

Arts and Culture Committee
Manhattan Community Board 9
Monday, April 5, 2010
Broadway Housing
583 Riverside Drive, 7th Floor Penthouse

Meeting Minutes

Agenda/Minutes approved.

Arts and Culture Directory

It is hard to quantify the number of arts organizations that are in the district, information has been primarily anecdotal. One of the goals of the arts and culture committee is to develop a working and ongoing directory, in hard copy and electronic version, that includes artists and arts organizations in CB9. The goal is to have the directory available in the Fall. No form was available for organizations. Organizations present were asked to put information on paper and committee would be in touch to collect information. Forms will be available at each subsequent meeting.

"The Guide to Adolescent Resources in Northern Manhattan" provides an excellent example of an effective directory <http://pffh.org/aip/youthboard/theguide.php>

Harlem School of the Arts Closing

Mesiyah McGinnis, former Director, Corporate and Community Partnerships, Theater Manager at Harlem School of the Arts, provided background information on the closing of HAA and invited the community to join in the efforts to save the school. A meeting organized by the HSA Parent Association is planned for Thursday, April 8, 2010 at 10am at HSA.

A robust conversation followed and the concerned parents, community members and arts & culture advocates present, suggested the creation of a resolution or letter of support that outlines the recommendations and salient points raised and that represents their vision for HSA which include:

- Provide immediate funding that will allow for the current HSA programs (after-school, instructional, year-end performance and event rentals) to move forward; further, this funding should be made available to ensure that students may complete the semester and also allow HSA to remain operational until the end of the calendar year;
- Provide additional funding to support the development of a long-term restructuring of the organization with the goal of restoring the vision as set forth by HSA founder, Ms. Dorothy Manor and as implemented by their former leader, Ms. Betty Allen -- the creative and driving forces behind HSA;
- Ensure that the Harlem School of the Arts building is not sold to a private entity for the purpose of commercial development; any development of HSA should be solely for artistic purposes;
- Retain and restore HSA staff: HSA is known for its faculty, comprised of arts professionals who possess extensive performing and exhibition credentials, as well as expertise in motivating and encouraging students to challenge them and to fully develop their talents. It is imperative that the educational, artistic and administrative staff that has a proven track record of long-term committed service to HSA and its students and parents and the Harlem community continue to serve in their professional capacity;
- Restructure the Board of Directors and assemble an accountable executive body that will create a synergistic relationship with the artistic, administrative and development staff to rebuild HSA and comprised of professionals that possess the necessary skills and understand the nuances associated with running an arts institution;
- Appoint and convene a temporary strategic planning committee comprised of individuals with professional expertise in finance, development, curriculum and programming to evaluate HSA's current structure and to create a plan that concretely lays out a viable plan with timeline, benchmarks and goals;
- Convene a community-led advisory (ongoing) committee comprised of community stakeholders (parents, students, residents, artists, educators, etc.) to serve as a liaison and connective thread between the community, the Board of Directors and HSA management and to provide a support mechanism for HSA and its programs;
- Engage the Guild of Community Music Schools (of which HSA is a member) in the re-structuring process as outlined herein.

Preserving a Cultural Legacy – Reso to Save PS 186

The reso, drafted and passed in the A&C committee and was presented to CB9's Executive Committee but was tabled as the executive committee felt that there was not enough information to make a decision. The Executive Committee suggested conversations with and a presentation by experts from City Planning and the Mayor's office to better understand the upholding of the deed restriction. Contact has been made with both offices but it appears no presentation will be scheduled.

The issues around PS186 have been discussed and vetted over many years, with presentations made by the various stakeholders, the findings of an ad hoc committee formed to examine the feasibility of the project and to the desires of the community clearly articulated. Questions persist: How do we best navigate the sometimes conflicting information circulating (building can/cannot be saved, who is and what is the reputation of the developers, will the needs expressed by the community will be honored?). Walter South has copies of plans that were previously submitted for the development of PS 186 and other related documents. Included is a plan that accommodates the preservation of the building.

A motion was made and seconded to "un-table" and resubmit the reso at the next Executive Committee meeting. Voted unanimously to un-table at Executive

Announcements

A&C Committee Member, Debra Ann Byrd of Take Wing and Soar Production (TWAS) was acknowledged for her production of *Pecong*, written by Steve Carter, a former playwright in resident at the Negro Ensemble Company. *Pecong* was based on the *Medea* story and set on a Caribbean Island and ran for 3 weeks at the National Black Theater. TWAS will host its Excellence Awards fundraiser in May.

New Board Members LaQuita Henry and Joe Rogers were acknowledged and welcomed.

Next month's A&C meeting will focus on summer arts programs for youths in partnership with the Youth and Education Committee.

The Apollo Theater offered their "Next Pass" to CB9 A&C meeting participants. The "Next Pass" offers access to Apollo Theater programs for \$7.50 including Amateur Night, back stage tours, and other performances. Anyone interested in the pass should leave their information to be passed on to Ade Williams at the Apollo.

Jazzmobile is programming its first VocalFest in CB9 venues: 6 nights at Showman's and 3 nights at the Harlem Stage Gatehouse

PennieMaria Jackson announced Harlem Stage's upcoming programs including "E-moves" a dance program featuring evolving, emerging and established choreographer. Their "Uptown Nights" series has been a huge success, the last program, a Nina Simone tribute sold out. The next Uptown Night is a tribute to Roy Ayers with Stefon Harris, Peter Rock and Robert Glasper.

Bring a friend or someone to the next meeting

Meeting Adjourned.