

I am President of the Briarwood Action Network (BAN), a community organization focused on and operating in Briarwood, Queens. I am writing once again because today NYS DOT has seen fit to ambush our community with traffic pattern changes as a result of construction on the Kew Gardens Interchange Project (KGIP). Since October 2011, BAN has been in touch with and met with you regarding the ongoing impact of the Kew Gardens Interchange Project (KGIP) on our neighborhood.

We were repeatedly assured of the following, as recently as last month: that NYS DOT was hiring an onsite community liaison for the KGIP; that NYS DOT would post up-to-date project information on its website; that NYS DOT would keep the Briarwood community apprised of changes in traffic patterns. Well, there is still no NYS DOT community liaison and the information on the agency's website is two months old and too vague to be helpful. And the minimal commitment made by NYS DOT to apprise us of major changes on the streets of our community has not been met. I might add, partner agencies on the project, such as NYC DOT and NYC Transit, have not been forthcoming with information, either.

In October 2011, BAN sponsored a public meeting about the KGIP at Queens Borough Hall, at which representatives from various city and state agencies and elected officials spoke. In October 2012, BAN again participated in a multiagency meeting, this time hosted by Queens Borough President Helen Marshall. At both meetings, and in other communications, NYS DOT (which oversees the project) and its partner agencies made a commitment to keep BAN and the Briarwood community updated and to address the concerns raised. This large construction project commenced in late 2010 and it is unclear when the work in Briarwood will be completed.

In August 2012, an existing subway entrance on the south side of Queens Boulevard was permanently closed and a new one alongside the Van Wyck Expressway service road opened. At the same time, the traffic pattern on Queens Boulevard where it intersects with the highway was altered. This happened suddenly and with little notice to the community and caused a lot of confusion to both pedestrians and drivers. Today, history repeats itself.

Today's change in the traffic patterns on Queens Boulevard near Main Street and the Van Wyck, and a new walkway to the subway, has been established. Why haven't we been notified about this? At the very least, personnel from the construction contractor and/or involved agencies should have handed out flyers days in advance of these changes. That we are once again being kept in the dark until the last minute is outrageous.

Our middle-class community has borne the burdens of the KGIP with patience and fortitude. We did not ask for the gateway to this neighborhood to be torn apart for years at a stretch, but we have little choice but to tolerate this upheaval for the sake of a supposedly greater benefit to our city. The one thing we have asked for almost two years now is to be kept well-informed about the progress of the project as it moves from one phase to the next -- especially when it involves substantial changes to local traffic and the walk to the subway. But for some reason I cannot fathom, we are, yet again, being denied this consideration.

Surely it is not too much to ask for our public servants to take into account the need for timely and comprehensible information about a large-scale public works project in the middle of our community. Or is it? It's our neighborhood, but the residents of Briarwood continue to be an afterthought to the planners and implementers of the KGIP.

I hope to hear an appropriate response from you as soon as possible. Please be aware that BAN will be encouraging Briarwood residents to contact you directly to express their concerns.

Sincerely,

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**visit our website: [www.briarwoodactionnetwork.com](http://www.briarwoodactionnetwork.com)**

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