

Minutes of the Chinatown Working Group (CWG) Full Group Meeting  
4pm to 5:30pm, Monday, June 10, 2013  
American Legion L.T. Kimlau Post 1291

Voting members present: American Legion Post 1291 (Gabe Mui); Asian American Arts Centre (Robert Lee); Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (Alexander Hu, Bethany Li); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinatown Business and Property Owners (Douglas Woodward); Chinese Progressive Association (Mae Lee); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Josephine Lee); Committee Against Anti Asian Violence (Jason Chan, Helena Wong); Community Board 1 (Michael Levine); Community Board 2 (Edward Ma, Antony Wong); Community Board 3 (Gigi Li); Create in Chinatown (Amy Chin); Museum of Chinese in America (Helen Koh); Two Bridges Neighborhood Council (Wilson Soo); 61 Delancey Street Tenants Association (Zhi Qin Zheng)

Planning consultant: Jocelyne Chait, Charles Lai.

Elected representatives: Manhattan Borough President (David Czyzyk).

Also present: Rob Hollander (Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development); Irving Lee (Property Tax Payers Association); Unknown (Robert Lee's Guest).

Media: Charlene He (Sinovision); Bonnie Lee (Sing Tao Daily News); Clement Lee (World Journal).

Meeting called to order at 4:26pm, Wilson Soo and Antony Wong presiding.

### 1. Introductions

### 2. Agenda

>>Agenda approved by all present

### 3. Minutes

Antony Wong: There is one unidentified consultant speaker in the minutes. The consultant will identify the speaker for the secretary. [The speaker was Mandu Sen.]

>>Minutes (except the missing name) approved by all present.

### 4. Feedback of the consultant's preliminary report from last meeting.

Antony Wong: Go around the room for comments.

Edward Ma: As Parks Team Chair I am concerned with plaza space, and as a mental health professional I see the mental health benefits of gardens. I have five points in favor of a large plaza: 1) promotes community consensus; 2) encourages reaching out to others to accept differences; 3) promotes massive historical and political movements; 4) conducive to democratic participation; and 5) fulfills self identification, large group identification and historical identity.

Helena Wong: At CAAAV we were concerned that all the documents, whether agreed upon or those not agreed upon, were given equal attention, obscuring the work over the years that were accomplished.

Bethany Li: Both in planning and town hall all the consensus contained in CAPZ and the RFP should be emphasized.

Irving Lee: I'm concerned that economic development not remove current operations or pressured by price.

Robert Lee: How do we protect Chinatown without a 197a Plan?

Mae Lee: In the Chinese Progressive Association, we are concerned to see the creation of affordable community spaces for community meetings, programs like adult education. Currently we have to coordinate with public schools through the DOE. There's a need for more affordable community space. Also we want the hotels to provide good jobs for community.

Amy Chin : The preamble of guiding principles of the Culture and Historical Preservation should be represented in the presentation, not just the mechanics, so that the kind of Chinatown and quality of life, the overall objective, won't be lost.

#### 5. Update on the June Town Hall

Wilson Soo: Seward High School did not respond. MS 131 responded for June 26. We must inquire with the fiscal conduit, University Settlement, regarding our budget for renting the venue should the planning consultant not be able to take on that cost. On Wednesday the location will be finalized. We need to budget for the custodian, security, and plus break-out rooms which may cost around \$400.

Michael Levine: Who pays for the materials, pads, pencils...

Jocelyne Chait: That's in our budget.

Mae Lee: Chinatown Y at MS131 may be able to provide more space than through the DOE.

Antony Wong: Town Hall will tentatively be held on Wednesday, June 26, 6pm-8:30pm, with light refreshments served.

Mitchell Grubler must leave early and so he will fill out a proxy ballot for the co-chair election. We are still waiting for quorum to conduct the election.

Jocelyne Chait: Passed out draft handout regarding logistics of the Town Hall and questions to be asked in the breakout groups. Also a survey will be administered at the Town Hall and to members of CWG. This is not part of the RFP, but would help our work. [see attached].

For the 26th, we'd like to ask for an extra half hour for the survey. We may cut it down to a 2-page survey. People need time to fill it in.

There will be an introduction by the CWG chairs with a CWG history. Then a consultant's presentation including principles, agreed-upon goals in CAPZ and economic development. And thanks to Amy for mentioning the cultural principles. We'll add that. And then we'll describe the break-out groups, the purpose of it. We give them 70 minutes, followed by a report and maybe discussion at the end.

Michael Levine: Do we observe or participate. Who will staff the break-outs?

Jocelyne Chait: Participate. We will staff.

Charlie Lai: Please do not dominate, allow the community speak.

Irving Lee: Economic development history should be general since CWG never finalized a plan.

Jocelyne Chait: Co-Chairs will give a history of the CWG. We will give agreed-upon general agreements: job development, business assistance; but not where there has been contention.

We'll also explain our timeline and next meetings. We'll explain that it's an interactive process. Break out into tables, expecting maybe a hundred people, groups of ten at most. Each will have a facilitator and scribe. We'll have interpreters in Mandarin, Cantonese, Fujianese and Spanish. Materials will be available at each table, surveys, the presentation, maps and a glossary, also translated. The agenda: introduction, three overall questions and targeted questions on cultural and historical preservation, affordability, economic development and zoning. What's in parentheses next to the questions is for the facilitator. We'll give everybody a chance to respond, record on notepads.

For targeted questions, we may not go around, just gather responses in light of time. Maybe two questions instead of three for each topic to save time. We'll reconvene for a report back. We will transcribe the notepads and provide a report that will be available for CWG to read.

Michael Levine: Questions are excellent but will require too much time. How compress? Tough to shift from an in-depth discussion on one topic to another. Will each table deal with all the topics?

Jocelyne Chait: Yes. All the topics will be dealt with for each table. Translators for each...

Rob Hollander: Shuffle the order of questions to be sure that each question will have been addressed by at least one table.

Bethany Li: The questions should be in the same order as the RFP.

Irving Lee: Is the meeting completely open to the public?

Jocelyne Chait: Yes.

Irving Lee: Is it possible to address some of these questions at a later Town Hall?

Jocelyne Chait: Need input on all these for progress. But we can prioritize.

Josephine Lee: After five years, there needs to be more concrete presentation of the progress we've made already. People ask, what have we done? The beginning introduction should include items of consensus. People should know what we've put forward.

Robert Lee: This could go back to beginning. Maybe people should hear from those of us who did this work. People can respond to what we've done and will respond to us.

Helena Wong: The introduction with translation may get drawn out.

Ed Ma: I agree with Josephine. People ask me, when will CWG collapse? When will it end? Let's include our achievements, the primary goal and community approval. The old guard is skeptical.

Jocelyne Chait: We need to mention the other approved action plans.

Mitchell Grubler: Historic buildings can be protected without preventing development.

Mae Lee: Can we focus on questions where we don't have agreement, so we get new information. We know about affordability, but we need new responses about economic development.

Robert Lee: I agree we need to focus. The cultural questions don't address desires for the future, for example, it doesn't ask about an arch. There are other questions that are not addressed, questions beyond just built environments.

Bethany Li: One way to convey progress is to subsume the overarching questions into the target questions. We know there are store closings. What kind of store closings? Make the focus more specific.

Irving Lee: The participants should address affordability from the start.

Bethany Li: Ask the group, What do you find affordable?

Jocelyne Chiat: The survey is not final. We may cut out some questions.

Rob Hollander: Include, Do you work in Chinatown? Own a business in Chinatown? Own Property in Chinatown?

Gigi Lee: Will you distribute this beyond the Town Hall?

Jocelyne Chait: Yes, to member organizations, responses by the end of July.

Helena Wong: Will it be translated?

Joceylne Chait: Yes, into Chinese and Spanish.

Michael Levine: Three pages may be too long. Could take out the session questions, then use a longer version for distribution to membership organizations.

Jocelyne Chait: We thought it should be one page, but then it developed. We want to know who is answering and need information.

Rob Hollander: ...except if you don't get to all the questions in the session, then you don't get them at all.

Antony Wong: Any further questions/comments please send to Jocelyne Chait and we'll review them at the Coordinating Committee meeting on Tuesday, June 18, 4pm, at Community Board 1, 49-51 Chambers Street.

## 6. CWG elections

All voting members received a ballot and filled them out.

Results: 15 votes in favor of Antony Wong and Wilson Soo as Co-Chairs for 2013-2014.

## 7. Community announcements

Antony Wong: Community Board 3's Traffic Committee will consider co-naming of Elizabeth Street & Canal Street "Danny Chen Way" on June 13, 6:30pm, at Confucius Plaza's Community Room.

Ed Ma: CUNY-TV on Channel 75 will broadcast a new monthly program called Asian American Life. People featured include Helen Koh from Museum of Chinese in America, and Charlie Lai. Quite different and interesting.

David Czyzyk: Please take a copy of the report to revitalize the waterfront from the Manhattan Borough President and NYS Assemblyman Kavanagh.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm. Next full group meeting, July 1.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rob Hollander, Secretary

# Chinatown Planning and Rezoning Study Pratt Center/Collective Partnership Chinatown Working Group

## TOWN HALL

Wednesday, June 26  
6:00pm – 8:00pm (8:30pm?)

### PROPOSED AGENDA

1. Welcome, History and Town Hall agenda by CWG – 10 min
2. Presentation by Pratt Center / Collective Partnership – 10 min
3. General description and objectives of the breakout exercise – 5 min
4. Breakout session – 70 min
5. Report back – 20 min
6. Next steps – 5 min
7. Light refreshments (mingling, survey) - extra 30 min?

## BREAKOUT SESSION

Participants will gather around tables of maximum 10 persons each, including two or three staff. We expect between 8 to 10 tables.

### STAFF

- Each table will have a facilitator and a writer/scribe.
- There will be tables for non-English participants. Each of these tables will have one translator/interpreter for each of the foreign languages spoken in the Chinatown / surrounding areas: Mandarin, Cantonese, Fujianese and Spanish.
- If experienced in community meetings, the interpreter/ translator can be the table's facilitator?

### MATERIALS

Each table will have:

- A large Sticky Pad.
- A large map of the study area
- A set of color markers: black, red, blue, green, purple

**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**

- Pens/ pencils /paper
- Surveys for each participant. Surveys will be collected by a designated staff.
- Glossary
- Copy of presentation plus map

### **BREAKOUT SESSION AGENDA**

1. Introductions – 5 min
2. Overarching Question –25 min
3. Targeted Questions –40 min

#### **1. Introductions – 5 min**

The facilitator will begin by introducing himself/herself, and ask everybody at the table to introduce himself/herself and in which part of Chinatown or surrounding areas he/she lives. **MARK ON THE MAP** (optional)

The facilitator will distribute the surveys to each participant and ask them to fill them out before the end of the evening.

#### **2. Exercise 1: Overarching Questions – 25 min**

The facilitator will write each question at the top of a large pad. (Or will refer to questions that have already been written on the pad.)

The facilitator will ask the following questions:

- ***What are unique or special characteristics of Chinatown and surrounding areas that you value and want to preserve?*** (for instance shop signs, small stores and ethnic shopping, affordable housing, community services, job opportunities, proximity to friends and relatives, cultural identity, language diversity, architecture/historic buildings) ***What and Where?*** **MARK ON THE MAP**
- ***What are changes you have seen in Chinatown/your neighborhood in the last 10 years? What and Where?*** **MARK ON THE MAP**
- ***What are problems you see facing Chinatown and surrounding areas that you would like to have addressed?*** (for instance store closings, loss of jobs, traffic, lack of open space, rising housing costs, harassment, inappropriate development) ***What and Where?*** If appropriate, **MARK ON THE MAP.**

The facilitator should ask every participant to respond to the questions. It would be up to participants to pass or to agree with other member (s) of the group.

The Scribe/Writer should list each answer under the question written on the large pad.

The Scribe/Writer should mark all location-specific answers on the map.

### 3. Exercise 2: Targeted Questions – 40 min

The facilitator will explain that these questions would help us understand issues of concern related to the main topics raised by CWG.

The facilitator should encourage every participant to join the discussion.

The Scribe/Writer should list each answer or raised issue on a large pad, per topic.

All site-specific answers should be marked on the large map. Use a different color marker for each topic.

#### **AFFORDABILITY – 10 min (RED marker on the map)**

- ***What is your biggest concern about housing or small businesses in Chinatown and surrounding areas?*** (for example, affordable rent; condition of apartment; overcrowding; fear of eviction, rent increases)
- ***Have you experienced either landlord harassment or poor building maintenance and services?***
- ***Do you feel that your children or other relatives will be able to find affordable housing in Chinatown and surrounding areas if things continue as they are?***

#### **CULTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION – 10 min (GREEN marker on the map)**

- ***What are the types of cultural or community uses and/or historic buildings you feel are unique to Chinatown? What three places in Chinatown are most special to you and why?*** MARK ON THE MAP
- ***Would you like to see historic buildings and areas protected from development? If so, which buildings? Which areas?*** MARK ON THE MAP
- ***When you need to gather a large group for a meeting or a celebration, where do you go and why?*** MARK ON THE MAP

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – 10 min (PURPLE marker on the map)**

- ***Where do you work and what kind of jobs would you like to see preserved or developed in Chinatown and surrounding areas?*** MARK ON THE MAP
- ***What are the types of business you feel are unique to Chinatown's character? MARK ON THE MAP. Do you feel that the current mix of stores and businesses in Chinatown and surrounding areas meets your needs? Why? Why not?***

- **What are your thoughts on sidewalk vending in Chinatown and surrounding areas? Should there be more opportunities for vending in the neighborhood? If so, where?** MARK ON THE MAP

#### **ZONING AND LAND USE -10 min (BLUE marker on the map)**

- **Do you feel that all new development should be required to reflect the size of existing buildings and the existing uses?** (Activities such as stores, apartments, offices, schools, etc.) **Should any specific type of development be restricted? What and Where?** MARK ON MAP
- **If more affordable apartments or cultural and community spaces could be created and/or protected in Chinatown by constructing taller buildings in certain areas, would you find that acceptable? If yes, for what use? Where? How much bigger?** MARK ON THE MAP
- **How would you like to see Chinatown and the surrounding areas develop in the future? For what? In what way and in which areas?** MARK ON MAP

# CWG Planning Study – Chinatown / LES Resident Survey

## Part One: Please Describe Yourself:

1. In what neighborhood do you live? (check one) \_\_\_\_\_  
(For example: Chinatown, Lower East Side, Two Bridges, Little Italy)
2. What street corner is closest to your home? (example: East Broadway & Pike St.) \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many years have you lived in this neighborhood? (write number) \_\_\_\_\_
4. How old are you? Under 17 \_\_\_\_\_ 18-24 \_\_\_\_\_ 25-34 \_\_\_\_\_ 35 -64 \_\_\_\_\_ 65 + \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is your gender? \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female
6. With what racial group do you most closely identify? (check one)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Asian / Asian American      \_\_\_\_\_ African-American      \_\_\_\_\_ White  
\_\_\_\_\_ Latino / Hispanic      \_\_\_\_\_ Other : \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many people do you live with, and how old are they? (write total persons in each age bracket) (optional?)
- Youth (under 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Adults (18-64) \_\_\_\_\_ (Seniors 65+) \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the combined annual income of all the people you live with? (Household income) (check one)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Less than \$25,000      \_\_\_\_\_ \$25,000 - \$50,000  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$50,000 - \$100,000      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100,000 and up

## Part Two: Community Character:

9. What have you valued most about living in Chinatown / LES? (indicate top three items)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to Family      \_\_\_\_\_ Variety of Local businesses      \_\_\_\_\_ Public Transit access  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sense of Community      \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Opportunities      \_\_\_\_\_ Bus service to other Chinatowns  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cultural Activities      \_\_\_\_\_ Affordable rent      \_\_\_\_\_ Parks / Community Gardens  
\_\_\_\_\_ Proximity to School      \_\_\_\_\_ Architectural character
- Other (write in): \_\_\_\_\_
10. How concerned are you about the following issues in your neighborhood? (Check all that apply)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cost of Housing      \_\_\_\_\_ Loss of Small / Local Businesses      \_\_\_\_\_ Employment Opportunities  
\_\_\_\_\_ Traffic on Weekdays      \_\_\_\_\_ Traffic on Nights / Weekends      \_\_\_\_\_ Noise from bars / nightlife  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cost of goods & services      \_\_\_\_\_ Gentrification      \_\_\_\_\_ Crime  
\_\_\_\_\_ Architectural character      \_\_\_\_\_ Other (write in): \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you use the public parks in your neighborhood often? (YES) (NO)
12. If you answered no, please select the most significant reason: (check one)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Too far away      \_\_\_\_\_ Doesn't interest me

# CWG Planning Study – Chinatown / LES Resident Survey

- Too crowded
- I don't have enough time
- Wrong kind of facilities
- Dirty / poorly maintained

13. What kind of amenities / facilities would you like to see developed in Chinatown / LES? (indicate top three)

- Community Center
- Performance space
- Public Meeting Space
- Bicycle paths / lanes
- Employment Training
- Child Care / Day Care
- Green Market
- Sidewalk Café, shops
- Street vendors
- Library
- Park / Playground
- Medical Clinics
- Large Stores (like Home Depot)
- Other (write in): \_\_\_\_\_

## Part Three: Housing Situation:

14. What size apartment do you have? (check one)

- Studio
- 1 Bedroom
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Bedroom
- 4 Bedroom
- 5 Bedroom or more (how many?) \_\_\_\_\_

15. What is the monthly rent or mortgage payment for your apartment? (include contribution of others)

- Less than \$600
- \$1,400 - \$1,999
- \$600 - \$999
- \$2,000 - \$2,999
- \$1,000 - \$1,399
- \$3,000 or More

16. How many people that you live with split monthly housing expenses? (write number) (optional?) \_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you own or rent your residence?  Own  Rent

18. Which of these terms best describes your apartment? (check one)

- Rent-regulated
- Public housing
- Market rent
- Don't know
- Condominium
- Mitchell-Lama
- Low-income HDFC
- Other: (write in) \_\_\_\_\_

19. Has your rent increased in the last two years? If so, how much more? \$\_\_\_\_\_ more

20. Would you like to own property in your neighborhood in the future? (YES) (NO)

21. Suppose you had to move next month, how confident are you about finding a similarly-priced apartment in the neighborhood?

- Confident
- Fairly sure
- Doubtful
- Not confident
- Don't know

22. Do you have friends or relatives who have left the neighborhood, even though they wanted to stay? (YES) (NO)

23. What was the main reason they moved away? \_\_\_\_\_

24. Do you purchase the majority of day-to-day items close to where you live? (YES) (NO)

25. What kinds of business goods and services (for example....)do you have trouble accessing in your neighborhood?

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**Part Four: Neighborhood Growth:**

26. In your opinion, how many floors should be allowed for new buildings in Chinatown / LES?

- floors along small / narrow streets (like Bayard St)
- floors wide streets (like East Broadway)
- floors along Canal Street
- floors along (Specify)

27. How do you feel about new development in your neighborhood?

- Good       OK       Concerned       No Opinion

28. Which of these statements best describe your reaction to new development in the area? (rank top two)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm fine with new development          | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood character will be lost    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'll be priced out                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood character will improve    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It will be good for local businesses   | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased traffic and parking problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public facilities will become strained | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood is too crowded already    |

29. Would your opinion about increasing the size of new development change if accompanied by any of the following?

- |   |                              |                             |                                  |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Low income housing opportunities        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Depends |
| Moderate income housing choices         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Depends |
| Preservation of regulated housing units | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Depends |
| Additional Community services           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Depends |
| Space for small business growth         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Depends |
| Well-paying jobs for local residents    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Depends |

30. If you answered depends, or if you have any other comments to add, please take a moment to explain:

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**Thank you for taking the time to answer all of the questions, your opinion counts!**

If you would like to participate in the CWG Planning Study, please tell us how we can best contact you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_