

HOLLIS HILLS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

"Protecting and Preserving our Community for the Betterment of our Residents"

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Hello everyone, my name is Dev B. Viswanath, and I have the privilege and honor of serving our community as the new president of the Hollis Hills Civic Association. After many years of being the very backbone of our community, Zion Halili, one of the founding members of the resurrected association, stepped down as president and transitioned to the new role of Special Advisor to the Board. For his commitment to continuing to help and support our Board, we are forever grateful!

In this introduction letter I would like to give you all a little background about myself, introduce our new officers and the rest of our Board, talk about some issues, & discuss a few of the projects and events that we have scheduled for this year.

My family is originally from Bangalore, South India and came to the United States in 1961. My parents moved to the nearby neighborhood of Holliswood where I was raised and where I spent all of my formative years. I attended, P.S. 178, Ryan Junior High School, and then Bronx High School of Science. I went off to Boston University, for my Undergraduate Degree, where I received a Bachelor's of Arts in both Psychology and Philosophy. Then, in 2001, I began my studies at Pace University School of Law, where I obtained my J.D. degree with a certificate in International Law and subsequently began my legal career.

I am a practicing lawyer with offices in Queens and Manhattan and I commute between both. I am married to Kara E. Murphy, a lawyer as well, who works for the federal Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) in the enforcement division of the air branch. We have a beautiful little girl, named Meena, who just celebrated her 1st birthday. For this, we thank God for the blessing!

Kara and I moved to Hollis Hills in 2007, after I lobbied for us to come back to the neighborhood area where I grew up, and where I wanted my children to grow up. We found the best of all worlds in Hollis Hills. The wonderful community of diverse people, the exquisite school system, the closeness to all necessities (i.e. the hospital, fire station, and police department), and the accessibility of all the major roadways going East, West, North, and South; all of these things made our decision and my lobbying efforts fairly easy. Hollis Hills is our paradise, and, hopefully, with all the good work of our elected officials, our community board 11, our civic association, and all of you, we will keep this neighborhood a special piece of New York City.

With our recent civic association elections, some changes have been made and I would like to make you all aware of them. First, Zion Halili has agreed to stay active within the Board and has taken on the role of Special Advisor. His experience and guidance are much appreciated. Also, Dr. Alex Katz, DPM has agreed to stay on as our wonderful Vice President, Jo Beth Greenbaum is staying on as our great Treasurer, and Anthony Benfatti graciously accepting the invaluable role as General Secretary. We are also fortunate to have Board Members such as Lotus Hsu (HHCA Newsletter Coordinator), Brian Chen (HHCA Webmaster), Walter Winter (Crime & Safety Liaison), Dennis Novick (Zoning Liaison), Jennifer Camilleri (Fire Safety Liaison), Paul Pluta (Graffiti Liaison) as well as Arianna Halpern, Mina Bail, Robert Sayour and Lisa Ajzenman. We have a terrific team put together and I thank everyone for their participation. I also encourage others to let me know if they would like to get involved, and volunteer their time and energy to making our community great.

We have a very exciting year ahead of us, after a terrible winter of snow storms galore. The inefficiency of the Sanitation Department for plowing and snow removal after the December 26th snow storm definitely had many of our resident's trapped, upset, and inconvenienced to say the least. As part of our agenda we will work on making sure that we can do what is feasible in helping to ease some of the problems that stem from such disasters. We will make it part of our mission to act as proper conduits and liaison's for our community and the other government and quasi-government entities. Hollis Hills is too important to accept such problems.

Looking forward, we have a very exciting year ahead with a few great events planned. As of now, the four events for our community that are planned are: 1) A disaster preparedness seminar in the Spring; 2) the Hollis Hills Community Street Fair in June; 3) A Community Volunteer Fundraiser for a Public Charity at the end of Summer; and 4) a Wine Tasting Social in the Fall. We will also be looking to constantly update all of you about the goings on in our community through our wonderful newsletters and our new and improved website which is forthcoming please continue to check back at www.hollishillscivic.com. In the meantime, we will continue to update the website under the format that it has been.

Lastly, I just want to let you all know how humbled I am by this entire experience working with and for all of us. It is a tremendous task that we as the Board have taken and I request that anyone and everyone within our community who is interested in getting involved, to please contact me or one of our Board members. Furthermore, I implore upon all of you to please send in your civic association dues, if you have not already. A coupon is attached to this newsletter. Without these small contributions of just \$25 a year, we cannot function and do what we do. While it is true that our Board members volunteer their time for our community, there are many factors including the publishing of this newsletter which bring about costs; costs

which can only be offset by your dues. We may have problems at points concerning the membership issue, but I promise you all that we will do our level best to correct those problems as soon as possible and with the strongest possible efforts.

Thanks so much for allowing me this opportunity to serve our community as president. I look forward to work with/for all of you and hopefully, meeting you all, some day!

Sincerely,

Dev B. Viswanath

President

Hollis Hills Civic Association