

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD #1
HELD
MAY 18, 2004
MUSEUM OF JEWISH HERITAGE
BATTERY PARK CITY, NEW YORK, NY

Chairperson Madelyn Wils called the meeting to order.

Public Session:

Liz Edelstein welcomed Community Board #1 on behalf of the Museum.

Jen Hensley, CB#1 Board Member, advised that The Downtown Alliance is hosting “Dine Around Downtown” tomorrow, May 19th, from 11 AM to 3 PM on the Chase Manhattan Plaza on Liberty Street.

Paul Hovitz, CB#1 Board Member, encouraged everyone to register with the 9/11 Health Registry. To date, over 30,000 people have registered, and the Registry is reaching out to encourage parents in the community to register their children. The Registry will cease registering the end of August. The interview takes approximately 20 minute, and a representative will come to your home if that’s more convenient.

Executive Session:

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on May 18, 2004 were approved unanimously.

Chairperson’s Report:

- Negotiations continue on Sites 5B and 5C. There have been a half dozen meetings with Deputy Mayor Doctoroff and the Department of Education on the “feeder school” proposal for P.S. 234 at Site 5C. Although all the issues are still being worked out, progress is being made. The plan goes to MBPO for comments by end of May. By end of June we will have better understanding on how to move forward.
- The LMDC is in the process of naming a Chairperson to head the Memorial Foundation. There are diverse views regarding the types of cultural entities vying for space, and all interested groups will have the opportunity to come forward to speak.
- A meeting was held with representatives of Pace University regarding the NYU Downtown Hospital Beekman Street Parking Lot site, to discuss what kind of relationship we can create to encourage more community amenities. We will attempt to create dialogue with Mr. Ratner, who is the developer of the site.
- Friends of Community Board #1 sponsored a resident’s poll that will be released next week. This was a follow-up to the last poll taken over a year ago. The results didn’t yield many surprises, but several points are interesting. A summary will be sent to board members once released.

- Three new board members who have been appointed: Meyer Feig, Gloria Aldamuy, and Heather Hopson.

Meyer Feig was a commercial tenant in WTC for 14 years. Meyer said he is interested in the redevelopment of WTC, and has just moved his business back downtown and would like to be involved in the rebuilding.

Gloria Aldamuy is a resident of Battery Park City. She is the former owner of David's Cookies in BPC and is interested in harbor issues and the waterfront.

Heather Hopson was not in attendance.

Committee Reports:

A. Executive Committee:

RE: The City's new West Side plan and its impact on Lower Manhattan – Resolution

The resolution was drafted in response to the proposed new West Side central business district plan. The West Side plan proposes to build a total of 28msf by 2035, which will create a glut of office/commercial space that would compete with the 10msf of commercial space planned for Lower Manhattan. The resolution points out the importance of the planned buildings for the WTC site with the first two buildings scheduled for construction and the four additional buildings planned as the demand warrants. The Hudson Yards plan requires immediate creation of commercial office buildings in order to allow for City-sponsored bonds to be repaid.

A "Whereas" was added to the resolution through a friendly amendment that refers to the recent legal decision on the Silverstein insurance matter, and the uncertainty of how that will affect the remaining office towers to be built downtown.

A roll call vote was taken with the following results: 34 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 1 Abstained, 0 Recused.

RE: Water taxis, State legislation – Report

The Community Board will be sending a letter to the State requesting that they offer the same tax benefits to New York Water Taxi that are offered to NY Waterways.

B. Nominating Committee:

Tim Lannan was pleased to report that we have board members interested in all posts. The office of Chair will have both the current Chair Madelyn Wils and board member Marc Ameruso as candidates. Vice Chair Richard Kennedy, Treasurer Joe Lerner, and Assistant Secretary Albert Capsouto will be running unopposed, and Shelia Rossi has been nominated for the office of Secretary. At the June meeting, each candidate can make a statement and hand out a 250-word document.

The slate is closed with no additional names added.

C. Battery Park City Committee:

RE: Proposed new text amendment and Goldman Sachs building on Site 26 - Resolution

BPC Site 26 is currently a parking lot located directly in front of the Embassy Suites Hotel.

Michael Ketring, Senior Development Council for the Battery Park City Authority, spoke about the zoning for Sites 25 and 26. This proposed text amendment would allow for zoning on Site 26 that corresponds with the underlying C6-6 designation, and would establish additional street wall and setback regulations. The resolution sets out the details of the text amendment. The Battery Park City Authority is pleased to have a prestigious company like Goldman Sachs building on this site.

Architect Henry Cobb of PEI Cobb Freed & Partners gave a presentation of the proposed building. Mr. Cobb said that Goldman Sachs choose this site in order to bring the many scattered offices around Lower Manhattan into one headquarters. The building will be a gold-standard environmentally friendly building. The public walkway in the back of the building will have retail, and the Hudson River Park Trust plans to create a park area in front of the building. Goldman revealed that they would be underwriting the full interior design of the public library planned for Sites 16 and 17. In addition, they committed \$1 million toward the new Community Center planned for Site 5C.

Several board members expressed concern that Goldman-associated black cars would cause congestion once the building was open. Goldman officials said they are aware of the issue, and have devised a traffic plan to alleviate any problems with black cars backing up around the building and onto the streets. A board member requested that there be no neon signs on the building, and was assured that the building would have no neon signage.

Goldman officials were asked how they would handle construction on the site. Goldman said that they follow more stringent rules, use higher standards, and use low-sulfur fuel and catalytic converters. It was noted that the resolution asks Goldman Sachs present a full construction plan to the Community Board.

A vote was taken on this resolution with the following results: 32 In Favor; 2 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 2 Recused.

D. Youth & Education Committee:

Re: Proposed “Feeder School” at Site 5C – Resolution

We were offered a few options for space at 5C, and the Department of Education understood that the community should have input. Our opposition to the proposal was withdrawn. Councilmember Alan Gerson was at meeting, and we thank him for his support. The Youth Committee will discuss this at next meeting. The overcrowding issue at PS 234 is addressed in this resolution, with input from the principal of P.S. 234. The Committee also discussed eliminating cluster rooms. There would be a separate principal or assistant principal to oversee the pre-K – K program at P.S. 234. The principal asked that PS 234 not become a bigger school, and stated that it has worked well at 650-700 children. We are asking that the school not grow past 700 students.

A vote was taken on this resolution with the following results: 34 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 0 Recused.

RE: International Children’s Center – Report

There was a resolution that was inadvertently omitted in this package; therefore we will present it at our next meeting.

RE: Proposed new childcare center – Report

The Committee is looking at this issue and will report to the full board when there is more information.

RE: Murray Bergtraum HS Youth Contract – Report

The Committee found that there are no children from CB#1 who benefit from the Youth Services funds. Madelyn generated a letter to the Youth Bureau and our elected officials, requesting that CB#1 be consulted on all further contracts being awarded in order to avoid granting awards that do not serve the children of our community.

E. Financial District Committee:

RE: Battery Park Carousel, concept design – Resolution

The Battery Park Conservancy is planning to erect an aquatic-themed carousel in the park. The proposal and the design were well-received by the Committee, and we fully support the amenity.

A vote was taken with the following results: 34 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 0 Recused.

RE: Street Fair proposed for Pearl Street - Resolution

The Committee approved this application, which will be raising money for the Sloan Kettering Children’s Cancer Center.

A vote was taken with the following results: 33 In Favor; 1 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 0 Recused.

F. WTC Redevelopment Committee:

RE: WTC Final Environmental Impact Statement – Resolution

The resolution was reviewed with a few minor changes that include: Retail – made language stronger by replacing the words “consider accommodating” with the word “relocate”.

The Committee Chair commended the entire committee for their hard work and dedication to this issue, and for the fine resolution that was crafted.

A vote was taken on this resolution with the following results: 33 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 0 Recused.

G. Landmarks Committee:

RE: 51-53 Walker Street, Application to construct a new nine-story building – Resolution

This resolution urges the LPC to hold over this matter until the application returns to the Landmarks Committee of CB#1 with requested information.

The vote was taken on this resolution with the following results: 32 In Favor; 0 Opposed, 0 Abstained; 1 Recused.

RE: 133 Beekman Street, application to replace rooftop mechanical equipment – Resolution

This resolution was changed at the full board meeting from requesting that the LPC hold over the application, to read that the Committee approves the application.

A vote was taken with the following results: 33 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 0 Recused.

RE: 60 Hudson Street, application to create a building-wide master plan for the installation of storefront and window louvers, and mechanical equipment at the building setbacks – Resolution

Due to many unanswered questions regarding the application, the Committee requests that the application be held over by the LPC until further analysis can be studied.

A vote was taken with the following results: 34 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 0 Recused.

H. Tribeca Committee:

RE: 137-141 Duane Street, liquor license application for Rosanjin – Resolution

The application is for a restaurant that will have 7 tables and 16 seats. The committee does not oppose the application. A vote was taken with the following results: 29 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 5 Abstained; 0 Recused.

RE: 134 Reade Street, liquor license application for NYRU, Inc. – Resolution

The application is for a restaurant that will have 26 tables and 70 seats. The committee does not oppose the application. A vote was taken with the following results: 30 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 4 Abstained; 0 Recused.

RE: 228 West Broadway, sidewalk application for 5 tables and 10 seats – Resolution

The Committee does not oppose the new liquor license application. A vote was taken with the following results: 33 In Favor; 0 Opposed; 1 Abstained; 0 Recused.

RE: 25 Hudson Street, liquor license application for Shinob – Resolution

This application is for a restaurant with 25 tables with 110 seats. The Committee does not oppose the new liquor license application. A vote was taken with the following results: 33 In Favor; 3 Opposed; 0 Abstained; 1 Recused.

I. Waterfront Committee:

The Governors Island Alliance will be holding a focus group session on the island on Saturday, June 12. It would be beneficial for members of CB#1 to attend, to ensure that our voice is heard on the amenities we feel are important on the island. If you can attend, please give your name to Judy Duffy.

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