

bellerose commonwealth civic association, inc.

actionnews



Volume 14 No. 7

Sept. 1988

**The BCCA hosts
Evelyn Durham of
the NYC Dept for the
Aging and SNAP
in a discussion
on City Services for
Older Persons
At House of Hope Church
Thursday September 8, 1988
at 8:00 PM**

We meet the first Thursday of each month at the House of Hope Church, corner 248th Street and 85th Avenue at 8:00PM

President's Gavel

Welcome back from a super hot summer. The biggest news is, as you know by now, that we won our traffic light on 86th Avenue in a major victory, but we are setting a heavy agenda for the rest of the year. The upcoming meeting will be extra important to our elder neighbors as well as to those of us who are concerned about our parents approaching retirement or beyond. We have asked the Queens Director of the Office of the Aging to join us along with a representative from SNAP to speak to us about the programs, activities and benefits provided by the City and other organizations for our loved ones who have already paid their debt to society many times

I urge everyone, young and young at heart, to come down for this important meeting.

R. C. Hellenbrecht

CIP Underpass Removal

The BCCA, St. Gregory's and many others in the area have been complaining for years about the old railroad underpass at the Cross Island Parkway. Senator Padavan had written numerous letters to the state Department of Transportation (DOT) about this problem and this summer, DOT presented its plans for finally removing the underpass. It seems that the structure is

really a bridge and has suffered some structural deterioration over the years. DOT is planning a complete upgrading of the entire length of the CIP and has chosen to start with this area because of the complaints and structural problems. According to these Preliminary plans construction will begin around Spring of 1990 and take around two years to complete.

The upgrading will improve travel in several ways.

Most importantly, it will add a fourth lane on the southbound side between the Hillside Avenue entrance and the Braddock Avenue/Jerico Tpk exit and northbound between the Jerico Tpk entrance and the Hillside Avenue exit. This new lane will provide an acceleration/deceleration lane for added safety. Other improvements include reducing the slope of the highway (since they no

CIP continued on page 2

CIP continued from page 1

longer have to clear the railroad) and improvements to the right-of-way on both sides of the CIP. Finally, additional level space will be provided between the service roads and the embankments.

The construction will proceed in phases first building a temporary 3 lane road on the west embankment and shifting southbound traffic to the new road and northbounders to the old S/B roadway. The N/B road and portion of the bridge will be removed, regraded and the road rebuilt. In the next phase N/B traffic will be returned to normal and the old S/B lanes and bridge portion will be removed and restored and finally, S/B traffic will be returned and the temporary road removed.

DOT's plans provide for no detour of traffic to local streets throughout construction. Representatives from St. Gregory's were careful to insist that the pedestrian underpass is maintained at all times and that all new concrete surfaces are constructed of graffiti-proofed materials requiring minimal maintenance. We also emphasized the need to meet noise restrictions, particularly due to to proximity of the church and school.

We expect that some extra traffic will be attracted to Bellerose streets and some damage will result from heavy equipment, but we asked for

repairs to be provided in the contract. This construction will be beneficial to all of us and I look forward to its completion. The BCCA will continue to monitor the design and keep you informed of the schedule as it unfolds.

Rich Hellenbrecht

Traffic Light Success

The BCCA fought very hard for a traffic light on 86th Avenue near PS133. As you will recall there have been serious accidents including fatalities. In frustration we scheduled a demonstration in early June to force the City to approve the light. As hundreds of us formed and began to march on June 8 there were rumors about the City's approval. They were confirmed by representatives of Sen. Padavan and Assemblyman Prescott and formally announced by Councilman Sheldon Leffler at the demonstration.

This is a major success for the BCCA and the area since it is extremely rare that a traffic light is installed under such circumstances. We will receive a device which is being tested under a pilot program and only three other such lights are installed in the city, the first of which was on Langdale Avenue in the Floral Park section. The light is described as "burning red": its normal

condition is red in all directions. It senses stopped vehicles and briefly changes to green. Unfortunately the City is backed up by over a year for new traffic light installations so it will probably be the beginning of the 1989 school year before we have the light installed.

I would like to thank all of you who wrote to Commissioner Sandler and signed or circulated petitions, and especially our City and State representatives named above for their support and assistance in getting this light. We will not give up on pushing for installation of the light sooner rather than later, but in the meantime, please drive below the speed limit on 86th Ave. and caution your children to be careful on this busy street.

Triangle Property

Hopefully there will be more on this later, but since New York City has asked what to do with the triangle property at Commonwealth Blvd and 85th Ave, it has been suggested that it be donated or sold to a neighborhood community group rather than to a developer. We hope that the vacant land can be improved as a garden and may be used as an opportunity for our area senior citizens to teach youngsters about gardening and vegetable growing while removing a serious eyesore (and nosesore)

from the neighborhood. You will be hearing more about this if we hear favorably about the request and what group is selected to manage the plot. We hope there will be a lot of community input, especially from the immediate neighbors, so that appropriate and beneficial use can be established for the triangle.

Other Key Bellerose Issues

Stay tuned to ActionNews over the next few months for some major issues in our community which you can impact. Most important will be the rezoning plan for the Bellerose area. This new plan will down zone the area directly to our south from R4 to R3-2, which reduces the possible density of the Queens

Colony area and will avoid the possibility of major development once older houses are removed or destroyed for any reason. Before this proposal can be accepted public hearings must be held in the areas affected. We expect these hearings to be held in late September or October and we hope you will all come out to get the facts and support the initiative so it can go to the Board of Estimate for adoption.

In addition, the long-in-planning contract HW463, for the reconstruction of Commonwealth Blvd, part of 248th Street and certain other area streets is due for public meetings on the final design. About a year ago we held preliminary design meetings which resulted in many important comments from a large Bellerose turnout. Watch the ActionNews for

more information on the next hearing. The City bureaucracy only reacts to demonstrated concern from local neighborhoods and they will pay little attention to projects which don't arouse surrounding citizens.

Finally, we've learned from Councilman Leffler that our request for reconstruction of Bellerose internal streets has been rejected. However, the City has approved a complete repaving of these roads during FY1989-1990 and we should see signs of action in the next few months. Paving is preferable to reconstruction since it will not require new sidewalks and driveways which are charged back to the homeowners, yet we will have new streets which should last many years.

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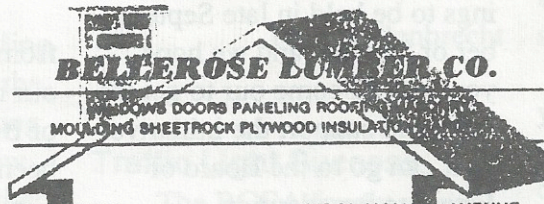
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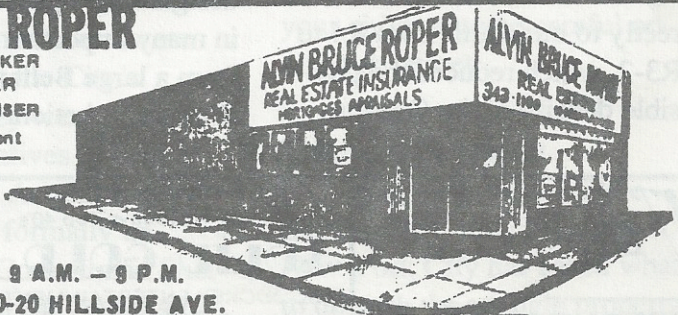
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