

White Plains Council of Neighborhood Associations  
February Meeting

Tuesday, 5/13/2025

Location: Zoom Meeting

Time: 7pm

Attendees: Michael Sanchez, Michael Dalton, Tom Osbeck, Ellen Berger, Bob Friscia, Leonard Gruenfeld, Frances Jones, Dan Letizia, B. Kahn, Debbie Katz, Michael Matarese, Charlene Raynor, Ron Sarig, Valerie Simmons, Howard Waldman, Shawn Woodford, Debra Zipf

Guest Speaker: Hon. George Latimer, U.S. House of Representatives - NY 16<sup>th</sup> District

1. The Meeting was called to order by President Sanchez. Representative Latimer's staff notified M. Sanchez that Rep. Latimer would be delayed approximately 30 minutes because business had not been concluded on the floor of Representative. Pres. Sanchez opened the meeting to any topic that attendees would like to discuss while waiting for Rep. Latimer to join the meeting.
  2. L. Gruenfeld reported that the "Pavillon" property had been sold to a new owner. The new owner/developer will now have a fresh opportunity to clean up the site.
  3. The "Windward School" property will be on the agenda at the next Rosedale Association meeting – Thursday, 7pm at the Highlands Middle School, rm 261.
  4. D. Letizia reported that he and his family would be moving to Spain. Dan thanked all CNA representatives for their help and support in "breathing new life" and re-activating the Reynal Park neighborhood Association. All attendees wished Dan and his family the very best in their new life in a town outside Malaga in southern Spain.
  5. D. Zipt reported that she had taken part in a meeting with folks in the Lake Street neighborhood with the aim of "activating" a new Lake Street neighborhood Association.
  6. D. Zipf was honored at the White Plains Democratic Committee annual Shollenberger Dinner for her service to White Plains Democratic Committee.
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At 7:30, Rep. Latimer joined the zoom meeting.

8. Rep. Latimer began his remarks by saying that in Washington...we are working on "macro" issues...which is a bit different than the issues that local and county elected officials are challenged with. He is a 71-year-old man...who is a 1<sup>st</sup> term "freshman" representative. He is on the House Foreign Affairs committee (which he admitted was not an area he had a great deal of experience) and the House Small Business committee.
9. As best he can.... he works with both fellow democrats and republican representatives to try and "influence" things. That said...the democrats are in the minority and do not currently drive the agenda.
10. The current republican agenda is putting at risk \$4 million dollars of federal funding to the White Plains school system and has led to the planned closure of the local Social Security Office in White Plains. Rep. Latimer explained that he and Rep. Lawler(R) are working to keep the Social Security Office in White Plains open.
11. The "macro" issue which will be dominating the work in the House is the Federal Budget.... that will issue will be followed by another very contentious issue: the Debt Ceiling.
12. D. Zipf asked Rep Latimer if signing petitions...actually helps him. Rep Latimer replied, "the signing of petition does help. Signed petitions document the number of persons supporting a particular idea or issue....and I can share with my colleagues in the House the number of people who have signed petition. Those signed petitions show that a particular issue has grass roots support."
13. Rep. Latimer acknowledged that there will be constituents who will disagree with a particular policy he may be supporting. He asked that those who differ with him on an issue to write to him....express your opinion.... it's all good.

14. Rep. Latimer's email address is: [LatimerGeorge@gmail.com](mailto:LatimerGeorge@gmail.com)
15. S. Woodford explained that 1200 Mamaroneck Ave will be the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> marijuana dispensary in the City of White Plains. He went on to say that he felt there had been no transparency about the approval of this dispensary by the Mayor's Office. Mr. Woodford asked Rep. Latimer, "is there anything you can suggest?" Rep. Latimer replied, "as things are right now...there is no role at the Federal or County level to get involved in the dispensary issue."
16. M. Sanchez asked Rep. Latimer how the Trump Tariffs might affect small business in White Plains. Rep. Latimer responded, "tariffs are an economic tool...not a political tool. When a tariff is levied it is paid for by the importer of the good. The "tariff strategy" employed by the Trump administration has created "uncertainty" in the marketplace...which will result in product price increases."
17. M. Sanchez asked, "could a "bailout" for small businesses be created...not unlike the "bailout" that was provided to farmers during the first Trump term?" Rep. Latimer replied, "the tariff policy should be pulled back. The Congress has given the president – "emergency powers" ...Congress should rescind the "emergency powers" the President has been given and take back control of tariff policy."
18. Rep. Latimer agreed with the idea that a product for sale...that has risen in price because of Trump's tariff policy.... should be able to say on its packaging the cost impact of the new tariff policy on the final sale price of that product.
19. B. Friscia asked, "is there anything that can be done about the increased cost of our utility bills?" Rep. Latimer responded, "state governments regulate Utilities. The Governor appoints the representatives to the public service commission...not the state legislature...and it is the public service commission that is that is supposed to "manage" the Utility Companies. Congress does not really play a role in overseeing the public service commissions or Utilities in a particular State."
20. B. Friscia then asked, "why is the Governor reluctant to confront the Public Utilities?" Rep. Latimer replied that the Shelly Mayer, our state legislator, has been and is still working to get the Public Service Commission to really dig down and get to the bottom line of why utility costs have risen so dramatically."
21. B. Friscia asked, "is there anything being done on the SALT (State & Local Tax) tax deductions in Washington?" Rep. Latimer responded, "yes...there are some republicans mostly in the northeast who are asking that the State & Local Tax deduction that is currently capped at \$10k be rescinded. If the final Budget doesn't restore the ability to deduct SALT in excess of \$10k.... Latimer and other northeast legislators will object and not vote to approve the new Budget."
22. F. Jones said..." the medical profession needs help. The doctors who are treating her for cancer have explained to her that her Aetna Medicare Advantage insurance is costing her more than "traditional Medicare. Consumers are just not properly informed to make intelligent choices when it comes to healthcare. Rep. Latimer responded by saying, "perhaps we can set up a Healthcare Seminar on ZOOM to assist folks make sound choices for their healthcare insurance."
23. The republicans are trying to cut \$1.80 trillion from the Budget...if the Budget gets passed with that level of cost cutting...it will dramatically impact the whole healthcare system."
24. F. Jones explained that when Nita Lowey was in office, she had 2 women in her office who helped seniors with their healthcare questions."
25. L. Gruenfeld asked, "is it true that CDBG (Community Development Block Grants) are expected to be cut to ZERO in the proposed republican Budget?" Rep. Latimer answered by saying, "it is likely that the CDBG's will be a target of "cuts" in the Budget, and it is fair to say that Community Development Block Grants are in real trouble."
26. With no further questions.... Pres. Sanchez thanked Rep. Latimer for taking the time to attend the CNA meeting and for taking questions from its members."
27. Several CNA attendees noted that the issue of marijuana dispensaries is a "real" issue for many people in their neighborhoods...perhaps we can dedicate a future CNA meeting to the subject of "dispensaries"."
28. Pres. Sanchez reminded the membership that the guest speaker for our June meeting will be County Executive Ken Jenkins. Pres. Sanchez thanked everyone and closed the meeting."