

2022

8.21.22 - NYC Districting - Brooklyn Public Hearing

Piper Benedict



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The New York City Districting Commission 2022-23 Public Hearing
Sunday August 21, 2022 @ 3:30pm to 7pm
Medgar Evers College (CUNY),
School of Science Health & Technology, Dining Hall,
1638 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn 11225

Brooklyn		
Witness Name	Organization(s)	Testimony
District 46		
Council Member Mercedes Narcisse +members of the district	New York City Council – District 46	Keep Canarsie whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Unity Map but would make slight adjustment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add Kings Village Apartment Complex (East 51st and 52nd and Avenue I and J) to 46 and make Flatlands portion compact Noted \$1.5 million for Canarsie Library Include Rockaway Parkway
?		Keep Canarsie whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft is not compact or contiguous Nothing in common with East New York Overpopulated so shouldn't be a problem to lose below Flatbush Ave. and keep rest of community together
Velda Jeffrey	1199	Keep Canarsie whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 77th St. up to Foster/Farragut all the way up to 108 Asking commission to reconsider those lines
Floyd Jarvis	Canarsie Neighborhood Alliance Canarsie Community Garden	Keep Canarsie whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a contiguous Canarsie and Flatlands Draft would have Canarsie lose a total of 4000 residents Would remove the ethnic minority majority population from 53.9% to 48.8% Diluting one person, one vote In last election, first time they were able to elect own city council member due to 2013 lines
Audrina Burgess		Keep Canarsie whole

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Charmaine John		<p>Keep Canarsie whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referenced article about the new lines in Canarsie – improving East NY and train lines coming together at Broadway Junction • Canarsie not mentioned in development of Broadway Junction • Concern re transportation options in Canarsie • East NY, Brownsville, Bed Stuy would benefit, but Canarsie would not
Georgette Clark		<p>Keep Canarsie whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed map violates guidelines from charter • Noted Census issues – skewed numbers • Would disempower their community
Dr. Winslow? Nelson		<p>Keep Canarsie together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep community interest together • New lines would further deepen equity issues in Canarsie
Felina Backer	Making the Impossible Possible Inc.	<p>Keep Canarsie whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From E. 108th St. in the east to E. Ralph Ave.? to the west, Foster Ave. to the north, Shore Parkway to the south – keep in 46 • Canarsie has unique needs • Happy with current council member
Keyon?		<p>Keep Canarsie whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't separate Excel Upper (middle school) from Excel Lower (elementary)
Jacqueline Smart		<p>Keep Canarsie whole</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted history of Canarsie's different ethnic populations • Strong Black community • Voting bloc that stands together
Harold Jones	Canarsie Community Development Inc.	<p>Keep Canarsie whole</p> <p>Four ways draft map would affect Canarsie</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Block associations – taking away 30-40 blocks out of district – working hard to organize them • \$21 million plan to develop library, community center – taking away library from district • Superstorm Sandy – he wrote emergency plan for Canarsie – Holy Family and other

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		<p>churches taken out of district – plan is ruined</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small businesses – Rockaway Merchants Association – draft removes them from district
District 45		
<p>Council Member Farah Louis</p> <p>+members of the district</p>	<p>New York City Council – District 45</p>	<p>District 45</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposes draft for 45 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would push district further into West Midwood and Borough Park – would cause her to have to run against another council member • Disparities – large AAPI community lives in East Flatbush too – new homeowners who are pushed out of Coney Island Ave. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • don't cut out parts of East Flatbush • keep communities of interest together • noted schools that would be removed • Submitted a map for the district with members of the district • Keep district whole and expand it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further into Flatlands • Further into Marine Park • Further into Remsen Village
<p>James Cyprian</p>	<p>Pakistani Christian Association</p>	<p>District 45</p> <p>Keep District whole and expand the district further east into East Flatbush, Flatlands, and Canarsie</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft would remove large portion of Flatbush Flatland and East Flatland section of 45 • Unity of Caribbean and South Asian community in that area benefits from being in one district • Longstanding institutions would be removed from 45 – would negatively impact these groups by pulling resources away
<p>Gerard Brewster</p>	<p>Utica to Flatbush Initiatives (President)</p>	<p>District 45</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed map would cause district to lose schools, spiritual houses • Food desert, very little services for health

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have gained a bit of traction but the proposed map would break up groups that work together and pits them against other groups that strive to stand up for communities
Mark Appel	Bridge Multicultural & Advocacy Project	<p>District 45</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse district that works together • Supports map submitted by Council Member Farah Louis • Expand district into East Flatbush, Flatlands, and Canarsie area • Will lead to more senior centers, parks, healthcare institutions in district <p>Predominately Caribbean and South Asian community – needs help and draft would negatively impact these communities</p>
Council Member Justin Brannan	New York City Council – District 43	<p>District 43</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bay Ridge, Dyker Heights, parts of Bath Beach, and Bensonhurst • “in Brooklyn we like our pizza cut into slices, not our districts” • Draft map divides historic communities of interest especially in southern Brooklyn • Combining 38 and 43 = dividing districts • Pitting communities of interest against each other and wiping out hard fought gains – not the path forward • Growing Asian constituency • Could accomplish creating new Asian district without turning all of southern Brooklyn upside down <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t pit immigrant communities against each other • Shouldn’t lead to dissolution of Red Hook and Sunset Park in 38 while slicing up Dyker Heights as afterthought • With more precision, commission could create new Asian majority district without extinguishing the voting power of historically Latino communities – will submit map

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasized listening to the people over experts living in other states and computer programs • Should keep in mind other city boundaries – school districts, community boards, police precincts, and sanitation garages • Keep communities of interest together
Council Member Jennifer Gutiérrez	New York City Council – District 34	<p>District 34 – Brooklyn / Queens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft map dilutes power of Latino population in North Brooklyn and Western Queens • 34 = Latino plurality • Proposed map – decrease in Latino population and increase in white population • Concerned about increase in NYCHA populations that 34 would now represent without guarantee of increased resources • Consider the cultural histories • Draft would pit these communities against each other • Concern re Latino voters and Black voters in 34 • Doesn't make sense to include parts of south Williamsburg bc that population is not there • Makes sense for 34 to absorb more of Ridgewood instead – more Latino
Council Member Rita Joseph	New York City Council – District 40	<p>District 40</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't split up Kensington • Supports proposed map for 40 but with a few comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that western border at Kensington at E. 7th St. stays and protects vote of South Asian community that lives in Kensington
Faseer Kabeer?		<p>Unite Kensington in one district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladeshi and South Asian community • AALDEF has submitted community of interest map for this community • Currently divided and draft divides further
Syeda Parveen?	Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)	<p>Unite Kensington in one district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted AALDEF submitted community of interest map

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy surveillance after 9/11 in their community and deportations • Fought back against racist policies • Don't split community up
Kalid Akhter?	Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)	<p>Unite Kensington in one district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladeshi community • AALDEF submitted community of interest map for Kensington • District 39 – Council Member Hanif reaches out to community – language access
Monteil Islam?	Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)	<p>Unite Kensington in one district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AALDEF submitted community of interest map for Kensington • Bangladeshi community of interest
Ferse Akiba?	Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM)	<p>Unite Kensington in one district</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AALDEF submitted community of interest map for Kensington • Community has been there for many years • Elected council member for their community • Need to be in same district to fight for interests
Tanzin Azad	NYC Panel for Education Policies	<p>District 39</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain lines for 39 so that South Asian community of the district remains intact • During pandemic, Bangladeshi community lacked language access
Council Member Crystal Hudson	New York City Council – District 35	<p>District 35</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't change anything on proposed map for 35 • Represents Crown Heights, Prospect Heights, Fort Green, Clinton Hill, and a sliver of Bed-Stuy (sliver of Bed-Stuy will be moved into 36 on new draft) • Important to maintain and keep whole communities of interest and Bed-Stuy is one of those areas • Approves of this move • Prospect Heights remaining whole is also great • Keep neighborhoods united • Draft ensures what remains of Black population in 35 is retained

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Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes	Assembly District 51	<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep 38 intact • Represents Red Hook, Sunset Park, part of Bay Ridge • Sunset Park is being gentrified • Culturally diverse, vibrant, working class, predominantly immigrant community • Community is gerrymandered among five state senators • Noted skewed Census numbers • Supports Unity Map – creating opportunity Asian district while keeping 38 intact • Don't destroy one immigrant community to create another
Senator Simcha Felder	17 th Senate District	<p>District 44</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disagrees with proposed map • Doesn't want 44 moved to Canarsie • Submitted written testimony
Yiatin Chu	Asian Wave Alliance (President)	<p>District 43</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports new Asian majority district • Sunset Park's and Bensonhurst's predominately Chinese populations have surged by 42% over past 10 years • Community has been ignored and exploited • Chinese families have been ignored by representatives
Yi Fang Chen	Asian Wave Alliance (VP)	<p>District 43</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports new Asian majority district • Frustrating to get voices heard • Current Sunset Park council member against their interests re performing arts school • Concerns are ignored • New Asian district is exactly what Asian community needs
Vincent Lu?		<p>District 43</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports new Asian majority district • Keep communities of interest together • Elected officials don't share their values • Education opportunities, public safety – representatives ignore • New district will give community real chance at representation

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<p>Rabbi David Neederman</p> <p>And</p> <p>Zev Steinmetz</p>	<p>United Jewish Organizations</p>	<p>District 33</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep community unified in 33 • Submitted written testimony twice • Close to 95% of their community is in District 33 and rest is in 36 • Draft would change that drastically • Yiddish population traditionally in south Williamsburg but now expanded into Bed-Stuy and Clinton Hill • Previous districting commission created community of interest district in 33 • Shared religion and culture as Hasidic Jews • Have strong voice in 33 • Splitting district would dilute voice • Noted hate crime incidents – vulnerable community – need one district
<p>Debra Greif</p>	<p>Brooklyn Family Support Service Advisory Council (Chairperson)</p>	<p>District 47</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make maps easier to read for those with visual disabilities • Don't change 47 – have worked together for many years • Want Warbacks to Trump Houses? back in district • Current council member understands needs of those with disabilities • Agrees with Canarsie wanting to stay together
<p>Christopher Greif</p>		<p>District 47</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make maps truly ADA accessible and up to date on computer • Want to keep 47 the same • As a transit advocate - agrees with Canarsie due to L train • Don't change many districts – look at where problems are • Keep people with disabilities in mind
<p>Karen Blondel</p>		<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Hook • Concern re representation of NYCHA residents – blocked from information • Happy with draft returning them to district that includes Carroll Gardens and Gowanus

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would put Red Hook with other small neighborhoods with similar interests • Do not want to be with Sunset Park • Has 50 testimonies to submit from Red Hook community
Salvatore Franchino		<p>District 34</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern re Staten Island districts • Shouldn't empower voters who exclude residents • Lower population in Staten Island districts • Rest have overpacked districts • Outdated zoning code in Staten Island • Should expand districts into Manhattan and Brooklyn • Uphold one person, one vote • District 33 seems to be gerrymandered • Concern re council members getting to testify
Jim Tampakis	Marine Spears International – marine/industrial mechanical contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Hook • Noted work with Army Corps of Engineers during Hurricane Sandy • Red Hook and Sunset Park have similar interests on water and industrial manufacturing • Park Slope is not on water • Red Hook would not have any benefits in being with Park Slope
Elizabeth OuYang	APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Bensonhurst whole as much as possible • Currently divided into four districts • Adopt Unity Map – creates two strong APA plurality districts in Brooklyn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47 – 44.5% APA district entirely composed of Bensonhurst • 38 - 38% Asian and 36% Latino coalition district • Keeps Bensonhurst as whole as possible • And keeps longstanding minority district whole in 38 – shared interests - language access, immigration, healthcare, etc. • Requests release of other map that commission considered that didn't keep Staten Island's districts exclusively on Staten Island
Tonya Lewis Taylor	I Will Graduate Program	<p>District 36 – maintaining lines</p> <p>District 45 – opposed to redistricting 45</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools they help would be removed from district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meyer Levin; Brooklyn Science Engineering Academy; Samuel J. Tilden; It Takes a Village; Kurt Hahn; Cultural Academy for Arts and Sciences Provide critical services to these schools
Dr. Zulema Blair	<p>Medgar Evers College</p> <p>Center for Law and Social Justice</p> <p>Unity Map Coalition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Unity Map Supports draft map keeping communities of interest whole in the Bronx Supports draft map uniting northern Bronx including Wakefield Make sure institutions are protected as much as possible and economic engines District 35 and 36 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to make 35 a Black plurality district if some of Crown Heights is not taken District 41 - Make sure Ocean Hill is kept whole in 41 Make sure all the other districts 42, 45, and 46 are also kept whole Unity Map – District 28 – majority Black district <p>Hard to follow VRA when all of deviation is given to Staten Island</p>
John Chan?		<p>District 43</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports new district Small business owner in Brooklyn’s Chinatown Have collected thousands of signatures supporting new district 43 feel their issues are ignored by current representatives new district will allow their voices to be heard
Isaac Mandel	UTA Private School Academy Williamsburg	<p>District 33</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% of student body lives in 33 Draft map would remove about 1/4 of the community and 3 of the school buildings Need support of council member Adopt a plan that would keep south Brooklyn together

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unite community
Mindy Rothschild?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Williamsburg • Noted school established in community • His connection went out on zoom
Maria Barbara Lopez		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunset Park • Noted Census difficulties – not accurate count <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced issues during pandemic - Healthcare, food, services for seniors, and families and children • Many immigrants did not receive support during pandemic • Census workers didn't always speak Spanish • Be conscious of these issues • Continue working with communities
Jerry Chan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to redistrict community boards • Supports Unity Map
Samuel Sierra?		<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't divide Sunset Park • Keep neighborhoods and communities of interest intact • Opposed to proposed map for 38 • Sunset Park would see less representation, resources, and funding • Income rates would be skewed • Would negatively impact social determinants of health due to healthcare networks being separated • Charter – keep neighborhoods intact and avoid oddly shaped districts • Would take away voice of Hispanic community
James Neimeister	<p>Works in office of Council Member Alexa Aviles</p> <p>*Testifying in personal capacity</p>	<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft map would create two plurality or majority white districts in place of a majority people of color coalition district by splitting up Red Hook and Sunset Park • Should not separate Red Hook and Sunset Park • Will submit written testimony • Bay Ridge and Park Slope are very different from Red Hook and Sunset Park

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity Map option • Or create district that would include Sunset Park, Red Hook, Gowanus, and Carroll Gardens – would unite public housing and wouldn’t preclude creation of Asian majority district
Edward Cerna	<p>Works in office of Council Member Alexa Aviles</p> <p>*Testifying in personal capacity</p>	<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Sunset Park whole • Noted citizenship question and other issues with Census • Draft would break up Sunset Park and separate it from Red Hook • District was designed to be Hispanic opportunity district • Draft would dilute people of color • Would create majority white district • Supports border crossing from Staten Island to Brooklyn as shown in Unity Map
Bryan Gross	<p>Works in office of Council Member Alexa Aviles</p> <p>*Testifying in personal capacity</p>	<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposed to draft map for 38 • Don’t put district together with Bay Ridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very different neighborhood • Latino community has fought for decades for representation in that area • Latino community would be minority in 38
Tricia Bartholomew		<p>District 35</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Unity Map for 35
Steve Mei	CPC Brooklyn Community Services	<p>District 38</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Unity Map • Sunset Park • Keeps AAPI communities intact • Bensonhurst AAPI currently divided into 38, 44, 47, 43 • Keep Bensonhurst as whole as possible • Keep communities of interest intact
Dr. Burchell M. Marcus	<p>Community Director for Borough of Brooklyn</p> <p>Community Advocate</p>	<p>District 41?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave districts where they are right now • Redistricting will divide communities further • Elections have been a mess

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	Development Organization	
Daniel Heredia		<p>District 45</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haitian American Business Network • Concern re draft map changing level of services in district • East Flatbush should remain whole extending to Remsen Village, Remsen Avenue in Remsen Village to Avenue P in Flatlands • If removed, many on fringes of district will no longer have access to resources that his organizations provide • Expand district further east
Mania Que?	<p>Academy of Medical and Public Health Services</p> <p>APA Voice Redistricting Taskforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Unity Map • Creates two strong plurality Asian districts • Don't divide Bensonhurst (community of interest) – currently divided • Sunset Park – keep Asian and Latino communities together – more in common than Bay Ridge • Connecting Bay Ridge and Sunset Park would dilute voting power and resources
Rona Taylor	<p>East Flatbush Community Development Corporation (executive director)</p>	<p>East Flatbush</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black population in district has declined • Ensure that neighborhoods remain intact • Ensure communities of interest remain intact • Generally agree with proposed map • But would like to add back sections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7th St. from Church Ave. to Avenue H • 18th Ave. to the north; Avenue H to the south; E. 8th to the east; and Ocean Parkway to the west • Will submit testimony with map
Haris Khan	<p>Muslim Democratic Club of New York</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will submit testimony with proposed districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District in Queens – Muslims throughout Hillside Ave. – currently divided and proposed map continues that division • South Brooklyn – won't split Muslim community – consolidates Bay Ridge into one district, includes Bath Beach • Little Yemen community in the Bronx

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Queens		
Witness Name	Organization(s)	Testimony
Linda Lam	Chinese American Citizens Alliance of Greater NY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District 25 – Elmhurst • District 30 – Maspeth • South side of Queens Blvd. • Area of about twenty streets - should be with Maspeth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West – Kneeland Street • North – Queens Boulevard • East - Woodhaven • South - Long Island Train Track • Currently in 25 but should be in 30 • 1-2 family homes – similar to Maspeth • Mostly stay on south side of Queens Blvd. • North side is very different • Have to go to 30 council office to get services
Milly Wong	Elmhurst United	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South of Queens Blvd. (Elmhurst Triangle) • Should be remapped with Maspeth • Developers have changed character of Queens Blvd. and are now looking to move into Elmhurst Triangle • Owner occupied homes are being bought up by developers and converted into multiple family buildings – ugly eyesores • Different needs
Sally Wong		<p>Elmhurst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted written testimony • Move her area from 25 to 30 • Area: South side of Queens Blvd. from Kneeland Street to down to Woodhaven Blvd. • This area is very different from 25 - Economic, social, political ideology, zoning, residential configuration • Noted flooding issue in the area – lack of outreach or help given to that area • Middle Village and Maspeth more closely aligns with this area
Della Harley?	Unity Map Coalition	<p>District 27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to keep communities of interest whole and elect candidates of choice

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rockaway should be community of interest along the coast and JFK should be available for 27, 28, 31 as economic agent • Keep housing developments together – Rochdale Village
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Witness Name	Organization(s)	Testimony
William Stanford Jr.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go by highways or bus corridors • Trying to submit proposal using map drawing tool • Keep communities together • District 10 – should be bounded by 155th St. to the north; between 155th and 181st St river to river • District 7 - ? river to river or Amsterdam Ave. ? • District 6 – west of 5th ave. between 96th St. and 57th ?