



P.O. Box 356068  
 Briarwood, NY 11435  
[www.briarwoodactionnetwork.com](http://www.briarwoodactionnetwork.com)  
 briarwoodactionnetwork@gmail.com

**Interagency Meeting regarding  
 The Kew Gardens Interchange Project**

Meeting Date: October 15, 2012  
 Scheduled  
 Start: 4:00 p.m.  
 Location:  
 Queens Borough Hall  
 120-55 Queens Boulevard  
 Borough President's Conference Room  
 Kew Gardens, NY 11424

**Briarwood Action Network**

Board Members Present: Aida Vernon, Beth Brooks, Crystal Courts, Zina Zimmerman

Agency Officials and  
 Elected Representatives Present:

**Queens Borough President Helen Marshall;  
 Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz;**

**Monir Avery**, Counsel for Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz;  
**Janna Davis**, Director of Community Relations for NYC Council Member James Gennaro;  
**Barry Grodenchik**, Community Board Director & Deputy Borough President for the  
 Queens Borough President;  
**Andrew Hatki**, Lieutenant, NYPD/Transit District 20;  
**Sheila Hutson**, Station Manager, New York City Transit;  
**Sokwon Im**, Engineer, NYS DOT;  
**Karen Koslowitz**, NYC Council Member;  
**Kelvin Marajh**, Station Manager, New York City Transit;  
**Charles O'Shea**, Director of Government Relations, NYS DOT;  
**Jeremy Parnes**, Principal Transportation Planner, New York City Transit;  
**Joseph Raskin**, Assistant Director Government and Community Relations, New York City  
 Transit;  
**Craig Ruyle**, Area Construction Supervisor, NYS DOT;  
**Seymour Schwartz**, President, Briarwood Community Association;  
**Albert Silvestri**, Borough Planner, NYC DOT;  
**Michael Telfer**, Captain/Commanding Officer, NYPD/Transit District 20;  
**Ignazio Terranova**, Citywide Community Affairs Officer, Department of Sanitation

***Minutes***

Queens Borough President Helen Marshall thanked and welcomed everyone. Guests introduced themselves.

Queens Borough President Helen Marshall acknowledged the Briarwood Action Network representatives and invited them to present the concerns of the Briarwood community to the representatives present.

Briarwood Action Network president, Aida Vernon, distributed and discussed a prepared list of community concerns.

***The list of community concerns prepared by the Briarwood Action Network is attached as Appendix A.***

Aida Vernon began by thanking Queens Borough President Helen Marshall and Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz for hosting and arranging the meeting. Aida then thanked the agency representatives present for their responses to some previously voiced community concerns including: some improved lighting at the new Briarwood Van Wyck subway entrance; the countdown walk/don't walk signs at the Queens Blvd/Van Wyck Expressway crosswalk; improved signs for pedestrians and vehicles; satisfactory trash pick-up on the ramp entryway to the subway.

### Safety/Crime at Subway Entrance

**Aida Vernon** described the location of the new Briarwood Van Wyck subway entrance as “the perfect recipe for crime”. Subway riders coming from the subway cannot be seen from Queens Blvd., there is loud traffic, the location is desolate and the pathway is below grade. Aida asked about the installation and monitoring of a street level surveillance camera and a functioning accessible pedestrian call box.

**Queens Borough President Helen Marshall:** Noted that adequate lighting is a crime deterrent and encouraged all representatives present to do their part in ensuring that there is adequate lighting in the area of the subway station entrance and asked about the possibility of having an officer patrol the area.

**Captain Michael Telfer:** Stated that, although the responsibility of NYPD/Transit District 20 is underground in the subway, they have taken steps to address security concerns at the entrance of the subway. The police have put additional lighting in the area of the subway station entrance. Captain Telfer also advised that, as of last month, there are patrol officers assigned to the area. The foot patrol works shifts of 11 am – 7 pm and 7 pm – 4 am.

**Aida Vernon:** Requested clarification of which precincts were responsible for the area around the Briarwood Van Wyck subway station.

**Lieutenant Andrew Hatki:** Answered that, generally, the areas north of Queens Blvd, including the main subway entrance still under construction, were the responsibility of the 107<sup>th</sup> precinct. The areas south of Queens Blvd, including the newly opened subway entrance, were the responsibility of the 102<sup>nd</sup> precinct.

**Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz:** Stated that, at the October 17, 2011 community meeting, it had been stated that there was a functioning call box for residents to be able to contact NYPD/Transit District 20.

- **Lieutenant Andrew Hatki:** Stated that the call box connected to NYPD/Transit District 20 in the area of the Briarwood Van Wyck substation entrance was functioning.
- **Aida Vernon:** Advised that the call box was now within the construction work zone and inaccessible to the public.
- **Craig Ruyle:** Confirmed that the call box was inaccessible.
- **Joseph Raskin, Jeremy Parnes** and Mr. Ruyle stated that they would confirm that the call box was functioning and make it accessible to the public.

**Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz:** Stated that he thought that there was an existing transit camera.

- **Lieutenant Andrew Hatki** confirmed that there was a camera monitoring the subway station’s mezzanine which was monitored by the transit police. However, there was no street level camera.

**Captain Michael Telfer:** Stated that NYPD/Transit District 20 would be responsible for any monitoring of new surveillance cameras, but that they could not order the installation of a street level surveillance camera.

**Joseph Raskin:** Stated that he would research the costs/feasibility of installing a camera at the station entrance.

**NYC Council Member Karen Koslowitz:** Expressed her concerns for the safety of people travelling to and from such a secluded location and committed to allocate funding to pay for a street level surveillance camera at the recently-opened Briarwood Van Wyck subway station entrance to address those concerns.

- All members present from the **Briarwood Action Network** thanked Councilwoman Koslowitz for her concern and commitment.

### Traffic Safety

**Aida Vernon** and **Zina Zimmerman** described the various traffic safety issues arising from the work on the Kew Gardens Interchange Project. Including:

- Drivers travelling eastbound on Queens Blvd. often make illegal turns to stay on Queens Blvd when they realize they are entering the Van Wyck Expwy.
- The conditions are very dangerous for pedestrians crossing Queens Blvd at the Van Wyck Expwy due to limited standing space, the tendency of vehicles to speed in the area of the street light, and a blind spot for pedestrians checking for approaching vehicles.

**Seymour Schwartz:** Stated that there was also a problem with the pedestrian crossing area on the south side of Queens Blvd. crossing the Van Wyck Expwy entrance road. Mr. Schwartz stated the need for a traffic light there.

**Craig Ruyle:** Stated that the NYS DOT had put the infrastructure in place for a traffic light at that location but that it was up to the NYC DOT to determine feasibility and to do installation.

**Albert Silvestri:** Stated that he would visit the area to get further information on the various traffic safety issues arising from the work on the Kew Gardens Interchange Project and determine what steps the NYC DOT could take to help the situation.

### Transportation

**Beth Brooks** noted that southbound Q20A/B buses were not stopping at the temporary bus stop at Main St and Queens Blvd. Beth questioned why that temporary stop is not also a stop for the limited bus (Q44), due to its close proximity to the new subway entrance.

**Joseph Raskin:** Stated that he will make sure that southbound Q20A/B bus operators know to stop at the Main St and Queens Blvd. stop. He would try to get inspectors assigned to the area to monitor the bus stop. Mr. Raskin requested that riders note the date, time, and bus number if a bus fails to stop there upon request. Mr. Raskin further stated that the location of permanent express and local bus stops will be reassessed after the completion of construction work and the re-opening of area subway entrances.

### Sanitation

**Aida Vernon** described the increased trash generated by the area construction work and the insufficient cleanup and garbage collection in the area. Aida asked for confirmation of who was responsible for cleanup.

**Craig Ruyle:** Stated that the contractors, ECCO Enterprises, were responsible for the construction area and the perimeter and that he would have them clean and maintain that area.

**Ignazio Terranova:** Confirmed that the contractors were responsible for area and perimeter clean-up. He stated that summonses could be issued to the contractor if the area was not maintained.

**Zina Zimmerman:** Stated that the contractors, ECCO Enterprises, could place garbage cans in the area of construction and be responsible for garbage collection from those cans.

**Aida Vernon** asked for clarification of who would be responsible for snow and ice removal.

**Craig Ruyle:** Stated that the contractors, ECCO Enterprises, were responsible for the removal of snow and ice at the area and perimeter of the construction site.

**Joseph Raskin:** Stated that the MTA was responsible for the removal of snow and ice from the ramp leading down to the subway entrance and from the subway steps.

### Information Distribution to the Community

**Aida Vernon** described communication with the community as an overriding issue. The community has been given little or no notice of major changes in service, traffic patterns, or project scheduling. This has led to increased frustration of Briarwood residents. Aida asked how project updates and alerts will be relayed to the community.

**Queens Borough President Helen Marshall:** Acknowledged the importance of communication with the community. She asked about the feasibility of having project personnel on site to answer community questions. She suggested renting a small storefront to set up an information center.

**Craig Ruyle:** Stated that the NYS DOT was in the process of hiring a community liaison for the project. That community liaison should be in place in approximately one month and will be the contact person for questions from the community.

**Aida Vernon:** Asked what the current time frame was for the opening of the main subway entrance on the north side of Queens Blvd. and Main St.

**Craig Ruyle:** Stated that it is estimated that the main subway entrance will open in approximately a year and a half.

---

Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, again, thanked all meeting attendees for their time and attention.

---

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:10

## APPENDIX A



P.O. Box 356068  
 Briarwood, NY 11435  
[www.briarwoodactionnetwork.com](http://www.briarwoodactionnetwork.com)  
[briarwoodactionnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:briarwoodactionnetwork@gmail.com)

### Interagency Meeting Re: Kew Gardens Interchange Project

Monday, October 15, 2012, 4:00 PM

#### COMMUNITY CONCERNS ADDRESSED:

- Improved lighting at the new Briarwood Van Wyck subway entrance
- Countdown Don't Walk signals installed at Queens Blvd-Van Wyck Expwy crosswalk
- Improved signage for pedestrians and vehicles around construction area.
- Improved trash pick-up along the ramp leading down to the subway entrance.

#### COMMUNITY CONCERNS NOT ADDRESSED/INSUFFICIENTLY ADDRESSED:

##### Safety/Crime at Subway Entrance

- Loud traffic on Van Wyck Service Road + Desolate Location (by cemetery) + Below Grade Pathway = Ideal Recipe for Crime. Subway station users walking to/from walkway in the Van Wyck Service Road cannot be seen by anyone on Queens Blvd due to construction area fencing covered with black sheeting.
- No surveillance cameras at street level. If installed, who will monitor?
- Transit PD call box now within construction zone and inaccessible. Will an accessible call box be installed?

##### Traffic Safety

- Drivers travelling eastbound on QB often make illegal turns to stay on QB when they realize they are heading onto the Van Wyck.
- QB-Van Wyck crosswalk is very dangerous for pedestrians due to narrow/limited standing space, drivers tending to increase speed at traffic light and blind spot at Van Wyck when crossing south to north across QB.

##### Transportation

- Southbound Q20A/B buses not stopping at temporary bus stop on the corner of Main Street & QB.

##### Sanitation

- Continued buildup of trash & debris, especially on north side of QB, due to lack of cleanup and collection, standing water and general unsanitary conditions in pedestrian areas around the construction.
- Who is responsible for clean-up and snow/ice removal in construction area?

##### Information Distribution to the Community

- Is there going to be a community liaison assigned to the project? How will project updates and alerts be relayed to the community?
- KGIP Website: What will be frequency and content of updates?

#### B O A R D O F D I R E C T O R S

Executive Board  
 Aida Vernon | *President*  
 Crystal Courts | *Secretary*  
 Larry Sherman | *Treasurer*

Members-At-Large  
 Carl Havens  
 Justin Wax-Jacobs

Directors  
 Beth Brooks | *Director, Communications*  
 Eugene Leon | *Co-Director, Membership*  
 Sylvia Sherman | *Co-Director, Membership*  
 Zina Zimmerman | *Director, Community Service*