

Arts and Culture Committee
Manhattan Community Board 9
Monday, March 1, 2010
Broadway Housing
583 Riverside Drive, 7th Floor Penthouse

Committee Members

Linda Walton, Diane Wilson ~ Co-Chairs

Debra Ann Byrd, Donitra Clemons, Vicky Gholson, Christa Giesecke ~ CB9M
Stephanie Berry, Magali Damas, John-Martin Green, LaQuita Henry, Michael Palma, Lee-Ann Pinder ~ Public Members

Meeting Minutes

Presentations

Arts and culture has been long-recognized as an economic engine and catalyst for community revitalizations. The following presentations were requested to provide insight into and awareness of issues surrounding the current plans for rezoning and development in CB9 and how and if arts and culture-related activities are accommodated in these plans.

Scott Metzner – Janus Properties

Janus Properties has been in the community for 20 years and focused their work on affordable housing and more recently on commercial development.

Janus has a commitment to promoting the arts in the district as evidenced by its support of Triple Candy (art gallery) and now Chashama (providing workspace to artists)

*Janus Properties has plans to develop its properties on Amsterdam Avenue and on West 126th, 127th and 128th Streets between Amsterdam and Convent Avenue currently located in an M1-1 zone and are included in the Department of City Planning's proposed M1-5 zone as part of the broader West Harlem rezoning.

Janus Properties opposes the M1-5 rezoning proposal because it fails to expand the uses already permitted as-of-right in the existing M1-1 zone and fails to increase as-of-right density enough to spark meaningful economic development and revitalization. The M1-5 proposal fails to accomplish the goals endorsed by CB9's 197A Plan.

Janus Properties propose that the properties be rezoned to a special mixed use district, MX (M1-5-R8) and sites the following as deficiencies of the M1-5 proposal:

1. M1 uses are too limited to encourage significant new investment or economic growth
2. The proposed density is not sufficient to transform the neighborhood and leaves 100,000 square feet of space with non-conforming bulk.
3. Restrictions on community facility uses are in conflict with the community's vision and existing conditions
4. The proposal arbitrarily creates an island of M1-5 surrounded by mixed-use zoning

Advantages of a Mixed-Use Designation (MX)

1. Allows for the full range of commercial, manufacturing, and community facility uses on an as-of-right basis and permits residential use, which is in keeping with CB9's 197a Plan

*(*excerpted from Janus Properties handouts)*