

CB 9 Economic Development-Harlem Piers Meeting Minutes

October 6, 2015

Committee members in attendance: Arnold Boatner (chair), Quenia Abreu, Erik George, Nick Smith, Jose Taveras

Community board members: Padmore John

Community members: Douglas Adams-CEO-Waterfront Alliance, Mary Caldwell, Osiris Stephen

Meeting called to order: 6:41pm

Reviewed Agenda

Reviewed Minutes

UPDATES/PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

- 1) **Waterfront Alliance Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines (WEDG) Presentation**-Douglas Adams-COO-gave a PowerPoint presentation that outlines the guidelines within the context of the Marine Transfer Station redevelopment. Douglas gave a brief history of the organization and mentioned that WeAct founder Peggy Shepherd is among the board of directors. Programs and events presented in addition to WEDG also include the Open Waters Initiative, Ferry Transit Program, Harbor Camp, Waterfront Conference, City of Water Day and the Annual Heroes of the Harbor Gala fundraiser. Genesis for WEDG began from the city 2020 Vision planning development guidelines.
WEDG credit categories include 1) Site Selection & Planning 2) Public Access & Interaction 3) Edge Resiliency, 4) Ecology & Habitat 5) Materials & Resources 6) Operations & Maintenance and 7) Innovation. WEDG was used in the development of Brooklyn Bridge Park. Manhattan Community Boards 1 and 6 have adopted resolutions of support for WEDG. Among the other projects that incorporated WEDG guidelines include the Domino Sugar affordable housing project. After the presentation Boatner asked about feasibility study now being conducted and what assistance the Waterfront Alliance can provide the community board in developing a plan for the MTS. Douglas Adams mentioned that asbestos removal is currently being conducted by the city in anticipation of the decommissioning by the Sanitation department.
- 2) **Update on Columbia University Manhattanville Retail Strategy**- Boatner gave an update on the answers provided to Martin Wallace concerning the retail space that will be available in the Jerome Greene Science Building. As previously reported, Columbia will provide no additional preference to the existing businesses such as Floridita Restaurant in the selection of tenants. There was a lengthy discussion of Columbia University and the poor relationships it has with neighboring businesses near the Manhattanville construction site. There was consensus from the discussion that there is a need for an economic impact study to determine how much the construction has hurt neighborhood businesses.
- 3) There was also a detailed discussion regarding the rising rent/lease rates that are impacting neighborhood businesses on Broadway. Quenia Abreu said 7 businesses have closed as a result

of losing their leases. Further action is needed for rent protections for neighborhood businesses. Nick Smith suggested taking action through the city council in the form of legislation. Nick is on the staff of city council member Jumaane Williams of Brooklyn.

- 4) A discussion of the Mt. Sinai Hospital buildings being sold and the types of development that should be allowed. Boatner mentioned the discussion Mt. Sinai's CEO had with the General Board regarding reinstatement of programs previously eliminated in return for support from the board of public subsidies the hospital receives.
- 5) Boatner mentioned the need for a collective effort on the part of the Economic Development committee members to utilize all of the city resources available to get information on the status of the Marine Transfer Station decommissioning. Charles Calloway of WeAct will be invited to the November meeting to establish guidelines to develop the community vision for the MTS redevelopment. The assessment that is being conducted currently will determine how much it will cost to redevelop the site. Identification of key players within the city administration to get updates on the assessment is needed. The transfer to DCAS from the Sanitation department and the eventual disposition of the property need to be closely monitored. Comparisons of other projects that have been developed in other states was suggested by Quenia Abreu.

Meeting adjourned approximately 8:15pm