

DRAFT Minutes
Chinatown Working Group Meeting
November 13, 6:30pm, 275 Cherry Street Community Room

Voting members present: Artists Against Displacement (Harry Burke, Matthew So, Bettina Yung); Asian American Arts Centre (Robert Lee); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinatown and Lower East Side Artists Against Displacement (Francisca Benitez); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Wing Lam, Zishun Ning); Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence (Chester Thai, Melanie Wang, Chen Yo, Zhi Qin Zheng); Good Old Lower East Side (Jessie Ngok); Hombres y Mujeres Luchadores (Yolanda Donato); Land's End 2 Residents Association (Merceu Jabul, Alena Lopez, Tanya Negron); Lower East Side Organized Neighbors (Antonio QueyLin); National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (Francisca Benitez, Joanna Estevez, Madeleine Jackson, Steph Kranes, Louise Velez); New Design High School (Darren Chase); Youth Against Displacement (Zishun Ning); 229 Henry Street Tenants Association (Xiu Yun Cao); 318 Restaurant Union (Zhi Liang Chen); 83-85 Bowery Tenants Association (Shu Qin Wan).

Also present: Lisa Fairstein (Friends of Elizabeth Street Garden); rob hollander (Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development); Caitlin Kelmar; Christopher Marte; Paula Segal (CDP-Urban Justice Center); Briar Winters (LES Dwellers).

Meeting called to order, 6:45pm, Francesca Benitez facilitating.

1. Approval of the agenda

Proposed agenda:

- Co-chair election
- New membership
- Approval of the minutes
- CWG plan and implementation strategy
- Website report

Agenda adopted with no objections.

2. Co-chair election

Wing Lam (CSWA) moves to hold co-chair elections at the next meeting. Members should be notified and asked for nominations. The co-chairs should be responsible for moving forward the decisions of the group, for external communications and coordinating the meetings.

rob hollander (secretary) suggests that because the community boards are no longer participating, CWG should allow two co-chairs from any two community-based organizations that are members of CWG.

Several members second the motion as amended.

Francesca Benitez (CLAAD and NMASS) restates the motion: Notify the membership that CWG will take nominations for co-chairs at the next meeting and will hold elections at that meeting; the co-chairs will represent two community-based organization members of CWG.

12 in favor, none opposed, none abstaining.

3. New member

Youth Against Displacement submitted their application, including minutes of their October meeting. All approve their membership as of the current meeting (13 in favor, none opposed, none abstaining).

4. October minutes

October minutes are approved by all present. [*Please see the addendum below.*]

5. The CWG plan's implementation and strategy

rob advises that since diverse agents have been taking the plan piecemeal, some CWG members have expressed a desire to have CWG reaffirm the importance of promoting the plan as a whole.

Wing: Solidarity in the community is essential to prevent the community being divided. Already CB2 defected from the CWG plan around the Canal Street/Broadway area. Moves to have CWG reaffirm that the plan should be moved forward as a whole and not be pulled apart.

Antonio Quelin (LESON): Second.

Members of LESON, CLAAD and NMASS express the importance of promoting the plan as a whole.

Jesse Ngok (GOLES) informs the group that the Borough President is interested in a text change for NYCHA development.

Laura Segal (Urban Justice): The BP wants to avoid an EIS process to proceed with a text change sooner.

Fran: Vote on the motion to reaffirm that the plan should be moved forward as a whole and not be pulled apart:

12 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining.

5.a Implementation

Briar Winters (LES Dwellers): Who should apply? What is the timeline?

Joanna Estevez (NMASS): Shouldn't the community vote on the plan? Could it be put on a ballot?

Wing: LESON had a plan to stop all the developments on the waterfront.

Fran: What are the details of the LESON plan?

Tony Quelin (LESON): We'll send you a summary explanation of the LESON plan.

rob: I have a copy of the LESON letter. I will distribute it along with an intro.

Wing: CWG has resources. A law suit will be expensive.

Tony: The LESON plan cost \$21,000. We're going to FEMA, EPA, Federal agencies as well as State. The area is a floodzone, the buildings were carefully designed to bring light into the apartments. Leson lawyer exposed that it isn't as of right. It need special permits for the LSRD. It will violate sewage requirements, light sources -- they didn't engage with the community.

Christopher Marte: Everyone should learn the LESON plan so all the groups can know it and share.

6. Website report

Fran: We can't take over the old website but we can transfer all the information. The committee will meet Dec. 1 to begin designing a new website.

Meeting adjourned, 8pm.

Respectfully submitted,
rob hollander, Sec'y

ADDENDUM: The October minutes were corrected on 11/29/17 so that the sentence

If the developers apply, Urban Justice, with its clients GOLES, CAAAV and Land's End Tenants Association, are prepared to sue them in court.

correctly now reads

If the developers apply, Urban Justice, with its clients GOLES, CAAAV and Land's End 1 Tenants Association, are prepared to sue them in court.