

SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc.

6th Annual Meeting – June 16, 2020

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 Tuesday, June 16, 2020 remotely via Zoom at 5:30 p.m. for the organization's 6th Annual Meeting.

Attached as Exhibit 1 is a list of attendees of the Annual Meeting.

With a quorum of membership present, the meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m.

Executive Director Mark Dicus made welcome remarks. He welcomed attendees, wished them health and safety, and acknowledged unprecedented times in midst of COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing protests in support of Black Lives Matter following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Mark noted many businesses are preparing to reopen as society re-starts following harsh shut down that began in NYC March 20. Mark noted many stores still boarded up, which are expected to gradually unboard as businesses reopen. Mark shared that board and staff have been working diligently throughout pandemic to put district in best possible position for its comeback. Mark introduced Initiative President Brian Steinwurtzel, Co-CEO and Principal at GFP Real Estate, owner of 594 and 560 Broadway in SoHo Broadway District.

President Brian Steinwurtzel offered opening remarks. He shared how his company, tenants, and other small businesses touched by COVID, as well as impacts of looting and boarded stores. Epidemic has given us opportunity as society to reconnect with family, community, see where we need to improve as a society. Proud of what has been happening around country and coming together. Inaction is not OK, encourage all of us to continue making opportunities for those who may not have them, speaking out when you know it's wrong, listening and asking questions, and we should make better what we know is working right.

Mark thanked Brian and introduced Secretary Paul Farr, who presented items to be voted upon. Paul presented the minutes from June 18, 2019 Annual Meeting and the minutes and presented the slate of Directors for terms ending June 2022 in Class A1, Class A2, Class B and Class C, as well as one Alternate in Class A1 for term ending June 2021. Paul shared instructions for voting digitally and a link was shared in the chat for members to use for voting. Quorum was met in each class, and all items and slates were approved.

Mark thanked Paul. Treasurer Richard Benenson had technical difficulties so Mark

Dicus presented the Finance Report. Budget was presented on screen. Mark reported BID has \$557,000 cash on hand. BID is projected to end the Fiscal year with \$1,034,000 in revenues and expenses of \$818,000 for net revenue of about \$215,000. For FY 2021, Projected revenue is \$926,000, expenses \$930,000, and net loss of \$4,000. Board has approved a balanced budget for FY 21. The Initiative plans to hold surplus from prior years to invest in future recovery efforts that provide the greatest benefit to the district. Given the amount of uncertainty, want to be financially conservative to see where the needs are before allocating those funds. Budget anticipates delays in payment of our assessment, but that it will be paid in full. We expect that sponsorship revenue will dry up and possibly a decrease in city grant income. Initiative cleaning services will continue to be priority, with an increased focus on graffiti removal. Public safety will also continue to be a priority. Anticipating events to start by the late fall, will have to wait and see. Planning to resume our in-person events programming with our Weekend Walks, happy hours, open house and annual meeting. Budget includes funds to develop an interim public realm plan, maintain planters, put together restart tool-kits for small businesses and launch a restart art campaign.

Mark introduced Lance Marsh, long-standing Field Supervisor for the SoHo Broadway Clean Team. Lance presented an overview of the Clean Team's work during the fiscal year. Clean Team was considered Essential Workers during pandemic. Lance noted 42,889 bags of garbage were collected and 4,185 incidents of graffiti addressed in FY 20. Lance shared images of the Clean Team at work cleaning/painting public assets and encouraged everyone to stay safe and positive.

Mark thanked Lance and entire Clean Team and ACE and continued with Annual Report and Year Ahead as follows:

- **Quality of Life and Public Safety:** In addition to overseeing the Clean Team, Initiative's Quality of Life and Public Safety efforts are led by Director of Operations, Frank Wessels, who serves as a liason with our partners at a number of City Agencies, including NYPD, DSNY and DOHMH. In the past year, in addition to overseeing the work of the Clean Team, Frank has responded to 280 community complaints, made 173 notifications to City Agencies and 83 contact with street vendors operating illegally.
- **Community Development and Planning:** This work is headed up by Community Engagement and Planning Manager, Brandon Zwagerman. This past year, Brandon coordinated our first ever banner and trash receptacle sponsorship program that raised over \$80,000 this past year, coordinated our public events including our Weekend Walks on Howard Street and our Winter Warm Up party. We were looking forward to hosting an expanded Weekend Walk series, but those plans are on hold for the moment due to the pandemic.
- At the end of 2019, the Envision SoHo NoHo report was released. The Initiative was looking forward to working on the recommendations with the community and the process sponsors, but that work was stopped due to the Covid 19

pandemic. We understand that responding to the pandemic and preparing for the recovery take immediate priority right now, and look forward restarting these important conversations in the near future.

- COVID-19 response: Throughout the pandemic our staff and clean team have been in the district each day. Our Clean Team has shifted their focus to graffiti removal while continuing to clean up any litter they find. We've stepped our communications, hosting workshops for our businesses, roundtables with different segments of the SoHo Broadway community to prepare for restart of society and the economy.
- Civil Unrest: At the end of May, Cities across the country reacted in protest to the killing of George Floyd. New York City and Lower Manhattan have seen dozens of peaceful protests over the past several weeks. At the end May and early June, several neighborhoods in lower Manhattan, including SoHo were victims of widespread looting over several nights. The looting used the protests as cover to undertake what appears to be a coordinated effort to loot stores in lower Manhattan. These were some very difficult and painful nights for the SoHo community. Thankfully peace has been restored and SoHo has seen peaceful nights for almost 2 weeks.
- Solidarity and Commitment. The Initiative stands in solidarity with the protests and supports the Black Lives Matter movement. Our staff and board have started to reflect on the role we play and to think about actions we can take to end system racism against black and indigenous people of color. We plan to release a statement expressing this support and share our preliminary thinking on the work we need to do to end systemic racism. Juneteenth is this Friday and celebrates the emancipation of black slaves in the United States. One initial step we are taking is that the Initiative will recognize Juneteenth as an annual holiday, paying our Clean Team time and half for time worked this holiday just like when they work on other recognized holidays like the 4th of July or Memorial Day.
- Re-Opening and Public Realm Planning: We've been getting a lot of questions about what the restart looks like. When will all the businesses re-open, where will all the tourists go, how can we make sure social distancing is followed and that people wear masks. These are all important questions, unfortunately no one has done a restart like this before. Most of our stores are large enough to not have capacity issues, but some will need to queue customers on the sidewalk. Many of our office building lobbies are small and under-elevated, we anticipate some of those buildings will need to queue employees waiting to get into their offices. We expect to see more people biking to our neighborhood and pedestrians wanting more space to walk. Unlike the PAUSE order on March 20 requiring everyone to stay home, the restart is being done in phases. We expect the restart in SoHo to take time, some businesses will re-open, others will wait. Phase 1 start on June 8 and Phase 2 may start as early as June 22. Our role is to help the restart be safe and successful, to help get people back to work and visiting SoHo Broadway. Short Term: We expect the restart to take some time,

both for boards to come down but also for businesses to be prepared to re-open. We will help them re-open safely by providing face coverings and signage to encourage the following of public health recommendations, including wearing face coverings and social distancing. We will also be mindful of sidewalk congestion and other issues, as we have always been. Medium Term: As we expect to be living with Covid 19 for some time, we want to develop some medium term solutions to the new demands on our public space: the need for more space to walk, more space for cycling and other needs that haven't emerged yet. Sidewalk congestion is a long standing issue and now is a moment to test out new solutions. We are exploring solutions with DOT and exploring developing our own Interim Public Realm plan for SoHo Broadway. The future is uncertain, but by working together, we can help SoHo Broadway come out of this crisis even stronger.

Mark thanked all Sponsors and Supporters, everyone who provided financial or in kind support in past year: GFP Real Estate, Scholastic, Meringoff Properties, TJ Maxx, Council Member Margaret S. Chin, ACE, Cubico, Boxed, 524 Broadway Company, L.P., VillageOne, Loci Architecture, and Reclaimed Organics.

Mark offered an opportunity for Q&A from attendees.

Q1. Do we know what businesses are closed/open?

A1. Doing field surveys of district consistently. A handful doing curbside delivery/pickup (Bloomingdale's, Uniqlo are two we are aware of)

Q2. Question about how to know you are a member

A2. If you did not receive email from us prior to meeting you are not a member. Will share registration link.

Q3. Possible to enforce noise and illegal parking from ice cream trucks blocking crosswalks?

A3. Approach remains. We don't have enforcement authority; need City to enforce. We are putting planters on corners which we hope will help deter from parking there.

Q4. Question about Dept. of Finance extending July 1 tax date.

A4. We have no information at this time.

Q5. What are efforts to unboard/repair windows?

A5. We think we will see businesses take down boards as they reopen. Entering phase 2 where retail can be open at 50% capacity so expect more stores to do so.

Q6. Need real outreach to get stores to unboard and repair storefronts because it is contagious. Anything BID can do to promote that?

A6. Agreed it is critical. We are monitoring and having conversations with business/property owners.

Q7. How is BID thinking of approaching Phase 1->2 in terms of issues that might be anticipated on Broadway e.g. crowds, cars, waiting for curbside pickup, ensuring social distancing?

A7. We don't have enforcement authority, but developing a toolkit with signage for stores, where retailers should queue customers, if seeing curbside pickup problems let us know/report to 311 but we don't anticipate much of it. Most employees not coming back until at least Labor Day.

Q8. Thanks to Clean Team for work on Crosby/Mercer. Have requested funding renewal from Council Member to continue funding for cleaning those streets. Any help BID can do to help that happen is appreciated. Coordinate retailers to promote bringing NYers back here even though tourists unlikely to come back?

A8. Have heard about lack of vibrancy from a number of residents. Need to wait and see but appreciate need to have people come and support businesses. Good idea to explore. Re: sanitation funding, we believe these are smart investments but understand City budget is under much stress.

Q9. Question about getting staff in and out of buildings due to social distance requirements and how City could fund helping businesses to configure these interventions.

A9. City budget is tight but a lot of cost businesses will incur to get up and running, good for people to hear. Maybe an in-kind exchange for services from designers.

Q10. Question about continued NYPD presence in SoHo?

A10. They kept increased presence in SoHo following looting but need has diminished and have been redeployed around City. Unaware of medium term plans to increase presence.

Q11. Question about long range ideas for securing ground floors. What are building owners and retailers considering moving forward for better security.

A11. Landmark District, can't put gates on outside. Question property owners and retail businesses need to think about. One building's board decided not to do something major in response to unprecedented looting event that happened one night, could have long term negative impact.

Q12. Question about residential compost program.

A12. Hope to get this restarted next year. City removed compost boxes and got them returned.

Q13. Question about assessment from property owners and funding.

A13. We know property owners struggling but budget anticipates there will be delays in payment but expect it will be. Also being financially conservative. We think being in BID helps with restart, coming back to clean and safe district.

Q14. Concerns about crowds returning and social distancing. Crowds have become busy in London at flagship stores. What are you prepared to do? Residents concerned at crowds not socially distanced that they have to walk to.

A14. Needs to be planning done to accommodate need for more space for shoppers returning. Perhaps parking lane could be repurposed as walking space. Our retailers have pretty high legal capacity even at 50%, unlikely to meet capacity. Will need City to help.

Q15. Have you heard from police if any looters, ringleaders etc caught from video handed from shops/residents?

A15. Last update we received is they are compiling and organizing the videos received and detective squad looking to identify individuals. Slow process. Many wearing masks.

Q16. Artwork on plywood. Has there been effort to preserve/save/document it?

Probably over 200 pieces in neighborhood. Because a neighborhood filled with artist it is our heritage.

A16. We've been documenting artwork in district. Been a lot of ad hoc work. Did hear NY Historic Society is interested. Many are photographing these but not sure who central repository would be.

Q17. Question about managing sidewalk queues.

A17. Going to advocate businesses used app-based system. Or if they do queue to curb them on curb so people can get out of buildings.

Q18. Question about where discarded boards can go.

A18. We will try to find resources and connect people with them.

Mark introduced Vice President Emily Hellstrom, who offered closing remarks. Emily thanked all who participated. Shared James Baldwin quote “not everything that is faced can be changed but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” Change is deeply uncomfortable, can be scary. It is unmooring. Some of the most profound art and moments in humanity come from change that is difficult. City is going through fast change which feels particularly scary. But when communities come together it is when good things happen. More than ever we need to do the hard work of change. I feel nervous but excited and hope you do to and we can make this change together.

The meeting adjourned approximately 7:02 p.m.

Exhibit 1

Attendance for Meeting Minutes

Robin Abrams
Margaret Baisley
Roseann Barber
Leigh Behnke
Paul Bowden
Gale Brewer
Deborah Buyer
Rob Byrnes
Debbie Carter
James Cavello
Dylan Cecchini
Andrew Chang
Suzy Changar
Cynthia Chapin
Yasmin Cruz
Daniel Cubas
Steve Cytryn
Peter Davies
Grant Di Mille
Anthony Drummond
James Ellis
Sharon M Ermilio
Maria Feliciano
Jane Fisher
Chandler Forsythe
Leonard Friday
Vincent Fung
William Fung
Clarence Hahn
Nancy Horch
Michael Ingbar
Ed Janoff
John Johnson
Allen Kantorowitz
William Kelley
Cheryl Klauss
Greg Kraut
Warren Leshen
Lee Leshen
Sylvia Li
Janet Liff
Peggy Low
“NYC Management” [no name given]

Derwin Manigault
Ara Mansour
Andrew Marcus
Zulma Matos
Renee Monrose
Rebecca Olshan
Nicole Paynter
Kendall Pelzer
Kylee Pendery
Cordelia Persen
Diane Petan
Kaylen Poretzky
Taina Prado
Douglas Propp
Bo Riccobono
Catherine Rice
Mary Rolland
Jed Root
Phyllis Rosenblatt
Timothy Rosser
Sara Schiller
Sarah Shaw
Gaston Silva
Kim Skarvelis
Ed Somekh
Jason Vacker
Michele Varian
Donna Vogel
DJ Williams
Kristen Williams
Susan Wittenberg
Luke Wolf
Ronnie Wolf
Lydia Wong
Gabrielle Yacoob
Vivienne Yang
Marissa Yanni