

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF  
PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT FUND GOVERNING GROUP, INC.**  
*February 13, 2020*

The annual Meeting of the Members and Directors of the East Midtown Public Realm Improvement Fund Governing Group was held at 1:16 p.m. on February 13, 2020 at 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

Public notice of this meeting was given and posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

The meeting was chaired by Council Member Powers, Vice-Chairperson of the Governing Group, on behalf of Deputy Mayor Been, Chairperson of the Governing Group.

The following Members were present:

- Hon. Keith Powers, Council Member for District 4
- Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
- Dan Garodnick, Designee of Speaker of the Council
- Susan Chin, Executive Director of the Design Trust for Public Space

The following Members acted by proxy:

- Sandy McKee, Member and Designee of Manhattan Community Board Six
- Vicki Been, Deputy Mayor of Housing and Economic Development
- Marisa Lago, Director of the NYC Department of City Planning
- James Patchett, President of the NYC Economic Development Corporation
- Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Transportation
- Melanie Hartzog, Director of the NYC Office of Management and Budget
- Mitchell Silver, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation
- Lorraine Grillo, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Design & Construction

The following Member was not present:

- Manhattan Community Board Five

The following Directors and Alternate Directors were present:

- Hon. Keith Powers, Council Member for District 4
- Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
- Dan Garodnick, Designee of the Speaker of the Council
- Molly Hollister, Member and Alternate Director of Manhattan Community Board Six
- Susan Chin, Appointee of the Design Trust for Public Space

- Pedram Mahdavi, Alternate Director for Deputy Mayor of Housing and Economic Development
- Bob Tuttle, Alternate Director for the Director of the Department of City Planning
- Kim Vaccari, Alternate Director of the President of the Economic Development Corporation
- Lizette Christoff, Alternate Director for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget
- Ed Pincar, Alternate Director of the Department of Transportation
- Nicholas Molinari, Alternate Director for the Commissioner of the Department of Parks and Recreation
- Jamie Torres-Springer, Alternate Director for the Commissioner of the NYC Department of Design & Construction

The following representative was present:

- Layla Law-Gisiko, Member and representative of Manhattan Community Board Five

The Meeting of Members commenced, a quorum being present.

1. **Directors and Alternate Directors:** It was announced that elections were in order to elect an Alternate Director of the corporation. There were no questions or comments. Upon a motion made and unanimously carried, a resolution was adopted for the membership sections at issue to elect the following Alternate Director.

**Alternate Director:**  
Kate Theobald

The Meeting of Directors commenced, a quorum being present.

1. **Adoption of Meeting Minutes:** It was announced that adoption of the meeting minutes from the Meeting of Members and Directors, held on December 13, 2019, was in order. Director Chin noted a correction to the Update on MTA Improvements section to reflect ridership at the proposed 51st Street Station on the Lexington Avenue line is projected to be 8,000 weekday entries and exits. Director Torres-Springer note a correction that he represents the NYC Department of Design & Construction. There were no further questions or comments. Upon a motion made and unanimously carried, the meeting minutes were adopted.
2. **Development Update:** Director Tuttle noted that there were no changes to the update provided during the previous meeting in December. He did note that the opening of One Vanderbilt continued to be scheduled for August 2020.
3. **Project Updates:** It was announced that DDC and DOT would present an update on several projects within East Midtown. Director Torres-Springer provided an update on two items: (1) Pershing Square East pedestrian plaza, and (2) Pershing Square West pedestrian plaza.

#### Pershing Square East pedestrian plaza

- Capital budget | \$15M
- Project schedule
  - Design | Summer 2020
  - Procurement | Winter 2020
  - Construction | Summer 2022
- Current phase | Preliminary design
- Amenities | Seating, trees and plantings, wayfinding, LinkNYC, bikeshare, lighting
- Additional components | pedestrian security measures, emergency vehicle access

#### Pershing Square West pedestrian plaza

- Capital budget | \$12M
- Project schedule | Opened summer 2019
- Current phase | Final elements to be installed in first quarter of 2020
- Amenities | Seating, trees and plantings, lighting, drinking fountain

Director Pincar provided an update on two items: (1) Lexington Avenue thoroughfare improvements, and (2) 43rd Street shared street.

#### Lexington Avenue thoroughfare improvements, between 45th and 57th streets

- Capital budget | \$12.8M
- Current phase | Scoping
- Components | Pedestrian safety improvements

In response to a question from Director Garodnick, Director Pincar explained that a subsurface investigation of the area identified some underground utility conflicts at locations that were identified for bulbouts, which will result in some changes to the number and location of bulbouts.

#### 43rd Street shared street, between Lexington and Third avenues

- Capital budget | \$17.7M
- Project schedule | Construction in summer 2023
- Current phase | Preliminary design

Director Pincar noted that the preliminary design will include lessons learned during the temporary layout phase of the project, which included a painted gravel treatment, planters, granite blocks, and flexible delineators.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Powers, Director Torres-Springer explained that the project schedule may be altered depending on conversations and design iterations to address the needs of the Chrysler Building. Director Pincar added that conversations were ongoing with the property owner and GCPBID about the best design choices to address the delivery needs of the Chrysler Building and the enjoyment of the space by pedestrians.

4. **Park Avenue Median Engagement:** Casey Gorrell, DOT Pedestrian Unit, previewed a presentation being developed for community outreach sessions. Mr. Gorrell discussed the avenues history, existing number of moving and parking lanes, and the pedestrian and vehicular safety statistics for the past five years. He noted that left- and right-hand turns block traffic in moving lanes and can result in aggressive speeding patterns. He also explained that the pedestrian crossing to the median requires crossing 45 feet, which is four lanes of traffic.

Mr. Gorrell explained that there are passive and active green space treatments that could be used in the redesigned medians. He discussed that a variety of options will be discussed at the public sessions to gauge interest in various types of treatments, including benches, plantings, a small park, and a walkable and bikeable corridor.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Powers, Director Pincar confirmed that DOT has jurisdiction of the medians. In response to a question from Hon. Director Brewer, Director Pincar confirmed that the various groups that maintain the medians have been informed about the trainshed construction project and the redesign of the medians.

In response to questions from Director Garodnick and Director Chin, Mr. Gorrell explained that DOT is considering an option that maintains two moving lanes, left-hand turn bays as needed, and a parking lane in both directions.

In response to a question from representative Law-Gisiko, Mr. Gorrell confirmed that DOT analyzed the use of alternating pedestrian phase (a/k/a pedestrian scramble) at complex and standard intersections. He explained that this type of phasing often reduces the amount of time allocated to pedestrian crossing since there is a phase when only vehicles can move. He noted that this can work in some situations but often isn't beneficial at standard intersections, like along Park Avenue, where it can lead to more pedestrian and vehicular conflicts if pedestrians choose to cross during the vehicular phase.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Brewer, Mr. Gorrell stated that the proposed street treatments were similar to those used elsewhere in the city but that looking at examples beyond NYC could be done.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Brewer, Director Pincar noted that DOT is working to identify a partner to maintain the medians, which will be especially necessary if the non-standard DOT materials are used. Fred Cerullo, GCPBID President and CEO, noted that governance of the medians is also something that GCPBID is discussing.

In response to questions from Director Garodnick, Mr. Cerullo, GCPBID President and CEO, explained that GCPBID had worked on a visioning session with a variety of stakeholders to identify some core principles including where there should be beautification and where there should be activation. Director Pincar and Douglas Adams, Mayor's Office of Capital Project Development, noted that the City had met with GCPBID regarding its efforts and ideas and that coordination would continue throughout the community outreach process.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Powers, Director Pincar clarified that construction of the trainshed by MNR will require certain portions of the street being replaced more than once throughout the trainshed reconstructions timeline.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Brewer regarding the Waldorf Astoria returning to service as a hotel and residence, Director Pincar noted that they would consider how loading and unloading may affect traffic in the area and if any new rules will be required.

5. **Capital Expenditure Report:** Director Christoff provided an update regarding the \$50M the City provided as seed money for public realm improvement projects in the East Midtown area. She noted that \$46M of the funds being held by the City have been allocated to projects, \$4M remains unallocated, and \$3.7M has been committed to projects.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Powers, Director Christoff explained that the reason OMB reports on the \$50M of City funding and EDC, as the PRIF Treasurer, reports on contributions to the PRIF is because the funds are held in separate accounts.

In response to a question from Director Garodnick, Director Christoff clarified that the \$500K in other funding to the 43rd Street shared street project is from City Council.

In response to a question from Director Chin, Director Christoff clarified that engineering work to narrow the design of a project is eligible and included as a capital cost.

In response to a question from Director Vaccari, Director Christoff and Director Tuttle confirmed that the Zoning Resolution requires that the PRIF be used only for capital costs and doesn't allow for expenditures such as maintenance expenses. Director Chin stated that it might be worth the group looking at using interest earned from contributions to the PRIF to cover maintenance costs. Director Pincar noted that DOT partners with private entities to maintain its public plazas. Representative Law-Gisiko requested that all funding options be explored before using money from the PRIF for maintenance expenses. The conversation concluded with adding this topic as an agenda item to the next meeting.

6. **Treasurer's Investment Report:** Director Vaccari provided an update regarding funds in the PRIF. She noted that the account balance is \$42M, investment income is \$64K, and \$544K is in a checking account for expenses such as audit fees.
7. **JPMorgan Chase Plaza Project Overview:** Devin Maher, of JPMorgan Chase (JPMC), presented the proposed design for a plaza at 270 Park Avenue (a/k/a JMPC Headquarters), which is currently being redeveloped. He noted that demolition of the 53-story tower and podium was underway, and that construction of the new building's foundations had also begun. Mr. Maher discussed that the POPS would be 10K square feet and include amenities such as a food kiosk, fixed and moveable seating, trees and plantings, water features, and artwork.

The Hon. Director Powers and representative Law-Gisiko commented that the location of the existing subway station entrance within the boundaries of the POPS reduced the amount of

useable space below 10K square feet. Mr. Maher responded that they would look further into options.

In response to a question from Hon. Director Brewer, Mr. Maher noted they are looking into programming options for public events in the space. Representative Law-Gisiko stated that Manhattan Community Board 5 would be interested in talking with JPMC further about programming when more details are known.

Representative Law-Gisiko noted that Manhattan Community Board 5 was pleased with much of the design. She noted that water elements seemed too large for the space and should have some verticality.

In response to a question from the Hon. Director Powers and representative Law-Gisiko, Mr. Maher stated that the transaction between JPMC and MTA was a public document and that they could provide additional information on that topic as a follow-up.

8. **Business Improvement District Update:** Mr. Cerullo noted that much of his report had been touched upon previously in the meeting. He expressed appreciation for the opening of Pershing Square West and stated that it was a great addition to the area. Mr. Cerullo noted that they continue working with DOT and area stakeholders regarding the Pershing Square East pedestrian plaza and 43rd Street shared street. He stated that they look forward to continued public engagement regarding the Park Avenue medians including a temporary vision during construction. Mr. Cerullo encouraged the group to continue discussing how it might help with maintenance costs for the new public spaces.
9. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting of the Board of Directors was adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

## COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

**ABO** | NYS Authorities Budget Office  
**BID** | business improvement district  
**CPC** | NYC City Planning Commission  
**DCP** | NYC Department of City Planning  
**DDC** | NYC Department of Design and Construction  
**DEP** | NYC Department of Environmental Protection  
**DOB** | NYC Department of Buildings  
**EMP** | East Midtown Partnership BID  
**FDNY** | Fire Department of the City of New York  
**GCP** | Grand Central Partnership BID  
**LIRR** | Long Island Rail Road  
**MNR** | Metro-North Railroad  
**MTA** | Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
**NYCEDC** | NYC Economic Development Corporation  
**NYCT** | New York City Transit  
**NYPD** | NYC Police Department  
**OMB** | NYC Office of Management and Budget  
**PAAA** | Public Authorities Accountability Act  
**POPS** | Privately owned public space