

**Harlem Piers & Waterfront, Economic Development &  
Consumer Affairs Committee  
Manhattan Community Board Nine**

Savona Bailey-McClain, Committee Chair  
Jane Arrendell, Vicky Gholson Ph.D., Eileen Merritt, Blaine North, Norma Ramos, Linda  
Walton, Ernestine Welch, Board Committee Members  
Maritta Dunn, Public Member

**Committee Meeting Minutes of September 11, 2007**

The meeting was called to order at 6:45 p.m. by Chair Savona Bailey-McClain.

Present: *Savona Bailey-McClain, Chair, Jane Arrendell, Vicky Gholson, Ph.D.,  
Eileen Merritt, Ernestine Welsh, Maritta Dunn*  
Absent: *Blaine North, Norma Ramos, Linda Walton*

CB9

Members: *Jordi Reyes-Montblanc, Christa Giesecke, Ted Kovaleff, John Reddick  
Brad Taylor*

Guests: *Barbara Askins, Executive Director, 125<sup>th</sup> Street BID; Alyssa Cobb-  
Konan, Vice President, NYCEDC; Alejandro Baquero-Cifuentes, Assistant  
Vice President Special Projects, NYCEDC; Kate Van Tassel, NYCEDC,  
Marilyn Lee, NYCEDC Greg Fitzgerald, Urban Planner, Office of the  
Manhattan Borough President, Maurice Bruet, Deputy Manhattan  
Borough Commissioner, NYC Department of Transportation, Derrick  
Taitt, CB11, Ashley Emerson, Columbia University, John Stage, Owner  
-Dinosaur Barbeque, Signe Nielsen, Matthew Nielsen Landscape  
Architects*

Adoption of agenda was approved.

**Presentations:**

The evening began with Alejandro Baquero-Cifuentes from NYCEDC introducing Ms. Signe Nielsen from Mathew Nielsen Landscape Architects. She presented her firms streetscaping plans for the Harlem Piers area.

**Background information:**

Signe Nielsen has practiced as a landscape architect and urban designer since 1978. During that time she has overseen the planning, design and construction of more than \$280 million worth of projects. Ms. Nielsen is a Fellow of the ASLA and a Commissioner for the Art Commission for the City of New York. She is also the recipient of over two dozen national and local design awards for public open space projects.

Ms. Nielsen holds degrees in Urban Planning from Smith College, Landscape Architecture from City College, and Construction Management from Pratt Institute. She is currently a full Professor in both the graduate and undergraduate Schools of Architecture at Pratt Institute.

Mathews Nielsen is an award-winning firm providing landscape architecture, comprehensive planning, and urban design services for clients throughout the United States.

Mathews Nielsen creates landscapes that respond meaningfully to the people and site for which they are designed. By investing our firm's energy and resources into collaborative, place-based design, we actively engage the existing landscape, its cultural and ecological context, and its stakeholders to develop lasting, memorable places.

In partnership for more than a decade, Ms. Kim Mathews and Ms. Signe Nielsen guide a professional staff of twenty landscape architects, urban designers, environmental planners, horticulturalists, and project managers.

Ms. Nielsen proceeded to discuss issues that the committee was concerned about -- mostly maintenance costs and lighting. Ms. Nielsen stated the goals that her team developed for the project. They wanted to make the Harlem Piers area the heart of West Harlem. Her team looked at the CB9 197-a plan and tried to offer benefits that we wanted -- pedestrian safety, sense of community and alternative transportation. Her team wanted to create signature public spaces and the inter-modal facility. They were aware that we a terminus of a major bus line and took that into consideration.

In regards to lighting, they wanted to offer the following:

- 1) Consistent and safe lighting. Higher levels of lighting at intersections where they meet DOT basic standards.
- 2) Enhance the experience at night and make it pleasurable, interesting and fun. Make the street special by framing it like bookends and offer seasonal lighting.
- 3) Nielsen was concerned with how the lights looked in the daytime. Could there be flexibility in the light's character.

Four different light poles were reviewed River to River but two options were being considered -- the Davit and the Grand Central pole.

The presentation went on to show lighting at different times in the evening. The first presentation showed the Davit poles that uses "metal halide" lights. According to the consultants these lights offered a high cut off fixture that give more light vs. the second presentation that showed the Grand Central Partnership lights that uses "sodium vapor lights."

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BOTH LIGHTING POLES CAN USE EITHER SODIUM VAPOR OR METAL HALIDE LIGHTS. (SEE ATTACHED LIGHTING GLOSSARY)**

The Committee Chair interjected that capital funding can allow our area to have metal halide lights. Barbara Askins from the 125<sup>th</sup> Street BID interjected that her organization was trying to bring more lights to the sidewalk vs. the street and disagreed with the scenario presented.

Discussion to inform the members that one to one replacements of lighting poles are being conducted for 125<sup>th</sup> Street BID area between Lenox and Morningside Ave.; pedestrian arms will be added to these poles and will be funded by UMEZ and Assemblyman Wright.

Alyssa Konan interjected that the 26 million federal funds are just for capital and not for maintenance.

The consultant continued to explain that there are a lot of utility lines underneath which provides a lot of limitation. And she shared how the narrowing of Marginal Street and traffic reduction measures were led by WEACT.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT WEACT DID LEAD THE HARLEM ON THE RIVER STUDY AND PUSHED THE RECOMMENDATION TO CLOSE MARGINAL STREET BUT IT WAS THE COMMUNITY BOARD THAT PASSED THE RESOLUTION WHICH MOVED NYCEDC TO TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION TO NARROW MARGINAL STREET – A PARTNERSHIP**

The consultant stated that streetscaping can be done on the south side of 125<sup>th</sup> Street making crossings safer and widening sidewalks 8-15 feet. No buses would travel along Marginal Street (traffic calming feature) and for bikeways we could get a Class 3 enhanced bikeway. Committee Chair distributed the letter that the board sent to NYCDOT and their response for a study.

The consultants went on to explain the city wide lighting competition (details and winner information attached). Consultant went on to discuss greening options (having an “urban forest”) and utilities lines underneath.

More details were discussed regarding the cost for each option study and then the lightscaping of Twelfth Avenue.

**PLEASE READ POWERPOINT PRESENTATION.**

The meeting continued with further discussion among committee members. To be continued in October.

One action item was presented to have New Amsterdam Special Mixed Use District included in the 125<sup>th</sup> Street River to River Rezoning area. The resolution passed unanimously.

Lastly a presentation by committee member Eileen Merritt showcasing the new public art that was recently installed at Harlem Piers.

Meeting adjourned 8:35 p.m.