

SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc.
7th Annual Meeting – November 15, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to a written notice, the membership and guests of the SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc. (dba SoHo Broadway Initiative) assembled on Monday, November 15, 2021 remotely via Zoom at 5:30 p.m. for the organization's 7th Annual Meeting.

With a quorum of membership present, the meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Executive Director Mark Dicus made welcome remarks. Mark recalled how at time of prior Annual Meeting, SoHo was just coming out several nights of looting followed by an explosion of art being made on boarded up storefronts, vaccines weren't yet available, and the streets of neighborhood and city were very quiet; since that time has been encouraging to see SoHo and NYC come back to life. Introduced Director of Planning and Community Engagement Brandon Zwagerman and all Board of Directors who have been made panelists.

Mark introduced Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer who offered opening remarks. Gale congratulated Initiative staff and Board for efforts on releasing Public Realm Framework + Vision Plan. Visited demonstration open street "Little Prince Plaza" on Prince Street. Many BIDs trying to perfect Open Streets, very exciting. Pedestrianization good for users but also for business sales based on DOT data. Brewer has been calling for Public Realm Czar. Need to accommodate deliveries. Wants to be supportive, Mark and Board are prefect leaders for this. Rezoning: doesn't support current plan but want to work with other thinkers like BID to improve it. Helicopters: 311 complaints up 10-fold since 2020. Congestion pricing: supports it.

Mark thanked Borough President Brewer, introduced Initiative President Brian Steinwurtzel, Co-CEO and Principal at GFP Real Estate, a vertically integrated owner, operator, property manager and developer of commercial real estate based in Manhattan. 594 and 560 Broadway are two properties owned by GFP.

Brian Steinwurtzel thanked Mark and thanked Gale for her leadership over past year through recovery from pandemic and looting. Recognized elected officials, Board members, staff, Clean Team for cleaning up and preserving beauty. Shared trends of continued increased occupancy in GFP buildings. Staff and Clean Team have done great job of keeping BID services going after great year and deserve thanks. Proud of team and Committee for developing vision for streets. Zoning has been painful process for many, but being collegial and respectful in my conversations despite difference of opinions. Optimism that dialogue can help all.

Mark acknowledged Anthony Drummond from Council Member Margaret Chin's office. Council Member sends regards and apologies not to be able to attend. Challenging year, been receiving many calls/emails re: rezoning. Hope this will benefit both residents and commercial interests. Thanked Board, staff, and members for working together over years, given Council term ends at end of year.

Mark introduced next item on the agenda: Items to be Voted On for registered members. Only registered members as of midnight on Friday are allowed to vote, and received an email prior week with a meeting packet. Members will be approving the minutes from the 6th Annual Meeting held on June 16, 2020 and electing board members. Registered members will be voting tonight using a digital survey. To vote in the board elections, a registered member needs to know their membership class which was also emailed to registered members prior to the meeting. If you are a registered member but do not know your membership class, please submit a question using the Q&A feature and an SBI staff member will message you back with your membership class. We will also verify membership status following the meeting when tallying votes.

Members are registered in the following classes:

- Class A1: Owner of Commercial Real Property
- Class A2: Owner of Residential Real Property
- Class B: Commercial Tenants (including owners of shares in a coop for commercial space)
- Class C: Residential Tenants (including owners of shares in a coop for residential space/JLWQA space)
- Class D: Elected Officials
- Class E: Non-voting members.

Mark introduced Initiative Secretary Katy Rice who is handling the items to be voted on. Katy lives on Broadway between Broome and Grand.

Katy Rice: Registered members are electing 11 board members plus alternates tonight. The candidates are listed on the screen. Of the 11 candidates, 9 are seeking re-election with and 2 candidates seeking election for the first time (Michelle Choi, president of the coop at President of the coop at 16 Crosby Street/452 Broadway and Anders Holst who owns a residential condo unit at 473 Broadway since 2005, both in Class A2). Votes can be cast until the end of the meeting using the link and we will try to announce preliminary results before the end of the meeting. Results will be verified and shared with the membership following the meeting.

Brandon Zwagerman shared voting link in Chat.

Mark thanked Katy and took a moment to recognize Katy Rice and her service to the SoHo Broadway Initiative. Katy is a founding board member of the Initiative, joining the board in 2014 after helping form the organization as a member of the Steering Committee. During her 7 years as a board member, Katy has contributed greatly to the work of the Initiative. Katy is stepping off the board after 7 extraordinary years of

service to the organization and her community. Round of applause and thanks given by all.

Mark introduced next item, the Finance Report to be made by Richard Benenson. Richard is a founding board member and Treasurer and the owner of the commercial space at 597 Broadway.

Richard Benenson gave Finance Report:

The Initiative's financial year ends on June 30 of each year. For the prior year ending June 30, 2021

- Projecting \$951,000 in revenue against \$935,000 of expense, for net revenue of \$15,000;
- As of 6/30/2021, \$489,000 in the bank;
- Currently finishing our annual financial audit and will publish our audited financial statements by December 31;

For the current year ending June 30, 2022

- Board approved a budget with \$971,000 of revenue against expense of \$995,000, for net loss of \$24,000. The net loss will be funded by prior year surpluses.
- Expense (\$995,000):
 - With foot traffic continuing to increase, the board increased funding for street cleaning by \$35,000 to add coverage during the busiest times of the week and maintains funds for public safety/quality of life services.
 - The approved budget includes funds:
 - To design and implement demonstration projects in line with the SoHo Broadway Public Realm Framework and Vision Plan (\$55,000);
 - to complete a massing study the sites DCP identified in the proposed rezoning as potential development sites and to hire land use counsel and lobbyist to support the organization's advocacy.

Overall the organization is on solid financial footing.

Mark thanked Richard. Mark took moment to remember Henry Jones, a long serving member of SoHo Broadway Clean Team, who died unexpectedly at the age of 61 in September, giving brief remembrance followed by a moment of silence for important member of our team.

Mark next moved into the Annual Report. At time of last Annual Meeting in June 2021 SoHo was coming off of several nights of looting and streets were very quiet following as district began to emerge from lockdown. Hundreds of artists descended into SoHo to paint boarded up storefronts over several weeks and then the week after last year's annual meeting as businesses started to re-open, our team quickly pivoted to art recovery mode.

Artwork Recovery: Director of Operation and Public Safety Frank Wessels, Director of Planning and Community Engagement Brandon Zwagerman and members of Clean Team sprung into action to collect and move art pieces to storage as they began to come down. Mark thanked storage partners Aurora Capital Associates and JVP for stepping

up and GFP Real Estate for donating equipment to help with the retrieval process. Over 20 artworks were returned to artists, and 3 plywood artworks were included in Museum of the City of New York exhibition “New York Responds” December 2020-April 2021.

District Today: Since last June, district has seen a slow but steady return to normal, with residents returning home, retail locations re-opening and visitors from around the City reconnecting with SoHo, and introduction of outdoor followed by return of indoor dining.

Sanitation: The SoHo Broadway Clean continued to keep our district clean through the year providing street cleaning, snow removal and graffiti removal services.

Beautification: In partnership with DOT, this fall we installed 15 planters into 9 Curb Extensions that were installed by DOT. The Horticulture Society, our landscaping partner, plant, care for and water seasonal plantings throughout the year. Since our last annual meeting, we’ve completed three street light banner campaigns designed to help create a sense of place and draw attention to the district.

Public Art: We also leaned into public art with a custom street light banner campaign featuring art from members of the SoHo Renaissance Factory. The campaign featured 5 works of art that were painted on boarded up storefronts in SoHo during the pandemic. Digital Art Month came to SoHo in October 2020 with three locations participating in this campaign. Jean Andre, a polaroid photographer who is fixture on Prince b/w Broadway and Crosby presented *Dear New York* as the photographer’s homage to the spirit, diversity and resilience of the people of New York City. The artwork included 350 portraits digitally projected in large scale unto the wall of his regular post. Hundreds stopped by to reconnect with Jean Andre, friends and neighbors.

Quality of Life and Public Safety: Complaints range from illegal vending, oversized trucks, three card monte game, illegal dumping and a recurring drummer. Staff investigates complaints and refers them to the proper agency for response if warranted. Director of Operations and Public Safety is no longer with the organization but was with the Initiative for over 5 years and was a valued member of the team; his presence will be missed. Over the coming weeks, I will be working with the board to evaluate our needs, update the job description and start a search for this filling this role.

Community Development: Through out the pandemic, we encouraged our businesses to follow best practices is protecting their employees and visitors against Covid 19. We handed out window clings to encourage mask wearing and social distancing as well as hand sanitizer and distributed face masks on behalf of the City to small businesses and their employees. We also held 17 community roundtables where community members could connect with each other throughout the pandemic.

Planning and Advocacy. Proposed Rezoning: This past May the City released it’s proposal to rezone SoHo and we’ve provided testimony each step of the way. We hired PKSB Architects to complete a massing study of the 9 City-identified potential development sites in our district to assess what might actually be built. We also hired

Cozen O'Connor to provide land use and lobbying support. Today our board is divided on the proposal, the vast majority of residents oppose the proposal and commercial board members generally support the proposal. Our advocacy now focuses on areas where there is agreement between our commercial and residential communities: Creating straightforward and inexpensive process to convert JLVQA units to residential; Opposing contributions to the art fund on the conversion of JLVQA units and engaging in a planning effort for arts/culture where there is community and political support for doing so; comprehensive plan to improve quality of life.

SoHo Broadway Public Realm Framework and Vision Plan. Effort began June 2020 with creation of Task Force and search for planning consultant to address both long standing quality of life issues on streets and sidewalks as well as in context of COVID pandemic and recovery including sidewalk crowding and vehicular traffic. Long term big ideas in Plan include vision of Broadway as pedestrianized busway and blocks of Prince adjacent to Broadway as plaza spaces. Did demonstration open street 4 Saturdays on one block of Prince called "Little Prince Plaza" to test concepts and gather feedback in tandem with Plan release October 2021. Also presented at Urban Design Forum, Community Board 2, Q&A Sessions. Release of plan is beginning of long term conversation about how to rethink public spaces.

Key Sponsors and Partners. Mark thanked GFP Real Estate, Vornado Realty Trust, Meringoff Properties, TJ Maxx, JVP Margalit Startup City, PKSB, Council Member Margaret Chin, Borough President Gale Brewer, Cubico, PacSun, Aurora Capital Partners, SoHo Renaissance Factory, Scholastic, NoMo SoHo Hotel, Loci Architecture, Zara, Karp Strategies, NYC SBS, NYC DOT, Lure Fishbar, SoHo Dental Group, Better Tex, The Hort, Street Plans, Cozen O'Connor, Museum of the City of New York, ACE, Jean-Andre Antoine, DSNY, NYPD for their support and collaboration.

Mark offered opportunity for Q&A from attendees.

Q1: Question about timeline for Director of Operations & Public Safety replacement timeline

A1: Reviewing needs and discussing with board; no exact timeline but as soon as possible.

Q2: Question about deliveries and rezoning.

A2: Historic district with historic crowded sidewalks; we are advocating that city develop freight plan for SoHo whether rezoning or not, focus should be to maintain quiet night for residents while improving efficiency.

Q3: Question about position allowing retail 2nd floor and below without restrictions.

Was some agreement on planning goals but not area of agreement now, letting stakeholders advocate for selves. Appears city will require some level of review for large retail, but we are not going to advocate about this due to divergent views among stakeholders.

Q4: Does SBI have written bylaws and can they be viewed?

A4: We can share bylaws by written request from registered members.

Q5: Is there plan to improve trash/recycling so not so messy?

A5: We want to participate in Clean Curbs containerized waste program. Consolidate

garbage into fewer locations and also serve as an amenity. Get trash off corners and also prevent rats.

Q6: Is there a plan to make Prince and Broadway walking streets?

A6: Collecting data from temporary plaza on Prince. We think would likely need to be open some days/times of week for access by service/delivery/sanitation vehicles.

Q7: Concern Director of Operations won't be replaced in exact role.

A7: Going to review organizational needs and may add additional duties.

Q8: Traffic backed up on Prince Street during Open Street. Concerns trucks will be moved to side streets.

A8: Was significant traffic throughout SoHo first weekend during peak hours. Re: trucks on side streets in Plan, Broadway would remain open for deliveries. Goal to thin out through-traffic while allowing local traffic. Loading zones would be included.

Q9: Board Member Pete Davies made statement re: proposals of massive fines and needing to show proof of artist certificate doesn't gel with what was discussed during Envision SoHo NoHo process. Punitive. Residents facing existential crisis.

Q10: Question about potential impact on residents of Public Realm Plan re: how noise would be controlled on Broadway, and who would be permitted to drive on Broadway.

A10: Buses, delivery trucks, for hire vehicles, and local traffic. Re: quality of life concerns, quiet night is important in mixed use neighborhood. Amenity set should be designed not to encourage nuisances (e.g. temporary seating in sensitive locations, greening, public art, etc.). Residential concerns need to be taken into account. Reducing traffic through neighborhood will make huge difference in bringing down noise levels for all.

Q11: Concern that fewer lanes will cause more traffic issues, turning and parking vehicles blocking traffic behind it, etc.

A12: Getting rid of nonessential traffic and people will learn how to use these spaces. We will work with DOT to study.

Q12: Question about monetizing public space (renting out public space to large companies such as Meatpacking does).

A12: We need to review, but believe SAPO would be ones approving/benefitting from this, not BID. BID would not have goal to have these types of events.

Q13: Question about addressing residents' concerns about rezoning.

A13: We have acknowledged residents largely oppose rezoning and we have raised their concerns in testimony. But we can only speak on issues both residential and commercial stakeholders agree upon.

Q14: Concern free seating will not encourage visitors to spend money. Why give free places to sit?

A14: In area with lack of places to sit, residents, office workers, visitors would all enjoy passive open space. People like to take breaks while shopping.

Q15: Question about Class C membership (coops).

A15: Coop itself owns real property (eligible for Class A2), coop members own shares in coop (not considered real property, so eligible Class C).

Q16: Has full independent traffic study been completed?

A16: No; that is one of important next steps. This is a Vision Plan; a credible approach but much further study of traffic and parking needed. Will be encouraging City to do these studies; beyond scope of what we could undertake as a BID.

Q17: Why is there no NYPD or DOT traffic control on Broadway during peak hours?

A17: We did pilot at Broadway/Broome recently which showed potential for positive impact, but hoping to talk to new electeds about this for new year.

Q18: Board Member Michele Varian: Retailers are being told by brokers owners will not reduce rent and spaces remaining empty. Has prospect of upzoning kept owners from negotiating to reduce rent on these spaces? What can BID do?

A18: Discussion about issue among Board Members. Richard Benenson responded; unfamiliar with this practice. Jason Vacker feels not overwhelming cause for high rents that mortgage would stipulate certain rent, but rather if you leased at that rent couldn't afford debt service. Banks overwhelmingly unwilling to write down loans. Have often delayed interest and added payments to back of term when there was no income, in generalities. Don't believe rezoning is playing major part in this. Board Member Margaret Baisley notes in retail rental market trying to meet debt service. Many refinancing... a coverage ratio required by the lender. Issue here is not seeing the reduction in taxes needed to meet decline in income from tenants. Most holding out for rent that will pay debt service and taxes, wages, other costs. Difficult to reduce rents. Not in purview of BID.

Q19: Question about how noise and trash from pedestrian areas would be mitigated. Would BID be responsible?

A19: BID would be responsible stewards, adjust practices if something not working.

Q20: What parts of streets proposed to be closed?

A20: Not proposing closing streets permanently. Broadway proposed as pedestrianized busway. Prince as plaza that could be opened/closed, Broome with fewer travel lanes. Part of low-traffic neighborhood strategy to divert through traffic around neighborhood. Extent of study area: Broadway, Mercer, Crosby between Houston and Canal and cross streets between Crosby and Mercer.

Q21: Board Member Ronnie Wolf: Residents concerned re: quality of life re: upzoning and public realm. How do commercial owners feel about public realm proposals?

A21: Board Members discussion. Gaston Silva: Personally ambivalent about these changes citywide, but can see benefit of pedestrianization of length of Broadway that has happened so far; if you read between lines seems intent would be to close it to Battery. SoHo has huge traffic problem due to location between tunnel and bridges. A need to figure out how to make traffic better. This Plan is very early effort; many studies will be needed as Mark mentions. Congestion pricing could help somewhat but only one solution. Brian Steinwurtzel shared that commercial members of Executive Committee and Public Realm Task Force raised many of same concerns. But as part of process did walking tour of other neighborhoods who had done good job of increasing pedestrians space and still allowing need vehicular access. I am skeptical and optimistic. Encourage more thoughts on what we should be doing not what we shouldn't. Jason Vacker notes we don't have perfect solution but there should be a solution. Willing to sacrifice convenience for my building/tenants if it helps district as a whole, as I've seen at Flatiron BID where he is Treasurer. Outcome is better neighborhood for everyone; need to work together to get there. Need to be part of process or will happen without us or not at all.

Q22: Gaston, what do you see as benefits of closing stretches to Broadway?

A22: Board Member Gaston Silva shared stretch between Madison Sq Park and Union Sq has created better environment since no through traffic. Better feel. Jason Vacker agrees; not perfect, some other streets may be more congested, but quality of life better

and people learning to use it. Not a huge proponent of removing roadway but big picture the investment worth doing to make more livable, workable, visitable. Street grid in NYC was never designed to be used how it is today. Mark notes these are long-standing issues we are trying to solve; we have heard people want more pedestrian space and fewer cars and starting conversation. Mark notes tour we gave of other BIDs and may be good to do another with more stakeholders.

Mark introduced Emily Hellstrom, founding board member and the board's Vice President, who also lives on Broadway, sits on the Community Education Council, is a board member of the Friends of Elizabeth Street Garden, serves on the Executive Board of the Downtown Independent Democrats and is a founding member of Children's First.

Emily Hellstrom offered closing remarks. Committed to ideals embodied in mission and unique makeup of board. Greatest strength and most likely weakness. Have done so much since founded, but faced with inflection point. When first we were presented with potential rezoning, formed committee to put together roundly praised Zoning Guidebook. Joined Envision SoHo/NoHo process and planning committee to try to find common ground. Came up with planning goals Board could mutually agree upon, compromise. We have potential to be looked at as model but also potential for many to lose faith. We must take great care. Important for us to renew commitment of what board stands for, all listening to one another, all voices at table to have flourishing and balanced ecosystem.

Mark thanked Emily. Gave preliminary voting results that Minutes approved and Board Slate passed. Will verify. [note: staff verified following meeting]. Thanks to all for participating.

Meeting adjourned approximately 8:00 p.m.

Exhibit 1

Attendance for Meeting Minutes

Dashiell Allen

Patricia Ali

Margarite Almeida

Jamie Ansorge

John Antrobus

Timothy B

Howard Baden

Margaret Baisley

Leigh Behnke

Tsipi Ben-Haim

Richard Benenson

David Bernal

Donald Blair

Martin Bondell

Carter Booth

Gale Brewer

Deborah Buyer

Rob Byrnes

James Cavello

Andrew Chang

Wellington Chen

Michelle Choi

Bruce Cormicle

Daniel Cubas

Pete Davies

D. James Dee

Mark Dicus

Anthony Drummond

Roxanne Earley

Maria Feliciano

Jane Fisher

Leah Gitter

Dan Glickman

Patrick Hall

Sanjukta Hazarika

Emily Hellstrom

Anders Holst

Nancy Horch

Nell Jocelyn

Anita Jorgensen

Jeannine Kiely

Jeffrey Kohn

Leo Kone

Thomas Lee

Steve Leon
Lee Leshen
Warren Leshen
Peggy Low
Darlene Lutz
Margo Margolis
Lance Marsh
Laurie Marshall
Christopher Marte
James Martin
Carl L. Marxer
Renée Monroe
Cordelia Persen
Katy Rice
Jeannette Rodriguez
Mary Rolland
Jed Root
Denny Salas
Michael Salzhauer
Gaston Silva
Brian Steinwurtzel
"User Name" [no name given]
Jason Vacker
Michele Varian
Donna Vogel
Aaron Weitzen
DJ Williams
Ronnie Wolf
Brandon Zwagerman