

## Community Board 9 Manhattan

### Economic Development/Harlem Piers Committee Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, October 4, 2016

**Location:** Broadway Housing, 583 Riverside Drive, West 135<sup>th</sup> Street

**Called to order at 6:42pm | Quorum achieved at 6:42pm**

**Attending Members:** Quenia Abreu (Chair), Maritta Dunn, Jose Taveras, Basia Nikonorow, Orlando Ovalles, Nick Smith. **Absent:** Nekpen Osuan

**Guests:** Daniel Backman (NYC Dept. of Small Business Services),

#### Organizing a Merchant's Association

- **Presentation:** "Introduction to Merchant Organizing" by Daniel Backman (Project Manager of NYC-SBS for Upper Manhattan)
  - Through NYC Business Solutions, located at 361 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (Upper Manhattan) and 560 West 181<sup>st</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (Washington Heights)
  - Workforce 1 is open for foreign workers and assistance for finding work.
    - New Workforce 1 office has opened at 516 West 181<sup>st</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, in Washington Heights
- **SBS Resources**
  - **Federal Grants:**
    - Avenue NYC Grants available under the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program.
    - Neighborhood Challenge Grants: monies available through the NYC Economic Development Corporation and NYC Business Assistance Corporation through competitive grants focused on business innovation catalytic projects. Grants available upwards of \$100,000 to community development organizations.
    - Post-Sand Storefront Program: monies available for businesses damaged by Hurricane Sandy.
- **Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)**
  - Potential BIDs require to go through the Uniform Land Use and Review Process (ULURP), approval of the Community Board, City Council, and Mayor's Office.
  - Entire process can take between two to three years.
  - Requires support of landowners as well as businesses.
  - Merchants Associations is deemed to be much easier to create.
    - SBS would like to work with CB9 to establish a merchants association within the district.
- **Dealing with property owners and BIDs.**
  - Mandatory assessment from property owners
  - Majority of property owners must be in the BID's board.
    - Boards must have a 51% membership of property owners.
    - Rest of the board can be community members and merchants.

- Merchants Association (MAs)
  - Some property owners and developers do contribute to Merchants Associations
  - Fundraising can be done through grants, membership dues (optional)
    - Merchant Association Examples:
      1. New Harlem East Merchants Association
      2. Harlem Park to Park
      3. Bradhurst Merchants Association
  - Federal, State, and City funding is available to help the establishment of MAs.
  - Committee will look more into these established MAs.
- Potential MA in West Harlem: West Harlem Merchants Association
  - Potential Sections of MA:
    1. Northwest Morningside/Harlem Piers: 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue from West 125<sup>th</sup> Street to West 138<sup>th</sup> Street & Broadway between West 122<sup>nd</sup> Street and West 125<sup>th</sup> Street
    2. Broadway Corridor: Broadway from West 125<sup>th</sup> Street to West 155<sup>th</sup> Street
    3. Amsterdam Avenue Corridor: Amsterdam Avenue from West 123<sup>rd</sup> Street to West 155<sup>th</sup> Street
    4. West of the Harlem BID: West 125<sup>th</sup> Street from St. Nicholas Avenue to 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue
  - Sections are subject to change and further discussion.
- Federal Grants (Avenue NYC, Neighborhood Challenge, etc.) opens up in late fall for Fiscal Year 2017
  - Discretionary funding is also available from City Council Members for the establishment of MAs which will be funded through SBS.
  - Funding can also be attained through non-profit organizations.
- SBS can support the creation of a MA once a steering committee/organization is made or enough interest from businesses.
  - Committee will look for some target area for MA formation.
  - SBS would also like if there is data on up to date businesses and their status. (Newly created businesses, long established businesses, recently closed businesses, etc.)
  - At least 15 to 20 businesses must have strong interest in creating a MA, but do not have to be within a specific corridor.
- Funding and Organization
  - Merchant Organization Grant: approx. \$30,000 per year (funded through Avenue NYC)
  - Business owners are USUALLY the majority of the board.
  - Recommended for the CB or non-profit organization to conduct a business census.
  - Committee must conduct a meeting with Dinosaur BBQ, La Floridita, and the Cotton Club in the near future to discuss the impact Columbia University's Construction of the Manhattanville Campus.

- Potential Events for MA (examples):
  - Harlem Park to Park's Dynamo Event
  - West Harlem Restaurant Week (sponsored by the New York Women's Chamber of Commerce (NYWCC))

Other New Business:

- Big Belly Roti Shop, 1290 Amsterdam Avenue
  - Having problems acquiring liquor license due to issue with landlord
  - Committee will contact business owner to discuss potential solution.

Old Business:

- Janus Properties:
  - Committee members will conduct with owners of Janus Properties to discuss the business incubator in the mixed-use district.
    - Members Maritta Dunn and Quenia Abreu met with Scott from Janus
  - Janus Properties are open to developing office space for small businesses.
  - Committee members will take Janus Properties owners up to 5030 Broadway in Inwood in order to show an example of creating space for a small business incubator.
    - Current Tenants in 5030 Broadway
      - CUNY In The Heights
      - Columbia University
      - Medical Offices
      - Pharmacy
      - Manhattan Mini-Storage
    - Rent for office space begins between \$700 to \$1000 per month
    - The workspaces are on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> floors, and owners are planning to convert another floor for office space.
      - Amenities include communal kitchen and conference room, etc.

New Business:

- Committee members filled out the capital and expenditure budget priority list for fiscal year 2017.
  - Members will do research on finding out what is a "basket truck."

Meeting Adjourned at 8:22pm.