SOHO BROADWAY INITIATIVE

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SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc.

Public Informational Meeting – October 21st, 2026

Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to a written notice and promotion via email, the organization's website, newsletter, and social media, members of the public with an interest in the SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc. (dba SoHo Broadway Initiative) assembled on Wednesday, October 21st, 2026 in person at Westwood Gallery (262 Bowery) starting at 5:30 p.m. for a Public Informational Meeting.

Following a Board of Directors Meeting, Annual Meeting, and a second Board of Directors Meeting, the Public Informational Meeting commenced at 6:05 p.m. A list of attendees is attached as Exhibit 1.

Executive Director Erin Piscopink began the Public Informational Meeting by sharing highlights from the Year in Review for Fiscal Year 2026 (July 2025-June 2026). A print Year in Review document was also distributed to attendees upon entry.

- Erin noted that the Initiative spent much of this fiscal year working toward containerizing the public garbage collected by the Clean Team. This effort was in response to both the success of the Initiative's prior Bin Box pilot on Prince Street and a new City rule that all BIDs must containerize their trash. This June, the Initiative placed nine containers throughout the district on cross streets and is pleased to share that the BID is no longer staging any bags at its corners. Erin thanked the Initiative's Clean Team and Community Engagement and Program Services committees for their input in making this deployment possible. The company the Initiative purchased the bins from is based in New York City and woman-owned, and were able to work with the BID to create a new style of bin that has planters on the roof of these large-size containers. Funding for these bins was provided by the City Council, resulting from advocacy by the NYC BID Association which Erin co-chairs.
- In addition to these green roof planters on the bins, the Initiative added additional standard planters adjacent to the bins to beautify and protect the containers. This has brought the Initiative's total number of large planters to 33. Altogether this has more than doubled the Initiative's horticulture program.
- Erin acknowledged the efforts of the Initiative's Clean Team who are dedicated to keeping the district's streets clean and do so with much joy. They logged over 11,000 hours during the fiscal year and removed over 46,000 bags of trash and over 7,000 incidents of graffiti, stickers, and posters. Field Supervisors Bobby Canty and Cheikh Dieng have been with the BID for 11 and 6 years, respectively.

- The district's street-level retail occupancy reached 89% during the fiscal year, the highest recorded since the Initiative began collecting data in 2015. The district also saw an average daily population of over 60,000 people in the district in June, which is well above pre-pandemic levels. 38 new storefront businesses opened during the course of the fiscal year. The Initiative greeted these businesses and made them aware of the organization's presence and services as well as sharing information to get them set up for success and encourage them to be good neighbors.
- The Initiative continues to post on its social media accounts and share monthly newsletters with an audience of over 5,700 people.
- The Initiative's focus on maintaining pedestrian safety and flow continues. The Field Operations and Engagement Manager logged roughly 600 district walks this year where they engage with those blocking the clear path and encourage compliance. They logged on average a dozen 311 filings per day and report noncompliance to enforcement agencies, including DSNY and NYPD, in addition to sharing a weekly survey of vendors who are violating the laws with enforcement agencies and elected officials.
- Staff have also spent countless hours in communication with the Initiative's partners in government, advocating for increased and improved enforcement. And while the BID sees some responsiveness to its efforts, there is obviously much more work to be done.
- In this new fiscal year, the Initiative is recommitting to its core services. The organization will be increasing its power washing efforts, caring for the newly expanded horticulture program, and relentlessly seeking improvements to quality of life here in SoHo.
- Erin thanked all attendees for joining this evening and remaining engaged in their community.

Erin next moved into the Q&A. A number of questions were submitted in advance and are attached in the order they were received as Exhibit 2.

Erin began by noting that given a number of questions were asked on similar topics, she has tried to strike a balance between answering questions exactly as they were asked and consolidating similar questions.

- The Initiative received multiple questions about its position on the proposed Canal Street redesign and the corresponding proposal for a two-way bike lane on Grand Street.
    - The Initiative received comments both in favor and in opposition to DOT's plans. Erin shared context for those less familiar with the issue that as part of the 2021 SoHo/NoHo rezoning, DOT promised to study and propose improvements for Canal Street.
    - When DOT issued their original plans, the Initiative contracted with transportation planning firm TYLin to review DOT's plans alongside concerns from stakeholders. They did so and helped the BID craft a letter to DOT stating the organization's questions and concerns.
    - Months later, DOT announced they were splitting the Canal Street project into two phases and presented their updated plans for Canal west of Broadway and for the two-way bike lane on Grand Street.

    - The Initiative again engaged TYLin and sent an updated letter to DOT. The Initiative asked DOT to consider limiting northbound left turns from Canal to peak hours, asked them to consider alternatives to Grand Street for a westbound bike lane, and asked that should they move forward with the two-way lane, they employ a robust safety toolkit.
    - Erin noted that if anyone would like to receive a copy of either of these letters, please email her. The Initiative looks forward to reviewing DOT's updated plans that they will be presenting to the community this evening at Community Board 2.

- Another question received asked: "To assure a well-informed organization, please clarify the unique make-up of the SBI Board in regard to commercial and residential representation, with some background explaining why SBI was structured the way it is, and how many stakeholders from each of the various classes are registered with SBI."
    - Erin responded that like all BIDs in NYC, the SoHo Broadway Initiative has members, registered members, and board members:
        - Members: everyone with a presence or interest in the BID
        - Registered members: vote for board members
        - Board members: elected by registered members
            - Over 50% of the Board must be property owners
            - The Board must have least 1 commercial renter & residential renter/shareholder
            - The Board includes seats for 4 electeds (representative of Mayor, Borough President, Comptroller, Council Member)
        - Both general membership and the Board have class categories:
            - A1 being commercial property owners
            - A2 being residential property owners
            - B being commercial renters
            - C being residential renters or co-op share holders
            - D being elected officials
            - E being non-voting interested parties
        - As of October 11th, the Initiative has 141 registered members in the following classes:
            - 24 A1
            - 15 A2
            - 21 B
            - 46 C
            - 4 D
            - 31 E
    - What makes the SoHo Broadway Initiative unique is that its Board and each of its committees have equal representation of commercial and residential members.

        - This was established at the Initiative's founding, with the intent of having the BID represent this mixed-use community well
        - Assessments are paid to the Department of Finance with property taxes and are compulsory.
            - In the Initiative's case, commercial property owners pay over 99% of the assessment.
            - The assessment is not a tax, as the full amount is returned to the BID.

- Erin next noted multiple questions were submitted about how the Initiative engages with members and neighbors to share potential plans and projects and get feedback from the community.
    - Erin replied that this current meeting is one good example. The Initiative's founding documents state that the organization will hold two public informational meetings each year. This is one. The Initiative understands that it's important for the community to get to hear about its plans and offer feedback. The BID plans to hold the second public informational meeting for this fiscal year in the spring.
    - The Initiative is also in the practice of doing broad community surveys every couple of years to help understand trends, current issues, and opportunities for program development.
    - The Initiative maintains a website, releases a monthly newsletter with organization and neighborhood happenings, and makes regular updates to its social media accounts.
    - Importantly though, Erin wanted to be sure to share clearly that community members are welcome to reach out to staff at any time to share their ideas, concerns, or feedback.

- Erin introduced the next question: "Please share 3 or so main goals that SBI is using to guide us toward solutions for the current and ongoing problems we're seeing in the district, with some specifics about each goal and the strategy for finding the needed solutions."
    - Recently, the organization's Program Services and Community Engagement Committees met to consider what new programs or initiatives the Initiative may want to consider.
        - The major takeaway from that meeting was that the Initiative needed to focus on sanitation, beautification, and unlawful street vending. At this moment, the BID is not pursuing new programs or initiatives, but rather, improving its core services. Generally, people are satisfied with SoHo Broadway's sanitation and beautification programs, particularly after the recent investments into them, but the Initiative does have plans to refine them.
            - Sanitation

        - Beginning just after Thanksgiving, the Initiative will add an extra Clean Team shift Friday - Sunday to accommodate for the busy holiday season. The Initiative has done this during peak seasons for the last couple of years and it's gone really well.
        - The Initiative is working with its sanitation vendor to expand its power washing program. Particularly to accommodate the new Citibins and to bring extra services to midblock problem areas
    - Beautification
        - The Initiative is just releasing an RFP for its horticultural services as the current contract is expiring. This will ensure that the planters and their plants get the care they need and that the Initiative is getting competitive pricing and services.
    - Vending
        - Counterfeit: The Initiative will continue to press elected officials and government representatives for improved enforcement.
        - Time/place/manner violations for vending that could be legal (food/general vending): The Initiative is looking forward to increased enforcement capacity at DSNY in the coming months. The Initiative will continue to build relationships there and share constituent concerns frequently.

- Erin next noted that the Initiative received a few questions regarding the status of the Field Operations and Engagement Manager role.
    - The person most recently in this role has resigned and last week was his final week.
    - This role has inherent challenges that have led to more rapid turnover than the organization would like to see.
    - Erin is working with the Executive Committee to determine how to best fill this role with considerations for possibly targeting new pools of prospective employees, updating the job description, and/or, bringing on the support of a third party to provide security/ambassador services.

- Erin shared another question received: "Can SBI find funds to hire, either a security guard or police officer to walk the blocks from grand to canal.. specifically addressing retail and residential doorways and storefront windows that are being blocked by counterfeit peddlers' goods? Not after a long search, but immediately?"

    - Erin acknowledged and appreciated the urgency in this question and the severity of the issue.
    - The Initiative has explored the option of contracting with NYPD to have "paid detail" officer. This is a service where an organization can pay to have off-duty officers assigned to specific locations. Unfortunately, these officers are not able to write summonses and therefore would not have any enforcement capabilities in the district, so the Initiative has not pursued this option up to now.
    - Additionally, if the BID takes on a new expenditure, it has to consider two aspects of the organization's governing documents:
        - First, the decision to take on a new project would have to go through a Board approval process
        - Secondly, the organization's finance policy mandates a competitive RFP process for expenditures over a certain dollar amount, of which this would certainly be.

- Erin noted the Initiative received multiple questions about winter lights, and read a representative one: "What is the status of the Winter Lights Project? I understand that it's been tabled. What exactly does that mean?"
    - When the Board met in September, they voted to pause the winter lights project and the organization will not be moving forward with installing winter lights this season.
    - With that said, Erin imagines that in the New Year, the Board will begin to consider whether or not the organization wants to pick up where it left off and work to make improvements to the program and ultimately install seasonal lights, or if it will be tabled indefinitely.

- Erin read another question received about sound: "What is the policy of Soho Broadway initiative to sound levels generated by stores in relation to residents within the same building? Do you recommend consideration? Do you recommend stores have preference over residents? Will you recommend consideration over 'my store needs over anything' whether louder sound actually works to increase sales or not?"
    - While the organization does not have a formal policy on this related to decibel measurement, etc., the BID has fielded concerns similar to this in the past.
    - Typically, if staff hear from a resident that a business in their or neighboring building is producing excessive noise, they will reach out to the business, share "be a good neighbor" materials, and let them know that the Initiative encourages the businesses here to be mindful of the mixed-use nature of the community and to be respectful to all.

    - If this doesn't produce the desired results and it appears that the noise level may reach the point of a violation, staff would alert the organization's partners at NYPD and ask that they visit the business.
    - The Initiative takes the same approach to amplified sound outdoors

- Erin read another question received about events: "What steps is SBI taking to press the relevant city agencies to address commercial events held without the required SAPO permits? These events are an egregious example of large commercial entities taking over public space, and they need to be addressed. My block has an embargo on SAPO and yet they continue to take place."
    - For background for attendees not familiar, Erin explained that SAPO is the Street Activities Permit Office. If any entity, commercial or otherwise, uses the sidewalk or roadway for an event, they are required to get a permit from SAPO.
    - It is not uncommon for to see unpermitted events here in the district or permitted events acting outside of their permitted plans.
    - SAPO does not have enforcement capabilities and staff rely on NYPD to intervene when they see unlawful activations.
    - Staff alert SAPO when they observe bad actors and hope that these reports impact SAPO's considerations for future permits.

- Finally, Erin noted that while it was touched on a bit previously, the Initiative received a number of questions about counterfeit merchandise vending in the district. Community members across geography and interest groups are very concerned about the high concentration of counterfeit sellers on Canal Street and the southern section of Broadway in the district.
    - The Initiative has advocated time and again to elected officials, government representatives, NYPD, City agencies, BIDs, luxury companies, and the City's tourism agency for improved enforcement.
    - Despite how pervasive the issue is, both the NYPD 1st and 5th Precincts do regular enforcement. It is clearly not moving the needle and that is what the Initiative tries to impart upon partners in government when staff speak with them.
    - Erin wrote a letter in the spring asking three agency Commissioners who engage with unlawful vending (NYPD, DSNY, DCWP) for a roundtable on this issue with related agencies, elected officials, and other impacted organizations. The Initiative has continued to follow up on that ask and while no one has yet been opposed to doing so, the roundtable has not yet happened.
    - The Initiative does have reason to believe that NYPD will be employing additional resources to the corridor to address this issue in the near future and is hopeful that this could make an impact.

    - The Initiative has also continued to advocate for enforcement above the street level. It's clear that the sellers of these goods are part of a larger organization and the hope is that law enforcement will begin to seek solutions that bring enforcement to higher levels, or that this is already happening and the organization just isn't privy to it.

Following the completion of responses to questions submitted in advance, Erin took questions from attendees in the room.

- Cynthia Chapin, resident of 480 Broadway, shared a number of concerns. The store on the ground floor put up signage without permission on the scaffolding at 484 Broadway that points to her door as being an entrance to the store. Since the sign was installed she has the number of people sitting on her doorstep has increased. She said 484 Broadway residents are unhappy about this as maintenance person from the store installed this sign without permission. Cynthia had also been told that the dispensary at 481 Broadway agreed not to have benches or music outside when they received license but that has not been the case on a daily basis. There is also a speaker with amplified music installed above the open store doorway on the ground floor. She stated the noise hurts her ears. She ended by asking if the speaker use is legal.
    - Erin responded that stores, like all others, are not allowed to have amplified sound outside without a permit and that staff will follow up with NYPD.

- Amy Troost from 565 Broadway asked more about the winter lights project: "What does reconsidering after the new year mean, and what outreach will you do to people impacted by those lights? . . . The project got pretty far without us knowing about it and we are the ones who have to live with it."
    - Erin responded that one of the things the Initiative has heard loud and clear from the community was concern about the brightness of the lights. If the BID would continue and pick this up in the future, brightness of the lights would be further considered even more than it already has been. The Initiative doesn't have built-in practices for how to consult with the community around these sorts of projects, but Erin suggested perhaps she could speak with Amy offline about what would be an appropriate way to do that. The Initiative is open to ideas and wants to continue the conversation.

- Amy asked a follow-up question about whether there are any other projects or programs we are considering that residents should know about?
    - Erin responded that no, the Initiative is focusing on its core services.

- Leigh Behnke noted that in the past the BID has had great meetings where we would invite representatives from SAPO, NYPD, other agencies and open them to the community and it would be great if you reinstated those.
    - Erin thanked Leigh for this feedback.

- Pier Consagra noted that in regard to amplified sound from any vehicle, including outreach vans like the Mitzvah Tank, are governed by municipal administrative code 10-108 and any person or organization operating such a sound device on a public street must obtain a sound permit. Pier asked whether this music heard outside is all against the law.
    - Erin confirmed that amplified sound in the public realm must be permitted, including the Mitzvah Tanks. When staff observe this they ask people to comply with laws and if they do not, it is reported to NYPD. However, there does seem to be some confusion among some NYPD officers about what rights they have under 1st Amendment but amplified sound is not protected under First amendment. Staff will continue to follow up.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:33 p.m.

Exhibit 1

Attendance for Meeting Minutes

Margarite Almeida
Sheridan Ash
Margaret Baisley
Leigh Behnke
Tsipi Ben-Haim
Candy Buckley
James Cavello
Andrew Chang
Cynthia Chapin
Michelle Choi
Pier Consagra
Peter Davies
Danielle de Marne
David Del Rio
Jess Duran
Chandler Forsythe
William Fung
Donna Gagliuso
Nasra Gariballa
David Goldberg
Nick Guntli
Cheryl Klauss
Andy Li
Grace Lee
Steve Leon
Philip London
Andrew Marcus
Kevin Mercurio
Renee Monrose
Ruben Moya
John Pasquale
Pedro Pernambuco
Heather Peachy
Erin Piscopink
Michael Prunty
Katie Rice
Phyllis Rosenblatt
William Simopoulos
Hal Thiessen

Peter Tse
Amy Troost
Ronnie Wolf
Paul Zangrilli
Brandon Zwagerman

Exhibit 2

Questions Received in Advance

Q1.

What is the policy of Soho Broadway initiative to sound levels generated by stores in relation to residents within the same building? Do you recommend consideration? Do you recommend stores have preference over residents? Will you recommend consideration over "my store needs over anything" whether louder sound actually works to increase sales or not?

Q2.

Winter Lights: Erin has said the installation has been "tabled." Could she clarify what that means? Does SBI intend to revisit the plan, or has it been abandoned? Residents deserve a clear answer.

Q3.

*Counterfeit vendors***:** Is Erin actively pressing the Mayor's Office to take effective action against counterfeit vendors, including involving federal authorities to address the organized crime believed to be behind these operations? I realize SBI has no enforcement authority, but advocacy for effective enforcement is necessary. The situation is a blight on SoHo.

Q4.

Unauthorized commercial events: What steps is Erin taking to press the relevant city agencies to address commercial events held without the required SAPO permits? These events are an egregious example of large commercial entities taking over public space, and they need to be addressed. My block has an embargo on SAPO and yet they continue to take place.

Q5.

Communication with residents: What changes does Erin propose to ensure that residents are consulted before plans affecting their neighborhood move forward? Better communication could help prevent another confrontation like the one over Winter Lights.

Q6.

Replacing Bryan: Could Erin update us on the search for Bryan's replacement? Given the increasing illegal activity in the corridor, would SBI consider hiring a retired or former police officer with relevant experience who could take a more active and effective role in addressing these problems?

Q7.

What is the status of the Winter Lights Project? I understand that it's been tabled. What exactly does that mean?

Q8.

What other projects are being proposed?

Q9.

I am writing to express my strong concern regarding the recent increase in illegal vendors on Canal Street. As a resident of this building since 1997 and of the neighborhood since 1992, this is the worst condition I have seen on Canal Street in over 30 years. These vendors obstruct the sidewalks, make crossing the street difficult, generate a significant amount of trash, and do not contribute positively to our community. Some are aggressive and confrontational. I request increased enforcement to address this growing issue.

Q10.

Additionally, regarding the DOT proposal for Canal Street, I fully support measures that calm traffic and create a safer balance for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. Improving pedestrian safety is critical, particularly given past traffic fatalities directly outside our building.

Q11.

I think the residents are particularly concerned that we will be going through the very busy holiday season without a Director of Field Operations and Engagement. It would be useful for us to understand the criteria and hiring process and what the BID's plans are to find someone. There seems to be a great deal of turnover with this position, making it less effective than having a seasoned person in place longer term.

Q12.

Can SBI find funds to hire, either a security guard or police officer to walk the blocks from grand to canal.. specifically addressing retail and residential doorways and storefront windows that are being blocked by counterfeit peddlers' goods? Now – not after a long search, but immediately?

Q13.

I'm extremely worried about the 2nd bike lane proposed for Grand Street. The initial one has already made it much more treacherous to cross the street and having a second one will make it even worse. I'm a senior and live on Crosby which has several residential buildings with seniors and families in addition to all of the people who stay at the NoMO Hotel. This is madness — especially considering that the Transportation

Department has never put in walk lights on the NW and SW corners. (I would urge the SBI to put pressure on them to do that.)

In addition adding the second bike lane will restrict vehicular traffic to a single lane. There is already heavy traffic on Grand (trucks, tourist buses, and cars) and this will create traffic jams and have negative repercussions on the bottom block of Crosby which is very narrow street but has considerable traffic from taxis and Ubers servicing the hotel, not to mention other vehicles that enter Crosby from Howard Street.

I hope the SBI will protest this bike lane.

Q14.

The unique structure of SBI: To assure a well-informed organization, please clarify the unique make-up of the SBI Board in regard to commercial and residential representation, with some background explaining why SBI was structured the way it is, and how many stakeholders from each of the various classes are registered with SBI.

Q15.

Goals for 2027: Please share 3 or so main goals that SBI is using to guide us toward solutions for the current and ongoing problems we're seeing in the district, with some specifics about each goal and the strategy for finding the needed solutions.

Q16.

Communications with Stakeholders: How does SBI plan to be fully inclusive of non-Board members in and around the district, so that all are best informed and heard in regard to SBI's potential plans and projects?