

Community Board 2 to JR's: 'Let 'Em Eat Cake'

By Craig McGuire

In Bensonhurst, you can drive down Vincent Gardenia Boulevard and in Bedford Stuyvesant, you can turn onto Marcus Garvey Boulevard. So why not rename a corner in Brooklyn Heights to honor one of the neighborhood's most noted items?

Well, "Cheesecake Alley" wasn't what Community Board 2 had in mind.

Only an impassioned plea from the owners of Junior's Restaurant stayed an imminent rejection by CB 2 of a proposal to rename the corner of Flatbush Avenue Extension and DeKalb Avenue "Cheesecake Alley."

Junior's, famous for the high-calorie treat, has been in business on the corner since 1929.

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In a written statement, the CB 2 Traffic and Transportation Committee recommended to reject the proposal for two reasons.



Chairperson Libbie Wills addresses Community Board 2. Photos by Craig McGuire

First, the name "Cheesecake Alley" is not appealing, and second, "it sets a precedent for commercial establishments naming streets which could be used as a form of free advertisement," the committee determined.

However, as a concession, the committee suggested that a sidewalk plaque be placed by the building.

CB 2 Chairwoman Libbie Wills said, "Everybody was turned off by the name Cheesecake Alley."

Alan Rosen, whose grandfather opened Junior's Restaurant, said, "For the past 64 years we've shown great commitment to this community."

"We're only looking to have the corner co-named,"

said Rosen, adding that only that specific corner would be affected, and not the street or the adjacent corners.

At the January CB 2 meeting, Rosen cited several instances, including following a fire in 1981, when Junior's had the opportunity to relocate.

"At all these junctures we could have left, but we didn't," said Rosen. "You can take away the Dodgers and you can take away Ebbets field, but you can't take away Junior's."

However, Rosen said that community support has been one of the key ingredients for the success of the restaurant.

"After the fire, we received strong support from both residents and politi-

cians," said Rosen.

"Cheesecake might not sound like a great name, but I'm not concerned with semantics," he explained. "It's not the name that is important, it's the commitment."

"This is not a case of a business looking to feed off a community," he added.

According to Rosen, Junior's, which employs 175 people, is an integral part of the community.

"A commitment is not just good for Junior's, it is good for the community," Rosen concluded.

Jon Quint, traffic and transportation committee chairman, said, "Given Junior's position and willingness to revise, perhaps we should have another look."

The matter was tabled

and will go back into committee for further consideration.

The committee will report on it at the February 9 full board meeting at Borough Hall. For information, call the board at 596-5410.



Alan Rosen, whose grandfather founded Junior's Restaurant in 1929, addresses Community Board 2 at their January meeting.