

CB 9 Economic Development-Harlem Piers Meeting Minutes

April 7, 2015

Committee members in attendance: Arnold Boatner (chair), Quenia Abreu , Nick Smith, Nekpen Osuan

Community members: Barbara Askins-125th Street BID, Victoria Mason-Ailey-Columbia University, Rick Vellkov, yoga instructor

Called to Attention 6:45pm

Reviewed Agenda

Reviewed Minutes

UPDATES/PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

- 1) Barbara Askins, Executive Director of the 125th Street BID gave a presentation on the potential use of new signage technologies for buildings on 125th Street. After the 125th Street rezoning in 2008 property owners along 125th Street received fines for illegal advertising on buildings. . The new zoning laws prohibited any other advertising on buildings other than advertising for the businesses located in the building. The summonses eventually totaled over \$100,000 in fines to remove the advertising signage. A \$50,000 study was commissioned by the BID to determine what new technologies might be used in the future. The BID has met with Councilwoman Inez Dickens and staff to discuss the scale and the types of advertising that could be allowed and the brightness of the lights. BID members would help small business owners by sharing in advertising revenues. Askins said that the council member Dickens liked the idea of sharing revenue and recommended taking the proposal to city planning. A meeting was held with City Planning last month and the proposal was declined. City Planning said outdoor advertising is only allowed in Time Square. Boatner asked if the small advertisers could be given advertising for free instead. Askins explained that the advertising sites are controlled by individual owners who negotiate individual advertising deals and want to control their own advertising. Discussion followed on possible sites for potential advertising and the types of content including informational content about the community that would be allowed. There would be strict advertising guidelines. The next steps for CB9 would be a presentation to the full board along with a letter of support for the 125th Street BID requesting modifications of the law to allow advertising. The committee voted 2 yes 0 no and 1 abstention to draft the letter to present to the full board for consideration.
- 2) Victoria Mason-Ailey-Associate V.P. for Planning and Community Affairs reported on the retail strategy for the retail space that will be available in the Jerome Greene Science Building which is the first phase of construction to be completed. Projected occupancy is fall 2015. A brochure was distributed describing the space and square footage. There was lengthy discussion on the types of potential businesses that might occupy the space. Quenia Abreu asked if there would be any preferences given to existing businesses in CD9. Victoria Mason-Ailey said no. She said there would probably be a restaurant due to the types of activities that would be going on at the Greene Science Building and that it would have to have extended hours due to the fact that the building was going to have activity 24 hours a day. Boatner asked if Apple had been contacted

regarding occupancy. Mason-Ailey said Apple had been brought up as a potential tenant. Mason-Ailey also presented flyers on the Small Business Expo that will be held on April 17th co-sponsored by Columbia University and Empire State Development Corporation. There will be information sessions on MWBE certification process and a table set up by Columbia to answer questions regarding the retail space. Mason-Ailey also mentioned the Columbia Employment center being under-utilized by the community.

Meeting adjourned 7:54pm