

# Manhattan Community Board 3

## COMMUNITY GROUP PRINCIPLES AND PROTOCOLS

### **Executive Summary**

Community Board 3 ("CB3") is committed to encouraging and facilitating public participation in political process. To that end, CB3 has developed the procedures described below to facilitate communications between CB3, Community Groups ("CGs") and any individuals or groups that may come before a CB3 committee ("Applicants"). For a comprehensive discussion of CB3 principles relating to interactions between CGs and Applicants, see [page 2](#).

### *Procedures and Protocols*

1. CB3 will post on its website contact information for CGs and Applicants. If you are part of a CG that wishes to be listed on CB3's website, please follow the instructions on [page 3](#) and complete the one page [Listing Form](#).
2. CGs are welcome to submit or provide testimony to CB3 in any manner that they choose. To aid CGs in the submission of testimony, CB3 has created a voluntary comment form ("[CG Comment Form](#)") that any CG may elect to use in connection with its comments on any CB3 agenda item. If your CG would like to use this form, or would like to review CB3's suggested "best practices" in setting up meetings and dealing with Applicants, please see the discussion on [page 4](#).
3. Any CG wishing to utilize the [CG Comment Form](#) may submit the form via e-mail to the CB3 office by noon on the business day prior to the relevant committee meeting (e.g., by noon Friday for a committee meeting occurring on Monday evening). Such form will be distributed to relevant CB3 members in advance of a meeting. [CG Comment Forms](#) (and testimony in any other form) also may be delivered in person to a CB3 committee chair prior to the start of a meeting or presented to the respective CB3 committee.

### **Community Board 3: Principles Regarding Community Groups and Applicants**

- CB3 values the input of all community stakeholders.
- In order to effectively and efficiently promote communications between CGs and Applicants, CB3 will publicize contact information for CGs and Applicants on the CB3 website.
- Applicants are expected to reach out to the relevant CG(s) in advance of the respective CB3 committee hearing at which their agenda item(s) are to be addressed. CB3 members may weigh an Applicant's attempt(s), or failure to attempt, to contact the relevant CG(s) when discussing and voting on agenda item(s).
- CGs are strongly encouraged to reach out to the relevant Applicant(s) in advance of the respective CB3 committee hearing at which any agenda item(s) of concern to such CG may be addressed. CGs do not need to wait to be contacted by an Applicant.
- The posting of CG information online does not constitute an endorsement of or support by CB3 of any CG or position. Rather, the information is intended to allow self-identifying CGs and Applicants to meet and discuss Agenda Items in advance of committee meetings. CB3 takes no position as to what qualifies or does not qualify as a self-identifying Community Group.
- Nothing in these procedures and protocols is intended in any way to limit or restrict the right of any individual or group to participate in any CB3 meeting. **No individual or group shall in any way be prohibited from addressing or submitting materials to CB3 committees, regardless of whether or not such individual or group is listed on the CB3 website or has previously met with an Applicant or elects to use a CG Comment Form.**
- In all instances, CB3 will fairly and impartially review any and all statement of all parties appearing before it.

### **Listing a CG's Information on the CB3 Website**

- 1) Any CG that would like to be listed on the CB3 website should complete to the best of its ability and return to the CB3 District Office the required form ("[\*\*Listing Form\*\*](#)") detailing basic information, contact information and the committees of interest to the group. *Note that all information included on the Listing Form will be publicly available on the CB3 website.*
- 2) The CB3 District Office will create and maintain a consolidated listing of all CGs, along with contact information, and post it on the CB3 website.
  - a. CGs are responsible for updating the information on their Listing Form whenever it changes by contacting the CB3 District Office, and to affirm its accuracy as prompted by the CB3 District Office (i.e. annually).
  - b. The CB3 District Office will use its best efforts to post new and/or updated submissions to the CB3 website promptly after receipt of such submissions.
  - c. The CB3 District Office may remove a CG from the website if (i) a CG requests to be removed from the website; or (ii) the CB3 District Office determines, in consultation with the CB3 Executive Committee, that a CG has become inactive. If any CG is removed from the CB3 website, such CG may request to be added back to the CB3 website at any time, and the CB3 District Office will use its best efforts to post such CG's information to the website promptly after receipt of such request.
- 3) CB3 takes no position on the qualifications, rights, or responsibilities of any self-identifying CG listed on the CB3 website. As a result, CB3 will not monitor or police the actions of a CG in connection with the process outlined herein.

## **CB3's "Best Practices" For Community Group & Applicant Interactions**

### **Communications/Meetings Between Applicants and Community Groups**

- 1) CG contact information will be posted on the CB3 website, along with their geographic area(s) of concern and CB3 committee(s) of concern.
- 2) Applicants that will appear before a given CB3 committee should review the CG listings on the CB3 website as early as possible to identify CGs within the geographic area of their application/activity/agenda item to determine if the CG has identified that committee as a committee of interest.
- 3) CB3 expects Applicants to reach out to the applicable CG(s) to open a line of communication and potentially determine if one or more CGs are interested in meeting in advance of a CB3 committee meeting to discuss the relevant agenda item(s).
  - NOTE: CGs do not need to wait to be contacted by the Applicant. CGs are strongly encouraged to proactively reach out to Applicants once the monthly committee agenda, along with Applicant contact info, is posted on the CB3 website on the last Wednesday of each month.
- 4) CB3 strongly encourages Applicants and/or CGs to use their best efforts to publicly advertise and make publicly accessible any meetings held in advance of a CB3 meeting. For the convenience of CGs, CB3 has developed a [\*\*Public Meeting Notice\*\*](#) template that CGs may choose to use to advertise their meetings.

### **Submitting Testimony & Utilizing CG Comment Forms**

- 1) Any CGs wishing to submit comments with respect to one or more agenda items may choose to present oral or written testimony at any CB3 meeting in the manner they deem most appropriate. CB3 has developed a voluntary CG Comment Form for any CGs needing assistance in preparing and compiling relevant information for any agenda item.
- 2) CGs may elect to utilize the CG Comment Form available on the CB3 website and can complete such form to the best of their ability. Note that the use of the CG Comment Form and the answers to any questions therein are entirely voluntary, and any CG may submit testimony in the manner they deem most appropriate.
  - CG Comment Forms delivered to the CB3 District Office via e-mail by noon on the business day prior to the relevant committee meeting (e.g., by noon Friday for a committee meeting occurring on Monday evening) will be distributed to the CB3 committee members prior to such meeting.
  - CG Comment Forms may also be delivered in person to the respective CB3 committee chair prior to the start of a committee meeting.
- 3) Written testimony, including CG Comment Forms, may be presented orally to committee members by a representative of the CG or read into the minutes by the committee chair.

- 4) Applicants will be given an opportunity at the CB3 committee meeting to affirm or rebut any content in any relevant testimony, including CG Comment Form(s).
- 5) CB3 committee members may review submitted testimony, including CG Comment Forms, and exercise discretion to give whatever weight to such forms, if any, as they deem appropriate.
- 6) CGs, and any interested individual or group, are still free to attend and participate in any CB3 meeting in accordance with existing procedures. The sole purpose of the voluntary CG Comment Form is to create a streamlined option for CGs to present their position on behalf of their membership and potentially avoid the need for duplicative testimony. Use of the CG Comment Form is entirely voluntary, and CB3 will not require any CG to use the CG Comment Form.