

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD #1
HELD
JANUARY 18, 2005
P.S./I.S. 89, AUDITORIUM
201 WARREN STREET

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

Public Session:

Jennifer Raiten and Thom Simonson from the American Red Cross spoke about the benefits still available from the September 11th Recovery Program. Such examples were mental health programs, financial assistance programs including short-term assistance for living expenses, financial health programs, and intensive case management programs.

Deborah Alfarone and Kristen Haines are opening a new spa in Tribeca at 18 Harrison Street.

Executive Session:

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on November 16, 2004 were adopted. There was a correction made in the number of attendees at Landmarks and Seaport/Civic Center Committees. The minutes were unanimously adopted.

Chairperson's Report:

Madelyn Wils reported that there was a meeting with the State Department of Transportation regarding alternatives for West Street.

Treasurer's Report:

Joseph Lerner presented his quarterly report on the Board's budget.

Committee Reports:

NOTE: SEE RESOLUTIONS AT END OF MINUTES

A. WTC Redevelopment Committee

It was reported that there is a plan for the deconstruction of 4 Albany Street. The time line is approximately 26 weeks.

Regarding the future of Fitterman Hall (aka 20-32 West Broadway), the President of BMCC will keep the Board updated on the plans for the site. BMCC and its Board said that the building will be coming down and be rebuilt, but it needs financial assistance to do so.

A schematic design is coming to fruition for the World Trade Center memorial site.

B. Landmarks Committee

Eric Anderson presented on behalf of the committee.

RE: 321 – 323 Church Street, application to legalize alterations to a storefront, installation of awning signs, a rooftop railing and a through-wall air conditioning unit without Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) approval

The three violations are to a one-story, noncommercial building on the corner of Lispenard Street. A new awning was installed with inappropriate dimensions and signage that does not appear to follow DOB code. The original awning was approved and it was recommended that a master plan be prepared for 321 and 323, which would bring both awnings into compliance with the DOB code and LPC practice for awnings. The rooftop railing complied with DOB code which the Committee had no objection with legalizing. The poorly installed through-wall air conditioning unit should be replaced with a roof vented system.

By a unanimous (38 member) vote, the Board resolved to recommend that the Landmarks Preservation Commission legalize the alterations.

RE: 71 Hudson Street (3 Staple Street), application for a storefront alteration.

By a unanimous vote, the Board recommends the LPC approve the application for an alteration to replace a poor infill storefront on Staple Street.

RE: 16 Hudson Street, application to construct a rooftop addition

By a unanimous vote, the Board urges LPC to reject the application. While the proposed materials are acceptable, the committee believes that, given the importance of the building, any rooftop addition should be invisible from the south, and less visible from the east than proposed in the application. If these goals can be achieved, the application will then be reconsidered and referred back to the Board for an approval.

RE: 31-33 Vestry Street, application to construct a new nine-story residential building

By a unanimous vote, the Board resolves that it urges LPC to reject the application and asks the ground floor of the site be modified by the applicant to be more transparent and to not set back from the street wall.

The Committee found the design above the first floor fresh and oddly contextual, but the Committee found the Vestry Street ground floor to be unacceptable as proposed due to its setback from the street and its extensive use of stone both on the opaque façade and at the sidewalk level within the recess.

The applicant must be referred back to the Community Board and the Tribeca Committee with its proposal if it intends to seek a BSA variance. A presentation that includes rendered elevations and a thorough study of sightlines is to be included.

C. **Battery Park City Committee**

A report on complaints regarding helicopter noise in Battery Park City was given. Tour operators are scheduled to attend the March Battery Park City Committee meeting to discuss the issue.

A traffic study performed by the Department of Transportation will be requested by the Committee regarding the pedestrian crossings on South End Avenue.

D. **Financial District Committee**

RE: 63 Wall Street, CPC special permit to allow a public parking garage with 85 spaces in the cellar level of an existing building

After extended discussion among Board members regarding the parking and public policy concerns, there was a vote of 30 in favor, 3 opposed and 3 abstaining to approve the application for a special permit pursuant to Sections 12-562 and 74-52 of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York to allow a public parking garage with 85 spaces located in the cellar level of 63 Wall Street.

RE: 55 Church Street, CPC application to permit the establishment of an open air café in an existing urban plaza

The Millennium Hilton at 55 Church Street seeks approval of an application to modify the requirements of the Zoning Resolution to permit the establishment of an open-air café in an existing urban plaza.

The hours of operation of the café would be noon until 10 PM seven days a week and there has been a proposal by the applicant to add 150 linear feet of public seating on the Fulton Street side of the plaza.

By a unanimous vote by the Board, the application for a special permit to allow the establishment of an open-air café at 55 Church Street was approved.

E. **Seaport/Civic Center Committee**

A report was given on the problem of illegal parking by vehicles with NYPD and other agency parking permits in the district. A crackdown on this abuse was requested.

There is no news to report regarding the NYU hospital site. Talks continue regarding putting a school into the new residential building.

RE: Co-naming of Duane Street for FBI agent Leonard Hatton

By a vote of 36 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention, the Board urges the City Council to co-name Duane Street between Broadway and Lafayette Streets for FBI Special Agent Leonard H. Hatton who joined NYC firefighters in evacuating occupants of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 and was killed when the towers collapsed.

F. **Tribeca Committee**

RE: 60 Hudson Street, proposal to install planters and bollards

60 Hudson Street is proposing to place a combination of planters and bollards on the West Broadway and Hudson Street perimeters of 60 Hudson Street and the Board applauds the proposal to remove the unsightly Jersey barriers, which have been put in place since September 11, 2001.

The proposal, though, does not include placement of bollards or planters on the Worth or Thomas Street sides of the building, which raises questions about why they are needed at all. Also, the proposed planters are unnecessarily large and unsightly obstructions that will occupy too much of the sidewalk, impede pedestrian flow and look inappropriate in front of this historic building.

By a vote of 36 in favor, 1 opposed and 2 abstentions, the Board would prefer that there not be any obstructions on the sidewalk in front of this building, including planters, bollards, and Jersey barriers. If it is determined by the Police Task Force on Terrorism or some other agency having jurisdiction over the security for the building that some sort of security barriers are needed for 60 Hudson Street, they should be limited to bollards, which the Board understands provide better security than planters.

If it is necessary to install planters, there should be as few as possible and they should be designed to be small and unobtrusive and complement the historic character of the landmarked building. The City should ensure that there are enforceable guarantees in place requiring these planters and the plants housed in them be maintained.

The building management, too, shall use all reasonable efforts, including but not limited to, requesting police department enforcement to keep all push-cart vendors on the street side of any security barriers.

The bus stop currently in front of the building should be maintained and there should be unrestricted access to both bus doors from the sidewalk.

Community Board #1 requests a meeting with the security consultants and designers to better understand the need for any barriers outside the building and review the actual designs for them.

G. **Tribeca Licensing Task Force**

RE: 319 Broadway, liquor license transfer for Dracula's House Inc.

By a vote of 38 in favor and 1 opposed, the Board does not oppose the transfer of the existing two-year license two years subject to compliance of the applicant with the limitations and conditions set forth below.

The applicant agrees to reduce the proposed maximum of hours of operation from the hours initially requested to 11 AM until 12 AM Sunday through Thursday and 11 AM until 2 AM Friday and Saturday.

The applicant will not be seeking a cabaret license or sidewalk café license.

The applicant represented that the kitchen in the establishment is properly vented and that all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that residents in neighboring buildings will not be bothered by cooking smells.

The applicant indicated that the establishment will continue to have live music, but represented that the insulation was adequate and agreed to operate it as a piano bar only and with not more than 3 musicians playing at any time without amplification as appropriate for an establishment located in a residential neighborhood.

The applicant has agreed to cooperate with the residents of adjacent buildings to ensure that it is operated in a reasonable manner taking into consideration its location in a residential neighborhood.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.