

# Public given chance to get some answers

Assemblyman Moya hosts quality-of-life town hall meeting for residents



PHOTO BY TESS MCRAE

**Assemblyman Francisco Moya goes through questions for the city agency representatives at a town hall meeting held on Tuesday in Jackson Heights.**

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by Tess McRae, Associate Editor

In order to increase communication between residents and the community, Assemblyman Francisco Moya and the Jackson Heights Green Alliance hosted a town hall on Tuesday, held at the Jackson Heights Jewish Center, featuring a panel comprised of representatives from an array of city agencies, state agencies and community

“This is a great opportunity for us to get together and for the community to really voice some of the concerns that they have and to interact with the groups that have a real impact on the neighborhood,” Moya (D-Jackson Heights) said at the beginning of the hearing.

So as not to cause a commotion or arguments between residents and representatives, Moya had attendees write their questions on index cards for him to read aloud.

The process made for a smooth and generally peaceful and successful forum compared to many town hall meetings.

Many concerns were quality-of-life issues though there were questions on the proposed Jackson Heights-Corona Business Improvement District.

“How will you include residents and business owners, not just property owners, in the BID?” one of the cards read.

Seth Taylor, the executive director for the 82nd Street Partnership, which is overseeing the BID, said that while the group plans on incorporating resident input, it is still working out some kinks.

“A few ideas had been thrown around,” he said. “For example, we would have smaller groups within the BID that would include residents and then have a representative from each of those groups on our board of directors.”

Other issues, including problems with trash, noise and traffic were not answered as easily.

“We cannot write summonses for things that we do not see,” Deputy Inspector Ronald Leyson, commanding officer of the 110th Precinct, said. “My suggestion would be to call 311 or if it’s an emergency, call 911 and we’ll send officers over there. If you don’t report issues, we don’t know about it.”

That answer did not fly with everyone in attendance.

“I’ve called before and there are times when you do not respond,” a woman yelled from the crowd. “Or if an officer does come, they simply say ‘hello’ and ask the people to move.”

“I highly doubt if you called in a complaint and an officer observed a group participating in something illegal that they’d just say ‘Hey, how you doing?’” the officer responded. “It’s not the best but this is how it works. If we don’t observe something, we can’t write a summons for it. It’s not going to happen.”

While every issue would not be fixed overnight, the Department of Sanitation, Department of Transportation and the NYPD captains who were present took note of specific locations of problem areas and promised to look into the matters further.

“Also, it’s important to remember that my office is always available,” Moya said. “We can help you get in contact with the proper agency. My staff is more than happy to assist you and make the district a better place.”