

DRAFT: Not for distribution
Minutes of the Chinatown Working Group (CWG) Full Group Meeting
5:30pm-7pm, Monday, July 7, 2014
Hamilton-Madison House, 50 Madison Street

Voting members present: Asian American Arts Centre (Robert Lee); Asian-American Legal and Education Fund (Bethany Li); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinatown Manpower Project - Business Outreach Center (Eddie Chan); Chinese Progressive Association (Mae Lee); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Wendy Cheung, Wah Lee); Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence (Anj Chaudhry, Steven Houang, Jeffrey Lau, Guo Zheng Ping, Wai Yee Poon, Yuang Rui Zhi); Community Board 2 (Antony Wong); Community Board 3 (Gigi Li, John Leo); Create In Chinatown (Amy Chin); Good Old Lower East Side (Julian Morales, James Rodriguez); Hester Street Collaborative (Dylan House); Lower East Side Mujeres e Hombres (Yolanda Donato, Louise Velez); National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (David Tieu); NoHo-Bowery Stakeholders Incorporated (Zella Jones); Property Tax Payers Association (Dean Fong, Irving Lee, Jan Lee); Two Bridges Neighborhood Council (Victor Papa, Wilson Soo); 61 Delancey Street Tenants Association (Zhi Qin Zheng); 197 Madison Street (Chi Lung Poon); 176 Hester Street Tenants Association (Edwin Zhen); 318 Restaurant Workers Union (John Chen);

Also Present: Rob Hollander; Jonathan Gardenhire (Smith Houses Residents Association); Devin Maroney (New York Hotel Trades Council).

Media: China Press (Sophia Su); Epoch Times (Hanna Cai); Sing Tao (Lotus Chao, April Xu); World Journal Report (Joseph Hsu and unsigned reporter).

Meeting called to order, 5:48pm. Wilson Soo and Antony Wong, presiding.

1. Introductions.

2. Minutes passed by all present with no objections.

3. Co-chair elections, Antony Wong, Wilson Soo (incumbent Co-chairs) and Rob Hollander (Secretary) facilitating.

Antony Wong: We received three proxy votes from members. Wilson will call the roll. The candidates are: Antony Wong for co-chair from a community board and Wilson Soo for co-chair from a community organization.

Wilson Soo: [Calls the roll. All present voting members vote "yes" for both candidates.]

Antony Wong: Michael Levine, representing Community Board 1, voted yes by proxy. Douglas Le, representing Asian-Americans for Equality, voted yes by proxy. Ci Mae, representing 197 Madison Street Tenants Association, did not indicate a vote on the election in her proxy document.

Wilson Soo: 17 votes in favor of the candidates.

4. Vote on Subdistrict A, option 1 without air rights transfers. Antony Wong facilitating.

Antony Wong: This is the option that Community Board 3 voted in favor of.

Irving Lee: I move to separate the question of air rights from the motion. The Chinatown Working Group has not held a comprehensive debate on the air rights transfers.

Anj Chaudhry: The meeting notice sent out to all members included the agenda item as presented. Air rights transfers were discussed in committee and the community board has already voted on it as well.

Rob Hollander: Is there a second to the motion. [Pause.] There is no second for the motion.

Gigi Li: Those who prefer an alternative to the motion on the agenda should vote "no." If the motion fails, then an alternative can be proposed.

Josephine Lee: I'd like to present our outreach with the community and their response. We have over a thousand signatures on petitions requesting a zoning that would better reflect the existing community and neighborhood. We are presenting these also to Community Board 3 so that voices in the community can be heard.

Zella Jones: If we are accepting a petition, can we hear its preamble and what it exactly refers to? Are there different petitions for each area?

Josephine Lee: [Reads the petition. See attached.]

Zella Jones: I don't see anything wrong that there were petitions except that the language of the petition has little to do with the specifics we are considering. I don't see how a petition with such a lengthy preamble and such broad brushstrokes should bear on what we are doing today.

Antony Wong: Josephine is just submitting the work that she and her group have done in the community to reflect certain needs in the community.

Victor Papa: Wouldn't the petition have more integrity if the language were more specific in reference to the resolution on the table?

Josephine Lee: The petition was written and distributed before the Pratt plan was finalized. I am submitting these just as the background demand supported by the community that luxury highrises be prevented. That demand is given more detail in the final Pratt plan that we are voting on today. This is just the context.

Antony Wong: Your [Zella Jones'] comments are duly noted, and your [Victor Papa's] comments are duly noted. I point out that Josephine is just presenting certain points of view that aren't directly tied to the particular vote on the table.

Josephine Lee: That's right. This petition was conducted while Pratt was working on its plan, to inform Pratt of a community need.

Antony Wong: Josephine is merely presenting the petition that reflects the essence of the Pratt plan reflecting a community need for a rezoning.

Victor Papa: I don't think we can accept them. In the name of those who signed the petition -- I will speak for those people: the petition has integrity in so far as it makes reference to a particular proposal that has nothing to do with what we are considering here. Josephine should withdraw them.

Jan Lee: I move to discuss the presentation of petitions in New Business.

Zella Jones: Second.

Antony Wong: Any discussion on the motion?

Anj Chaudhry: The motion seems unnecessary. Josephine's organization gathered over a thousand signatures on a petition indicating that luxury high-rises are unwelcome in Chinatown. That's important to hear.

Bethany Li: I don't think we need further discussion. The only point to be made is that the petitions informed the decision-making that went into all the discussions and participation of what is currently on the table.

John Leo: I call the question.

Rob Hollander: The question has been called.

Anthony Wong: Are we ready to vote? Can we vote by hands.

Rob Hollander: All in favor of discussing the petitions in New Business. I see 8 in favor. All opposed? I see 6 opposed. The motion fails.

Zella Jones: How do we know who are the voting members?

Rob Hollander: Doesn't matter, there were only 8 hands in favor. [At least 15 votes are required to pass any CWG motion, or a majority of voting members present, whichever is greater.]

Antony Wong: We will vote on the motion as stated on the agenda.

Wilson Soo: [Calls the roll:]

Asian-American Arts Centre: Abstain.
Asian Americans for Equality: Abstain by proxy.
Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund: yes.
Bowery Alliance of Neighbors: yes
Chinese Progressive Association: yes
Chinese Staff and Workers Association: yes
Chinatown Manpower: yes
Committee against Asian American Violence: yes
Community Board 1: yes by proxy
Community Board 2: yes
Community Board 3: yes
Good Old Lower East Side: yes
Hester Street Collaborative: yes
Lower East Side Mujeres & Hombres Luchadores: yes
National Mobilization against Sweatshops: yes
NoHo Bowery Stakeholders: abstain
197 Madison Street Tenants Association: yes by proxy
Property Tax Payers Association: no
61 Delancey Tenants Association: yes
318 Restaurant Workers Association: yes
Two Bridges Neighborhood Council: abstain
[End of roll-call.]

Rob Hollander: There are 16 in favor.

Wilson Soo: 16 in favor.

Rob Hollander: 1 no.

Wilson Soo: 1 no.

Rob Hollander: 4 abstaining.

Wilson Soo: 4 abstentions.

Rob Hollander: Motion passes.

Antony Wong: This vote will go to Community Board 3's Land Use Committee. We will then move forward to consider the other subdistricts. The Land Use Committee is scheduled to discuss subdistrict B this Wednesday, 6:30pm at 187 East Broadway, Cantor Center.

For everyone's information, we lost five members of CWG two weeks ago: Chinatown Consolidated Benevolent Association, Lin Sing Association, Confucius Plaza, Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, and United Community Association.

For the coming month, I ask that CAPZ meet for any further discussion of subdistrict B. Wilson will send out the dates to the members. We might not have a full group meeting in August depending on the Community Board's schedule. If there is a meeting, you will all be informed.

Josephine Lee: What is our timeline now? We were supposed to consider subdistrict B today too.

Antony Wong: We will see what CB3 does on Wednesday.

Josephine Lee: Are you waiting for the community boards to be able to participate in our process?

Antony Wong: Yes. Are there any community announcements?

Wendy Cheng: As part of the *Justice will be served!* campaign, NMASS is conducting a boycott of East Market Restaurant for its union busting violence. The NMASS demands: stop wage theft and pay back the workers; reinstate Sky Wong (employee targeted by management); apologize to the community for their wrongdoings.

Devin Maroney: As a representative of the New York Hotel Trades Council, I was asked by several Chinatown Working Group members and by Wilson to attend and speak. We want to express our support for greater community input on hotel development. Although we are part of the hotel business, we believe the community should have more say. We have a letter template to send to local office holders expressing community concerns over hotel development. Please talk to us after the meeting.

Jan Lee: The Property TaxPayers are withdrawing from the Chinatown Working Group effective immediately. We are submitting a letter to the chairs.

Wilson Soo: Meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Hollander, Secretary