

Chinatown Working Group Economics and Transportation Working Team

August 18, 2009, 6-8:30 pm at the Chinatown Partnership

Attending

Wellington Chen – Chair Combined Econ & Transp Team
Danny Chen – Acting Chair Combined Econ & Transp Team
Steven Wong – Chinese Hotel Assoc.
Hiroko Tachibana - Councilman Gerson's Office
Jeanne Chin – Chatham Towers
Zella Jones – Vice Chair, Econ Dev Team, CB2

AGENDA: Upgrading Notes from Brainstorming Session

Pedestrian and Vehicular Traffic & Transportation

Current Condition

- I. **Pedestrian Traffic**...very crowded pedestrian right-away (in vehicular/sidewalk areas)

Inefficient use of space (crowded sidewalks)

Goal

Create Pedestrian Mall Spaces

Pedestrian **ONLY** sidewalk and street space with retail, business etc. (perhaps for defined hours of the day to accommodate store deliveries)

Pedestrian Malls & Street Closures on some streets
(Pell? Doyers)

Agencies

DOT, DCA, DOS,
Parks, LPC, CPC

Create Sidewalk Vending Regs just for Chinatown

to better organize the traditional open market flavor but improve massing to accommodate pedestrian flow— redefine allowed areas, define amt of space allowed by vendors.

Incorporate wider sidewalks in zoning and development plans.

2. **Transportation: lack of ready-access** (bad access) – Chinatown has a large population, and is an established tourist cache. It should have an adequate, large, mass-transportation “hub” which will make access and intra-Chinatown movement more efficient. This would help to recoup commerce lost since 9/11 and attract people to the area

Plan for a Central transportation portal for Chinatown – create-A “hub” like the Fulton Street Transit Hub...

DOT, MTA,

Shuttle Buses – Public transit: shuttle system (i.e. Downtown Alliance shuttle)

Reduce car speed on Canal St.

Crosstown Bus – at least one for Chinatown between Grand St. and Worth or Frankfort.

3. **Re-establish access to Chinatown** lost in the

Improve pedestrian linkage between Chinatown and

CPC, DOT, NYPD,

<p>planning and development of government buildings which blocked off parks, closed streets and radically changed traffic patterns. Additionally the imposition of adhoc security measures by NYPD headquarters and facilities has failed to accommodate Chinatown.</p>	<p>Municipal Buildings.</p> <p>Improve pedestrian linkage with Municipal Area Public Transit centers to L.I., NJ, etc.</p>	<p>City Council, State and Federal Transportation Agencies</p>
<p>4. Lack of coordination and planning for incoming and outgoing bridge and tunnel traffic.</p>	<p>Bicycle lanes and other improvements to the streets that encourage bicycle riding in the neighborhood</p> <p>Create a flexible traffic routing system (including reduced tolls to encourage re-routing for peak or off-hour traffic)</p> <p>Include Chinatown access as part of an integrated and coordinated lower Manhattan traffic management strategy.</p>	<p>Office of Emergency Management, DOT, Bridge and Tunnel Authority, Federal and State Depts of Transp.</p>
<p>5. Chatham Square/Park Row</p>	<p>Re-Open Park Row</p> <p>Relocate Police Headquarters</p>	<p>NYPD</p>
<p>6. Loss of parking affects businesses (*weekends)...(Police Plaza, Pearl St., Leonard St.). As the vehicular entry point for the Manhattan and</p>	<p>Re-establish municipal parking. Provide above or below ground parking with better intra Chinatown and Govt Center local transit opportunities.</p>	<p>CPC, DOT</p>

Brooklyn Bridges as well as the Holland Tunnel with additional Govt Agency parking needs, the area provides no opportunity for parking vehicles and reducing vehicular traffic.

Stricter limits and better enforcement of placard parking.

Consider shared fleet system for government agencies/employees

7. **Taxis avoid Chinatown** (Chatham Square)

Provide mandated Taxi-Stand areas.

Taxi & Limousine Commission, DOT

Possible coordination with pedestrian mall or seating areas and with municipal parking locations

8. **Too much Commercial Traffic** - truck traffic on Canal St. (health problems, safety issues). This has unfairly burdened Chinatown.

Change toll structure on Verrazano Bridge

Federal Dept of Transportation, State Dept of Transp., Bridge and Tunnel Auth.

Dis-incentivize access by large trucks (Higher tolls for larger vehicles, defined local delivery hours ?)

Economic Development

Current Condition

1. **Too many of the same kinds of retail businesses.** Built environment needs re-invention to integrate groundfloor retail with more vital above ground businesses.

2. Lost jobs (out of 21,000...16,000 gone)...garment industry (staggering loss of jobs)

3. **Above street level space underutilized.** While much of Chinatown is already zoned for FAR 6 it is not attracting use of this resource.

Goal

Expand and develop economic development zones (Empire Zone) and programs.

Create business incubators: Clothing and Home Furnishings Design; Culinary Products.

Develop Training centers: ESL for immigrants...job training, skill building all ages/skills. Proximity to Govt entities providing programs and funds for such programs is a plus and could make an excellent case for Chinatown as a NYC Center for job training, retrain and job readiness programs.

Alter built environment so that it can house service businesses: medical, high-tech, educational, design studios.

Attract college/university, Hospital Partners, Clinics
 Light Mfg – Garments design, electronic assembly/packaging and testing facilities.

Agencies

State Dept of Commerce, EDC, CPC, Dept of Education,

CPC (special zoning districts), EDC, NYU, CUNY

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| 4. Signage (Way-finding) – Chinatown lacks a coordinated municipal signage system. | Add signage directing traffic from Brooklyn, Manhattan & Williamsburg Bridges. | DOT |
| | Add Direction/Exit signs on FDR, West Side Highway, from Brooklyn/Battery Tunnel | |
| 5. Sidewalk Commerce – a traditional and cultural identity for Chinatown, it is currently lacking a logic and variety and organization to enhance its use. | More defined street commerce and street life

Test marketplace with greater variety of street vending choices | DOT, DCA, LPC
Parks |
| | Sidewalk cafes/entertainment presence | |
| | Night Markets | |
| 6. Empty office space (plethora)...in non-residential buildings. The exit of garment manufacture has left many Manufacturing buildings vacant and their infrastructure and configuration uncompetitive with alternative and more modern MI-5 uses | Study for development of green businesses, increasing high-tech infrastructure build-outs, incentives for renovation, addition of floors and/or restoration (where buildings have a historical context).

Incentivize educational, cultural, financial institution and community facilities investment in Chinatown facilities. | NYC & Co., EDC, CPC (special zoning for light industrial uses within mixed use environment) |