

Zoom meeting February 14 (see details in box)



Creedmoor Civic News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CREEDMOOR CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
Founded 1927, Incorporated 1938

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REDISTRICTING AFFECTS OUR CIVIC

Every ten years, based on the results of the latest census, election district lines throughout the country are redrawn. In 2014, the NYC Constitution was amended to create a bipartisan redistricting commission comprised of ten members.

This year, after the bipartisan New York State Independent Redistricting Commission was unable to agree on lines, a plan has been drawn up by Democrats, passed by both houses of the Democrat-controlled NYS Legislature, and signed by Democratic Governor Kathy Hochul.

According to Newsday, the state's new congressional map favors Democrats. There are currently 19 Democratic members of Congress and 8 Republicans. One Republican-held upstate Congressional seat will be lost due to population changes in the state. Analysts believe that Republicans have a good chance of losing four seats, including the one that was eliminated upstate, due to the way the boundaries were drawn.

On February 3, a group of Republican voters filed a lawsuit, claiming that the new district lines are unconstitutional. The lawsuit maintains that Democrats have "brazenly enacted a congressional map that is undeniably politically gerrymandered in their party's favor." "Gerrymandering" is "the political manipulation of electoral district boundaries with the intent of creating an undue advantage for a party, group or socio-economic class within the constituency." (Wikipedia). The party in power is often accused of gerrymandering. Currently, NYS government is controlled by Democrats. There are lawsuits are challenging Republican-drawn lines in Ohio and South Carolina.

Creedmoor Civic is in the 3rd Congressional District, currently occupied by Democratic Congressman Tom Suozzi. Presently, the district covers the North Shore of Nassau County and portions of the Northern sections of Suffolk and Queens. On the new maps, the district runs through Suffolk, Nassau, and Queens, and then extends to the eastern part of the Bronx (including City Island) and into Westchester communities adjacent to Long Island Sound, up to Port Chester.

LIVE CIVIC MEETINGS TEMPORARILY CANCELED JOIN US IN A ZOOM MEETING



State Senator John Liu is the featured, confirmed, speaker for the February 14 meeting.

Join the Zoom Meeting at 7:00 PM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82467601320>

Meeting ID: 824 6760 1320

Dial by your location +1 646 876

9923 US (New York)

If the new maps stand, we will remain in the 33rd Assembly District, currently represented by Assembly Member Clyde Vanel.

We are now in the 11th Senate District, represented by State Senator Liu, but under the proposed map Creedmoor Civic would be in the 14th Senate District, currently represented by State Senator Leroy Comrie. The 14th S. D. includes neighborhoods such as Queens Village, Bellaire, Hollis, Cambria Heights, Springfield Gardens, and St. Albans. Bellerose has been cut in half with the boundary between the senate districts be drawn down the Cross Island Parkway. East of the CIP, Bellerose remains in the 11th S.D.

The redrawing of NY City Council lines has not yet happened. We are in City Council District 23, represented by Council Member Linda Lee.

To see the new and existing district boundaries, visit <https://newyork.redistrictingandyou.org/>

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President's Message

We mourn the senseless murders of Police Officers Jason Rivera and Wilbert Mora, who were shot in Harlem during a call for a domestic incident on January 21. Several other officers have also been shot recently. We cannot allow ourselves to accept this as routine.

You may have heard that Officer Mora saved several lives through organ donation. If you wish to follow Officer Mora's example, visit the NYS Donate Life Registry. You can also sign up as an organ donor when you renew your driver's license or register to vote.

On January 25, a 91-year-old man was killed in a house fire on 88 Ave, just west of Winchester Blvd. I don't know what caused the fire. We express our condolences to the family and remind ourselves not to be complacent about fire safety.

Your neighbor, *Michael O'Keeffe*

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

If you own a home, you have probably received a Notice of Property Value from the NYC Dept of Finance (DOF). The document has a lot of information, including the assessed valuation, which is the basis for property taxes. It also indicates any property tax exemptions you are currently receiving. A document explaining various exemptions was also included. Queens Borough President Donovan Richards recently sponsored a Homeowners Tax Benefit Information Session Webinar with the NYC Dept. of Finance. The presentation runs just over an hour and can be found on the BP's YouTube channel. Here's the link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_Eu-brmvm4&t=1s
Information can also be found online on the NYC DOF Benefits for Property Owners Page, or by calling 311. The deadline to apply for most exemptions is March 15.

Basic STAR and Enhanced STAR: Offer school property tax relief to eligible New York State homeowners. For Basic STAR, your income must be \$250,000 or less. You may be eligible for Enhanced STAR if you are 65 or older in the calendar year in which you apply, with a total income of all owners and resident spouses or registered domestic partners not exceeding \$92,000. The rules are complicated. Visit the DOF website, call 311, or contact New York State at www.tax.ny.gov/star or by calling (518) 457-2036.

Senior Citizen Homeowners' Exemption (SCHE): A property tax break for seniors who own one-, two-, or three-family homes, condominiums, or cooperative apartments, available to homeowners with a combined annual income of \$58,399 or less. The SCHE benefit must be renewed every two years. Disabled Homeowners' Exemption (DHE): A property tax break for disabled New Yorkers who own one-, two-, or three-family homes, condominiums, or cooperative apartments, available to homeowners with a combined annual income of \$58,399 or less.

Veterans Exemption: The rules are complicated. Call 311 or visit the DOF website.

AND THE WINNER IS.. This month's winner of our remote raffle is the Munsch family on 88th Ave. They win a \$20 gift certificate for Accardi Cleaners on Braddock Ave near Gettysburg St. Thanks, as always, to the anonymous donor who funds this raffle!

GOV. HOCHUL WANTS TO CANCEL LOCAL ZONING

The Queens Civic Congress (and others) has come out fighting over the New York Governor's proposal for "ADU"s. These are accessory dwelling units that would override local zoning and essentially abolish single-family zoning, legalize illegal apartments, and forever change the face of our neighborhoods all across New York State. It also would force the the admission of multiple family units within one-half mile of any train station. That would radically change Bellerose since we are close to two railroad stations: Bellerose and Elmont.

The governor's thinking: ADUs, which would include backyard cottages, attics, garages, and basements —“can provide an affordable multi-generational housing option that helps families live closer together.”

But these units would be market rate, not “affordable.” Extra housing would impact parking spots, schools, and all other services. This one piece of legislation would end the entire notion of “suburban” forever. Fortunately, many electeds, and candidates for election, are mobilizing to fight this.