

*Jamaica Center
Business Improvement District*

**Annual Report
2006 – 2007**

**90-50 Parsons Blvd
Jamaica Center, NY 11432**

SECTION I

REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2007 ACTIVITIES



The Jamaica Center Business Improvement District is now in its third decade of providing supplemental services to this ever changing downtown. As administrators for the BID, the Jamaica Center Improvement Association, Inc. was created in 1979 by the State of New York as a special assessment district. We are a not-for-profit entity funded by special assessments paid by the property owners. Our district encompasses Jamaica Avenue from Sutphin Blvd to 169th St, and Union Hall St. from Jamaica Avenue to Archer Avenues. This is 20 city blocks along Jamaica Avenue and one block from Jamaica to Archer Avenues along Union Hall St.

Jamaica Center continues to thrive as a regional transportation hub. Linked by a multitude of bus lines, two bus terminals; several subway lines; as well as the LIRR transfer hub Jamaica Station; augmented by the AirTrain connecting to JFK airport sustained by ridership at 7 million/year, and 212 employees/day; connecting and major highways; Jamaica Center is easily accessible to all.

The Business Improvement District provides supplemental services to the district: sanitation, litter and graffiti removal, maintenance of sidewalk brick pavers; pruning and watering of trees; promotion and marketing through a variety of initiatives; and acts as an advocate on behalf of this urban downtown in the heart of Queens. The quality-of-life continues to improve with crime rate reduced thanks to the NYPD; capital projects for the 11-acre King Park, the only green space in the district; increase in new market-rate residential construction; and initiatives to create a Jamaica Center Cultural District.

SANITATION



The Jamaica Center contracts its sanitation services to Academic Stone, Inc. The crew works 7 days per week starting at 7am, in order to have the sidewalks litter free, as well as have 18" into the curb free of litter, prior to the opening of our more than 300 stores. Approximately 17,000 work hours are logged over the year. The work day ends on a staggered basis and is extended for daylight savings times. There are 30 BID-owned sanitation receptacles; 50 city-owned receptacles and 9 solar-powered trash compactors; all serviced throughout the day. The receptacles are lined with beige bags to differentiate ours from the merchants or illegal dumping. The compactors were obtained through the Queens Borough President's office and Clean Communities in conjunction with the manufacturer, Seahorse Power Corporation. The bagged litter is then hauled by the contractor to a NYC Sanitation site each morning. This prevents hundreds of bags of litter from staying on the street, creating an unsightly cityscape and dispenses with the probability of garbage being strewn throughout the area by bags being opened by vagrants.

MAINTENANCE

One of our primary goals in maintaining the appearance of Jamaica Center is keeping the area free of graffiti vandals. Daily reports are given to our offices from the cleaning crew on sighting of graffiti, which is removed as soon as possible. We also rely upon our merchants and residents to report incidents of graffiti on our stores. Over the years, we have had very few tags in the area, we believe due to our ongoing diligence in quickly removing the markings. In fiscal year '07, there were no incidences of graffiti removal.

The sanitation crew continuously removes posters, stickers, signs, etc from the more than 100 streetlights, parking meters, kiosks, mailboxes and fireboxes throughout the district. During the spring, the mailboxes in conjunction with the USPS Adopt-A-Mailbox program are painted with a fresh coat of blue. In addition, the fireboxes are painted.

As part of our contract with the City of New York, we are required to maintain the integrity of the sidewalk brick pavers, which extends virtually the entire one-mile strip of the commercial corridor. Due to the age of the pavers, more than 2-decades old, combined with the enormous amount of vehicular, bus and commercial traffic, the high water level and the problems with drainage, we are always aware of preventing possible injury from trip and fall hazards.

Last year, more than 50 sites required repair, either in realignment, or replacement of just a few bricks to several hundred in a particular area. Our store owners call us if there is a potential hazard and our cleaning crew is ordered to observe any possible issues and report them to us. Besides maintaining the safety of our citizens, we strive to enhance the overall appearance of the brick pavers by power washing them and perform the labor-intensive task of removing gum

from the bricks. The sidewalks look incredible after this is done and remains clean looking and almost like new for several months.

As part of our ongoing maintenance program, graffiti is removed from store gates. We have virtually no tagging in the district due to our program, which has graffiti removed as soon as possible. This is a deterrent to repeated offenders.

The trees in the district are maintained on an ongoing basis, including pruning and watering. This year 60 tree pits were totally redone with removal of old stones and rocks, realignment and bordered with Belgian blocks. There is now a wonderful continuity of style and better soil conditions to spur the health of the beautiful Bradford pear trees.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION



The Jamaica BID continues to aggressively promote and market Jamaica Center as a destination for shopping, cultural activities and educational opportunities through a variety of venues.

RADIO ADVERTISING

Over the last few years, a key component to our marketing campaign has been comprehensive outreach to our targeted audiences through various radio stations. We heavily advertise for 'Back to School'; the Christmas holiday; and Mother's Day with WRKS, WBLB, WLIV, WPWR and this year, we added Spanish and bi-lingual stations. Promotional giveaways are done by the BID, as well as van and special guest appearances by the stations to drive traffic to the Avenue. Each of these stations has its particular demographics, which enable us to reach our goals of expanding beyond our local shoppers. In addition, we were also linked to our website through the stations.

JAMS....Jamaica Center Arts and Music Summer Festival

In August 2006, JAMS celebrated its 10th year with more than 100,000 people attending the festivities. The 2-day even started on Friday evening with 'JAMS Under the Stars' concert in King Park, our only green space in the downtown, with hundreds of people coming to hear, see and enjoy Silvana Magda, Katende Band & Viva Brazil Dances and Harold Melvin's *Blue Notes*. On Saturday, Jamaica Avenue from Parsons Blvd to 169th St. was closed to vehicular traffic from 7am to 7pm. With priority given to our merchants to rent space in front of their stores; more than 350 vendors come to 'The Avenue'; Urban Folks with artisan crafts; an antique car show; free children's rides and activities; health and wellness block; and a main stage with

music and entertainment from noon until 7pm Memory Lane with photographs of Old Jamaica; and food galore, it is a wonderful, family-fun day. We know that this is an event that reaches beyond Jamaica Center and is certainly a magnet for those looking for a wonderful time during the hot days of summer.

SIDEWALK SALES

Throughout the year, we schedule sidewalk sales to allow our merchants to display merchandise outside their stores. Since Jamaica Avenue is a 'zero visibility' street, this is not normally permitted. These sales days are held from Thursdays – Sundays, and give the stores the opportunity to encourage shoppers to come into their stores and generate additional sales. .



SANTA LAND AND MORE.....

Over the past few years, using the Jamaica Avenue lobby of the National Amusements Jamaica Multiplex theatres, we have been able to bring Santa to our children. We created a lovely Christmas setting for families to have their pictures taken for the holidays. In addition to giving people the chance to have pictures taken with loved ones, the fact that Santa is of color brings a very special joy to many. We also had radio promotional activities the Saturdays prior to Christmas to heighten the excitement of the holiday.

OUTREACH INITIATIVES

Our first web site, www.Jamaicacenter.org was launched this year. The information is invaluable, including an online shopping guide with a coordinating map, a page dedicated to our promotional activities, including our famous walking tours; and links to other business and cultural entities. The shopping guide is the online version of our printed shopping guide, which is in its 4th edition. We receive requests throughout the year for our guides, including tour operators and out-of-town shoppers.

Each Saturday, for more than a decade, buses filled with shoppers come to Jamaica Center for their apparel, household, beauty supplies and more. Buses come from as far away as Michigan and South Carolina, with the holiday season the busiest. We estimate that more than 12,000 people visit us each year. As part of this initiative we created an 'Ambassador's Program' where we have official greeters welcoming the shoppers to our community. Shopping guides and our uniquely designed, large shopping bags are given out. Each year, we distribute more than 50,000 bag and 20,000 shopping guides. The greeters help acclimate those who come by giving directions, suggestions and just user-friendly advice.

During the times of the year, when the weather prevents a number of buses from coming, we continue our outreach program by handing out our Jamaica Center shopping bags to our local residents and shoppers. Our greeters assist shoppers, thank them for shopping in Jamaica

Center and are generally helpful. Many compliments are received for what is considered 'that old-fashioned touch' of pleasing the customers. Along with our shopping bags, we present our shoppers with flower seeds....this year Wildflowers, with a note imprinted on the back thanking them for shopping in Jamaica Center. Last year, we gave away over 10,000 packets....people loved them and appreciated the thought!!

Walking Tours — 2007

"The Inside Scene"

In conjunction with King Manor Museum, Roy Fox, caretaker & raconteur takes you behind the scenes of King Man. A look into places unseen by most and now available for your special viewing. An adventure for all!

"A Taste of Jamaica....Jamaica Queens, that is!"

Myra Alperson, founder of NoshWalks and author of Nosh New York, leads a slow, meandering walk through the streets of the downtown with stops at many of the eating establishments that lovingly serve 'home cooking'. However, 'home cooking' doesn't mean the American home, but home to the many cultures that live and work here – Jamaican, Thai, Chinese, Salvadorian, Mexican, Pakistani, and a combination of many. A wonderful introduction to 'cultural tourism'.

"The Churches of Jamaica"

Conducted by Roy Fox, this tour focuses on the landmarked churches, with two congregations dating back over 300 years. Beautiful Grace Episcopal Church with its WPA murals, "The Landmark" (the former First Reformed Church), The Tabernacle of Prayer (the former Loew's Valencia atmospheric movie theat) and The First Presbyterian Church, magnificent in its austere simplicity - vivid and diversified places for prayer.

"Heads Up"

Jeff Gottlieb, in conjunction with the Central Queens Historical Society and the Queens Borough Public Library, brings you a new perspective on Jamaica Center. A wonderful mix of architectural styles from one of the finest examples of Beaux Arts, neo-Italian Renaissance, Art Deco, Pre-Columbian and Art Nouveau, English Gothic, Colonial/Federal, Romanesque Revival..

"Six Feet Under And Then Some"

Join Cate Ludlam (Prospect Cemetery Association) and Roy Fox for a few hours of dishing the dirt. A tour of the beautiful Grace Episcopal Church cemetery and Prospect Cemetery with the restored Chapel of The Sisters (York College campus) for an in depth history of Jamaica when and those whose names may ring a 'history bell'.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Through the Midori Foundation, we have supported special music programs at PS 182, which is located across from King Park. These programs encourage a broad range of learning experiences for children. This is a city-wide initiative that expands the horizons of school age children through Adventures in Music and hands on instruction of musical instruments. We have striven to ensure that we enhance the learning experience of our children through programs that do not always receive sufficient funding. We have been a contributor to the Foundation for a number of years. Due to the cultural diversity of our community, the Midori Foundation is always exploring new and exciting venues that are unique.

For more than 10 years, the BID has been a strong supporter of Jamaica Kids, a non-profit day care center located in the Joseph P. Addabbo Social Security Building. Since its inception we have been involved in its creation and have steadfastly worked with SSA and GSA to make this one of the finest children's center in the area. Fifty percent of the children are mandated to come from federal agencies and the remainder from the community. We have always been represented on the Board of Directors and each year contributes towards activities that enrich the learning experiences of the children.

One of most noted historical jewels in the district is King Manor Museum, situated in the middle of the 11-acre King Park. The Museum offers a variety of educational and cultural programs for people of all ages. Over the years, we have donated to their children's archeological camp; Arbor Day; and special activities geared to youth. We are most grateful that we have the resources for supporting these three organizations that enhance the quality-of-life of our youngsters.

We continue to support the efforts of the 103rd Community Council, including National Night Out and the Children's Holiday Party. Without the considerable work done by the NYPD, 103rd precinct and the Council, the community would not be able to partake of such activities that bring us all closer together. This year we gave our annual Thanksgiving donations to Grace Episcopal Church, First Presbyterian Church of Jamaica, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and The Salvation Army....each one operates a soup kitchen and has a special holiday dinner.

SECTION II

LOOKING AHEAD: FISCAL YEAR 2008 GOALS

With the rezoning of Jamaica Center, we anticipate, and already see, dramatic changes occurring. Located on Parsons Blvd, just one block north of Jamaica Avenue, The old Family Court is being redeveloped into residential housing, retail, parking and space for a non-profit entity. Going north another block, several limestone townhouses were demolished for the construction of a 36-unit condominium, which is nearing completion. Anticipated asking price is over \$400,000 for a one-bedroom apartment.

There are an increasing number of developers purchasing properties in order to come on board with the new zoning; which will allow larger buildings to be erected and more residential units to be constructed. There are certainly concerns that the infrastructure, schools, and needed services will be able to sustain this new growth. Jamaica Center currently has more than 300 stores in the district, varying from small mom and pop, to regional chains to national AAA anchors. Each brings something to the Avenue, but with increasing rents, there will probably be more vacancies as landlords wait for the 'right tenant' that can keep up with the demand. Over the past year, Marshalls, Nine West, Bank of America, Citibank Financial, several furniture stores, and another Dunkin' Donuts, among others have found Jamaica as the place for expanding their horizons.

This spring, The Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning will be celebrating the opening of 'The Landmark', a venue for performing arts, a visitor's bureau, with workshop and conference space. This will bring additional night time activity to the Center. With the increase in the number of residents and expansion of cultural activities, Jamaica Center is still challenged by the lack of a table-cloth restaurant. We are inundated with fast food establishments, but have yet to entice appropriate dining facilities. We do have several fine Spanish restaurants that cater to particular patrons, but not an urban all around place for eating.

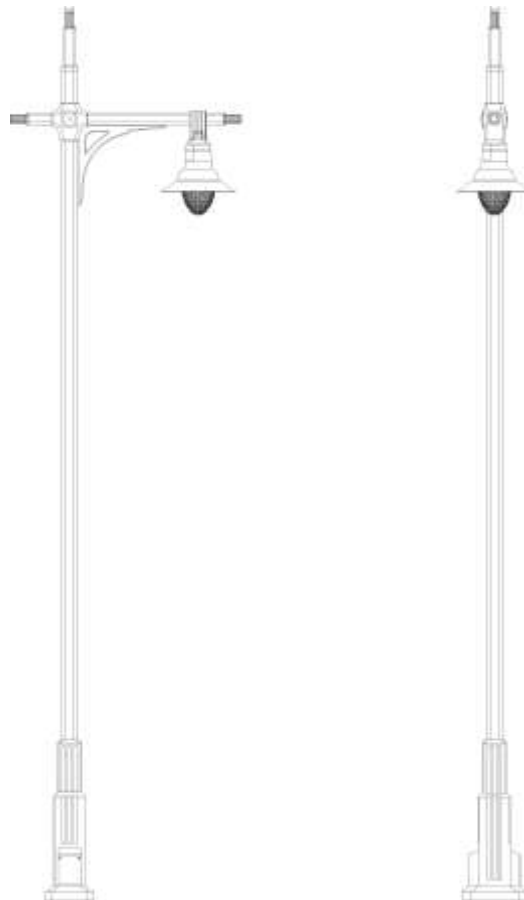
Our major challenge is acquiring replacement of the decades old Metromodule street lights and signals. They were poorly designed by urban traffic and wear and tear, i.e rusting, exposed wires, falling panels and a variety of issues that require their removal. The BID has raised some public monies towards TBTA light poles with Knickerbocker luminaries. These are strong, elegant and architecturally blend into Jamaica Center's cityscape. The new lights would add a much needed sense of security to the district; encourage more night time activities at the various cultural organizations; bring residents from near and not so far to dine and motivate merchants to stay open past 7pm, creating additional economic growth and stability through employment.

FY 2008 GOALS

The Jamaica Center BID faces a number of challenges in the near future and long range. Several are ongoing and we will continue to forge forward in making them come to fruition. Among our five major goals for the remainder of the year are:

- Continue to spearhead our initiatives to obtain sufficient funding to replace the Metromodule street lights and signals with TBTA street lights complemented by Knickerbocker luminaries and signals. Destination signage and wayfinders to facilitate vehicular and pedestrian mobility are also mandatory.

Working with NYC EDC, DOT, GJDC and our elected officials, we know that funding should be obtained by the end of this fiscal year. We have already had commitments from Assemblyman Scarborough and Borough President Marshall for approximately \$550,000 towards the needed funds. For the economic growth of this downtown, it is imperative to expand the 'business day' and this cannot be achieved without new lights, which will provide additional illumination and security.



- Last year was the 10th anniversary of the Jamaica Arts & Music Summer Festival. It had always been a community effort involving many organizations, but primarily produced by CCJ with JCAL and the BID as lead entities. This wonderful street festival has been a 2-day event, bringing over 100,000 people to the downtown. Our merchants have always been given priority to the sites in front of their stores and this event has been an outstanding venue for promoting Jamaica Center as a safe community and a destination for shopping.

Due to problems with the personnel structure of the JAMS festival planning committee, difficulties have erupted, which need to be rectified for the coming year. The BID will actively work with the Borough President's office to ensure this event continues. Within the next two months, we will ensure that appropriate actions are taken to make this happen.

- The creation of a cultural district "*Jamaica Funk*", for the greater Jamaica area is underway. Under the auspices of GJDC with a grant from Deutsche Bank, several organizations have been collaborating to make this happen...Jamaica Center, will be a hub of cultural activities and events, as well as a transportation hub. Working with JCAL, York College, King Manor Museum, 165th Mall Association, The Queens Borough Public Library and local artists and performers this collaborative effort will redefine Jamaica Center with its rich musical and artistic heritage. Our Jamaica Center *Heart & Sole Walking Tours* and the JAMS festival are a component of this initiative.

- Since we are responsible for maintaining the brick pavers our commercial liability insurance is over 5% of our operating budget, \$40,000. JCIA would like the City to explore ways in which it can assist in defraying the cost of this insurance. Since the City is not liable for sidewalk maintenance, we believe that we should be relieved of this insurance burden. The cost of maintaining the bricks is doable; it is the premiums that are a challenge to our limited budget.

- There are three high schools in this area...Hillcrest HS, Jamaica HS and Edison HS, comprising more than 10,000 students, many of whom come to Jamaica Center to access public transportation or to socially congregate after school. We are faced with ongoing negative behavior issues that impact on the stores and pedestrians. The NYPD has worked diligently to address these problems. However, the BID, will take on a more active role by working with DOE and the Borough President's office to find new approaches to help curtail some of the illegal and at times, dangerous activities that occur. We will be meeting with high school personnel to work cooperatively in ascertaining and implementing ways to meet this challenge.

SECTION III

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

The Jamaica Center BID is staffed by one full time executive director and one part time administrative assistant.

The director is responsible for overseeing all day to day operations; creating and working with board committees, organizing and initiating board meetings and annual meeting; writing annual reports; overseeing budget and expenditures for organization; liaising with government agencies; initiating marketing and promotional activities and media relations; spearheading community outreach initiatives; addressing issues of concern from merchants, shoppers, visitors and residents; and generally acting on behalf of the BID and as an advocate for Jamaica Center.

The administrative assistant maintains our accounting programs, answers telephones, updates computer data, organizes hard copy files and facilitates general office operations.

The volunteer Board of Directors is comprised of sixteen members, 3 of whom are representatives of city agencies. Normally the board meets every other month and only conducts business when there is a quorum present. There are three active committees: audit and finance, personnel, and marketing; and an ad-hoc committee on youth issues. Committees meet on an as needed basis and all issues are reviewed by the entire board. Our members consist of property owners, merchants, owner/merchant; and property managers, creating a cohesive and diversified board.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – FY '07

Property Owners

Claude Brodwell
President

Michael Hirschhorn
Vice President

Norman Fairweather
Treasurer

Michael Mattone
Secretary

Jerry Black
Parsco Realty

Rose Boord
Jamaica Paint

Daniel Kulka
KJL Realty

Neville Lalaram
Modell's

Aaron Schwartz
Franc-Men

Harlan Wolfson
Elbentino

Commercial Tenants

Veronica DeJesus
Conway

Edwin McCray
Nubian Heritage

Government Officials

Office of the Mayor
SBS Commissioner
Robert W. Walsh

Office of the Comptroller
Hon. William C. Thompson

Office of the Borough President
Hon. Helen M. Marshall