

CWG Minutes 4.5.21, 6:30pm via Zoom

Members in attendance: 318 Restaurant Workers Union (Nelson Mar); Art Against Displacement (Nathaniel Otting, Vanessa Thill); Artists Space (Nia Nottage, Jay Sanders); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Kirsten Theodos); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Zishun Ning); Citygroup (Michael R. Cohen, Violette de la Salle); Downtown Independent Democrats (Tom LaGatta); East River Park Action (Fannie Ip); Lower East Side Preservation Initiative (Richard Moses); National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (Steph Kranes, Briar Winters), Youth Against Displacement (Caitlin Kelmar).

Also in attendance: Andrew Berman (Village Preservation), Harry Bubbins (Village Preservation), Jonathan Gardenhire (Smith Houses), Rob Hollander (Secretary), Sheila Kendrick (Save Central Park), April Li (Two Bridges resident), Kaiyu Li (University of Illinois, Chicago), Lily Jue Sheng (artist), Jeanne Wilke (NoHo Neighborhood Association).

Briar Winters facilitating; Steph Kranes, taking minutes. Minutes approved and meeting called to order 6:30pm.

CWG Week of Action

Goal is for CWG member groups to take up the Week of Action as their own, ie. develop programming to educate/outreach to their members and constituents about the CWG Plan so that we can grow support and demand for the plan's passage. Aiming for mid-May. We'd like to create a Week of Action committee comprised of members of some of the groups; Coordinating Committee will also help plan.

SoHo Rezoning

The Chinatown area of Soho that the City wants to rezone (6 blocks west of Baxter) would be targeted for significant overdevelopment because the FAR would be raised to 12, the highest residential level. This would also affect east of Baxter as rezoning effects are not restricted to the precise area that is rezoned.

CWG and Soho are writing a joint statement against the City's plan and in support of our respective community-led rezoning plans, focused on the fact that the City's protection for one neighborhood (East Village) and exclusion of the rest, is harmful to the community; equal protection is essential to fight racism and displacement. By putting out a joint statement we show our unity.

Candidate Walks

We met with Lindsay Boylan and Brad Hoylman on a walk-through Chinatown to see some examples of vulnerable sites and learn about why we need the CWG Plan. We need to follow up with candidates to give them concrete actions they can take to show support of the plan (e.g. add community-led rezoning to their platform) and develop our relationship with them to build their understanding of the plan and commitment to promoting it.

Alliances and Letters of Support

Sheila Kendrick of Save Central Park sent a letter to the sponsors of the bill that opposes the use of inter-building voids.

Fannie Ip of East River Park Action: lawsuit is addressing the redacted report on the impacts of the park closure. Diane Morales pulled out of the lawsuit; ERPA will have a march.

Jing Fong

Community members put out a plan to take over Jing Fong's operations but Chu family stays silent. They aren't interested in continuing Jing Fong. The lack of zoning protection allows the Chus to overdevelop, showing how the City helps developers kick out the community. The workers' March 25 rally demanded Chus respond to the community's offer to continue dining operations and return the \$35 million the City gave to MOCA (c/o Jonathan Chu) for the jail back to the community for relief. The Chus have not responded or met the community's demand, so the Coalition to Protect Chinatown & LES is calling for a boycott with a twice a week picket of Chu's businesses; people can register to join.

Steph Kranes, Sec'y pro tem