To: Executive Committee

Board of Trustees

From: The Committee on Trustees

Re: Recommendations on Trustee Nominations

Date: March 2016

The Committee on Trustees has reviewed the qualifications of self-nominated Trustee applicants and subsequently met with a total of seven nominees between on March 15th and March 24nd. We find the nominees below to be qualified and capable and recommend their approval by the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees. All applicants stated that there were no commitments that would interfere with regular attendance at Board meetings.

The Executive Committee has a full nomination packet for each of the candidates. All candidates met Trustee eligibility qualifications. Below you will find a brief summary of their qualifications.

* **Karyl Cafiero**

**Occupation:** Part-time Research Associate to Permanent Citizens Committee to the MTA

**Committee Interests:** Livable Streets, Outreach, Membership

**Other civic involvement/activities**: Currently working with the Senior Planet Exploration Center, part of Older Adults Technology Service (OATS), which has the goal of making older adults more familiar with computer technology. Has served on committees of the Women’s Transportation Seminar and board service includes past president of NYU Robert F Wagner School of Public Service Alumni Association. Also works with PASS – Pedestrian for Access and Safe Streets, which has tried to facilitate cyclist/pedestrian dialogue.

**From Personal Statement***: I* *moved to Park Slope 24 years ago when I got married. My husband and I have lived in our current residence the entire time I've been in Park Slope. We raised our twin daughters here and can't imagine living anywhere else.*

*One of the main reasons I moved to New York City was that I wanted to live somewhere that I would not be required to own a car. I have a congenital eye condition, meaning that I am legally blind and thus can't drive, and I hated having to rely on the kindness of others to help travel around my hometown. In New York City, I depend on the public transit system and understand and appreciate the importance of an urban environment and livable streets.*

*Over the past 24 years I've seen the increasing threat that rising retail rents have had to individual local businesses, as well as the overall variety and character of the neighborhood. Like every property owner, I'm happy that the value of my apartment has risen dramatically, but I know that among the negative side effects of that increase in property value can be the loss of diversity of both residents and businesses that can no longer afford to be here.*

*Raising twin daughters here in Park Slope allowed me the opportunity to get involved in myriad PTA activities at PS 321, including chairing the Spring Gala and Winter Carnival and organizing many election day bake sales… We live in a ten-unit cooperative apartment building in a building in the historic district that was formerly both a mansion and the Unity Club. I've served twice for a number of years as my co-op's President and am keenly aware of the importance of living in a landmark district.*

*I have spent much of my career working as an advocate for good public transit and have focused on making the system more user-friendly and accessible for the riders. My vision limitations have also made me aware of the needs of people with disabilities of all types, and I have worked to implement cost-effective ways to make improvements that benefit disabled users and the general public.*

**COT comments**: During the conversation about potential conflict of interest, Karyl said that the only instance in which she could see recusing herself from a Trustee vote would be in the event that the Civic Council would be voting on a project or action specific to the NYC Transit authority

* **Mark Caserta**

**Occupation:** Executive Director, Park Slope Fifth Avenue Business Improvement District.

**Committee interests**: Forth on Fourth Avenue, Livable Streets

**Other civic involvement/activities:** Formerly worked in NYC Parks and Recreation, past Deputy Director of New Yorkers for Parks. Involved in Park Slope since 2001 as merchant, BID consultant and then BID Director. Has worked with PSCC during annual sweeps and routinely involved in the Halloween Parade as well as the organization of “A Taste of Fifth”.

**From Personal statement:** *I think my 16 years of experience in Park Slope as a former resident and merchant and current BID Director could be a great help to the Civic Council and its programs. Particular skills in event planning, fundraising, and bookkeeping.*

**COT comments**: In response to questions about conflict of interest, Mark replied that there could be an issue with his board regarding whether or not the BID would still give money to PSCC and noted that he would recuse himself if there were any situations in which the Board was going to vote on a 5th Ave BID related issue.

COT members had a fairly long conversation with Mark about the relationship of the BID to PSCC issues. Mark spoke about the ongoing concern about rising rental prices pushing out small businesses and noting that the BID keeps a close eye on vacancy rates – the BID area currently has a 6.5 vacancy rate. The BID is also using technology to track pedestrian traffic on sections of 5th, which has been useful in measuring the impact of the Arena on the Avenue – with the caveat that the business impact is almost exclusively on bars and restaurants He also mentioned that the BID continues to encourage local merchants to participate in the Street Fair, offering them a significantly reduced price for street space. The same company that manages 7th Heaven also fills space in the 5th Ave street Fair. This year the City will be inspecting all street fairs, with a possible eye to expanding their length. Mark suggested that the BID has information that would be useful in focusing PSCC community efforts.

* **Timothy Gilles**

**Occupation**: Semi-retired - Currently Director of Gilles Consulting Group, which provides communication consulting for companies, law firms, and non profits. Past experience in communications at Bank of America, Merrill Lynch and New York State Attorney Generals office.

**Committee interests:** Unwilling to commit to specific committee until he learns more about how it operates; interest (and past involvement with) Historic Districts Committee

**Other civic involvement/activities**: Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra Board of Directors (Interim Executive director), New York Choral Society, Park Slope Civic Council member since 2001.

**From Personal Statement**: *My wife and I have lived in Park slope since 1970 and have owned our home since 1972. We’ve raised 4 children here. We care deeply about the neighborhood and I would like to participate in activities to support the continued health of the community*

**COT comments**: None of Tim’s current clients present a conflict of interest with PSCC business and he stated that because of past jobs, he was very sensitive to that issue.

During the committee discussion with Tim, he noted that he had been attending Trustee meetings for close to a year and found that most conversations were fairly interesting, which increased his interest in more active Board participation. Being semi-retired, Tim is looking for involvement in local activities and brings skill sets of writing, publicity and project management. He discussed particular concerns about vibrancy of the neighborhood, noting increased vacancies on 7th Ave. Very passionate about “shopping locally/voting with wallet”, to the extent of virtually no use of on-line purchasing. He also noted that many local businesses appear to have weak local marketing skills.

* **Hector Gonzalez**

**Occupation**: Director of Just 3 Arts, a non-profit dedicated to the development and cultivation of talent in three major aspect of the performing arts; acting, dance and music, with a primary focus on the Latino/Hispanic youth. SAG member, producer of street and park festivals. His office is located in the Park Slope 14th Regiment Armory.

**Committee interests**: Arts Festival

**Civic involvement/activities:** Active with Veterans’ programs. Has worked with local communities in Manhattan on street fairs and park events – was invited by Brooklyn CB6 to help set up a fair in Coffey Park, Red Hook, and has worked city-wide with various local precincts and school guidance programs.

**From Personal statement:** *My interest is based on the multiple challenges and accomplishments (of Park Slope Civic Council) over the years. I believe that I can be an excellent contributor in the area of the performing arts… (and with).my professional track record and experience can help develop such programs to benefit the youth community.*

**COT Comments:** Although Hector’s path to self-nomination to the Board is not “typical” in terms of local community connections, we were very impressed by his energy and the fact that as he learned more about PSCC through another Trustee, he was impressed enough to jump in and take us up on the challenge - to become a trustee and offer his insights - contained in the recruitment letter sent to members. In a fairly lengthy conversation, we found him to be a charming and thoughtful person who can offer both enthusiasm and valuable perspectives to the Board. No organizational conflicts of interest.

* **Kedin Kilgore**

**Occupation**: Currently starting his own business after 15 years of experience in environmental marketing trading.

**Committee interests**: Finance, Sustainability (see comments)

**Civic involvement/activities**: Community Help in Park Slope (Chips), Brooklyn Micogrid (community and renewable energy cooperative), Vice Chair, Environment Markets Association (EMA), participated in PSCC Far Rockaway Clean up team.

**From personal statement:** *lived in Park Slope for 18 years… father of two children, a daughter who attended PS 321 and MS 51, and son who is currently a student at Park Slope Collegiate on the John Jay Campus. Joining the Board of Trustees for PSCC is an opportunity to learn about and support programs for students and young people in our community. And, with my background in renewable energy and environmental markets I am confident I can make a contribution helping with student participation in sustainability initiatives.*

*I am also keenly encouraged by the activism and community engagement I am watching emerge in my children and their peers. It is their interest in seeing a community that is integrated and inclusive and made sustainable by diversity is driving my interest in a more active role with PSCC. I believe our neighborhood as a whole, and PSCC in particular, can be stronger and have a tremendous impact if we can increase student participation and incorporate their energy and enthusiasm into the PSCC mission.*

*It is my hope that I can support and expanded sustainability mission for PSCC and create opportunities for increased student involvement and participation. I would like to see more opportunities for my kids and their friend to help define PSCC’s inclusive role in our neighborhood.*

**COT Comments:** Kedin half-jokingly remarked that he was “following his daughter” (who is a PSCC intern as part of her school’s community service program). He spoke eloquently about the idea of “stretching” the definition/issue of sustainability to include social justice and environmental fairness, as well as finding creative ways to engage the youth in those discussions.

* **Jeanette Lee**

**Occupation:** Retired, occasional tutoring. Until recently worked part time at Brooklyn Housing Works Brooklyn retail outlet. Past experience includes consultant grant writing for Brooklyn Ballet, former senior planner for NYC Department of City Planning/PFC, consultant (Allee King Rosen and Fleming) preparing environment analyses for such clients as the US Army of Engineers, Brooklyn Law School, and Con ED

**Committee interests**: Arts festival, outreach

**Civic involvement/activities**: Many years’ involvement with PT/funding for PS 32, founding board member of of “826 NYC”, which operates the Super Hero’s (tutoring) store in Brooklyn.

**Personal statement**: *As a former city planner and longtime Park Slope resident I welcome the opportunity to work with you all to make our neighborhood as vibrant and welcoming as possible.*

**COT Comments:** No apparent conflict of interest possibilities. In conversation, Jeanette noted that she had been aware of Civic Council for many years and had participated in events (House Tour and Food for Thought), but it was the work on the Arts Festival which drew her in to very active participation on that committee, notably in the area of finding sponsors. She is extremely enthusiastic about the festival and working to make it a success. She described herself as “a person who likes to make connections”, which was borne out by common connections made in the conversation, and actually enjoys outreach, fundraising and finding donors for causes she is involved in.

* **Douglas Schneider**

**Occupation**: Founding partner in Summers & Schneider, which represents clients in all aspects of criminal, civil and commercial litigation. Trial lawyer, Associate and Litigation associate with several different NYC law firms.

**Committee interests**: Historic District, Livable Streets, House Tour, Historic District Expansion

**Civic involvement/activities:** PSCC, Congregation Beth Elohim, Cardoza Alumni Executive Committee, Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats, New Kings Democrats, Working Families party, (appointed) Member New York City Bar Association Committee on Professional Ethics.

**From Personal statement***: I have been actively involved with the Park Slope Civil Council for several years. During that time, I have been able to participate in, and witness, the great work that the PSCC does for our community. From the historic district expansion, opposition to conversion of the Pavilion movie theater, and Food for Thought, the PSCC makes an incomparable impact on our community.*

*I have been lucky enough to volunteer, in official and unofficial capacities, for several of the PSCC’s initiative …. the House Tour, Food for Thought (including as a corporate sponsor), and testified at hearings regarding the conversion of the Pavilion. As such, I have seen up close how hard the PSCC works for our community.*

*At Congregation Beth Elohim, I am the volunteer coordinator of Shir L’Shabbat, the Saturday morning music class for kids 0-5. I also volunteered there after hurricane Sandy, worked for their food bank, and cooked for the CAMBIA shelter. I have cooked for CAMBIA when it was in other locations as well. Even in my law practice, where I do a large amount of pro bono work, I feel that I have an obligation to do community service.*

*I am excited to bring my skills to the PSCC. As a ten-year resident of Park Slope, my wife Joni and I have committed to making Park Slope our home. We are raising our son, future Trustee Micah, with what we hope will be an understanding and appreciation of volunteerism and community building. The PSCC plays an important role in making Park Slope a better place to live and work and I feel I have an obligation to join in your tireless efforts.*

**COT comments:** In discussions about possible conflict of interest, Doug was not aware of any litigation where that might arise, but is familiar enough with the topic to recuse himself. He observed that because of his frequent attendance at Trustee Meetings, he has become eager to be actively involved on the board. Doug raised the issue of being on the same Board as his spouse, Joni Kletter, and said that he saw no conflict there and they did not vote as a “bloc”.

Note: The COT finds no prohibition in the by-laws against both spouses serving as trustees at the same time, nor has concern that such action would result in untoward Board of Trustee activity. The COT also notes that there is precedent in the PSCC for such service.