

Arts and Culture Committee
Manhattan Community Board 9
April 6, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Committee Members: Debra Ann Byrd, Vicky Gholson, PhD, Co-Chairs: Linda Walton, Diane Wilson
Public/Task Members: Stephanie Berry, Magli Damas, John-Martin Green, Michael Palmer, Lee-Anne Pinder

- Meeting was called to order 6:45pm with a quorum by Co-Chairs Diane Wilson and Linda Walton
- Motion to approve the agenda/Approved and accepted

- **Review of Mission and Goals of Arts and Culture Committee**

Mission of the A&C Committee is to highlight, enhance, support and sustain District 9's creative community by promoting collaborating and building a strong artistic network through the engagement of community stakeholders.

Background

Earlier attempts at establishing a committee were not successful. The first committee was disbanded and installed as a Task Force. Through diligence and tenacity, the committee was reinstated. Committee and Task Force members were acknowledged for their ongoing support throughout the process.

Key efforts of the A&C Committee might include information and idea exchange, leveraging assistance and resources for artists and arts organizations, collaborations and partnership within and outside the board. Engage everyone in the effort, utilize each of our strengths, serve as a connective thread and support each other's efforts, maintain the legacy of Harlem, advocate for better quality of life for artists, ensure we are all on the same page, increase visibility, ensure that the vision of the 197A plan is realized, creation of a directory of artist and arts organizations in the district, and investigate monies available through Stimulus Bill.

- **Introductions, Information Exchange, Update/Issues**

Anita Durst & Rick Kariolic (Chashama, 2 temporary artists spaces in Harlem – The Mink Building at 126th St/Amsterdam and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd at 117th), Yuien Chin & John Reddick (Harlem One Stop – Destination Marketing), Simone Eccleston & Shon "Chance" Miller (Aaron Davis Hall, Inc/Harlem Stage), Miriam Aristy-Farer (new CB9 board member), Christa Gieseke (CB9 Member, Architect), Michel Madie (Temple M), John-martin Green (Chair A&C West Harlem Local Development Corporation-WHLDC, Blackberry Productions), Stephanie Berry (Actress, Founder-Blackberry Productions), Lee Anne Pinder (Arts Manager), Cedric Rose (Program Developer for Temple M), Michael Palma (Teatro Stage Fest, Photographer), Vicky Gholson (CB9 Board & A&C Committee Member, Designed Environment for Experiential Learning), Debra Ann Byrd (CB9 Board & A&C Committee Member, Theater Producer), Magli Damas (Filmmaker, Multi-media artist), LaQuita Henry (Heritage Health & Housing)

Discussion: How can the Committee be helpful/What are the needs of the A&C Community?

Assistance with audience development, ensure that indigenous cultures are preserved and protected, encourage cultural groups to submit for funding as a unified block, educate the elected officials around issues on the arts (host a summit on philanthropy, effect of economy on the arts), undertake research efforts to learn what resources might be available to arts and culture groups, establish relationships, create a think tank that operates with integrity and advises the WHLDC.

Suggestion: Organize a CB9 "Night Out" at select district events, restaurants; attend presentations in support of area arts organizations and artists. Going as a group makes a united statement and also raises attention to the work the A&C committee is engaged in while at the same time supporting the organization.

Economic Stimulus

There will be a Federal Stimulus Package Townhall Meeting sponsored by Senators Bill Perkins, Eric Schneiderman, and Jose Serrano on April 17 at Harlem Hospital at 9:00 am. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information on how the various sectors can access stimulus money.

There is a State Government listing of groups applying for stimulus monies under the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009** (go to http://www.economicrecovery.ny.gov/assets/pdf/internet_20090325.pdf for the complete list) The list includes projects that have been submitted by municipalities, organizations and individuals throughout New York State. Projects on this list have been reviewed by staff of the Economic Recovery Cabinet and have been forwarded to the appropriate New York State agency (as identified in this listing) for a determination of potential funding eligibility and next steps.

On March 13, 2009, CB9, 10, 11, 12 hosted the Upper Manhattan Economic Summit at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The event was co-hosted by the Harlem Community Development Corporation, the Harlem Business Alliance, and the Mid-Manhattan NAACP. Questions posed were "How will Economic Stimulus affect you?," "What will happen to planned major development?," "How will Economic Stimulus Package help small businesses?" A white paper from the proceeding will be created outlining recommendations.

Community Benefits Agreement Update

Presented by John-martin Green, Arts and Culture Chair, West Harlem Local Development Corporation-WHLDC

The WHLDC was created to negotiate the Community Benefits Agreement with Columbia University around its planned expansion. A Memo of Understanding was created outlining the distribution of the \$150M offered to mitigate the impact of the expansion on

the community (\$75M cash, \$20M in-kind and resources and access to CU facilities, \$30M for a new school, \$20M for housing and legal clinic. The City provided a match of \$150M toward an affordable housing program.)

Over the course of many months, an Arts and Culture Working Group was convened to brainstorm initiatives and ideas that could be supported by the CBA. Three priorities emerged – 1.) Sustainability (infrastructure support for arts institutions); 2.) New Initiatives/Programs; and 3.) Columbia's increased engagement with artists and arts organizations. Negotiations continue. Suggested programs included the establishment of an endowment, the creation of arts projects and programs, technical assistance programs, a living history project to memorialize this seminal period where people are being displaced. A mechanism will be devised for organizations to apply for support from monies available.

WHLDC will operate under a new structure which will include a dedicated staff and advisory committee comprised of community members and elected officials.

Discussion ensued as to what mechanism will be developed to distribute money. Current processes/models such as the Department of Cultural Affairs, Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, and New York State Council for the Arts are not conducive to the needs of smaller organization.

- **Communications** (Using available outreach information systems effectively)

The A&C Committee would like to focus some effort toward the development of an arts and culture directory. The directory will include artists, arts organizations, and arts-related businesses in the district. Further discussion will take place at future A&C Committee meetings.

Harlem One Stop (presented by John Reddick and Yuien Chin). Harlem One Stop is a cultural tourism initiative and was created for the purpose of establishing a one stop network for Upper Manhattan-Harlem-based tourism through alliances and strategic partnerships. Harlem One Stop partners with local arts and cultural groups, businesses and civic organizations to bring to residents and visitors a variety of events and tour packages that not only promote the more well-known venues in Harlem, but also the smaller, lesser known events. Harlem One Stop is designed to boost tourism, strengthen Harlem/New York's ability to draw diverse visitors, give tourists a greater choice of authentic experiences and foster exciting collaborative opportunities to market ethnic and artistic traditions.

The website, HarlemOneStop.org presents information on leisure-time events and attractions—historical tours, music, dance, theatre, fairs, festivals, outdoor activities, dining, shopping and more—for the Upper Manhattan area (Central Harlem, El Barrio, Manhattanville, Morningside Heights, Washington Heights/Inwood, and West Harlem/Hamilton Heights/Sugar Hill)

Local groups interested in posting their events to H1S should submit their events by Wednesday for Thursday's posting

Suggestion: Take a look at CB9's website as a vehicle to communicate what is going on in the community. Incorporate YouTube, MySpace and other similar platforms to get the word out. Also, a CB9 A&C page on H1S.

- **Broadway Malls**

As a courtesy, Linda Safran from Broadway Malls has been in touch with the CB9's A&C Committee regarding the planned placement of sculptures created by Carol Eisner in the district and how the committee might be helpful in getting the word out about the project. Broadway Malls works in concert with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. The sculptures will be placed in West Harlem along Broadway at 113th St, 137th St, and 144th St. As there was no letter of support required from either CB9 Parks Committee or A&C Committee and as Ms. Safran had expressed a desire to make only one presentation, it was suggested that the presentation be made before at the April 16th General Board Meeting.

Discussion followed as to how the decision was made to place which sculpture where. Further discussion revealed a desire to have better communications and an understanding of protocol as it relates to projects coming into the district. While the efforts of Broadway Malls are commendable, it is generally understood that the community would like to have some input or at least knowledge of projects before decisions are made. It was further acknowledged that the artist was assuming the cost related to the project. It was suggested that relevant City agencies be invited to an A&C meeting as a means of creating meaningful dialogue around protocols and procedures.

- **Collaborations**

Blackberry Productions and Temple M have begun discussion about a monthly series of events around Art and Politics that would include some artists and specialists from CB9. The series would address pressing themes (employment, health, housing, war, homelessness)

- **Old Business/New Business**

No Old Business to report

New Business: Investigate holding A&C Committee meetings at alternate venues.

Meeting adjourned at 8:53pm

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY, MAY 4, 2009 AT 6:30 PM