

Draft Minutes of the Chinatown Working Group (CWG) Full Group Meeting
5:00pm-6:00pm, Monday, July 11, 2016
Project Reach, 39 Eldridge Street

Voting members present: 83-85 Bowery Street Tenants Association (Shu Qing Wang); 229 Henry Street Tenants Association (Mary Ma); Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (Margaret Fung); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinatown and Lower East Side Artists Against Displacement (Francisca Benitez, Jessica Santos); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Wendy Cheung, Fun Mae Eng, Zishun Ning); Committee against Anti-Asian Violence (Naved Hussain); Community Board 3 (Vaylateena Jones); Good Old Lower East Side (James Rodriguez); Lower East Side Mujeres e Hombres Luchadores (Louise Velez); National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (Michael Lalan, Mary Lister, David Tieu); New Design Justice League (Brian Mella).

Also present: Trever Holland (Two Bridges Tower Residents Association); rob hollander (Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development); Alan Lee (UEAA); Gwen Simpson; Christina Zhung (Knickerbocker Village Tenant Association).

Meeting called to order, 5:15pm, Margaret Fung, facilitating.

June Minutes

Margaret Fung: Are there any objections to the minutes? Seeing none, the minutes are approved by all present.

Francisca Benitez: Trever have you decided to become a member?

Trever Holland: Not at this time.

Update on the community board meeting.

Louise Velez: The protest was strong and persistent, sent a clear message and made an impression.

Michael Lalan: Afterward the new board chair expressed full support for the CWG plan, asked to meet with us, offered to promote a resolution to support the plan without separating its parts and get the city to implement it immediately. This is an exciting change. Now we want to bring back to CWG all the groups that supported the plan so that we can moved forward with a broader base.

Wendy Cheung : It was a successful meeting, opening opportunities to go forward.

Mitchell Grubler: What about the changes the CB made in the CWG plan?

Wendy Cheung: We still need to organize and promote the plan.

James Rodriguez: What happened at the meeting between DCP and CB3?

Michael Lalan: They intend to study the plan further.

Margaret Fung: They haven't given us a timeline, so we need to get on with what we need to do.

Wendy Cheung: Let's reach out to former members and bring them back. We are continuing to put pressure also on City Hall.

Michael Lalan: Flyering and organizing to pressure the mayor will attract other groups involved in the same struggle.

Trever Holland: What is the CWG structure? Are there designated spokespersons?

Margaret Fung: The designation of spokesperson was a response to an immediate meeting with DCP in case we would be invited.

Trever Holland: Who is the spokesperson now?

rob hollander: Margaret is the spokesperson for now. The group can designate someone else if necessary.

Margaret Fung: Let's focus on bringing old members and bring in new ones as well.

Trever Holland: You need a structure.

rob hollander: The chairs had to resign because their groups left. But the chair positions were intended to be nominal positions -- mere coordinators and not even the meeting facilitators, who are supposed to rotate among the members.

James Rodriguez: Could we ask CB3 to ask CBI to stand in solidarity with CB3 and CWG?

Mike Lalan: Next step is plan to make it a reality. This is an opportunity to target de Blasio. Let's speak loudly.

Francisca Benitez: Both Gigi and Jamie went to DCP?

Trever Holland: Do we know any more about the meeting?

Margaret Fung: There's very little info -- that's part of the problem and why we need to move forward. How do we get ourselves heard if DCP gets back to CB3? We don't know, so we have to get to work meanwhile.

Trever Holland: DCP has halted the JDS development until the courts have settled a dispute over the air rights from Two Bridges Neighborhood Council. There's also a chance that the towers will trigger a ULURP process since they are in the Urban Renewal Area. JDS plans a 1000ft tower taller than the Extell tower. JDS will come to CB3. The tower will include 25% affordable housing.

James Rodriguez: The CWG rezoning would take years. Can CWG support CB3 efforts to delay the towers through the proposed ULURP?

Michael Lalan: What would be stronger than ULURP?

Trever Holland: What other strategy?

David Tieu: The Pratt plan is comprehensive. DCP could approve it immediately. The ULURP process would take only six months.

rob hollander: They'd have to do an Environmental Impact Statement, which takes at least a year.

Michael Lalan: A community outpouring could expedite the process.

Trever Holland: Are there any options in the process.?

rob hollander: If we reconvene the CAPZ team, we can look at that too.

Fun Mae Eng: [translated:] There needs to be a huge pressure on de Blasio especially while he's under investigation. The pressure should move the plan forward fast. Bowery displacement is currently in the courts.

Vaylateena Jones: This is urgent for our neighborhood. The development of these buildings could raise our rents overnight. The developers have put forward their plan. The CWG plan needs to be put forward.

James Rodriguez: About CBI's AMI change, why not ask CB3 to ask CBI to support the CB3/CWG AMI preference as a courtesy to a neighboring CB?

Rob Hollander: We should form a committee to review the impact of MIH and the demise of the 421a tax abatement.

Margaret Fung: Can such a committee report at the next meeting?

Rob Hollander: Who volunteers? [Margaret, James, David, Rob volunteer.] Who wants to work on gaining access to the website or creating a new one? [Fran, James, Rob volunteer.]

Trever Holland: When is the next meeting with DCP and CB3? When with CWG?

Vaylateena Jones: I will ask.

Trever Holland: DCP will be at one of the CB3 Land Use meetings.

Rob Hollander: The next CWG meeting will be August 1. Who want's to facilitate? [Wendy agrees to facilitate.]

Announcements

Christina Zhang: We are fighting a liquor license on Rutgers Street. Can rob distribute an email with the information?

rob hollander: I will.

Wendy Cheung: We will revive our demonstrations against de Blasio.

Trever Holland: Target developers?

Wendy Cheung: The mayor.

Trever Holland: There's a gala in September for developers. We should protest.

Vaylateena Jones: I will bring back to CB3 the resolution for ULURP support, support for whole CWG plan as written, ask about the meeting with the DCP and ask that CWG attend future meetings with DCP.

Meeting adjourned, 6:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,
rob hollander, CWG Sec'y