

Open House
February 6, 2017
Boxed Wholesale
28 Mercer Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10012

Start Time: 7:00 pm

End Time: 8:10 pm

Minutes

- 1) Jared Yaman, Chief Operating Officer, of Boxed Wholesale introduced the 40 audience members to the meeting space where the event was being held. Boxed moved into the 12,000 square foot space on Broadway in April 2016 and is excited to be a part of the Broadway community. Jared explained what the company does and where they believe to be heading in the future.
- 2) Brian Steinwurtzel (President) welcomed the audience to the open house event. He began by telling a story of when his family purchased property at 560 Broadway in 1986. He discussed that of the 10 million square feet of space his family owns in New York City, 3 million square feet of that is rented to not-for-profit organizations. He ended by quoting a line from a children's book he was reading to his child and comparing it to the SoHo Broadway mission statement. He felt it resembled the type of relationship we are trying to have with the community.
- 3) Larisa Ortiz of Larisa Ortiz Associates reported on the 2016 Spotlight on SoHo Broadway. Larisa Ortiz Associates and the SoHo Broadway Initiative have been working on a district profile for the SoHo Broadway corridor since July 2016. Larisa summarized the major findings from the piece noting that Broadway; is a major transit hub, is predominately retail, has a diverse workforce, and is a brand in and of itself. Larisa opened questions to the audience:
 - a. What format will this information be available in?
Answer: The four-page summary will be available digitally as well as a presentation that looks more in depth at the data.
 - b. Did Larisa Ortiz Associates look at actual vs. asking rents?
Answer: We did not look at actual rents. It is difficult to obtain that information and the timeframe was not in the budget.
 - c. Question: Is there a concern for retail with all of the high turn over?

Answer: It is hard to say what will happen with the retail market. In our study we observed that many property owners were choosing to list their vacancies on company webpages rather than using Loopnet, a publicly available listing site.

- 4) Mark Dicus, reporting on behalf of Richard Benenson (Treasurer) and Andrew Brown (Audit Committee). Mark presented the Finance and Audit Committee Reports. Mark discussed that the board approved the proposed assessment increase of 50-60% and what that would mean for property owners along Broadway. The next steps in the process are to finalized proposed assessment increase, to discuss increase with stakeholders, Council Member Margaret Chin and Department of Small Business Services and submit assessment increase materials to the City in June 2017.
- 5) James Cavello reported on the Outreach and Communications Committee. James discussed that the Initiative hired Jin Kang from Lapis Brand Design to create the Initiatives new website. He also discussed that the SoHo Broadway Initiative has partnered with DOT Art to commission an artist to create a sculpture at the bus bulb on Broadway between Grand Street and Howard Street. The selected artist will be announced by the end of February 2017.
- 6) Pete Davies reported on the Program Services Committee. Pete discussed the newly proposed vendor legislation by the City. He stated that Mark Dicus spoke at a public hearing about the concerns the new legislation could bring to the SoHo Broadway community. Pete mentioned that illegal vending has improved along the SoHo Broadway corridor.
- 7) Mark Dicus discussed the Residential Affinity Group meetings that the Initiative has been holding. The meetings provide an opportunity for residents to voice their concerns for what is happening in the neighborhood. A member of the audience asked a question regarding if lighting was a topic that has been brought up.
- 8) Mark reported on the Zoning Resources Committee. The SoHo Broadway Initiative hired Insight Associates and George M. Janes & Associates to evaluate the land use conditions along SoHo's Broadway. Mark iterated that we are doing this to 1) see how people are using the space in comparison to the current zoning and 2) create a resource for the community that discusses these outcomes. Mark opened it up to questions:

- a. How will changing the zoning affect our taxes?

Answer: Good question. We will be looking into this during the creation of our resource document.

- b. How are you getting your information?

Answer: Insight Associates hired a few interns that surveyed buildings as in depth as they could, Certificate of Occupancy records were pulled for each building, and New York City's publicly accessible PLUTO data was consulted.

- 9) Mark discussed community events the Initiative has been involved with. Through a partnership with the Lower Eastside Ecology Center the Initiative held an electronic waste recycling event on Broadway in early January. Mark reported that through a partnership with the Department of Transportation, local residents, and businesses a Weekend Walks event is scheduled for October 2017.

- 10) Mark opened the floor to questions. None were asked.

- 11) Emily Hellstrom (Vice President) gave the closing remarks for the meeting. She discussed that with the new White House administration it has really showed us that we need to set our differences aside and come together in order to make our communities better. She voiced that we can find a place where big box stores and local retailers can co-exist along Broadway.

Attendees:

Margarite Almeida, Margaret Baisley, Tsipi Ben-Haim, David Briggs, James Cavello, Andrew Chang, Claire Chapin, Cynthia Chapin, Adam Chen, Peter Davies, Trevor Gallina, Emily Hellstrom, George Janes, Kevin Jones, Jin Kang, Richard Lehrer, Lance Marsh, Eva Mullineaux, Danielle Nazinitsky, Susan Needles, Kendall O'Connor, Yukie Ohta, Larisa Ortiz, Michael Portegies-Zwart, Claude Samton, Ethel Scheffer, Linda Schrank, Brian Steinwurtzel, Brea Tatum-Carrasquillo, Chung Tsang, Michele Varian, Cesar Vasquez, Kacie Webb, Anton Wilkins, Susan Wittenberg, Ronnie Wolf