



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.ManhattanCB4.org

JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND

Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.

District Manager

PUBLIC MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, September 3, 2008

TIME: Public hearings begin at 6:30 p.m., meeting to follow

PLACE: Fulton Center Auditorium, 119 Ninth Avenue (17/18)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

MEETING AGENDA

Public Session	John Weis
Adoption of Agenda	Jean-Daniel Noland
Adoption of Last Month's Minutes	
Reports	
Manhattan Borough President	Angelica Crane
Local Elected Officials	Various
District Manager	Robert J. Benfatto, Jr.
Chair	Jean-Daniel Noland
Nominating Committee (Election)	Lee Compton
Committee Reports	Jean-Daniel Noland
Committee Letters & Resolutions (letters and resolutions, see reverse)	Jean-Daniel Noland
Old Business	Jean-Daniel Noland
New Business	
Adjournment	

PUBLIC SESSION

Maria Passannante Derr – spoke out against the DOS garage plan: “This plan sticks.”

Phil Mouquinho, member of CB2, speaks out against the DOS garage and salt shed; says CB2 and CB4 are being pitted against each other, and that we were sold a package in coordination with Hudson River Park. Let's stick together on this one.

Michael Kramer, St John's, former member of CB4, spoke against garage; says this is a chess game that is being played. CB2 and CB4 are being pitted against each other.

Mark Ameruso, from CB1 in lower Manhattan, works with John Lamb, doesn't want to let the Mayor pit CB vs. CB; he is willing to accept 2 sites, but 3 is too many.

Thomas Shevlin, spoke out against police raids on Pacha, and their destroying Pride Weekend events; the fact that police chose Pride Weekend to close down this and several other clubs is a slap to the gay community.

Councilmember David Yassky, from NW Brooklyn, Park Slope/Brooklyn Heights/Williamsburg, spoke about development; says there is no provision made for new schools in new development plans; wants feedback regarding development proposals; urges that before significant rezoning, each of fire/school etc would provide input on required infrastructure.

Allison Tupper, is concerned about Ram Lounge, item 8, and yet another club that brings a big crowd to the neighborhood.

Kathy Casey requests that issues regarding NY Public Library be put on agenda of Quality of Life Committee; complaints about no temporary site for teens collections; extreme problems with central children's room collections; says top library executives lie.

Mary Schwartz, president of Save Chelsea, spoke against proposed sanitation facility/garage; strongly urges board not to recommend garage plan.

David Glasser, rose to speak against strip club on 23 St./7th Avenue; says based on recent experience, strip club brings crime to the area. One of the owners of the strip club was fined in a Las Vegas club in which he has an interest. Lisa Daglian asks Glasser to return with documentation before committee.

Representative from NY Metropolitan Transportation Council discussed group and their planning forum to address transportation-related issues. See website: nymtc.org, and flyers in the back of the room. See webcast on 18th to learn about project policy.

Rachel Jaffe, attorney at Housing Conservation Coordinators (HCC), discussed the organization, which works on protecting lower income coops, reviewing drafting, leases and representing non-profits in administrative proceedings for clients that qualify for HCC services. For information call Rachel at 212 541 5996; Located at 777 10 Ave (between 52/53 St).

Jimmy Fin, seeks landmark support for IRT Powerhouse, 11/12 Av. between 58/59 St., which is owned by the City but leased to Con Ed. The building was put up for landmark status and lost in 1978 and 1991. He would like support as they approach Landmark Commission.
Email: interboro.group@gmail.com, 917 494 3586. Goal is landmark status to avoid alterations.

Kim Tabit discussed District 5 trucks; says it's an unfair, uncooperative position; her neighborhood has already agreed to house trucks for 2 districts, but 3 is unacceptable. Go to Spring and Greenwich St. and see if it's an industrial area! A big building would cut off the neighborhood; urges Board not to ratify letter.

Lisa Wager, FIT Community relations, announced Saturday and Sunday live classes for NYC high school students; classes are very affordable. Classes replicate the FIT curriculum. Separately, they have "hot topics" for adults (up to 135-300 classes). FIT is a SUNY college.

END OF PUBLIC SESSION

NEW BUSINESS

JD Noland, Chair, proposed slight changes to the agenda; defer item 3 to next month;

Burt Lizarin proposes new item 21 to address Tom Shevlin's questions/issue regarding police raids on Pacha during Pride Weekend and address the issue that Pride weekend was harmed.

ELECTEDS REPORTS

Borough President Scott Stringer representative Angelica Crane announced release of a report on NYCHA housing. NYCHA has 30 million square feet of development rights (11 empire state buildings); point of report is to get public input and work with tenants/community leaders on use of these development rights.

Councilmember Gale Brewer, recently returned from Democratic convention in Denver; Brewer discussed several issues: 1) development projects: Sheffield 322 W57st, building has issues inside/outside, thanks to CB4 for their input; 2) Nations School on W57St - issue is the use of IDA bonds to finance the school; understanding is that in state

legislature approval for IDA funding is on hold; Brewer says “yes” to some scholarships for the community, but perhaps this is not enough for IDA funding; budgeted lab money for Independence HS and applauds work on a green spaces project outside the school; finally; concerned about lamppost signs.

Assembly Member Dick Gottfried's representative Michael Cather(?) reports that Gottfried is concerned about phony demolitions, in which landlords evict tenants but don't actually tear down the building. Gottfried is disappointed with budget cuts.

Speaker Christine Quinn liason Melanie Larocca, reports about 11 items in the packet, including rally for tenant harassment bill; bike lane on 9th Av between 23-31 St.

Comptroller Bill Thompson's representative Sandra Duque reports that Controller has collected over \$1 million in damages to city property for 5th year in a row; extended deadline for claims regarding flood of last summer; Sept. 16 is Russian Heritage Celebration;

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT & CHAIR COMMENTS

Bob Benfatto, District Manager, reports

- Only 21 items on agenda.
- 621 W46 St on SLA board vote was 1-1 tie; hence they lost;
- 540 9th Ave. soon to be DT Lingerie store, looks like rows of small booths. Technically is this an “adult establishment.”
- Sep 15. CB is co-sponsoring Hudson Yards Forum at 457 W51 St;
- Hudson Park design proposals at 441W26 St, Sept 22 6:30pm. Citizens committee questionnaire.

JD Noland, Chair comments. Tony Juliano has agreed to head the small business forum. Tony mentioned that the Forum will explore solutions on the problem of disappearing small businesses and “mom and pop” shops. Elected have expressed interest in this forum.

JD says Christine Berthet suggests that board take up a study group regarding sidewalks – they don't belong to us?

JD hands the floor to David Pincus to discuss the theatre task force. David explains: Theaters are small businesses faced with extraordinary high rents, and are losing long-term leases. What practically can be done to support small theaters? What can we do to support survival of small theaters? These are the issues to be dealt with in this task force. Participation is welcomed.

JD calls on Anna Hayes Levin to discuss important meetings this month. Anna reports that we're back to work on the railyards; Related was selected, they must rezone western half of the railyard and perform an environmental study; Related agreed to make a presentation to the community; Hudson Railyards Forum is scheduled for Monday Sept. 15, at Sacred Heart School, 457 W51 St., Campbell Hall. City has been working on selecting a landscape architect on “boulevard to nowhere”, Sept 22 at Hudson Guild, 441 W26st. Ask Anna for details.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – LETTERS & RESOLUTIONS

Executive Meeting

Item 1: Letter to DCP re Block 670, DOS Garage (ratification)

CB normally does not comment on matters regarding other districts, but EIS mentions alternatives in CB4. member comments that the future of sanitation garages is to build up.

Item 1 passes overwhelmingly
1 abstain

Item 2: Letter to DOT re Chelsea Improvement Company streetscape improvements

Item 3: Letter to DOT re support for Tri-State Transportation Alternative's pedestrian safety plan

Item 4: Letter to CECM re NFL Week

Jay Marcus is upset that we didn't get sufficient notification for NFL kickoff event at Columbus Circle. This is a major closing of city streets. We think this is more like a street activities permit.

Anna Levin has concerns: private use of public space; Columbus Circle is a major thoroughfare –concern about closing this; neighborhood residents concerned; urges that we request a meeting on how these events are planned in the future.

Item 5: Meeting Policy

member ask what if a business person wants to meet with individual members; individual members should not necessarily meet with business people but rather funnel meetings through the chair.

Tony says meetings should happen to allow CB4 to function smoothly.

Lee Compton stresses that it would be unethical to do side deals. We must do everything possible to be sure it won't be tolerated. It's OK to meet, but not for consideration.

Hugh Weinberg adds that if anyone has knowledge of unethical practices, it must be reported. Committee Chairs have flexibility to select or chose people that attend meetings. The Chair should avoid a quorum, hence preventing an official board meeting, which must be open to the public.

Kirkland support the policy.

Passes

Quality of Life/Education, Libraries, and Cultural Affairs (QoL)

No items to report

Business Licenses & Permits Committee (BLP)

Item 6: Letter to SLA re SD Hospitality Corp.d/b/a The Pony– 637 10th Ave (45)

Items together: 6,7,10,12,13,14,15,16,17

Pass overwhelmingly

Item 7: Letter to SLA re Carl Narcias or Corp. to Be Formed – 539 W. 21st St. (10/11)

Item 8: Letter to SLA re Ram Lounge LLC. – 622 W. 47th Street (11/12)

Item 9: Letter to SLA re Za Bruno Rest. Inc. d/b/a Il Bordello – 470 W. 23rd Street (@10th)

Item 10: Letter to SLA re R.P.R. West 51 LLC d/b/a Amerigo's Discovery– 321 W. 51st St (8/9)

Item 11: Letter to SLA re IM Operating LLC – 533-535 W. 27th St a/k/a 536 W. 28th St (10/11)

John Lamb asks why only 1 security guard here, but 2 on in other club?

Morgan responds that this club has fewer residential buildings nearby; other club has more residential neighbors and concerns.

Passes

Item 12: Letter to SLA re Sutol Operating Co. LLC – 409-411 W. 14th St (9/10)

Item 13: Letter to SLA re 688 10th Ave Rest Corp d/b/a Casa Havana – 688 10th Ave (48/49)

Item 14: Letter to SLA re Blue Ruin – 538 9th Ave (39/40)

Item 15: Letter to SLA re Alpha Fusion Inc. – 365 W. 34th St (8/9)

Item 16: Letter to SLA re The Vandange Group LLC d/b/a Ardesia – 510 W. 52nd St (10/11)

Item 17: Letter to SLA re Meat Packing Restaurant LLC d/b/a Diner – 44 9th Ave (14)

Item 18: Letter to SLA re Southside Café – 453 W. 47th Street (9/10)

Lisa Daglian presenting. This establishment is in a mid-block residential building. We've had complaints of illegal construction activity. Tony Juliano raises friendly amendment regarding removing of 500 foot rule language. Cory Johnson says it did not feel good denying this application. Cory suggests incorporating fact that this location has never been used as a restaurant. Anna Levin said this is a grandfathered use of commercial activity. A restaurant is a commercial activity. This is an accident of history - zoning considers a mail order business the same as a restaurant.

Letter passes overwhelmingly

The Chair, JD Noland, praises BLP on its work and grace under pressure.

Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee (C/HKLU)

No items to report

Chelsea Preservation & Planning Committee (ChP&P)

No items to report

Housing, Health and Human Services (HH&HS)

No items to report

Transportation Planning Committee (TRANS)

No items to report

Landmarks Task Force (LAND)

No items to report

New Business

Item 19: Letter to LPC re Potential Lamartine Place Historic District

Item 20: Letter to NYS Historic Preservation re Potential Lamartine Place Historic District

Ed Kirkland presents: Lamartine place is an historic district that includes abolitionist house.
19 & 20 together pass overwhelmingly

Item 21: Police raids during Pride Week.

Burt Lizarin addresses item. In the public session, Tom Shevlin discussed what happened on the Friday before Gay Pride, in which there were coordinated raids by police at establishments that were scheduled to host Pride events. As a result, the establishments closed down for 2 or 3 days. Raids are done on Fridays to inflict maximum monetary damage. There certainly was some insensitivity on the part of people that were planning raids. This raid was certainly insensitive, if not homophobic. These events were to be attended also by visitors from outside NYC. Burt urges that we write a letter questioning the timing of these raids and their effects on Gay Pride.

Cory Johnson suggests that this matter should be brought up at the police meeting. Tony Juliano added that we've met with US Rep. Wiener and several elected officials who have agreed to draft letters.

A motion is made to refer the matter to the executive committee, which will draft and send out a letter expressing the comments here to the Police Commissioner and others before next months meeting. The motion passes overwhelmingly.