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CB4 plate full with BRC, Chelsea Market, sidewalk cafe matters

Added by admin on May 21, 2012.

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BY WINNIE McCROY | The monthly board meeting of Community Board 4 (CB4), held on May 2 at Roosevelt Hospital, began with a lengthy session debating the merits of the proposed Chelsea Market expansion (see article, page 6). Other issues discussed included new sidewalk cafes, several Department of Transportation (DOT) issues and a letter to the Department of Buildings (DOB) regarding the Chelsea Hotel (see article, page 1).

“The negatives of this project strongly outweigh any potential gains the community might receive from this expansion. This plan would dramatically alter an important historical building, with little guarantee of long-term community job creation,” said Assemblymember Richard N. Gottfried during the two-hour public debate session regarding Chelsea Market.

Gottfried also spoke on the serious financial challenges facing the Hudson River Park Trust, saying, “They have enormous capital needs not imagined when we wrote the legislation in 1998. There is the near collapse of Pier 40 and the crumbling of the bulkhead, the wall that keeps the west side of Manhattan from falling into the river. I trust you to look at the legislation and come up with revenue-creating uses that maintain the principles of the legislation.”

State Senator Tom Duane traveled from Albany to bid farewell to his aide, Sarah Meier-Zimbler, who will return to grad school. He noted that Ed Kirkland was Veteran of the Year in Albany, and spoke against charter schools. He also lent support to legislation that strips the license from physicians and psychologists who participate in torture.

“Regarding Chelsea Market, I won’t take an official position until you do, because you’re mishpacha, you’re family,” Duane told CB4.

Representatives of other elected officials shared their reports. Borough President Scott Stringer’s office pushed for a commuter tax, and Congressman Jerrold Nadler’s office noted work on the federal service transportation bill — with Katie Smith saying, “The Congressman is not happy with the [pork].”

Assemblymember Deborah Glick’s office opposed the Chelsea Market expansion and announced studies being made on traffic signs.

Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal’s office was working on bills for pay equity for state workers, overhauling rent control and moving animal cruelty into the penal code. They will also have a May 17 Town Hall meeting on mosquito prevention.

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CB4 MEMBERS DELIVER REPORTS

FROM OUR SISTER NEWSPAPERS

Dist. Manager Bob Bernick delivered a short update, noting that the Clinch/Hell's Kitchen Land Use May meeting would be held on June 13. The May 7 Housing Committee meeting has also been deferred, and will meet on May 17 — when Bowery Residents' Committee (BRC) Executive Director Muzzy Rosenblatt will report on BRC's Community Advisory Sheltering Homeless Youth 21-24 Gets \$1MM in New City Budget

THE VILLAGER

(CAC). Their recent CAC meeting brought out 28 people with quality of life concerns. It rained on their parade, but they danced on

The city budget was released on May 3; Dematto said: "Con Edison will pull up 17 We got the ball rolling; How Pr. 40 fight brought us Hudson River at Park

Before Artichoke Basil's Pizza and 49th Street has been complaining that the bar dog cc From splintered piers to fancy park of today, we've come a long way

st Keeping cool on the West Side, 1940s style

pl Fish, forests and fields coming to Tribeca pier

th Downtown Express presented the results of the Board Nominating Committee that all positions on the current board are unchallenged... excepting the repl

se Police Blotter: Week of May 24

C Cacophony of colors brings harmony at Governors Island Holi Hai celebration

v Wave vs. glacier: Slow pace of resiliency plans will leave Downtown ar to at risk for many years to come

le Once upon a moral panic...

w the roster was already overflowing. Johnson said they would bring this issue to the attention of

L All booked up: CB1 worries zoning change will push more hotels into crowded Downtown

ISSUES ARISING DURING PUBLIC SESSION

During the short general public session, Tracy Kahley, a 16-year resident at 340 West 39th Street, spoke against the sidewalk cafe planned outside Mickey Spillane's Kitchen at 350 West

40th Street, citing the large number of nearby trains and concerns about pedestrian safety. The issue, Agenda Item 4, was widely debated.

Burt Lazarin noted that the issue was contentious because the cafe owners seemed to not be following protocol. Some CB4 members observed that a public bike rack on the corner had been

legally removed to make way for the sidewalk tables. Others called attention to traffic, tree beds and news boxes on the corner.

"It seems like such a tight corner," said Larry Roberts. "It is a viaduct for five trains, and the graphic arts building is in the corner. Something may be legal, but it defies common sense. And I have had buyer's remorse about this cafe since we first voted for it."

A vote on the matter showed 13 in support and 24 opposed. CB4 eventually voted to send a letter of denial for the project, outlining in a sub-letter to the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) the reasons behind the denial.

Another issue that arose during the public session was the repaving of the roadway on 27th Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Connie Alberto thanked the board for their advocacy, while a man named Lou from Chelsea Houses relayed a story of potential dangers.

"The drive has not been worked on for at least six years, and for 10 years before that," said the man. "I was on Eighth Avenue and watched a lady in her mid-80s who stepped onto a nearby street, but the street was not there. She tripped and fell right on her face. I don't want that to happen to anyone's grandmother. NYCHA (New York City Housing Authority) thinks people are expendable."

AGENDA ITEMS BUNDLED, MOST PASS

Due to the late hour, many agenda items were bundled, including letters to the DCA regarding sidewalk cafes. Of 17 Business License and Permit Committee items, the board voted to support 15, to deny Mickey Spillane's, and to table a letter to the State Liquor Authority (SLA) regarding Frames — the bowling alley at 550 Ninth Avenue between West 40th and 41st Streets that blasts music onto the sidewalk, where they maintain velvet ropes (both of which CB4 has requested they remove).

The board supported Artichoke Basille's Pizza, provided they repave to level the grade for the sidewalk cafe. And, after much discussion, the board voted to approve Item 5 — a sidewalk cafe for West End Bar & Grill at 813 Eighth Avenue, as amended, noting that they must respect zoning rules that place tables on side streets rather than Eighth Avenue.



Sheltering Homeless Youth 21-24 Gets \$1MM in New City Budget

Connie Kurtz, Lesbian Activist, Artist, Dies at 82

Albany LGBTQI Advocacy Day Draws 250

Band of Brothers

HOP: Nabe Complaints Led to New Parade Route

Endors Association

EAST VILLAGER NEWS

Among powerful friends, Chin enters her second term

Top cop says special unit, outreach can cut thefts

Muscle-headed gym keeps flouting regs with illegal signage

Judge says city broke the law by approving N.Y.U. superblocks plan

De Blasio seems on same page with evicted news vendor

Agenda Item 26, a

minute meeting that

ants' Association, said

to the attention of



Other minor issues arose over Items 8 and 9, SLA licenses for Mayoub Murshed at 713 Eighth Avenue, the basement and ground floor locations. The board passed the items, with amendments that the operator keep cabaret in the basement and prohibit hookah smoking.

An SLA letter for Pinyin at 254 Tenth Avenue was also approved, provided the backyard cafe keeps the tenant fire access unblocked.

The board passed the remainder of agenda items without much discussion. Various letters to the DOT were approved. Item 19 dealt with Bike Share locations; Marcus and other board members decided to come back before the board with new locations that wouldn't affect pedestrian traffic patterns. They also amended the letter to withdraw support for a location in Manhattan Plaza, citing congestion.

The meeting ended with two final issues. The board approved Item 24, a letter to the Board of Standards and Appeals seeking a variance for commercial office use for 336 West 37th. And Item 26, a letter to the DOB regarding the Chelsea Hotel, also passed, with board members like Mackintosh noting that architect Gene Kaufman's plans to expand exceeded the building's approved Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

The next full board meeting for CB4 will be held on June 6, 6:30pm, at the Fulton Auditorium. For more info, visit www.nyc.gov/mcb4

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