

COMMUNITY BOARD 9 MANHATTAN
LANDMARKS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: March 14, 2011
Location: Broadway Housing, 583 Riverside Drive
Present: Walter South
Simon Thoresen
Patricia Jones
Javier Carcamo

Larry English
Christa Giesecke

1. Chairman South called the meeting to order at 6.45 pm.
2. The agenda was adopted (in absentia).

3. Janus Buildings:

Scott Metzner and Jerry Salama presented their plans for property they own in the M-zoned district between West 126 and 129th Streets from Amsterdam to Convent Avenue. The area is scheduled to be rezoned according to the recommendations of the Department of City Planning.

The property consists of several noteworthy late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, which have been considerably altered over the years. The buildings were calendared for consideration for landmark designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1990, before Janus acquired them in 1997. LPC never acted on the designation, but they remain calendared. It seems unlikely that the buildings will ever be landmarked, however, as long as they remain calendared there are limitations on how they can be developed. In light of the new proposed mixed use zoning and the Community's desire to see more job creation in this area, Janus is requesting that CB9 support their application to de-calendar the buildings.

Walter suggested that a deal might be made where the Janus buildings were de-calendared and Tasty Cake Factory calendared. But it was pointed out that this process would take too long and EDC is moving ahead with proposals for Tasty Cake.

A motion to support Janus request for de-calendaring was approved 4 – 0 (Committee Members) 2 – 0 (Board Members). The resolution will be edited by Pat Jones and circulated among Committee Members.

4. Convent Avenue Baptist Church:

Jumaane Stewart, architect for the Convent Avenue Baptist Church, presented a revised proposal for the extension and new entrance to the church, in which he tried

to incorporate some of the comments and objections that the Committee had to his presentation in February.

Comments included that the addition does not contrast enough with the church on one side and the townhouses on the other; that it is too busy; that it needs to be lighter; and that it is not appropriate for a historic district. Concern was expressed for the cherry tree in front of the addition.

A motion stating that we do not consider the design as presented appropriate for the Hamilton Heights Historic District was approved: 3 in favor, 1 abstention (Committee); 1 in favor, 1 abstention (Board).

5. Tasty Cake Factory:

Catherine Abate asked if there was any way CB9 could influence the EDC selection of a developer and architect to create an exceptional building in this unique site by having a design panel or competition. It was pointed out that EDC is moving ahead in their usual opaque fashion, in spite of agreeing to keep CB9 informed, and that nothing very special is likely to come of it. However, CB9 should keep up as much pressure as possible on EDC.

6. The meeting adjourned at 8.30 pm. The next scheduled meeting is April 11.