

# **Draft Minutes of the Chinatown Working Group (CWG) Full Group Meeting**

## **5:00pm-6:00pm, Monday, August 1, 2016 Project Reach, 39 Eldridge Street**

**Voting members present:** 83-85 Bowery Street Tenants Association (JinMing Cao); Asian American Arts Centre (Robert Lee); 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, Nancy Linn, Wayne Liu, Jessica Santos); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Wendy Cheung); Henry Street Settlement (Ivy Kuo); National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (Michael Lalan, David Tieu); New Design Justice League (Jordan Capik).

**Also present:** Trever Holland (Two Bridges Tower Residents Association); rob hollander (Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development); Vaylateena Jones (LES Power Partnership); Susan Leung (FROGG); Gordon Mark (OCM Church); Jamie Rogers (Community Board 3); Christina Zhang (Knickerbocker Village Tenant Association); Frank Yee (building owner).

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Meeting called to order at 5:15pm, Michael Lalan facilitating.

### Website Report: Francisca Benitez

Francisca Benitez: I asked Zella Jones for the CWG email list. She has given it to us.

Rob Hollander: We could create a new CWG website.

Michael Lalan: Let's ask CB3 chair Rogers to give us control over the old website.

### Announcement: Vaylateena Jones

Vaylateena Jones: At the recent LES Power Partnership we considered the CWG proposals on Area B. We liked the requirement that new construction not change the size and demographic including income. Development leads to gentrification which leads to displacement. We want to ensure that current residents can stay.

Mitchell Grubler: That is CWG's purpose.

### Report on CB3: Michael Lalan

Michael Lalan: At the last CWG, it was proposed that we ask CB3's new chair to support the CWG plan and to address the concerns Vaylateena has just expressed, to honor CB3's commitment and not drag out the process since developments are going up now. DCP

wants to use CB3 to slow down the process, consider the plan piece by piece rather than address it fast and whole. DCP is considering Area A only. CB3 chair Jamie Rogers says he supports our resolution to pass the entire Plan.

Margaret Fung: We had a committee to draft a resolution at the last meeting. The resolution included all the CB votes on individual parts of the Plan and resolves to support them all.

[CB3 Chair Jamie Rogers arrives.]

Trevor Holland: Why is DCP considering just area A?

Jamie Rogers: I am the Chair of CB3. We're holding several meetings related to CWG. We're considering land use, DCP's impact statement process to review lots in area D, and the role CB3 will play and the community. On the 26th I will chair an informational meeting with JDS, the developer that plans to construct on top of 80 Rutgers Street. This is one of three new developments. We hope to have meetings with each of the developers eventually. On the 29th we'll hold a second land use discussion. There will also be a meeting on area A with DCP and Councilmember Chin's office. Those are the three meetings.

Mitchell Grubler: Who set the agenda on area A alone?

Jamie Rogers: It was requested jointly by Borough President Gail Brewer, Margaret Chin, and DCP. We said it needs a separate meeting.

Michael Lalan: Area D is under pressure, why A? Why this delay?

Jamie Rogers: We have one path in DCP. We plan to exercise pressure and diplomacy with DCP. It will be a step forward but not the end of our job. There are two remaining pieces -- aside from the EIS for D. We are disappointed in the lack of interest in areas B&D. B is tough-- NYCHA and HUD as well as DCP are involved. With area D, everyone is concerned with the developments, but not zoning. So we want to be focused on rezoning.

Vaylateena Jones: That's just our LESPP issue. They are moving forward and we're still talking. Buildings are going up. Rezoning will be too late.

Jamie Rogers: Currently these developments are as-of-right. The EIS is meant to slow down their process. Meanwhile the discussion of rezoning CB will be pushing forward.

Wendy Cheung: I'm glad that you made a commitment to participate. CWG is growing. People are tired of meetings. This is not an initial meeting to us. We've been meeting for a long time. It's not for CB3 to invite the community for meetings, but CB3 should be representing what CWG has already done. We need to push the city, de Blasio, City Hall. We've been through it. Ask for actions at City Hall. We can't wait forever.

Jamie Rogers: I have the responsibility to push forward what the CB voted for which includes the CWG Plan. There's no prioritizing the plans. The CB benefits from resolutions from groups. It helps us advocate for the community.

Rob Hollander: Having different groups able to use their distinct tactics on the same common strategy can be advantageous to us all if we are cooperating.

Michael Lalan: But to deal only with area A is step in the wrong direction.

Jamie Rogers: CB3 never prioritized. The electeds and the city approached us, so we agreed because it's a step forward. But because the subdistricts are so big, we couldn't include it all at the Land Use Committee, given our volunteer limits. Where we have room to push forward, that's on us. It's difficult to fit in everything.

Susan Leung: The developer is planning to cantilever over the sidewalk.

Michael Lalan: The absurdities of these developers: no thought of the residents, their safety or health.

Jamie Rogers: We need testimonies from you for the process.

David Tieu: We've been doing this long time. CB3 should pass our resolution immediately.

Trevor Holland: Developers are sensitive to public attention. Pressure needs to be put on them. We want to protest Our Town's event honoring Victor Papa. News will be there. They don't know about what he's doing. We all need to attend.

Michael Lalan: Our group will talk about going.

Trevor Holland: It's on the 24th, Pike and Clinton. We should block the street. Bring flyers to educate.

Vaylateena Jones: Younger people need to assist the seniors to give them their voice. Seniors feel more vulnerable.

Trevor Holland: The average age there is 87. Many do not speak English and there is no advocate for them.

David Tieu: We have been mobilizing in our own way. We need need a plan.

Margaret Fung: First there should be consensus on the CWG Plan. Let's vote on our resolution.

Jamie Rogers: I'm giving you my email address. I'll present your resolution to the Land Use Committee. Whenever any part of the Plan comes up we'll push for the whole plan.

Francisco Benitez: Let's go to the CB meeting. I second the motion to vote on the resolution.

[Resolution is passed: 7 voting members in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining]

Meeting adjourned, 7:03pm.