

Forest Hills Taxpayers

1909-1917

“THE PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION SHALL BE
TO PROMOTE THE COMMON WELFARE OF ALL
PERSONS RESIDING WITHIN THE TERRITORY
OF FOREST HILLS OR FOREST HILLS GARDENS”

HISTORY

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

WHAT IS SOUGHT TO BE ACCOMPLISHED

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES



FOREST HILLS TAXPAYERS

HISTORY

The necessity for adequate school facilities brought nineteen residents of Forest Hills together one evening in 1909. F. L. Holmes was elected Chairman and F. A. Dede, Secretary. The need of a public school for the community was discussed and a committee was chosen to draft a letter to Mayor Gaynor, setting forth the situation, and also to interview the local school Commissioner. Both matters were promptly attended to and within four months the present temporary building on the North Side was erected, two teachers installed, and the school in session. It was determined to form a permanent organization and call it the Taxpayers Association. The Chairman and Secretary of the meeting were elected to fill these offices for one year. Charles T. Schneider was chosen Treasurer. Several meetings were held, a Constitution and By-laws adopted, and committees appointed to cover various matters of local interest. The work of the Association was carried on by its various committees and so energetically did they work that everything they had set out to obtain was accomplished within a year.

A year or more after this time the Russell Sage Foundation purchased one hundred and forty-two acres of land from the Cord Meyer Development Company, and rapidly developed what is known as The Gardens. As soon as a sufficient number of residents were located in this section it was determined to ask them to join the Association. A meeting was called and every resident was invited to attend. The meeting was a great success. The office of Second Vice Chairman was created, and T. Comerford Martin elected to fill the position, and R. P. Kaighn was elected Secretary. Several new committees were created, and all reorganized so as to represent equally the north and south sides of the community. From this meeting dates the cordial feeling that now exists throughout Forest Hills.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1913

More frequent railroad and trolley service secured.
Lower telephone rates obtained.
Two portable school buildings procured.
Anti-mosquito campaign started.
Local fire company reorganized.
Commutation rate on Long Island Railroad reduced to \$6.50
Branch express office opened.

1914

A Post Office secured.
A kindergarten established.
Better police protection obtained.
Transportation for kindergarten children secured.

1915

Children's playground given and equipped by Sage Foundation Homes Company.
Playground Director temporarily employed by joint efforts of Tax-payers and Woman's Club.
Anti-mosquito committee organized and a definite yearly program established.

1916

Queens Borough mosquito extermination committee and campaign started.
Regular taxes and special assessments examined by committee on Taxes and Assessments and some reductions secured.
Plan for reorganization of school for greater teaching efficiency proposed to District Supt. Perry and submitted by him to parents and eventually carried out in part.
Special school committee organized to work for new permanent school building and to improve heating and ventilation conditions in temporary buildings.
Mosquito extermination inspector employed and active aid given to Health Commissioner in securing appropriation of \$150,000 for ditching of Jamaica and Flushing Bay swamps secured from the City.

MATTERS UNDER WAY

1917

Recommendation for new school building to cost \$175,000 secured from Board of Education in cooperation with our school Commissioner.

Action started before Public Service Commission to secure fifteen minute headway on Long Island Railroad between Jamaica and Long Island City and the Pennsylvania Station.

Community Secretary proposition of the Sage Foundation Homes Company accepted and Community Council established.

Recommendation made to Commissioner of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity that City purchase property of Citizen's Water Supply Company and take it over and thereby secure reduction in water rates.

Community Council membership enlarged to embrace heads of all organizations which are doing, or might do, work of service in the war situation, so that it might serve as a clearing house and steering committee for all such activities.

OFFICERS

Lyman Beecher Stowe, President Anne R. Smith, Secretary
James Scott, Vice-President George C. Baerlocher, Treasurer

STANDING COMMITTEES

School—Edward H. Mays, Chairman
Health and Sanitation—Dr. Paul S. Barrett, Chairman
Anti-Mosquito—S. W. Eckman, Chairman
Fire—Ferd. Neumer, Chairman
Railroad Service—Alex. Cameron, Chairman
Welcome—P. A. Swartz, Chairman
Water, Gas and Electricity—Harold Daniels, Chairman
Postal Service—John M. Demarest, Chairman
Streets—Arthur H. Shapiro, Chairman
Taxes and Assessments—Frederic K. Seward, Chairman
Police—Edmund O'Shea, Chairman

Every adult resident of Forest Hills or Forest Hills Gardens is potentially a member of this organization.

Those who pay annual dues of two dollars (\$2.00) toward the support of the work of the association are members in good standing.
