



# MONTHLY BULLETIN

## The Jamaica Estates Association

### JEA HOSTS LEADERSHIP TOWN HALL MEETING

On February 27, the Jamaica Estates Association hosted its second annual leadership town hall meeting at the Hillcrest Jewish Center. Participating in the forum were Senator Tony Avella, Assemblyman David Weprin, Councilmember Rory Lancman, State Senator Leroy Comrie, Community Board 8 Chair Martha Taylor, and President and CEO of the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC) Hope Knight. In the audience were Solomon Davydov and Wendy Marsh, from the Union Turnpike Merchants Association (UTMA); Joe Sciamé, St. John's Vice-President of Community Relations; and Miriam Haas and Emily Grayson from Down to Earth farmers' market. The purpose of this event was to bring to legislators concerns and improvements specific to Jamaica Estates, as well as to update residents on progress made on programs that started as a result of last year's meeting.

The evening began with an informative presentation by Down to Earth's Miriam Hoss and Emily Grayson, who shared that as a result of last year's interest, there are plans in place to have a farmers' market on Sundays in Cunningham Park, tentatively set to be open from May 28 until just before Thanksgiving. Vendors will be selling products such as fish, meat, dairy, produce, and beverages.

JEA Chair Martha Taylor spoke about changes coming to the stores along Union Turnpike from 188<sup>th</sup> Street to Utopia Parkway. Solomon Davydov spoke about the progress made to the UTMA since last year's meeting. They are moving in the direction of submitting a Business Improvement District, a process with which they have had help from Councilmember Lancman and Assemblyman Weprin.



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(l-r) Down to Earth's Miriam Haas, SJU VP of Community Relations Joe Sciamé, Down to Earth's Emily Grayson, Senator Tony Avella, Assemblyman David Weprin, JEA President Dr. Ed Toriello, Councilmember Rory Lancman, Community Board 8 Chair Martha Taylor, GJDC President Hope Knight, State Senator Leroy Comrie



The leadership town hall was attended by a crowd of over 125 people.

Photos by Susan Zigman and Ed Morrill

### NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

## MUSLIM INTERNATIONAL NIGHT PROGRAM

Monday, April 24, 7:45 PM  
(details to follow!)

## TOWN HALL MEETING con't

Joe Sciamè of St. John's next addressed issues related to problems with SJU students. He encouraged anyone with questions or complaints to reach out to the proper authorities. For problems related to off-campus student housing, call 311, call the 107<sup>th</sup> precinct, and then call SJU Public Safety at 718-990-5252. Residents can also reach out to Mr. Sciamè at 718-990-1941. St. John's will be making their annual contribution to the JEA's Security Patrol.

Senator Avella then spoke about working on a bill related to property tax caps. Governor Cuomo put forth a property tax cap of 2% for all of New York State excluding New York City. Senator Avella introduced a bill to get the cap to include NYC.

Assemblyman Weprin spoke about fighting property tax increases as well. He reminded the crowd that property tax increases can be contested, and this can be done without a lawyer. Assemblyman Weprin also discussed his work to fight sewer and water taxes being a percentage of property taxes.

Several questions were asked about changes to road signage. Councilmember Lancman recommended speaking to Community Board 8 for assistance with any Department of Transportation matters, since they have an active transportation board. If there are places where a stop sign, a turn lane, or something similar would be useful, he suggested gathering the information in a clear, concise message, and bringing it to both Community Board 8 and his office.

Hope Knight of the GJDC gave a report on the incredible revitalization of downtown Jamaica Estates, with hotels being built and major retailers expressing interest in moving into the area.

Gathering this many legislators in one place to discuss one community's issues is no mean feat, and we are enormously grateful for the time and effort expended by everyone who made this very successful event possible.

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	Kirsten Gillibrand, 212-688-6262
U.S. Congress.....	Grace Meng, 718-358-6364
	Gregory Meeks, 718-725-6000
State Senate.....	Tony Avella, 718-357-3094
	Leroy Comrie, 718-454-0162
State Assembly.....	David Weprin, 718-454-3027
City Council.....	Rory Lancman, 718-217-4969
Community Board #8.....	Marie Adam-Ovide, 718-264-7895