

# FAITH *over* FEAR

# CANDIDATES

# GUIDE *for*

# District 20

*Downtown Flushing, Murray Hill, Queensboro Hill*

*New York City Primary Election Day is*  
**Tuesday September 12, 2017**

*New York City General Election Day is*  
**Tuesday November 7, 2017**

**POLLS OPEN 6 AM - 9 PM**

## *The Candidates*



**PETER KOO**

*Democrat  
NYC Council Member,  
District 20*



**ALISON TAN**

*Democrat  
Former Managing Director of  
Finance, Ackman-Ziff*

**FAITH *over* FEAR**



**#FaithOverFear #FaithinNewYork #NYCcouncil**

**Would you defend NYC's status as a sanctuary city?**

**TAN:** Yes, as a city of immigrants it is important that New York be on the forefront of protecting our city's immigrants. These are people who have come to our city for the wealth of opportunities available and have worked hard to take advantage of them. Today, a majority of small businesses are immigrant owned and operated. It is imperative that prospective entrepreneurs know that this city is a welcoming one in which to do business, and prospective tourists who bring our city so much business know that this is a safe place to travel free from racial profiling and enforcement of draconian immigration policies. It is not the duty of local law enforcement to determine immigration status.

**KOO:** Yes. I will continue working with our representatives in Congress like Grace Meng and Joe Crowley, both of whom have endorsed my campaign. I will continue my office's weekly immigration legal services, which has assisted hundreds of families throughout my tenure, for anyone who needs it.

**Would you support ending criminal penalties for minor infractions to limit arrests and potential threats to immigrants' status?**

**TAN:** Broken window policing has only limited evidence of efficacy and does more harm than good to our local communities. Enforcement of such statutes as criminal penalties reinforces the status of non-white New Yorkers as second-class citizens in the eyes of the law further widening the chasm between police and the communities they are meant to protect. Additionally, non-violent offenses should not be used as just cause in deportation proceedings, tearing families apart.

**KOO:** Yes. I voted for the Criminal Justice Reform Act that reversed 20 years of police policy that treated minor infractions as major offenses. For example: NYPD must now issue reports on race, age, gender of all civil/criminal summonses; NYPD must issue reports on Desk Appearance Tickets.

**Describe your greatest accomplishment in advocating for constituents of the district.**

**TAN:** Standing up for local residents against overdevelopment as member of Community Board 7.

**KOO:** Improved traffic conditions, supporting small businesses, including securing \$2 million fund for local businesses impacted by selling of municipal parking lot, \$2 million for senior services, joined tenant support unit to education tenants and sign up seniors for SCRIE, enhanced education including securing \$21 million in capital improvements for schools and \$12.8 for libraries and cultural institutions, improved public safety by installing security cameras in NYCHA buildings, increased trash pick up with \$800,000 additional funds for sanitation services.

**Describe the 3 biggest priorities for the district.**

**TAN:** Providing equal protections for all people in the city from discriminatory practices such as stop & frisk; Improving and maintaining quality of life for all residents; Inspiring and empowering ethnic minorities to form their own political coalitions

**KOO:** Sanitation improvements; Park upgrades and safety improvements; Creating affordable housing

**Would you support continued funding to support detained immigrants?**

**TAN:** Yes, as the nation's first government-funded legal representation program for detained immigrants, programs like New York Immigrant Families Unity Project serve as a model for the rest of the county. In fact, if elected I will fight to increase funding for programs such as these to ensure that all New Yorkers are given adequate legal protection regardless of immigration status.

**KOO:** Yes. Like Right to Counsel, all should have legal protections under the law.

**What is your position on tracking US residents and/or citizens based on their religious identity? Would you expunge wrongly collected surveillance data on Muslim New Yorkers?**

**TAN:** Policing on the basis of religious identity is the antithesis of our constitutional right to religious freedom. In that vein, all surveillance captured on the basis of religious identity should be destroyed and not be considered admissible in court.

**KOO:** We should not track residents based on religion. Provided the requests do not jeopardize ongoing investigations or reveal sensitive security information, NYPD should respond to FOIL. Likewise, illegally obtained surveillance should not be used.

**What is your position on strengthening the reinstated Handschu Committee?**

**TAN:** If elected, I would advocate that a representative from the Comptroller's and the Public Advocate's offices maintain a presence on the committee to serve as a powerful check on mayoral overreach and breaches of civil rights.

**KOO:** The Mayor made the right choice in March by adding former federal judge Stephen Robinson to the Handschu Committee. He is uniquely positioned as a someone who spent his career as defender of civil rights to provide independent oversight and serve as the people's voice.

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**Would you bring to justice the perpetrators of all types of hate crimes, including those based on religion, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity?**

**TAN:** Yes. As a society, we cannot tolerate acts of violence especially upon those whom we have committed to protect. While we cannot legislate against intent, we can make a statement that such actions are unacceptable in our city.

**KOO:** Hate crimes based on religion, immigration status, race, ethnicity, gender, and sex must be prosecuted with the full weight of justice. I have worked with the city and police to rally our community in order to react swiftly to these incidents and will continue to do so.

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**What is your position on law enforcement tracking members of civil rights movements?**

**TAN:** Doing so would constitute a violation of the right to freely assemble. Purely political activity can only be investigated by the Public Security Section and then only when the Section suspects criminal activity. Membership of an organization such as Black Lives Matter should not subject individuals to undue, open-ended surveillance.

**KOO:** Civil rights of all groups must be protected.

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**Would you support legislation to allow non-citizen residents to vote in NYC elections? Allowing parolees to vote in local elections?**

**TAN:** Yes, doing so will empower political and ethnic minorities who have no voice in local government. It is right to entrust the future of our city to those who have entrusted their futures to this city. Such legislation should be limited to legal permanent residents (Green Card Holders).

**KOO:** Voting should be exclusive to U.S. citizens. My office is one of the only offices that provides weekly immigration pro-bono legal assistance to anyone, regardless of status. We are always available to help those who want to become U.S. citizens, regardless of any other factors.

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**Do you support passing Intro. 1482 to increase oversight and comprehensive reporting of NYPD surveillance technology?**

**TAN:** Yes, the sheer volume of data collected by the NYPD using this technology is a violation of New Yorkers' right to privacy and inspires not only fear among the populace but inches us closer to a literal police state. This is unacceptable in one of the most progressive cities in the world.

**KOO:** I support any reporting that does not jeopardize the effectiveness and responsibilities of the NYPD to thoroughly investigate crimes, and I am continuing to work with my colleagues in the City Council to address this issue.

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**What is your position on proposed legislation Intro. 152-A, the Certificate of No Harassment, that aims to protect tenants from landlord harassment?**

**TAN:** I will support the expansion of the rights of tenants to level the playing field against landlords. When it comes to rent increases and adequate building maintenance, it is the duty of the council to protect families from undue harassment and unjust eviction.

**KOO:** Support. Landlords who harass tenants should be made to come into compliance before further building permits are issued.

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**What is your position on the Dept. of Housing Preservation & Development revising their requirements for developers who request subsidies to include a significant increase in the amount of deeply affordable housing?**

**TAN:** We are always supportive of affordable housing in New York City. The current administration has made numerous promises to the city but has failed to meet those expectations. If elected, I will hold developers accountable to the communities from which they profit.

**KOO:** Support. Landlords who harass tenants should be made to come into compliance before further building permits are issued.

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**What is your position on the proposed Housing Not Warehousing legislation, including Intro.s 1034, 1036 & 1039, to assure that land is used for affordable housing and not held vacant for profit?**

**TAN:** At a time when thousands of New Yorkers live without homes, it is wrong that spaces which could house them remain vacant until they can produce a profit for developers. As such, we should incentivize landlords to develop these areas with an eye towards deeply affordable housing, offsetting the increase in value generated by sitting on these properties.

**KOO:** Support. I signed onto Housing Not Warehousing legislation to report on vacant buildings.

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**Do you support passage of the Right To Know Act (Intro.s 182 & 541) to increase police accountability?**

**TAN:** Yes.

**KOO:** Yes.

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**Would you support ending the NYPD's current "broken windows" policing practices that over criminalize minor crimes and quality of life infractions in low-income communities of color?**

**TAN:** Yes, see previous answer.

**KOO:** I voted for the Criminal Justice Reform Act that reversed 20 years of police policy that treated minor infractions as major offenses. For example: NYPD must now issue reports on race, age, gender of all civil/criminal summonses; NYPD must issue reports on Desk Appearance Tickets.

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**What is your position regarding transparency and accountability of the NYPD when officers have engaged in misconduct or abuse?**

**TAN:** Police should be held accountable for their actions. If elected, I would support increased funding to the inspector general's office so that they may adequately investigate claims made against NYPD officers.

**KOO:** Abusive officers or those who have engaged in misconduct should be held accountable for their actions with full transparency.

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**How would you propose to cut greenhouse gas emissions from those buildings that are the biggest & dirtiest in the city?**

**TAN:** Propose government subsidies to incentivize landlords to retrofit their buildings with greener cleaner technology such as electric water heaters and furnaces in addition to advanced filtration systems.

**KOO:** I introduced legislation that would give Business Improvement Districts collective bargaining discounts for purchasing solar panels. This would give the emerging solar industry access to new customers while helping the busiest commercial districts in the city to utilize new, green technology.

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**Do you support installing solar panels on public buildings in NYC? Would you include local job creation & hire and the reinvestment of energy savings into communities most impacted by climate & economic challenges?**

**TAN:** New York City should lead the national effort to become a global leader in the manufacturing and implementation of green technology, including high efficiency solar panels and batteries.

**KOO:** Yes, see previous answer.

## GUIDE INFORMATION

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This candidates guide is based on the platform of the Faith Over Fear coalition, a group of more than 27 faith-based justice organizations in New York City, convened by Faith in New York. The content for this guide was created through a candidates survey. All answers were written directly by the candidates or their campaigns, except in some cases where answers were shortened to meet a 50 word limit due to design limitations. All candidates listed by the New York City Campaign Finance Board (NYCCFB) and the Board of Elections were invited to fill out the survey. Only candidates who completed the survey have their information included. This guide was paid for by Faith in New York Action. To view the platform and learn more about the coalition, please visit <https://faithinnewyork.org/faithoverfear>.

## VOTING INFORMATION

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The NYC primary election is Tuesday, September 12th, 2017. You must have been registered to vote in NYC by August 18th, 2017 to vote in the primary election. The NYC general election is Tuesday November 7th, 2017. You must register to vote by October 13th, 2017 to vote in the general election. On voting day, bring your voter registration card if you have it, and another form of identification just in case. Be aware that you CANNOT be barred from voting as long as you are on the voter rolls, even if you do not have a photo ID or voter registration card. You are guaranteed assistance by a poll worker or interpreter if needed. For other questions on voting, please visit <https://faithinnewyork.org/faq>, or go to the New York City Board of Elections site at <http://vote.nyc.ny.us>.

## POLLING LOCATION

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Polls are open from 6am until 9pm. Your polling site is listed on your voter registration card and can also be found online at <https://nyc.pollsitelocator.com/search> or by calling 1-866-VOTE-NYC.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION ON THE CAMPAIGNS

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With more and more money being poured into elections in our country and city, is it more important than ever to understand who funds the campaigns of our elected officials. As you consider making a decision, please visit the New York City Campaign Finance Board (NYCCFB) website at <https://www.nyccfb.info/> which provides detailed information on candidates' campaign financial information.

## CONNECT WITH US

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To pledge to vote, to attend a forum, or to simply learn more, please visit <https://faithinnewyork.org/faithoverfear>. We encourage you to follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @FaithinNewYork and use the hashtags #FaithOverFear, #FaithinNewYork, and #NYCouncil when you post your voter selfie!



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