

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD #1
HELD
FEBRUARY 17, 2004
SOUTHBRIDGE TOWERS INC
90 BEEKMAN STREET, COMMUNITY ROOM

The Chairperson, Madelyn Wils, called the meeting to order.

Public Session:

Police Officer Hoi-Ming So of the 1st Precinct advised the Board that he is retiring after many years of service to this community. He introduced his replacement, Police Officer Rudolph, who will be taking over the post as Community Liaison. Officer Rudolph introduced himself to board members, and asked that we contact him if we have any concerns regarding the community.

Steven Schall, community outreach consultant for the WTC Health Registry, wanted to remind everyone about the health registry survey, and the need for more resident participation. Mr. Schall is urging everyone to call the registry.

Florence Daniels, St. Margaret House resident, spoke to the Board and circulated petitions regarding the burden on senior citizens to pay for prescription drugs and saving Medicare, and the need to help save rent stabilization and rent control.

Robin Forst from Alan Gerson's office announced that the Councilperson is planning to hold a meeting regarding insurance issues and the cost of insurance for individuals, businesses, and residential communities. Details will be forthcoming.

Executive Session:

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on January 20, 2004 were unanimously approved.

Chairperson's Report:

- The WTC/Silverstein case will determine, for insurance purposes, whether the September 11 attack is considered to be one event or two events. If Silverstein loses this case then two other related cases will be withdrawn, but if he wins, the other two will go forward.
- Chairperson Wils went to Washington and met with the New York delegation to lobby for Liberty Bonds to be used for redevelopment of the WTC site. Under current circumstances, there will be a financial shortfall to rebuild the WTC, even if the September 11 attack is categorized as two events for insurance purposes. Therefore, Lower Manhattan will need Liberty bonds to pay for the rebuilding no matter what the Silverstein insurance matter outcome.
- The WTC Memorial design continues to be reviewed. A big issue in the design is still the 18-foot wall on West Street that makes public access difficult. Julie Menin says the jury was not told about the wall, and acknowledges that it does present a severe connectivity issue.
- The LMDC has sent out a press release indicating the cultural organizations on their short list for inclusion in the plan. The list does not preclude other appropriate cultural organizations from being considered.
- Chairperson Wils met with Goldman Sachs to discuss their desire to build a new headquarters at Site 26 in Battery Park City. Goldman Sachs would like to be a good member of the community, and would like to work with the Community Board. They are requesting an expedited ULRUP process, and will come to the Board with preliminary designs. Battery Park City Authority has requested a 75,000-s/f public space in or on the property as part of their design.
- Certification at 5C has been delayed again, but we expect it to be certified next week. We are putting a strategy together and will have a public meeting.
- Chairperson Wils received a resignation letter from board member Bob Grassi. Additionally, fellow Board Member Bernie D'Orazio has decided not to seek another term.
- A meeting was held to discuss the overcrowding in P.S. 234, how we might contain variances, the current P.S./I.S. 89 student body, and growth in the downtown area. We continue to look for a site for a new K-8 grade school for Lower Manhattan.
- We met with Andy Salkin of DOT and representatives of Citigroup regarding black cars. DOT agreed to implement the agreement reached in 2000, which allows the black cars to service people at Citigroup on Greenwich Street without being ticketed. New signs will be posted by DOT to allow TLC during certain hours.

Committee Reports:

A. Executive Committee:

The City is proposing changes to the current Cabaret Law, and came to the committee to ask for feedback once they put out their proposal. The committee expressed concerns regarding noise levels and unruly people outside the night spots. The City is seeking to draft a proposal that takes the community concerns into account.

B. WTC Redevelopment Committee:

RE: Fulton Street Transit Hub – Resolution

The resolution supports the proposed transit hub, and includes the committee’s desire to have the 92nd St. Y built in, or on top of, the transit hub. Board member Michael Connelly requested that the committee chair accept a friendly amendment to remove the 92nd St. Y reference, as the hub is supposed to allow light and air--building the Y on top of the hub would cause the design to change. Chairperson Wils noted that there are many ways to create light for the hub and still build on top of the hub.

The question was called and seconded for a vote on removing the reference to the Y with the following results: 13 In Favor; 6 Opposed; 4 Abstained; and 1 Recused. The motion did not carry.

Further discussion ensued regarding the design, and the committee chair agreed to amend the first BIFRT to remove “while opposing a commercial tower above the Fulton Transit Hub”, and adding the following: “above the hub while preserving the goal of bringing light into the station.”

The motion was called and seconded to include the revisions, and a roll call vote was taken with the following results: 22 In Favor; 6 Opposed; 5 Abstained; 1 Recused.

RE: Path Station -- Report

The WTC Path Station design by Santiago Calatrava is a beautiful design that will bring a wonderful feeling to the WTC site. The committee will stay involved in the process, and looks forward to its completion.

RE: Deutsche Bank building (130 Liberty Street) – Report

Tishman Spire is working to remove debris from the building. They are doing everything they can to be careful while cleaning the building of debris and paper. We will monitor their progress.

RE: WTC Memorial EIS – Resolution

Due to the depth of information and the length of the statement, the committee broke down the document into several sections.

Catherine McVay Hughes spoke on the environmental issues outlined in the statement. She noted that diesel is bad for neighborhood, and that the recently enacted law A19a should be implemented for all machinery to be used in the redevelopment. The three-minute idling law must be enforced, and an air-monitoring program around the site must be enacted. The plan has sustainable design guidelines that don't meet current green sustainable building guidelines. Efficiencies must be created to meet those standards. The MTA and tourist buses are to be retrofitted for low-sulfur output. The Sulfur Law goes into effect shortly, and we are requesting that other agencies follow the law.

Jeff Galloway spoke on construction issues, citing hours of construction, community outreach, and requests for mitigation measures.

Arthur Gregory voiced his concern that a "czar" be appointed who would oversee all the many parties working in the area to ensure continuity and control over the construction. This would be similar to the plan used for Route 9A, whereby construction meetings were held for all parties involved in the operation in order to control and coordinate the contractors. In addition, small businesses suffer when streets close for construction and road resurfacing--there should be some relief for those businesses.

Julie Menin spoke about noise created by the construction. The EIS Statement compared this project to other major construction projects, and reached a conclusion that this project would not have more issues than those of other large construction projects. The committee disagrees with this assessment. There is concern regarding the potential noise caused by the wind turbines. Noise monitoring must identify where the stations would be.

Michael Connelly spoke about concerns with traffic, parking, transit, and pedestrians. The committee felt that the assumptions used in this section of the EIS were baseless for the purpose of the study. The study did not account for workers and visitors using their personal cars to travel to the site, and therefore may be grossly understating the amount of cars coming downtown. The committee felt that the study understated impacts they knew would be adverse. Other transportation issues that still need to be addressed are: the need to stage black cars underground; and traffic and parking concerns for tour and commuter buses. Right now the ramp on Liberty Street is designed for truck deliveries, which means traffic will be pushed to other streets, impacting the community. Alternatives for the truck ramps should be looked at, and for truck staging on Greenwich Street. The EIS should also include any buildings that may go up in the surrounding area, and the impact of that construction. The statement looked at traffic flow that leaves the area to go to work, but also needs to look at the traffic flow coming back into the area. The committee would like to see a ruling that no private vehicles owned by the construction crews be allowed to park near the construction site.

Debra Lester, liaison to CB1 from Assembly Speaker Silvers office, advised the board that when the prior scoping document came out, Speaker Silver addressed some of these issues, and that this document does not mention the 2nd Avenue Subway and private vehicle parking for construction workers. Population increase will need to be included in the issues.

Tim Lannan discussed the neighborhood character, and pointed out that the study didn't look beyond the WTC area. The committee feels that the study needs to expand the analysis on the impact of the surrounding areas.

Bob Townley suggested that Arthur's suggestion relating to helping small businesses during construction be addressed. The request to have this issue looked at and some proposals put forth was accepted by the Chairperson.

Anthony Notaro reviewed the specifics about the Radio Frequency Electronic Fields. Board member Tim Lannan requested that some wording be added to ensure that the RFEMF's are properly monitored, and that the results of testing be published.

Jen Hensley spoke about community facilities, and expressed concern that there be adequate coverage by the NYPD and NYFD. Also included in this section was the potential impact on existing schools, libraries, day care centers, open spaces, and other amenities for the community.

CB1 expects that the LMDC and PANYNJ will continue to update and submit for review and input specific designs and proposals for investigating negative impacts addressing traffic flow, security barrier installations, and all other elements that will effect the residents, workers and visitors of Lower Manhattan.

A hand vote was taken on this resolution with the following results: 32 In Favor; 1 Opposed; 0 Abstain; and 0 Recused.

C. Tribeca Committee:

RE: The Tribeca Film Festival – Report

The Festival will be May 1-9. The Family Street Fair on Greenwich Street will be on May 8th. The fair will include the use of more side streets to mitigate congestion. The festival will have the same format as last year, and they will soon have a new web site set up.

RE: Tribeca Organization branding campaign and events – Report.

Sharon Frances-Moore, Executive Director of the Tribeca Organization, announced four events coming up in March. The weekend of March 6, 2-4 pm, there will be a concert series at the Tribeca Rooftop. A singles event in conjunction with the Tribeca Grand Hotel will be announced, events for students to speak about work, find a job, and other related areas, and a series of family fun events. There will be other events that will be posted on the Tribeca Organization's web site.

RE: 374 Greenwich Street, restaurant wine license for Hana Sushi America – Resolution

This application is for a 74-person, 19-table restaurant that will operate within the requested timeframe of the Community Board. The committee does not oppose the application, and a vote was taken with the following results: 30 In Favor; 1 Opposed, 2 Abstained; and 0 Recused.

RE: 385 Greenwich Street, liquor license application for Ivy's Bistro – Resolution

The application agreed to abide by the Community Board's guidelines, and the committee does not oppose the application. A vote was taken with the following results: 30 In Favor; 1 Opposed; 2 Abstained; 0 Recused.

D. Landmarks Committee:

RE: 302 Canal Street, application to legalize storefront constructed without Landmarks Preservation Commission approval – Resolution

The application was rejected by the commission, and therefore withdrawn by the committee.

RE: Wall Street, Exchange Place, New Street and Broad Street, application for a Master Plan governing the future installation of security devices and streetscape improvements – Resolution

This resolution pertains to the proposed security measures for the Financial District to include new streetscapes, security sectors, embedded portal bollards at various streets around the NYSE and other streets, and generally improved design of the entire area. The committee believes the plan to be a great improvement to the quality of life in the Financial District, and requests that the Community Board be afforded timely review of all improvement proposals to the area. A vote was taken on Master Plan with the following results: 30 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 1 Abstained; and 0 Recused.

RE: John St/Maiden Lane – Report

SHIPA, the New York State Agency in charge of State historical designation, was originally scheduled to come before the Board. Due to a scheduling mix-up and a need to delineate the issues involved, their attendance has been moved back. Bruce will put together an outline of issues involved for the Board and we will then have SHIPA speak to the issues.

E. Youth & Education Committee:

RE: Funding of local youth programs – Report on meeting with DYCD officials.

A meeting was held with the Department of Youth Services regarding the recent DYS cuts to youth funding, and the effects to our community. The issue remains open at this point, with no promise for additional funding.

A new RFP process is being developed by the DYCD. Mayor Bloomberg has decided to pull resources from various funding streams and pool monies together, forming a new project called Out of School Project. CB1 will be invited to attend a joint Youth Services Committee. There will be a community summit scheduled for early March at Baruch College. If communities want a voice in the process, they must get in touch with the Mayor's Office. A report is scheduled to be completed on May 15 in response to the Mayor suggestions on the RFP process and how it should be structured. The Mayor will have final input, with funding to range between \$60 to \$65 million. The agency claims there is nothing they can do about underreporting of youth in CB1 due to census data.

RE: The CB1 Youth Fair

The Youth Fair is scheduled to be held on March 25 in the Community Room at Southbridge Towers from 4 pm to 7 pm

F. Battery Park City Authority Committee:

RE: Liberty Street Bridge Elevator – Report

The bridge elevator continues to break down, and the pedestrian safety is not adequate. The bridge and elevator is operated by Brookfield Properties, and we are having dialogue with them on maintenance.

RE: Community Center at Stuyvesant High School.

Community Center operations have been taken over by the Battery Park City Parks Conservancy. The center is open evenings and weekends, with new programming being implemented.

G. Waterfront Committee:

RE: Proposed interim park uses on Pier 40 – Resolution

The proposed interim uses on Pier 40 were submitted by the HRPT, and meet the requirements in the Hudson River Park Act for fifty percent open space. The Committee supports the plan, and supports CB#2 who voted to support the plan. A roll call vote was taken with the following results: 32 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained; and 0 Recused.

RE: Proposal for a temporary covering of the NY Trapeze School – Report

The owners of the Trapeze School came before the committee to discuss the idea of creating a temporary cover for the trapeze in extremely hot, sunny, or rainy weather. The discussion of a cover centered on the issue of view corridors and the community's concern that a cover would create a barrier to the park. The owners took that information away to review their request, and how they could work with the community concerns.

H. Seaport/Civic Center Committee:

RE: Street Activity Permits for 2004 – Report

The Committee reviewed several street activity permit requests, and approved all but one permit for Hoop It Up, due to problems in the past years with this event. The committee requests that better supervision and security be implemented for this event. Rick Landman requested that the full community board vote on street fairs.

RE: Local parking problems – Update

The Community Board as been in discussion with the NYPD, and has worked out a compromise regarding double-parking around Beekman Street and outside 100 Gold Street.

RE: Brooklyn Bridge Park – Update

The Parks Department will be presenting a design proposal for a park under the Brooklyn Bridge. The park will be paid for by funds from the LMDC, in conjunction with the park revitalization plan for parks throughout Lower Manhattan. The Committee will have more to report at the next board meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairperson.