

BROAD CHANNEL CIVIC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the Broad Channel Civic Association

June 2018

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CIVIC ASSOCIATION MEETING

***** VFW Hall – Shad Creek Road – 7:00 PM *****

***** June 28, 2018 *****

This issue of the Newsletter is sponsored by
Bud Stillwaggon.

President's Message

This month's Civic **meeting will be held on Thursday, June 28th at 7PM** at the VFW Hall. Come down and find out what is going on in our town. This will be the last meeting before the summer recess and we will resume meetings once again in September. The Civic Association would like to wish everyone a happy and safe Summer. Enjoy it because it will go fast!

Street Raising Phase 1 update - The resumption of work on West 13th Road was set to begin on June 1st, after numerous meetings to push this time frame. On June 1st the contractor did not resume work and the Civic immediately began to call our elected officials to get to the bottom of it. It was discovered that there was a contractual dispute over pricing on some of the change orders that were required and that until that was resolved the contractor would not resume the work. Thanks to a big push on the part of Dan Brown (Borough President Melinda Katz office), Senator Joe Addabbo and Assemblywoman Stacey Amato, all who called the Mayor's office and the DDC commissioner, this issue has been resolved. We are now told that EIC associates will be back on West 13th Road working on the new road bed on June 26th. We will see.

Street Raising Phase 2 - Which refers to the proposal to raise streets West 14th through West 19th Roads will see two final design meetings. The first is to be held on Wednesday, June 27th at 6PM at the VFW for West 14th, 15th and 16th Roads. The second is to be held on Monday, July 9th at 6PM at the VFW for Roads West 17th, 18th and 19th. This meeting is not for everyone as most folks have had their one on one sit down with the design firm. It is for those, such as many in the Build-It-Back program, who never saw a conceptual design for their property. If you are noted as needing a meeting you will receive a notice from the NV 5 design firm and DDC. Once we have completed these final design meetings we will be looking for home owners to submit their consent forms. The Civic Association hopes that residents will support this effort to raise our streets to combat tidal flooding, recognizing that sea level rise (even on the low estimates) will only make this issue worse and this project will protect our streets and access to our homes for decades. In addition it will see; new road beds, new water lines, new sewer lines, new telephone poles, legalize parking on both sides of the streets (it is not so now) and finally install storm drains which we do not currently have. It is fully funded and designed and is an opportunity that will not come around again.

The center mall just outside of our town (through the strip) looks great and a big thank you **to Councilman Ulrich** for getting the weeds cut and the area cleaned and for his staffs support in getting the American Ball fields addressed with the fields totally made over. In addition, the Councilman recently funded the Flag day event at the 17th Road park. The event was packed and everyone had a great time!

Sunset cove construction is about to begin. Grace Industries has won the contract to remove contaminated soil, build a tidal wetland, walking/protective berm, maritime forest and overlooks. July will see small scale soil testing and staging of equipment and then in August there will be large scale soil removal and construction underway. This is an exciting project many years in the works and it is now underway. When completed phase two will begin which see the old Rockaway Boardwalk lumber used to create a boardwalk that will allow visitors to walk out over the wetlands and ultimately a eco dock for small scale environmental studies, such as oyster seeding to be conducted by local schools

The Toll between Broad Channel and Rockaway has been a constant threat, of the state taking away the rebate program, for many years. Through the efforts of Assemblywoman Stacey Amato, the NY State Assembly has passed a bill to remove it permanently. It is now in the Senate where Senator Addabbo is working to get it passed and off to the Governor where we would hope he would sign it.

Quote of the Month - "Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." ----Mark Twain

Respectfully submitted,
Dan Mundy Jr.

Thank you to all who paid their 2018 Civic Dues. It goes a long way toward keeping our newsletter up and running as well as other operating expenses throughout the year. Every little bit helps keeps us afloat!



The Flag will fly in July for
Lawrence Sweet,
U.S. Navy, WWII.



The Flag will fly in August for
Thomas H. Horn,
U.S. Navy, WWII.



The Flag will fly in September for
Vinnie O'Hare,
U.S. Army, WWII.

BROAD CHANNEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY **MARK HISTORICAL DAY ON YOUR CALENDAR!!!**

Plan to visit the VFW on October 14th from noon to 4PM for Broad Channel Historical Day. See what the Historical Committee has collected since 2016. Hope you will bring some new items for the collection and help us identify people in pictures.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Hold this Date!!! Saturday, October 27, 2018. It's the Annual Broad Channel American Legion Halloween Party. More details and fliers to follow! Thank you!

BROAD CHANNEL VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

June Mardi Gras Schedule. BCVFD fund drive is still ongoing. Currently only 9% of the town has given. June 14th will have passed by the time this gets out, but we would like to thank all for attending the street renaming ceremony held in honor of the Line of Duty Death of Chief Christian Hoobs which occurred June 14, 1917. A long overdue tribute to a Broad Channel hero.

ST. VIRGILIUS / ST. CAMILLUS CHURCH

ST. CAMILLUS - ST. VIRGILIUS Religious Education Program - Beginning in the First Grade, every catholic student is encouraged to register for our CCD classes. Classes will begin in September and are held on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 PM to 5 PM in St. Camillus Catholic Academy. There is NO FEE. You may register online at www.stcstv.com or call 718-634-8229.

THRILLA IN CAMILLA: The FDNY Boxing Club will fight the London Metro Police in the Parking Lot of St. Camillus Church on Friday, July 13th at 7PM. The proceeds benefit "Building Homes for Heroes". Tickets on sale NOW at www.FDNYBoxing.com. \$25 for General Admission; \$50 for Ringside.

ST. CAMILLUS CATHOLIC ACADEMY - Summer Office Hours: call 718-634-5260.

Volunteers Wanted: You can help connect young people to the National Parks Service's Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Floyd Bennett Field, Fort Wadsworth or Great Kills. NPS Education Specialist Dan Meharg is looking for adults to assist teachers with visiting class groups exploring nature, ecology and history through the Park For Every Classroom and Education Science Ambassador Corp programs. Minimum time requirement is just a few hours one day each month. Training will be provided. Email dan_meharg@nps.gov for more information.

GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

The following is a term paper written in 1998 by Diana McGee, a student at Hunter College High School.

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"Broad Channel, Where's That?"

continued....

While the northern portion of the island was flourishing with the wildlife refuge, residents were again threatened with eviction. In 1948, the Board of Estimate had proposed a canceling of all homesite leases, but when residents marched on City Hall, the plan was abandoned. In 1967, Mayor John Lindsay declared Broad Channel a health hazard. He said that the overflow of Broad Channel's raw sewage into Jamaica Bay was the source of hepatitis in Queens. Lindsay's solution to this problem was to displace all of Broad Channel's residents. The town disputed this accusation with its own health expert, and the mayor was forced to back off. In 1988, the city finally installed a sewer system, not without cost to the residents.

Eviction was an issue once again in 1968 when the Port Authority of NY&NJ proposed that the JFK International Airport extend two runways into Jamaica Bay and toward residences. In traditional fashion, Islanders protested and the plan was not implemented. In the 1970's Mayor Lindsay tried to dissolve the community by casting the town under the legislation of the Gateway National Park, which would entail removing all residents from the island. The city once again backed down when thousands of residents marched in protest. The fight ended in 1982 when Mayor Ed Koch allowed Broad Channelites to purchase their lots.

Most residents feel that the disadvantages of living in Broad Channel are outweighed by the benefits. One of the most obvious advantages to the town's location is the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, a combination of man-made and natural wilderness. In 1953, the nine thousand-acre refuge was opened by the city's Department of Parks. In charge was Herbert Johnson. Although he was not a wildlife expert, his expertise in botany was key in attracting different species of birds to the newly created ponds of the refuge. Today, over 325 species have been identified at the bird sanctuary. The sanctuary attracts about fifty thousand visitors each year, and Herbert Johnson remarked, "I'll bet I've got the only bird sanctuary in the world with a subway running through it." The town has more accessibility to nature than any other community in the city. Broad Channel may be the only place in the city where people and wildlife have such close association. When Madeline Maier said that there was no entertainment on the island, her husband interjected, "Not true. I can sit at my window and be entertained by nature for hours."

In a town so small, there is much cohesion. According to Jane Murray, "It's a small town. Everyone knows everyone else's business." No one on the island seems to move. Some families have four generations on the island, and many marriages have taken place between young people who lived "up the block" from one another. Dan Tubridy says, "We don't think in terms of years or decades, we think in generations."

Throughout the past century, Broad Channel has had to deal with the downfalls of its location and size. The town has resisted being turned into a landfill, a recreation area and a runway. But unlike many communities in New York City, the residents of Broad Channel have a sense of security and safety. Those residents who grow restless staring at the skyline, leave. Those who prefer excitement over serenity, leave. But those who remain cherish the solitude of their little town on the water. These are the people who will march on City Hall to defend their community when it is threatened. The town has been criticized as too homogenous, too sheltered, and at times, backward. However, the town does not wish to be changed. Perhaps it is this characteristic which has driven the town to persevere. Loyal Channelites are happy where they are, and to them, that's all that matters.