the public view is a good start.

One observer formerly involved in the Queens GOP was critical of Turner's approach, however, contending that the strategy was a "shotgun" approach to a goal which requires emphasis on individual campaigns in districts with potential.

"I think you want to show that you can run can-

didates in every district," the source said. "However, you have to be smart and strategic about where you run races, because there's not a lot of money out there... I think you have to really pick and choose where you run candidates. Just to say you ran candidates in every district is great, but who won?"

The geographic divide within the Queens GOP Party was what the source referred to as "the 38 Parallel."

Northern Queens was splintered off from southern Queens with City Councilman Eric Ulrich (D-Ozone Park) and Bob Turner leading in the south and the late GOP Chairman Phil Ragusa in the north.

"There was a long-lasting feud in Queens for many, many years, and it got to the point where no one knew why the feud was still going on" the source said, explaining how the death of Ragusa in 2014 brought disagreements to the surface. Turner was named successor 18 months ago as an "easy look" for the party, but on the condition that district leaders were given primaries along with an equal share of the executive committee of Queens County. This agreement was not honored.

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Ridgewood

Continued from Page 1
Association President Paul Kerzner.

Kerzner has been advocating for historic designations in Ridgewood since 1983 and remains committed to keep adding the preservation districts.

"There are two [historic districts] in the city of New York that are larger than Ridgewood," Kerzner said. "And those two neighborhoods are Greenwich Village... and the largest historic district in the city is Sunset Park, believe it or not. They have Ridgewood beat by about 15 buildings. That will not stand."

John Frey, or Jack as he is known, spent the first 26 years of his life on 70th Avenue, west of Fresh Pond Road where the dedication ceremony took place. He now lives on Woodbine Street and has spent over 80 years in Ridgewood, apart from a summer in Los Angeles as a young man. He spoke of the staples and hangouts long gone over the years, such as meeting halls, stores and

restaurants.

Community Board 5 Chairman Vincent Arcuri said his father was born in Ridgewood in 1900, prior to the construction of many of the structures in the district. According to Arcuri, he never left Ridgewood because he had no reason to. It is an attractive place with clean streets, which attracts immigrants to this day. He remarked that the new wave of transplants are coming in the form of hipsters, widely regarded as a gentrifying force.

"When people think of New York City, they think of so many different characteristics," Crowley said. "Ridgewood really exemplified that character. It's so important that we're able to preserve the rich history and culture that Ridgewood has to provide."

The majority of the structures in the neighborhood were built between 1906 and World War I, following the construction of the metro lines to the area and eastward expansion of the quickly sprawling New York City, according to the LPC.

Addiction

Continued from Page 1

Brown spent about a week on the peninsula, recovering from the storm's aftermath and struggling with his addiction. He recalled that dealers were already back in the area a day or two after the storm hit, with customers rationing supplies for drugs, including National Guard-issued MREs. Brown said he was able to return to Manhattan after the dollar vans starting running again.

Al Barreto, the program director of the Far Rockaway Treatment Center, said the center is the only state-certified drug treatment center on the peninsula and has suffered from budget cuts in the years since the storm.

"We're trying to just keep our program going and make ourselves available to the community," he said. "The continued support of the city is definitely needed."

Dr. Michelle Schwartz,

the lead investigator for the Project Restoration survey, said her staff reached out to residents of the Rockaways at community events. Schwartz said 1,000 residents have been screened to date, with almost half of the respondents listing significant mental health difficulties. The program has connected 150 of these participants with mental health care.

"Even just making them more aware of their symptoms was a huge first step, but getting them to that first appointment is a big thing," she said. "We really have hard evidence that natural disasters like a hurricane have mental health effects on a population."

She said it was more difficult to discern results involving drug use from the survey, speculating that survey-takers were hesitant to speak about addictions they faced.

Mary Washington was one participant who was willing to speak publicly about how Sandy affected her own drug use. Wash-

ington was born in Richmond, Va., and when the storm hit, she was living in the Hammel Houses in Far Rockaway.

"I couldn't believe our neighborhood looked the way it looked," she said. "A lot of people who were here during Sandy are not here now."

Washington said her drug use increased in the immediate week after Sandy, as residents took stock of the wreckage. As time went by, she said her drug usage exacerbated other health issues, which led her to speak about her addictions to a doctor. She enrolled in a mental health clinic at Flushing Hospital for a week, and after her discharge, she started visiting the Far Rockaway Treatment Center for outpatient work. This month she will have been sober for a year.

"We need this place," she said about the center. "We need Rockaway Treatment Center and we need to get it funded."

She attends counseling and support groups at the

facility, where she often sees Brown, who moved to a two-family house in Far Rockaway sponsored by the Fortune Society in 2013 while he continued to battle his addiction. He said he had been sober since February.

"I got tired of getting high and I got tired of smoking crack," he said. "I put my face to the floor and asked God to take that taste out of my mouth, and he did it."

Now, Brown and Washington are both receiving additional training at the Northwell facility so they can assist in counseling others struggling with their own addiction battles. Both expressed hope that the center would continue to receive the funding it needed, and Brown implored Rockaway residents to come to the facility if they were in need and fighting a drug dependency.

"If you want the help, come and get the help. The help is there," Brown said. "We are still people who need to be loved."

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MIDDLE VILLAGE
MidVill slams Q38 delays
 By Joe Anuta
 It's the end of the line for Middle Village straphangers who said they have put up with spotty service on the Q38 line for far too long. [Comment](#).

RICHMOND HILL
Rich Hill man seeks to clear name in 1996 drive-by killing
 By Joe Anuta

RICHMOND HILL: The Queens DA agreed last Thursday to look into the 2004 conviction of a Richmond Hill man who is serving 11 years of a life sentence for a 1996 drive-by shooting. [Comment](#).

ELMHURST
Elmhurst shopping center gets earful over workers' wages
 By Rebecca Henly
ELMHURST: Activist groups marched into the administrative offices of Elmhurst's Queens Center Mall last Thursday, dropping off 5,500 signatures demanding the mall give their workers higher wages and provide a community space. [Comment](#).

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