



## Contact Info

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Chair: Maria DeInnocentiis

Vice President & Editor:  
Sherry Reisner

Exec. Secretary: Joan Volmar

Go to our website,  
[www.utopiaestatescivic.org](http://www.utopiaestatescivic.org),  
and click on **Contact Us** on the  
left side menu to sign up for  
future emails!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The hallmark of democracy is the right and privilege of every citizen to vote for a candidate who professes to protect and defend our constitution as well as follow and implement the right and well-being of his or her constituents!

However, as of late, all this has been debunked!

Yes, we had to deal with COVID. Yes, we are dealing with injustice and chaos! But, if we give in to chaos and instability we will all be losers.

As of late, without community notification and the right of input, 108 released inmates from Riker's Island were ensconced at the Wyndham Hotel for \$200 a night including three meals a day. They are looking for jobs...

This week two of our Councilmen vote to defund the police 1 billion dollars...while crime in the 107th Police Precinct increased 156%!

Where is the consideration for us, the taxpayers?

Call your Councilmen and demand protection for all and respect for our 107th Precinct police officers, who make our area a safe and welcome place to live.

Call: Councilman Rory Lancman at 718-217-4969

Call: Councilman Barry Grodenchik at 718-468-0317

*Tami Hirsch, President*

## VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Although it's been a long time since we've sent out a newsletter, your Civic has been hard at work for you. There's been a lot going on in the community of which we will bring you up to date.

**COVID-19** has impacted us all, and we hope that you and your family are doing well. There is free testing which will be touched upon later. We are currently in Phase 3 (soon to move into Phase 4) which includes outdoor dining, reopening of offices, in-store retail hair salons and barbershops, real estate services, houses of worship, as well as car sales and rentals—all with social distancing and hygiene guidelines. There have been many in our neighborhood walking around without a mask. You are not only risking your health, but those around you. It is not only unhealthy, but disrespectful. *Please* be considerate to your neighbors and wear a mask when out and about. In addition, remember to social distance—keeping at least 6 feet away from others.

New York City has begun installing **Bioswales** otherwise known as **Rain gardens** in our area. Rain gardens collect and absorb storm water before it has a chance to enter and overwhelm the sewer system, which is important in reducing the amount of combined sewer overflows that enters the local waterways. One block can be closed for parking from 1--2 weeks depending on the number of Rain gardens planned on each particular block. If you see markings on the sidewalk in front of your home, there's a good chance one will be installed there. If you receive a notice that a Rain garden is about to be installed in front of your home and you have an in ground sprinkler system, you must advise the New York City Department of Design and Construction (NYCDDC) that they cannot install it. This project is costing New York City \$22.8 million. One of the major reasons this has proven necessary is the fact that when property owners pave over their land, they prevent rain water from being absorbed, thereby forcing all of the excess water onto the streets, and therefore into the sewers. If property owners would follow the land use regulations, perhaps this need would not be as great. We could develop better ways to be spending this money when our city is running at such a deficit.

We have seen the peaceful **Black Lives Matter** protesters in our Civic. I attended a Round-Table meeting held by the 107th Police Precinct on June 25th. The discussion was led by Deputy Commander Scott Henry who was reaching out to community leaders looking for ways in which to find how the police could better connect to the community. He was happy to report how our precinct has a very good rapport with our community and how people of all colors from the neighborhood have been stopping by the precinct and thanking the officers for the good relationship they have. You can find a video of the meeting on the NYPD 107th Precinct Twitter or Facebook page. Although the crime rate had gone up, I'm happy to report that the recent CompStat reports showed crime levels have recently gone down as of this writing.

There is an issue with the **Wyndham Hotel**, located on 186th Street and Horace Harding Expressway. They have been housing around 100 former inmates, all of which were released from either a NYC jail (Riker's Island) or a NYS prison. They are being supervised by Exodus, which is a transitional program which assists recently released inmates in finding a job and permanent housing. Exodus has been contracted by the NYC Mayor's office. These inmates have been released early from jails and prisons due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Of the 170 former inmates, some may have to go back to prison or jail at the end of the program, and some are on parole (meaning their release is supervised by a NYS Parole Officer, and do not have to return to prison unless they violate the terms of their release). Our local Councilmen, Rory Lancman and Barry Grodenchik are looking into how the Mayor's office shoved this population into our residential neighborhood with no advance notice.

The **United States Census Bureau** is strongly encouraging the public to respond to the 2020 Census online using a desktop computer, laptop, smartphone, or tablet. People can also respond by calling the number provided in their invitation or by mail once they have received a paper form. Everyone should respond to the 2020 Census as soon as they receive their invitation — and when they're finished, they can make sure their friends, families and social networks know about the importance of responding. You don't need to be a citizen to complete the Census. Complete the form for all who reside in your residence. Make sure our Civic gets the Federal funds and representation it deserves!

You may respond online today by visiting [2020Census.gov](https://2020Census.gov) or calling toll-free 1-844-330-2020.

*Sherry Reisner, Vice President*

### Queens Public Library Job & Business Academy's Virtual Resume Assistance Service

The Job & Business Academy offers job search, technology, entrepreneurship/ small business workshops and resources to all Queens Public Library customers. While the physical library branches are closed in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Job and Business Academy has staff available by email Monday–Friday, on a first come, first served basis. Job and Business Academy staff can aid in developing and updating resumes, cover letters, and answering job-search questions. They offer a variety of engaging webinars each month to provide detailed information about building a resume, work-skills identification, successful steps to interviews, making a great first impression with professional attire, and much more.

For more information, please contact:

@ [jobsearchhelp@queenslibrary.org](mailto:jobsearchhelp@queenslibrary.org)  
brarv.org or  
visit [www.queenslibrary.org](http://www.queenslibrary.org).

### FREE CITIZENSHIP CLASSES!

Prepare for your citizenship interview. Study U.S. history and civics questions. Practice reading, writing, and interview skills.

Classes will be held ONLINE. Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:00-8:00 PM. July 20th—September 28th. To register or for more information:

Call 973-797-9407

Email:

[slara@riissettlement.org](mailto:slara@riissettlement.org)

Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement, 10-25 41st Ave., Long Island City, NY 11101

## WHO IS LIVING IN THE WYNDHAM HOTEL?

In early June, I began receiving calls and emails asking "who is residing in the Wyndham?" On June 14th, a member of our Civic Association gave me information that confirmed that the City had placed 108 former Riker's Island inmates into the hotel. I used this information to follow-up with our elected officials. I spoke with Assemblywoman Nily Rozic, Councilman Rory Lancman and Community Board 8. I notified them about the released Riker's Island prisoners residing in the Wyndham Hotel. None had been notified and promised to look into it. Rory, our City Councilman called me back and confirmed that there have been 108 early release prisoners living in the hotel for more than 2 months. Exodus Traditional Community, Inc. is the supervising agency in charge. Rory spoke with Councilman Barry Grodenchik (the hotel is in Barry's district) and they requested a walk through and a meeting at the hotel.

On June 24th a meeting was held with elected officials, CB8, Civic leaders, the Queens Civic Congress and members of the Exodus program and the Mayor's office. Our Councilmembers and State Senators were livid about not being notified and having to find out on their own about the situation. The Mayor's office stated that there are other hotels in Queens (probably 2) being used but refused to share their location. No walk through was offered and we did not see any recidivism prevention activity (social workers, classes for re-retraining, etc.) going on. The agency would not share information on the Riker's Island residents, but did state they would set up a community advisory group. Jennifer Kaake is the Program Director, Community Unity liaison. She shared her cell number, 862-203-8263 and her email address [jkaake@etcny.org](mailto:jkaake@etcny.org), with us. We are waiting to hear from her with information about setting up this group. We will keep you posted via email (share your info with us) and through our website. We are in contact with our NCO's (Neighborhood Coordination Officers) at the 107th Police Precinct. They are aware of the situation and have promised to monitor it for us.

**PLEASE NOTE:** A petition is being circulated opposing the use of the Wyndham for housing former inmates. You are encouraged to sign it and to share it with your neighbors. <https://www.change.org/p/say-no-to-using-the-wyndham-garden-hotel-fresh-meadows-to-house-100-former-inmates-and-sex-offenders>

Are you aware that crime is up in the 107th! The 107th Police Precinct crime stats for the 28 days (for the week of 6/22 -6/28/20) shows that burglary in the precinct was up 156% and grand larceny auto was up 325% in the 107th Precinct alone! You can view it anytime on the 107th Precinct website, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/bureaus/patrol/precincts/107th-precinct.page>, or you can go to the Civic webpage [www.utopiaestatescivic.org](http://www.utopiaestatescivic.org), to link to our important sites. Share this information with your neighbors. In the meantime, I encourage you to report to the police any illegal activities or incidents between residents and those living in the hotel. We ask that you also contact CB8 at 718-264-7895 so they can have these incidents on record in their office.

Thank you to those who have reached out to our Civic as well as those who reached out to other Civic leaders. Situations such as these focus us and shows us why participating in our Civic Association is important. In the future we will be sending out our newsletter electronically. To do that we need your updated contact information. Please share it with us by going to our website, [www.utopiaestatescivic.org](http://www.utopiaestatescivic.org), and clicking on *Contact Us* on the left side menu. If you are interested in getting involved in the Civic or organizations we participate in add that in the comment section.

In these times of upheaval we all need to work closer than ever to ensure our beautiful community remains a safe harbor and a beacon to those who wish to escape the rush and lack of social distancing in the City. I look forward to working with you and for you and on this situation and others as they occur. Our motto remains "We are our neighbor's keepers." Please pay this forward!

*Maria DeInnocentiis, Chairperson*

**2020 Membership Dues**

To be a member in good standing, mail in your \$15 dues. Fill out the information below:  
*(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer to help my civic by doing the following:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: *Civic Assn. of Utopia Estates,  
P.O. Box 107, Fresh Meadows, NY  
11366*

**THESE POLITICIANS ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU**

**City Councilman Rory Lancman**

78-40 164th Street  
Hillcrest, NY 11366  
718-217-4969 phone  
347-561-6116 fax  
[RLancman@council.nyc.gov](mailto:RLancman@council.nyc.gov)

**State Assemblywoman Nily Rozic**

159-16 Union Turnpike  
Flushing, NY 11366  
718-820-0241  
[RozicN@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:RozicN@assembly.state.ny.us)

**State Senator John Liu**

38-50 Bell Boulevard, Suite C  
Bayside, NY 11361  
718-765-6675  
[liu@nysenate.gov](mailto:liu@nysenate.gov)

**Congresswoman Grace Meng**

*Forest Hills Office*  
118-35 Queens Boulevard, 17th Floor  
Forest Hills, NY 11375  
Phone: 718-358-MENG (6364)  
Fax: 718-445-7868  
(By Appointment Only)

*Northeast Queens Office*

40-13 159th Street  
Suite A  
Flushing, NY 11358  
Phone: 718-358-MENG (6364)  
Fax: 718-445-7868

**UTOPIA ESTATES CIVIC NEWSLETTER**

Civic Association of Utopia Estates  
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