

Minutes of the Chinatown Working Group (CWG) Full Group Meeting
4pm – 5:30pm, Monday, September 10, 2012
American Legion L.T. Kimlau Post 1291

Voting members present: American Legion Post 1291 (Gabe Mui); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinese Progressive Association (Mae Lee); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Wendy Cheng, Wah Lee); Committee Against Anti Asian Violence (Billie Zhu); Community Board 2 (Antony Wong); Community Board 3 (John Leo); Create in Chinatown (Amy Chin); Museum of Chinese in America (Helen Koh); Two Bridges Neighborhood Council (Wilson Soo).

Elected Officials: District Attorney's Office, New York County (Teresa Ye); Manhattan Borough President (David Czyzyk for Scott Stringer).

Media: Ming Pao (Claire Wang); Sing Tao (Bonnie Lee); World Journal (Clement Lee).

Also present: Rob Hollander (Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development); Charlie Lai (New York Chinatown History Project); Irving Lee (Property Tax Payers); Russell Leong (Asian American/Asian Research Institute); Irene Leung (The New School); Susan Yung (Bowery Poetry Club).

Meeting called to order at 4:17pm, CWG co-Chairs Wilson Soo and Antony Wong facilitating

1. Introductions.

2. Agenda: (Only one item, Fiscal conduit/RFP update)

3. June minutes approval.

>>**No objections, minutes approved by all present.**

3. Update on the RFP for a consultant, Wilson Soo and Antony Wong, presenting

Antony Wong: LMDC has not yet held a meeting to approve the fiscal conduit. We will inform the group when the vote has been taken.

Wilson Soo: Michael Zisser of the proposed fiscal conduit, University Settlement, helped us to improve the flow of the language of the RFP. Three primary tasks: review recommendations from the CWG CAPZ & Economic Development working teams; gather and analyzing information and provide analytic support for those recommendations; develop planning strategies based on the recommendations. Zisser says that \$140,000 is only enough to lay the basis for a plan. We streamlined the original eight pages down to five.

Antony Wong: Next Wednesday, September 19, the RFP will be presented to the CB3 Land Use Committee. Please attend.

Rob Hollander: Can we obtain new grants that can be added to the consultant's work?

Wilson Soo: I will ask if University Settlement is willing to continue as fiscal conduit for future grants.

Wendy Cheng: Can we go over the primary changes? Have we presented the RFP to CB3 before?

Wilson Soo: We have presented a previous version to CB3 before.

Antony Wong: That version was approved by CWG vote.

Wilson Soo: The only changes were removing repetitions and simplifying categories. Nothing was removed or altered in content, but rearranged. I will send out the June version that was presented to the full group for comparison.

Irving Lee: No mention of transportation.

Antony Wong: Those will be dealt with separately.

Rob Hollander: The CAPZ and Economic Development haven't finished their recommendations, so what will be presented? What about disagreements on documents – how will the consultant understand dissatisfaction with those documents?

Mitchell Grubler: If a team can reconvene in the meantime, why not do so?

Rob Hollander: Or it could be decided by the full group.

Antony Wong: I thought CWG was unable to decide, so we would allow the consultant to look through it, come to it with new research, give us a recommendation and we will provide guidance.

Mae Lee: If the Economic Development Team cannot come together, or if CWG cannot decide, then we could ask the consultant for an evaluation. The consultant will attend meetings of CWG and interact with the CWG for guidance.

Rob Hollander: I wish the literature review would include the words "critically review" to understand the sources and purposes of previous studies and the funding sources.

Antony Wong: The bulk of the work will be zoning, only a small part of it will be Economic Development. The consultant will meet with us throughout the process.

Rob Hollander: Why were the thirteen items under primary tasks not included among the deliverables?

Wilson Soo: One is research, the other outcomes.

Irving Lee: Economic Development never finalized its issues. I assume that we'll have a chance to finalize our work by the time the consultant is hired.

Antony Wong: That is the idea. Please all come to the CB3 Land Use Committee presentation on the 19th.

Announcements:

Helen Koh, the new director of the Museum of Chinese in America: We are launching public programs in series to create continuity and momentum, beginning with a local citizen series to educate about Chinatown and social justice. Our inaugural program will star Charlie Lai and Jack Chen, Thursday, Sept. 13 at 7pm, a discussion about the origin of MOCA. Saturday, MOCA will hold a big program called *Gathering Grassroots* -- lots of groups with discussions among themselves and open to the public, with music, from 12 noon to 8pm. Also our new exhibits are about comics from Sept 27 to Feb 24: *Marvels and Monsters, Unmasking Asian Images in US Comics from 1942-1986*, from the collection of William F. Woo; also *Alt Comics*, latest Asian alternative comics. On the street you will see their banners around the neighborhood. Please come.

Gabe Mui: The American Legion will hold a memorial for 9-11 at Kim Lau Square tomorrow, that the day not be forgotten.

Mae Lee: Sunday, September 16, *Immigrants Connect 2012*, at 11am-2pm at CCBA: government agencies will be present to explain their services, many employment related and issues of immigration status including the new Federal policy for temporary work.

Wendy Cheng: Will CWG ask for a place on the SPURA Task Force? CWG has been around for several years, we represent so many constituents in the neighborhood, and this is an important moment for community planning. We said we'd revisit sending a letter to CB3 in September.

Antony Wong: Gigi Lee, the CB3 chair, said she'd get back to us about it, but we haven't heard yet. So we have to follow up with her. We can address it at the next meeting. We'd also need quorum for a decision. We will put it on the agenda for the October meeting. Reminder to everyone to vote in the upcoming NYC primary election on Thursday, September 13.

Wilson Soo: The CB3 Land Use Committee will meet, Sept. 19, 6:30pm at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum, room 103, 103 Orchard Street.

Antony Wong: Next meeting will be held Oct. 1, 5:30pm, first Monday of the month. Meeting adjourned, 4:54pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Hollander, CWG Secretary