

Post-event Follow-up Notes

This document contains the **full list of verbatim questions submitted via the Zoom Q&A feature** during the SoHo/NoHo Mixed-Use & Public Realm Information Session held on February 25, 2021.

Please note that the questions were directly exported from the Zoom platform and have not been altered in any way except for the removal of individuals' identifying information.

For questions that were answered during the event, you can watch the event's recording. Answers to commonly asked questions regarding the planning process and the neighborhood plan will continue to be updated as part of our SoHo/NoHo FAQ as we move forward.

The event's recording and FAQ can be found on our website at www.nyc.gov/sohonohoplan.

Feb. 25, 2021 SoHo/NoHo Mixed Use Public Realm Information Session

Zoom Questions and Answers Export

Number	Question	Asker Name
1	Can chat be on for questions so I can take notes ?	Steven G
2	Hey sir	Steven G
3	Oi wanker open chat	Anonymous Attendee
4	What's going on???	king megatron
5	Will Union Careers Be provided on this project?	Sinade W
6	Can we have the developers contact info for construction bid opportunities .	Anonymous Attendee
7	Please tell us how many people are on this zoom.	Pete D
8	Hi Erik + Thanks	Pete D
9	Are these three meetings tied to, and a continuation, of the DSOW? Where does DCP stand on the DSOW? What's the next step and when?	Frederica S
10	The Gowanus rezoning has been delayed by a lawsuit contending that Zoom meetings are insufficient to ensure proper community participation. The outcome will likely be court approved procedures for DCP to initiate some in-person engagement. Has DCP begun to develop these procedures?	Anonymous Attendee
11	Erik please note DCP should be sending out a reminder to registered individuals, with zoom info an hour before if DCP is serious about neighborhood participation, as does all other organizations.	ronnie w
12	I see my first Q has been answered. What's the time frame for the Final Scope of Work?	Frederica S
13	There is something wrong with the audio again. Holding Virtual Hearings is extremely inappropriate to discuss Rezoning our iconic neighborhood, where many of its residents invested their life savings to repurpose old industrial buildings to residential code. Impacting design and architecture around the world. The current zoning is what protects it. I'm sorry but this young girl has absolutely no idea what she is talking about. The zoning reflects what is there. Why is would we alter it?	Anonymous Attendee
14	please clarify "affordable" housing definition, which often is not affordable to most low-income folks.	Ms Teriananda
15	Question for Response: How is it that DCP determines the marketable size of office or commercial space post pandemic?	Zella J
16	can you please include sidewalk repair in discussion of congestion. For P.w. Disabilities and Seniors this is a priority.	Ms Teriananda

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17	Isn't there far more undeveloped land in Brooklyn and Queens for building new affordable housing? And therefore also more space to create new small business zones? Why is Noho/Soho the locus of the City's interest in creating a more equitable city? Is this more of a political strategy than a well-considered urban planning strategy?	Anonymous Attendee
18	Does DOT understand that nighttime deliveries is TERRIBLE in a residential neighborhood. IT IS NOT OK!!! We have expressed this over and over and you are not listening!	Michele V
19	How does freight delivery 7pm to 6am ameliorate noise for residential tenants living in the same buildings.	Zella J
20	Seriously, we have expressed that night time deliveries ARE NOT OK. Noise mitigation requires enormous expense for shipping.	Michele V
21	Will zoning change in historic districts? Will the Landmarks Preservation Commission still have oversight and veto power over inappropriate development.	Anonymous Attendee
22	What is the enforcement and fine mechanism for quiet delivery mechanisms.	Zella J
23	Is Jennifer DOT aware of the OHD Study done by DOT Office of Freight Management on Broadway, specifically in regard to the very impactful noisy nighttime deliveries by retailer UNIQLO?	Pete D
24	Is there a specific proposal for residential zoning of small loft buildings in the historic district? Will it be permitted as of right.	Mark R
25	Will someone be showing up at 3am to curtail noisy deliveries? If no one is working at DOT at 3am, this program is a FAIL.	Michele V
26	OHD is fine for commercial units but doesn't sound practical for residential units - most of which do not have doormen. There is already problems with packages left in lobbies being stolen.	Michael L
27	Off-hour deliveries is very concerning. This seems to be a negative shift to serve the interest of soho as commercial hub. The plan should not make soho less desirable for residents with traffic or noise at night.	Anonymous Attendee
28	For Sanitation..my question is, what can be done with private sanitation trucks that are out dated and extremely loud. They are responsible for awaking residents in our neighborhoods all night long as they travel? One can hear them coming from blocks away. Will they be made to update their fleet?	ronnie w

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29	How are the containers emptied without making noise and waking the residents?	Michele V
30	How does Clean Curb operate when there are bike lanes adjacent to the curb for blocks along many streets?	Zella J
31	Clean Curbs Pilot: Community boards are notified AFTER bin sites are determined?	Frederica S
32	While its encouraging to hear the the pilot programs, how do you ensure that these pilots programs will actually be implemented and required as part of any changes to the zoning in soho? Given the current state of the city budget and services, there is concern these plans will not be fulfilled and soho residents will be left to deal with the lack of services.	Anonymous Attendee
33	Those curb dumpsters are very large and unsightly. Retail tennants will not be happy having their storefront obscured.	Michele V
34	Can you tell us: How many of the 109 attendees are non-residents representing ONY?	Anonymous Attendee
35	Has the sanitation dept spoken to Landmark Dept about those large trash receptacles? Obscuring the world famous cast iron and magnificent facades which over the years residents and building owners were not allowed planters because of obscuring the buildings.. which is why photo shoots and advertising companies pay the city for permits to film and photo here.	ronnie w
36	Those big garbage collectors—will they be placed at corners in front of commercial establishments, or do you envision placing them mid-block in front of residential doorways/under residential windows? And on all blocks, or is this reserved for Broadway in your conception?	Jane F
37	How will these huge trucks be “quieter” as Justin Bland claims?	Anonymous Attendee
38	Where Will these huge collection stations be placed?	Anonymous Attendee
39	For Justin Bland--this carting proposal sounds very promising. For containers on sidewalks, who is paying for these?	Margaret B
40	There is so little space for people to walk on Soho sidewalks, particularly along Broadway. Is there any plan to pedestrianize parts of Soho or at least remove a few lanes of parking and traffic to make the area more livable? Thanks!	Sasha A
41	How does the neighborhood loading zones allow residents to park overnight, if you have Off Hour deliveries and need the space in front of your business to unload deliveries at night?	Patrick H

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42	Given the historical mixed-used nature of SoHo, as you described, how will you be thinking about the tradeoff between residential and commercial development in this rezoning plan? In particular, are you thinking about how to ensure that commercial development doesn't end up crowding out residential entirely in the new developments, due to the higher rents it commands?	Jake S
43	Can you tell us, re the last segment re commercial waste carting, is this carting dependent on upzoning? I can't think of any reason it would be.	Jane F
44	I'd like to ask a question and make a comment	Brian S
45	Is there any discussion about yielding more of the street space to pedestrians and bicyclists, and eliminating private parking? With so much congestion and pollution, is the city prioritizing safe cycling and employing protected bike lanes so that the design of the public realm makes certain collisions less likely to happen?	Angela C
46	Also, in mixed use buildings, such as Singer Bldg at 561 Bway, why must residential owners upstairs pay for commercial carting services? Why isn't there residential pickup as in other neighborhoods? We certainly pay for it in taxes?	Margaret B
47	For Offices Sylvia said certain things will only be applicable to Large Commercial Buildings. How is the applicable size determined? Floors? Gross SF? Lot SF? And what are the cut off numbers.	Pete D
48	Finally, coops need support from downstairs retail stores to help pay for the big expenses of operating Landmarked buildings. What support for small businesses are you planning?	Margaret B
49	Given that one goal from the November 2019 Envision SoHo/NoHo report is to "foster the small business community", why does the city's Plan proposed adding Use Group 10 -- department stores and destination retail -- which prioritizes big box retail over small businesses?	Jeannine K
50	On the last session you mentioned challenges in converting JLWQA units to residential. Can you explain what are these challenges.	Anonymous Attendee
51	I would like to understand more about the "tailoring" of your ideas to our neighborhood	Katy R
52	Hi! Thank you for the presentation. I'd like to ask a question.	Emily H

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53	<p>Very surprised that Margaret Chin is not attending this very important meeting. IT is my understanding, that our elected City councilwoman will have ,a determining vote as to whether rezoning passes through or not !</p> <p>Question: I would like the panel to specifically address AIR units /Buildings ,that can not and have not been able to attain CofO's for decades. The definition of Aritst has broadened exponentially to many creative professions in the past 2 decades. Can the loft laws loft change to reflect what is the present day creative landscape in Soho/Noho. Finally , what can we expect in terms of protections to AIR dwellers without CofO's if rezoning goes through .</p>	Susan B
54	<p>Commercial delivery is only part of the problem. If confined to night time hours, how will noise be regulated at night? During the day, there are many retail deliveries - most noticeably from Amazon, and others. I'm not sure your proposal addresses that issue.</p> <p>Most of the photos in the presentation seem to show Broadway - what about the historic districts West of Broadway?</p>	Anonymous Attendee
55	<p>What will be done to help relieve sidewalk congestion on streets like Broadway, Prince, and Spring?</p>	Anonymous Attendee
56	<p>Given possible increased density from new housing, are you considering adding pedestrian and bike space on any non-arterial streets?</p>	Casey B
57	<p>What are the plans to improve biking in in SoHo/NoHo, protect bike lanes, and protect cyclists from cars? Thanks!</p>	Amelia J
58	<p>Property owners are paying higher and higher property taxes and need to be able to rent retail spaces to pay them. The fact that use groups are limited for our NoHo/SoHo spaces mean retailers are going to other neighborhoods where it's easier to open and our vacancies are really hard to fill.</p> <p>Victor Trager</p>	Victor T
59	<p>So far this presentation is primarily about making life easier for the commercial entities in this mixed-use neighborhood. Residents are mentioned only in passing. What will DCP do to enhance the quality life of residents who, pre-COVID, were living with the horrendous noise of nighttime deliveries and impassable streets?</p>	Anonymous Attendee

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60	Why can't we have Clean Curbs solutions for Residential as well as Commercial refuse?	Anonymous Attendee
61	I have a unit in SoHo that used to be residential. I changed it to commercial 6 yrs ago. Can I change in back to residential? Can the unit be used as a live/work unit?	Anonymous Attendee
62	In more normal times, the sidewalks on Prince and Street are virtually impassable. Any plans to enlarge the sidewalks and narrow the road bed? To truly prioritize pedestrians, any thoughts on restricting thru-traffic?	Janet L
63	BP said this is a wonderful neighborhood. Whatever conflict you assume need to be fixed certainly don't conflict enough to warrant further density.	Anonymous Attendee
64	Can you address this	Anonymous Attendee
65	did you read the alternative plan	Anonymous Attendee
66	Great presentation. Could you please share any available information on the Department's timeline for providing text to the public. Not asking about certification, but rather sharing a proposed text with the public.	shelly f
67	Why do we continue to bifurcate Residential and Commercial trash collection? I think this was a devil's deal many years ago when trash collection was mostly done by organized crime. Does that still make sense? Trash accumulates every day. The city should collect ALL trash daily. And the trash collection rules should be enforced. Why do we continue to be the filthiest, trashiest city in the developed world? The whole approach needs to be reconfigured to reflect the reality of trash management now and going forward. Continuing to make patches in a system essentially dating from the 1940s is throwing good money after bad.	Anonymous Attendee
68	Those large clusters of purely commercial buildings without any residential occupancy are very, very limited.	Pete D
69	Sylvia is absolutely wrong in stating that the retail (and attendant issues) you envision is already here. Residents have had to struggle mightily to be heard by businesses and to be considered on quality of life issues. And we have prevailed in many cases. Do you understand the physics of sound and how it travels up and across these cast iron buildings? Deliveries are problematic! No matter the hour. What is the plan for noise mitigation? And the answer can't be that it will take place during the night.	Anonymous Attendee
70	Does DOT not reach out to Residents directly regarding OHD?	Pete D

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71	What does noise mitigation mean? Please be specific and name exactly how this will work. 311 is a joke.	Anonymous Attendee
72	The missing explicit question is how will you mitigate noise? Other than delivering at night, which doesn't prevent noise?	Anonymous Attendee
73	If DSNY is providing the containers for waste, why do the property owners have to insure them? Will that discourage adaptation? Isn't the plan to make them attractive and also a public amenity?	Anonymous Attendee
74	ARE OHD participants required to use low-noise equipment? The answer is no. Recommendations mean nothing.	Anonymous Attendee
75	Come down and listen to UNIQLO, who continues to bang and crash their dollies below residential windows as they move pallets of merchandise into the store.	Pete D
76	How will DSNY ascertain where those huge full time garbage bins should - or should not - be located?	Pete D
77	No one wants a garbage set up at their front door, especially when you're planning restaurants????	Anonymous Attendee
78	This is painful to listen to —you're planning inter-agency discussions. You don't have an answer to that last question of traffic and density and crowds. How will this be dealt with? SoHo can scarcely contain the mobs as is.	Anonymous Attendee
79	Does anyone take into consideration the relationship between homelessness, mental illness, substance abuse and can recycling on the issue of trash. I regularly see unfortunate people emptying trash cans and bags on the street in search of their next meal or anything to sell or recycle. Rezoning won't address this citywide problem.	Anonymous Attendee
80	Given that there is a FINITE amount of geographical space in SoHo & NoHo, what is the proposal from DCP for increasing public open space to serve residents (current and future), beyond putting people in the gutter and the roadway?	Pete D
81	Open streets don't add green space to soho noho. Preserving Elizabeth Street garden is the only viable solution.	Susan W
82	the loading zone initiatives will not prevent noise and they will be a drop in the bucket on traffic. It's not an answer.	Anonymous Attendee
83	Echoing concern regarding absence of DOE and Parks Department at this Quality of Life meeting, wondering also how quality of life related to hospital emergency room and other emergency services capacity when population is slated to double? There is no hospital in CB2 since St. Vincents was closed.	Micki M

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84	Who is going to enforce existing rules regarding trash, traffic, noise, petty vandalism? And will these rules be reviewed and revised to reflect quality of life in 2021?	Anonymous Attendee
85	Jennifer: There is no plan/no ability to enforce noise mitigation. You're crazy if you think you can ask retailers to tone it down. They won't. We've been trying with Uniqlo for more than 15 years. Please be real!!	Jane F
86	Why was my question not addressed regarding DOT's plans to alleviate bridge and tunnel traffic and gridlock in Soho? Between 3pm and 7pm, most days, on Broome or Canal Streets, 99% of the traffic is trying to leave Manhattan, one way or another. There is very little double parking to unload a truck or car. Talking only about Open Streets and loading and unloading strategies, was a total non-answer.	David L
87	There have been less than half a dozen Special Permits for Use Group 10 Large Destination Retail in the past 25 years. The Special Permit process is precisely designed for that type of impactful retail. Why does DCP find such review so onerous, when that type of review with reasonable controls is necessary to maintain Quality of Life for Residents?	Pete D
88	The gentleman's question regarding traffic in SoHo is critical. Air quality in SoHo is among the worst in the city due to access to/from the Holland Tunnel. In addition to high level particulates, there is also a noise problem due to blaring horns from cars and trucks stuck in cross-town and north/south streets. The change in the Verrazzano Bridge toll was supposed to alleviate this long-standing problem. Unfortunately, the problem persists.	Anonymous Attendee
89	Why is this PLAN pushing As OF Right on ground floor retail when there can be a change to the zoning law for for the "permission" of ground floor commercial to support retail. That action would not require the broad brush stroke of As of Right and yet protect upstairs and adjacent residents.	ronnie w
90	Why does the city require the local property owners to repair and pay for the public sidewalks?	ronnie w

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91	<p>I'm an independent retail business owner that houses 20-25 individual creative businesses at any given time - I've been along Soho Broadway since 2017 and closed at the end of 2020. I am currently trying to assess the viability for a return this Spring/Summer. An ongoing and known concern is the lack of dining options - both as an attraction for locals and visitors as well as an amenity to employees. In the absence of any quick fixes, as it relates to DOT Open Streets - is there a way to accelerate timeline and implementation to have dining fast-tracked? Is there a way to include creative independent retail as an amenity? On a related note, are flexible pedestrian-friendly public spaces an option - so as not to occupy space on "gridlock" days but to take advantage of lighter traffic days and locations along Broadway and cross-streets?</p>	Ronen G
92	<p>What percentage of ground floor uses are ug6 or ug 10 currently. What % of ground floor uses are operated for retail without the proper permits in place? What does DCP see as the potential increase in UG 6 and or 10 by sq foot (a range is ok) with this proposal?</p>	Anonymous Attendee
93	<p>Current zoning across NYC has requirement for Off Street (internal) Loading Berths, pertaining to retail in excess of 25,000 SF (including below grade space). What is the DCP plan for incorporating that requirement into allowance for as-of-right Large UG 10 Retail?</p>	Pete D
94	<p>Another "envisioning plan"—you're kidding. The first one wasn't heeded.</p>	Anonymous Attendee
95	<p>yes, this is the question: where is the enforcement?</p>	Anonymous Attendee
96	<p>encourage — not require. compliance is not required.</p>	Anonymous Attendee
97	<p>DOT will never be able to contend with the quality of life complaints. Never. Have you spoken to anyone who lives here? This is actually laughable.</p>	Jane F
98	<p>The things that made Soho a great neighborhood: families, local jobs, creative people working together are getting drivern out by luxury apartments, development and corporate retail. We need affordable housing, local, useful shops and neighborhood services (schools, hospitals etc). Luxury shops and apartmens block these necessary services from appearing. What is the city proposing to limit luxury stores and apartments to make space for resident servies and ownership? Thank you.</p>	Anonymous Attendee

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99	Is there some reason why the DOT uses standards of complaint investigation rather than having sound quiet standards be the base start of the yardstick for retail deliveries and any services to retailers? I am sure Europe starts with respect for quiet FIRST AND FOREMOST. Why is this so hard for NYC?	Phyllis R
100	As DOT considers removing parking spaces with trash receptacles and yet adding more residents, what are those who must have cars who wish to shop here from outer boroughs do with their cars? Or are the city agencies thinking we don't need those visitors and shoppers to thrive? Will underground parking lots be mandated to be built in new buildings?	ronnie w
101	This process is inherently unfair to residents. My internet is unstable and I have been disenfranchised from the process. For the record, I think that we DO NOT HAVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT UPZONED RETAIL and you have no reasonable answers to how the residents of the Broadway corridor will be protected	Leigh B
102	Does DCP understand historically why there is a limitation on the size of Eating / Drinking Establishments in SoHo? How much work residents put into achieving that due to influx of impactful operations, that wreaked havoc with Quality of Life? DCP has continually told us we know our neighborhoods better than DCP employees ever could, so how is it that DCP is now determining that such reasonable limitations should not continue?	Pete D
103	Sylvia, are you aware that the floor plates were enlarged the last 10-15 years when big hedge funds and developers purchased ground floors when 80/20 law was eliminated? Then it was THOSE entities who knocked down interior walls...creating enlarged floor plates. Oversized businesses and restaurants do not work in cast iron mixed used district..as noise bounces loudly off our buildings and through thin panel glass windows..which are not allowed to be updated.	ronnie w
104	How will the retail zoning as of right work in the historic district? Will it be restricted to the ground floor as it largely is now or will whole buildings be retail?	Anonymous Attendee

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105	Why is the Broadway/Broome solution so difficult to get? A Traffic Officer on eves of holidays and Firday afternoon and evenings would mitigate the nerve shattering distruption suffered for many many many years. (at least the last 9 years).	Phyllis R
106	Will you let Carter Booth, CB2 chair speak?	Darlene L
107	What is the measurement in SF of *new* potential Retail space that will be made available in SoHo & NoHo per DCP's new allowance for as-of-right UG6 & UG10 Retail from Cellar and above, and also considering the DCP proposal that 2nd floors be allowed to build out to the full size of the lot with no rear setback?	Pete D
108	"Encourage "is not a binfdingg solution for bad actors"	Leigh B
109	Without law enforcemnt and fines for noise how do you expect retailers to comply with your cuggestions???	Phyllis R
110	Jennifer of DOT, have you not heard from those of us on the call letting you know that we don't suffer double parking during daytime deliveries? We already have commercial parking along our streets!	ronnie w
111	Considering the increase in FAR at various levels throughout the SoHo & NoHo M1-5A & M1-5B districts that has been proposed by DCP, what is the total amount of new buildable SF of bulk that is included in the current iteration of the "SoHo / NoHo Neighborhood Plan"?	Pete D
112	Just to make sure this is addressed: Are Open Streets defined as Greenstreets, which are not Open Space under CEQR Technical Manual?	Jeannine K
113	Other than the previously promised and funded Water Tunnel open spaces in NoHo and SoHo, what are other options for substantial and meaningful open space?	Jeannine K
114	DOT is not mentioning a major use of the curb space: Service vehicles for trades people working on the buildings (Electricians, Plumbers, HVAC, Elevators, etc.). Those vehicular users of the streets and the curbs are constant and and important for the upkeep and service of buildings in the area. How are those users being considered in plans being contemplated by DOT?	Pete D