

# Community boards: 1st rung of city gov't

Perhaps a developer wants to put an office on the corner of a street zoned for residential use. Or suppose a group of parents wants to get a stop sign near their children's school. Maybe some residents want their street repaved.

Who can help?

Staten Island's three community boards often assist in these and dozens of other situations.

Take the example of the developer who wants to construct an office in a residential neighborhood.

His petition for a zoning variance is likely to come before the community board. If this happens, the board will hold a public hearing for residents to discuss their concerns. The builder will also have a chance to talk about his proposal.

Based on the information it obtains, the community board will make a recommendation to the city Board of Standards and Appeals on whether a zoning variance should be allowed. The Board of Standards and Appeals then makes its decision, which can be appealed by either the developer or the community board.

The Board of Estimate hears such appeals.

The community boards also make recommendations concerning many other matters, including the siting of group homes for retarded persons and capital projects in the city budget.

The boards have a maximum of 50 members who are appointed on Staten Island by Borough President Ralph Lamberti and the Island's City Council members. Members are not paid for their service.

The board's decisions carry much weight since city officials often consider the boards to reflect the sentiments of the communities they represent.

As the first rung of the ladder of city bureaucracy, community boards provide a forum for civic groups and block associations to discuss problems and priorities. Many civic association members are also members of the community boards.

The Island's three boards meet once a month. Each board has several committees which meet between monthly board meetings to discuss, among other matters, issues related to transportation, education, and health care. Chairpersons of the boards, who are elected by the members, serve on the Borough Board, another body which makes recommendations to city officials.

Each of the city's 59 community boards receives an annual allocation of funds.

The funds are used to hire a full-time district service manager who handles the administrative details of running the board's office, and other full and part-time office staffers.

The budget is also used to pay office rental, utility and other board expenses.

Susan Moore Mouner is the chairman of Community Board 1, which covers the portion of Staten Island north of the Staten Island Expressway. The area includes the communities of Arlington, Arrochar, Castleton Corners, Clifton, Concord, Fort Wadsworth, Graniteville, Grymes Hill, Livingston, Mariners Harbor, New Brighton, Port Richmond, Randall Manor, Rosebank, St. George, Silver

Lake, Stapleton, Sunnyside, Tompkinsville, West Brighton, Westerleigh and Willowbrook.

Rosemary Palladino is the board's district manager. The board's office is in Village Hall at Tappen Park, 111 Canal St., Stapleton. It is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and can be reached at 981-6900.

Community Board 2's chairman is Edmund J. Murphy. That board covers the central portion of the Island, with the Staten Island Expressway at its northern boundary and a line from Great Kills west to Fresh Kills at its southern boundary.

It includes the neighborhoods of Bay Terrace, Bloomfield, Bulls Head, Chelsea, Dongan Hills, Emerson Hill, Grant City, Grasmere, Midland Beach, New Dorp, New Springville, Oakwood, Ocean Breeze, Richmond, South Beach, Todt Hill, and Travis.

Lillian Prado is the board's district service manager. Offices for Community Board 2 are located on the second floor of the administration building of the Sea View Hospital and Home, 460 Brielle Ave., and can be reached by phone at 390-8235 and 390-8209.

Community Board 3, chaired by Maxine Spierer, covers the Island's South Shore and includes the neighborhoods of Annadale, Arden Heights, Charleston, Eltingville, Great Kills, Huguenot, Prince's Bay, Pleasant Plains, Richmond Valley, Rossville, Tottenville and Woodrow.

Dorothy Fitzpatrick is the district service manager for Board 3. The board's office is in the basement of the Traut Insurance Co., 277 Nelson Ave., Great Kills. Its telephone number is 356-7900.