

Committee Board 12- Manhattan
Business Development- Meeting Minutes
March 5, 2019

Committee Members Present

Eleazar Bueno, Chair
Tanya Bonner
Domingo Estevez
Sara Fisher
Francisco Lopez
Debbie Nabavia
Bruce Robertson

Committee Members Absent

Glenis Aquino

Board Members Present

Richard Altman

Guests: Councilman Mark Levine, Jackie Tesman, Avenue NYC Program Manager

Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. with quorum. BD Committee Chair Eleazar Bueno opened the meeting by welcoming Committee members and guests.

Bueno introduced Jackie Tesman, Avenue NYC and CLOTH Program Manager. Ms. Tessman is going to present the findings of the CDNA (Commercial District Needs Assessment) conducted all last year completed on September 2018.

Jackie was first introduced by Madelaine Britt, Neighborhood 360 and SBS Program Manager to highlight CDNA overview and its current funding source. She mentioned CDNA is funded by a Federal Government program for Low Income Neighborhoods LMI through a Community Development Block Grant. This grant is an opportunity for community organizations throughout NYC to access resources that supports commercial districts just like the partnership with CLOTH.

CDNA first is about partnerships, understanding organizations in the community, stakeholders, reaching out to property owners, corridor inventory, store fronts conditions, street sidewalk conditions, community engagement and consumer reach out.

How to actively implement Ave NYC program?

Jackie's data reflect the following data:

Neighborhood context. 394 surveys were taking in WAHI. The surveys were taken in the BWY business corridor bet 155th-178th Street and the St. Nicholas Ave 165-178th Street.

The population of approx. 100,000 people comprised of 71% latino, 12% white, 12% black, 1% Asian, 1 % of different nationalities. 65% of the latino population is of Dominican descent, 10% and growing Mexican. The Average Median Income is \$40,000 and 22% live below the poverty line.

The key takeaways are:

The storefront vacancy rate is 20%.

Broadway Corridor between 155-178th street Broadway total number of stores is 304 stores. 65 total vacant storefronts.

St. Nicholas Ave Corridor between 165-178th Street total number of stores is 144. 21 total vacants storefronts

Most leases are coming to their 10-15 years lease terms.

Most foot traffic comes institutions like Columbia whose patients and employees patronize small businesses.

Out the total 448 total business inventory, on the Broadway corridor the top 3 businesses types are: Full and limited services Restaurants, Hair/Nail Salons and Barbershops.

On the St. Nicholas Ave corridor the top 3 are: Coffee Shops. Hair/Nail Salons/Barbershops, and Clothing stores.

Storefronts conditions are average and depend on the type of business. Sidewalk and garbage pickup and conditions depends on city or private services provided. Trash overflow, Health issues, signage improvement, scaffolding, parking congestion, trash management, need of bike racks are amongst the primary needs.

On the Merchant surveys key findings:

Avg business is coming to their 12 year lease term.

There need to be more community events to increase traffic.

50% of the community members patronize businesses on the corridor daily.

Strengths are the community events of places like United Palace that bring a lot of folks in our community.

Sally asked to change the average of the real conditions of the study, Jackie mentioned that there's not comparison study to gauge it.

The study, Jackie mentioned, phases first the study and then the program implementation. The implementation entails business support and retention. The federal programs are very limited in its funding.

The type of businesses included on the CDNA can influence on the kind of investment business investors need to make financial decisions. 457 million leave Inwood every year.

Jackie mentioned the analysis of the study is to make people stay and not to attract more.

Mark Levine was introduced to talk about the SBJSA bill. He talked about the difficulty of store owners difficulty of paying rent on the storefronts. Councilman provided an example of how an entire strip of Broadway and 162th Street has been vacant for over 4 years.

Councilman Levin also pointed out how the bill has now more support with 29 votes and needing only 34, a third of the total votes of 52, to reach the floor for vote. He's also trying to introduce legislation to Landmark small businesses so that the city pays for the difference of the rent between existent and the increase.

The bill is now on Central Staff being legally vetted the same way any bill written is. The bill has the Mayor, REBNY and small bldg owners as their main oppositors.

The biggest hurdle the bill now has it the arbitrator component, where according to the speaker it can lead to corruption since the final rent established can be influenced by corruption.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.