

DRAFT Minutes
Chinatown Working Group Meeting
June 1, 2020, 6:30pm, by Zoom

Voting members present: Artists against Displacement (Fran Benitez, Jaime Chan); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Zishun Ning); National Mobilization against Sweatshops (Steph Kranes, Briar Winters); Youth Against Displacement (Caitlin Kelmar).

Guest: Christopher Marte, candidate for City Council District 1.

Also present: Michael Cohen (Citygroup); Violette de la Salle (Citygroup); Andrew Hiller (Democratic Socialists of America); rob hollander (Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development); Richard Moses (Lower East Side Preservation Initiative); Shelley Silver (artist resident); Elaine.

Meeting called to order, 6:35pm, Zishun Ning (CSWA) facilitating.

AGENDA

Candidate for City Council
70 Mulberry Street update

PRESENTATION FROM CHRISTOPHER MARTE

Chris expresses his continued support for the CWG plan to prevent community displacement. Commits to updating the plan's data.

Zishun: How will you address the people in the Grand Street coops?

Chris: We need to look at the needs of small businesses there. There needs to be community input.

Richard Moses (LESPI): Preservation challenges?

Chris: I was involved in preserving Nativity Church and Rivington House and the buildings along the Bowery. Preservation helps prevent secondary displacement and keep property values down.

Mitchell Grubler (BAN): Opposition from property owners with concerns about fines from the city from sanitation and signage.

Chris: Views have changed since the jail issue. We should re-engage with them.

Zishun: Some property owners have opposed the CWG plan. What have you done or plan to do to get their support for the CWG plan?

Chris: With the jail issue many landowners may sense that they have less influence on the future of Chinatown than they expected. I think that some are now open to the plan. I have promoted the plan and will continue to do so.

Steph Kranes (NMASS): The plan should not be viewed as a plan of the past. It is a forward-looking plan for the future of Chinatown.

rob hollander (LESRRD): Could we have a meeting between you, CWG and Richard to rethink the relationship with the property owners?

Chris: Yes, and Steph is right that it's good to have a variety of materials to give to people so that they can understand it as a plan for the future.

Andrew Hiller (DSA): Your plans for criminal justice reform?

Chris: I have signed the pledge to cut the NYPD budget and shift towards education and youth plans that are already being cut. The mayor continues to increase the NYPD budget while services are cut, services that are an investment in the future of the people of the city. Even if the state repeals 50-a, money talks so we won't get the reforms we need without a change in the budgeting.

We've been involved with food deliveries and PPE needs, so please contact me if you know of anyone in need.

70 MULBERRY STREET

rob: I testified that any development taller than 85' high would violate the CWG plan and the building is listed in the pand as a building of significance. There was a lot of impassioned and effective testimony in favor of preserving the façade. Unfortunately, the previous non profit tenants of the building signed a letter prioritizing re-installing them in the location over preserving it. They mention its history, but they ask that the work be done as fast as possible.

Mitchell: At the full board CB3 resolved to ask for an independent engineer with accredited preservation experience to evaluate the building, particularly the lower floors.

Richard: We're concerned that any engineer hired by the city will not be truly independent. A socially distanced street protest is being planned. We are hoping for press coverage.

Mitchell: Richard is working on an online letter for sign-on. Could CWG sign on?

Zishun: Our perspective has been to preserve the plan since it is consistent with the plan.

rob: CWG would have to read the letter before adopting it, but we could distribute it as something that is out there for our members without actually adopting something that we haven't read.

Mitchell: The letter allows people to customize it.

rob: It would be good for the CWG to participate in the project.

Briar Winters (NMASS): It would help towards building relationships.

Shelly Silver (artist resident): Do the renters get city funding? Has the senior center been relocated?

Mitchell: It's my understanding that all the former tenants of the building have been relocated.

Zishun: In the chat, Michael wrote that he had to leave but the visualization can be on the agenda for the next meeting.

rob: If Chris leaves, we can discuss our candidate endorsement.

[Chris leaves.]

Zishun: Should we decide now?

Chris is endorsed by all members present with no objection.

Meeting adjourned, 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
rob hollander, sec'y