

6-27-2022

6.27 NYC Districting Commission Hearing Summary

Piper Benedict



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The New York City Districting Commission 2022-23 Public Hearing
 June 27, 2022
 4-7pm at York College Performing Arts Center
 94-20 Guy R Brewer Blvd, Jamaica, NY 11451

Opening points:

- Commission will go to all five boroughs for public hearings
- Noted tomorrow's primary election
- Can email testimony at any time to: Publictestimony@redistricting.nyc.gov
- Noted importance of submitting maps, even drawn by hand to show the streets/boundaries that witnesses mention
- Next public hearing:
 - Brooklyn - Wednesday June 29, 2022, 4-7pm
 - New York City Technical College, Auditorium, 285 Jay St, Brooklyn, NY 11201

| Queens | | |
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| Witness Name | Organization(s) | Testimony |
| Selvena Brooks-Powers | NYC Council Member | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crucial to engage the public in this process • Southeast Queens • Predominately Black community • microcosm of NYC • District has grown over the decade but remains within the margins for population requirement • Noted impact of COVID-19 on the district • Active civic groups • District 31 holds shared interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • Illegal dumping • Flooding – protecting coastline • Similar topography • Socioeconomic status • Environmental preservation • Represents parts of JFK • JFK should remain in district – access to employment opportunities • Do not break up these strong minority communities |

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| Yoonjoo Lee | Murray Hill Merchants Association | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flushing neighborhood • 149th place and 150th St. • Over 70 stores, most owned by members of Asian community • Chinese/Korean restaurants • Concern re changing districts |
| Marcia O'Brien | <p>Rosedale Civic Association (President)</p> <p>Community Board 13</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District 31 • Emphasized the laws (14th amendment Equal Protection Clause; Voting Rights Act; NYC Charter) • Population size – don't want district to be disrupted • Voting rights – strong voting community, must be nondiscriminatory • Compact, contiguous, similar interests • Community of interest • flooding, zoning, quality of life - makes sense to keep community together |
| Lara Gregory | <p>Queens District Attorney AAPI Advisory Board</p> <p>Queens Community Board 4</p> <p>Volunteered during pandemic for Borough President's Queens Complete Count (2020 Census)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elmhurst, Woodside • Little Manila • Noted loss of Filipino nurses during pandemic • Noted importance of Filipino community (teachers, healthcare workers, nannies, homeworkers) • Keep Woodside whole in 26 • Keep Elmhurst whole in 25 |
| Ambika Prasad? | <p>South Queens Women's March</p> <p>APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park • Punjabi and Indo-Caribbean communities – census often does not account for • Gerrymandered for far too long • Support AALDEF Communities of Interest maps • Currently divided into 28, 29, 32 • They have submitted maps • Divided at heart of Communities of Interest |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park whole to the extent possible • Noted 29% growth in Asian population • Noted that voting rights and bodily autonomy rights are on the line |
| William (Bill) Perkins | <p>Rosedale Civic Association (Board Member)</p> <p>Eastern Queens Alliance (Vice Chair)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep district fully intact • Keep JFK airport in the district • Rosedale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily single/two-family home community • Predominately Black and West Indian community • Surrounding areas have similar character and demographics (Laurelton, Brookville, Springfield Garden) • Common concerns for public safety, education, economics, rezoning, quality of life, illegal truck parking off residential streets and parks • active in community with neighboring towns • Rosedale + neighboring towns have common issues and should stay intact |
| Milly Wong | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elmhurst South • Elmhurst south side of Queens Blvd. • Predominantly working-class homeowners • Private 2-3 family homes • Quieter area compared to north side of Queens Blvd. • South side of Queens Blvd. should be joined with Maspeth in district 30 • Same civic orgs, grew up together, same schools, shared stores • Return to original council maps • Put this part of Elmhurst with Maspeth • Currently in 25 which is very different – taller, densely populated apartment buildings • Don't share common interests with rest of 25 • Noted public safety and criminal activity issues |
| Alfred Osbourn | Rosedale Civic Association (VP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosedale – cohesive community • Keep Rosedale intact • Quality of life issues |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closely work with NYPD and councilperson • JFK – keep JFK in district (jobs) • Flooding (especially in Rosedale) • Crime |
| Liz Nacinovich | Broadway Flushing Homeowners' Association (President) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep representation • Keep community whole • More than half of homes are covered by deed restriction • Had to go to court many times • Lines separate community • Look at this type of situation and be cognizant of community • Important to keep together |
| Darnell Stephen | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosedale • Single-family homes • keep district intact • flooding issues |
| Albert Liu | Korean Community Services (Bayside Queens) APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bayside and Auburndale – keep together • Referred to AALDEF maps • Korean and Chinese Communities of Interest • Similar businesses, restaurants, churches, grocery stores, etc. • APA population in district 19 grew by 53% • Keep APA Community of Interest whole |
| Felicia Singh | Jahajee Sisters (Advocacy and Campaign Manager) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park, Ozone Park • Indo-Caribbeans – large APA population • Consider AALDEF's maps • Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park – Community of Interest – keep together • Little Guyana, Little Punjab • Currently divided - 32, 29, and 28 |
| Linda Lam | Newtown Senior Center Chinese American Citizens Alliance The Communities of Maspeth & Elmhurst | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elmhurst • Lives on Seabury Street on south side of Queens Blvd. • Currently in district 25 • 1-3 family homes • Children go to same schools, shopping, picnicking at Juniper Valley Park – all on south side of Queen's Blvd. |

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| | Together, Inc. (COMET) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not like rest of 25 (North of Queens Blvd.) • Have to go to neighboring district 30 to get things done • Property assessment, sidewalk violations, illegal commercial parking, seniors' transportation, snow removal, health screening, recreational outings • Have to go to district 30 for these services • Section = Grand Ave.(west) – Queens Blvd. (north) – 59th Ave./Woodhaven Blvd. (East) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be included with district 30 |
| Rene Hill | Queens Civic Congress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern re people wanting to make Queens more segregated • Supports Queens Civic Congress plan developed by Paul Graziano • Keeps communities intact • Can't move districts around to keep your race together |
| Henry Euler | Auburndale Improvement Association (President) Queens Civic Congress (umbrella organization made up of dozens of other civic orgs in Queens) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored study for redistricting by Paul Graziano • Plan distributed to Civic Congress organizations, and they approved • Keeps communities together as much as possible and adjusts districts to meet parameters • Respects all residents of Queens • Western Bayside • Overlap with many civic orgs and work together • Would like to stay together in 19 if possible • Cohesion with everyone working together in 19 • Look over Graziano study/maps |
| Michelle Keller | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked over Paul Graziano study • District 27 • Change in 27 over time • Take some of 23 and 24 and put in 27 • Want to know how that would impact • Community is changing • She will submit a more detailed testimony |
| John Park | MinKwon Center for Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AAPI 350% increase in voter participation |

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| | <p>Action (Executive Director)</p> <p>APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flushing Queens area is very unique • Language capital of the world • Heavily trafficked area • Very concentrated area • Built hate free zone with 500 businesses • Addressing anti-Asian hate / other hate and bigotry • Developers came to Flushing after 2008 • AAPI community is not immune to recessions • Hit hard by pandemic • Community of Interest but also has its own unique characteristics • Currently divided in 19 and 20 • District 20 – line should extend up to 24th Rd. – 20th Ave. • Adjust for population – shift southern part of Auburndale to 19 • Incorporate as much of APA neighborhood maps as possible |
| <p>Farzana Linda</p> | <p>Chhaya Community Development Corporation</p> <p>APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District 25 • Keep Elmhurst whole • Support AALDEF neighborhood maps • Elmhurst, Woodside, Jackson Heights • South Asian and Indo-Caribbean communities • Rent/mortgage burdens on these communities • At risk for foreclosure • Rising home prices • Keep APA Community of Interest in Elmhurst whole • Many commonalities • Also Jackson Heights • And Woodside • Keep these communities whole • But separate into two districts (Woodside - 26, Elmhurst/portion of Jackson Heights - 25) |
| <p>Paul Graziano</p> | <p>Urban planner</p> <p>Developed map proposal for</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He submitted revised version of his proposal • Remind public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 7/14 districts are under minimum population, only 2 are over the maximum |

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| | Queens Civic Congress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No way to satisfy some of the requests that are being made ○ Referenced Mr. Park’s testimony ● Noted need to focus on more of the criteria ● His proposed map has been vetted by dozens of organizations ● It’s the best way to do the least amount of damage while meeting criteria |
| Jackie Mariano | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elmhurst district 25 ● Filipino American ● Keep Elmhurst whole in one district ● Classist testimonies from other witnesses re homeowners vs renters ● Should keep together on north and south side of Queens Blvd. |
| Carina Nieves | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Richmond Hill ● 29 - Rego Park, Forest Hills, Kew Garden ● 20 blocks in her portion of Richmond Hill ● Deserve more representation ● 28, 32 – divided currently ● This has diluted their voices ● Should put both parts of Richmond Hill together in one district |
| Beth Debethem? | | <p>She read someone else’s testimony: Donald Clark Sr. Federative Blocks of Laurelton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 31st district – keep as is – supported by Queens Civic Congress ● Similar priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality of life priorities ● Environmental protection ● Equity ● Public safety ● Infrastructure ● Education ● Rockaway, Cambria Heights, Laurelton, Rosedale, Springhill Gardens ● Black/other communities of color – prevent dilution ● Don’t want to lose councilmember Brook-Powers |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her testimony was similar - keep 31 together • Don't dilute vote • Noted good representation from Brook-Powers |
| Sally Wong | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elmhurst district 25 • Small section should be in 30 with Maspeth • Similar to Maspeth • 2-3 fam homes • Similar interests • Fighting to preserve character of neighborhood • Not well represented currently in 25 |
| Aaron Fernando | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park should be kept whole • Indo-Caribbean and Punjabi communities • Specified streets • Currently divided into - 28, 29, 32 • Bulk is in 28 – should not cross Van Wyck • Van Wyck is clear geographic boundary • Hillside Corridor • Currently divided into - 23, 24, 27 • He submitted map • Keep immigrant/South Asian communities as well as neighborhoods together |
| Albert Baldeo | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond Hill • 32, 28 divides • Noted that he's testified before 3 commissions over last 3 decades and never able to get Richmond hill together • Little Guyana, Little Punjab, Little Bangladesh • Don't combine with Howard Beach • Van Wyck is clear boundary |
| Elizabeth ___? | APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodside • Noted increase in Asian community in Woodside over the years • Filipino community • Little Manila • Keep APA community whole in Woodside and Elmhurst |
| Richard David | District Leader for 31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond Hill |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Echo testimonies from Rosedale Civic Association • Keep in 31 • Also South Ozone Park/Richmond Hill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deeply divided – 28, 29, 32 • Not priority in any single one of these • None of these districts have office in that neighborhood • Not accessible • Liberty Ave. – no trashcans – busy shopping area • Can’t even get basic services • Create district that would largely include South Ozone Park and Richmond Hill • AALDEF map gets us close |
| Princess Diane DeLeon | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodside • Little Manila – Filipino community • Grew up in Woodside • Elmhurst was almost an extension of Woodside • APA community • Woodside, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights – keep whole in 2 separate districts • Keep APA neighborhoods whole |
| Marcial Reed? | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventh grader • Little Manila Filipino community in Woodside/Elmhurst • Keep whole as much as possible • Affected by pandemic |
| Shawn Chandler | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Rochdale Village together • Currently in 28 • Don’t divide |
| John Bahia | <p>Woodside on the Move</p> <p>Youth on the Move Queens Community Board 2</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodside • Several immigrant communities in Woodside • Little Manila Filipino community • Noted high poverty rates • Woodside/Elmhurst/Jackson Heights • Supports AALDEF Communities of Interest maps • Keep Asian Communities of Interest whole • So they can build collective voting power |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Woodside and Elmhurst separate but whole (25, 26) |
| Jean Hall | Rochdale Village Board of Directors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rochdale Village • Keep community whole in one district • Will make more formal report at later date |
| Angela Lee | Immigration Social Services APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elmhurst • Keep Elmhurst whole in one district • Crosses Queens Blvd. daily • Grown more diverse and resilient • Affordable housing, schools, etc. • Keep APA Elmhurst community in one district |
| Fay Hill | District leader for 31B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far Rockaway, Springfield Gardens, South Ozone Park • Concern re residents not knowing where to vote • Lack of services for Springfield Gardens • many seniors in area • Roads not painted • No public transportation for seniors • No senior center • No library • No supermarkets • Looking to improve quality of life • Formed organization - Volunteers for Springfield Park – improved quality of life in Springfield Gardens • Got funding |
| Reverend Colleen Thorps | Community Board 12 (chair) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeowner • Concern re communities wanting to come together and she doesn't want it to be at the cost of other communities • Rochdale Village • Quality of life • Don't want to go back to segregation • Everyone has to live together, work together • Taxes, utilities, sanitation • Need to work on things together, can't afford to separate |

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| Aracelia Cook | 149 th Street Civic Association (President) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Queens • Homeowner • Sewage backup • District became closer during that tragedy • Councilwoman Adams has helped to try to right the wrongs done by the city • Sanitation, dumping problems • Need to stay connected • She will submit written testimony • South Ozone Park, Southeast Queens, Rochdale Village - Keep together |
| Liz OuYang | APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce (Coordinator) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian Americans • 29% increase in APA in Queens alone • 16 APA communities of interest – 11 in Queens • Common interests • These Communities of Interest need to remain whole to the extent possible • Current maps do a pretty good job • 25, 23, 24 – these do keep APA Communities of Interest together • 26, 25, 32 – these are also pretty good • 2 areas that could be improved: Richmond Hill / South Ozone Park – currently in 3 districts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Queens Women’s March addressed this along with many others today • Need to keep Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park together as much as possible • Working in coalition with Latinos and Black people • Unity coalition • Flushing and Bayside Auburndale could be improved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referenced John Park from MinKwon’s testimony • Make APA Communities of Interest whole in Queens |
| Fitzroy Searles | Community Board 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together for common interest – quality of life issues |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern re people wanting to separate by race • Worried about segregating communities • Communities throughout the city working together is better |
| Arianne-Ron Maliwanag | <p>National Federation of Filipino American Associations</p> <p>APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodside, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights – keep whole in two separate districts • Covid impact • Little manila • Filipino population increased by 14.4% in NY • More than half are in Queens • More than half in Elmhurst and Woodside • Little Manila Ave. naming • Clear and consistent voting patterns • Voting for APA candidates • She will also submit written testimony with more detail |
| Donna Downes | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Queens • Concern re redistricting being a waste of time and money when there's so much more that needs to be done • Rochdale Village • Don't split it up |
| William Stanford Jr. X. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use bus corners? to draw districts • Noted last-minute change in location and communication issues with commission • Noted 4pm start time was not great for those still working |