

SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc.

Community Roundtable – July 14, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Pursuant to a written notice via email, website, and social media, members of the public attended an information session (Community Roundtable) organized by the SoHo Broadway District Management Association, Inc. (dba SoHo Broadway Initiative) on Thursday, July 14, 2022 remotely via Zoom at 8:30 a.m.

Executive Director Mark Dicus welcomed attendees, introduced SBI staff (himself, Brandon Zwagerman, Dan Hogle) and Board Members/Alternates (Brian Steinwurtzel, Emily Hellstrom, Ronnie Wolf, Pete Davies)

Mark introduced District 1 City Council Member Christopher Marte.

Council Member Marte started term 6 months ago, office has hit ground running. Outlined some key areas of focus:

- Worked with Administration and community members to block legislation that would have unduly harmed JLWQA residents
- In SoHo, hired ACE to expand supplementary sanitation from Mercer to Greene, Prince to Canal.
- Spending more on sanitation and quality of life issues via budget process
- Recently met w/ Port Authority of NYNJ. Ports at 85% pre-pandemic. Expect to hit record levels of tourism and need to have people on the ground prepared for this.
- Rapkin-Gayle Plaza opens tomorrow at Lafayette/Grand. 11 a.m. ribbon cutting.
- Working to stop guerilla “dark stores” w/ 15-minute delivery. Will be death of mom-and-pop bodegas and 99cent stores. CM Marte and CM Menin going to introduce legislation to limit growth of these. Have also been complaints about speeding workings on e-bikes but not fault of workers; need protections for workers so everyone is safe.
- Opened district office at 65 East Broadway. Also 250 Broadway office near City Hall.

Q&A from SoHo Broadway Staff & Board with Council Member Marte

- Q from Mark: Favorite SoHo memory? A: Had friends who worked at Dean and DeLuca as a kid; got larger samples than usual. Used to be smaller outlet stores along Broadway with photos of celebrities and politicians on the wall; always hoped I would run into someone famous, never did. More recent memory is working with the people of SoHo; their resiliency and organized nature. The

people make this community a community.

- Q from Mark: Where do you like to go in SoHo. A: I'm an avid cyclist. Rapha store is the place to be in the city. Get coffee, see what is going on in the cycling world. Also I'm not much of a hat person but The Hat Shop is great, neighbors sitting outside at tables and chairs. Feels like being transported back in time.
- Q from Brian: One reason we hear from tenants that their staff don't want to come back to office is fear of public safety, concerns about unhoused people, and people with drug issues or mental health problems. Apps track 911/311 complaints and other issues. Folks have heard NYPD doesn't respond to issues. May be more perception. What can be done? A: Budget has huge investment in mental health outreach & homelessness. Affordable housing for Grand & Clinton. Chipping away at huge challenge... major vision and investment we need to do as a City. When folks see issue contact our office; helps us understand what is happening in community. Most instances on app aren't verified. Mark and Emily echoed comments that folks who don't spend time in city have a certain perception based on media being consumed and app feed. Discussion about how to balance perception and reality which addressing real issues. Need to show that SoHo is alive and not on fire.
- Q from Ronnie: A few concerns shared: 4 DEP manhole covers making noise that haven't been addressed since filing over 40 311 complaints since October 2001. Hearing rooftop parties at 433 Broadway. Residents being called biased/racist/bad citizens by members of Open NY. A: If you have 311 ticket numbers forward to office district1@council.nyc.gov. Open NY strategy seems to be to pit community against one another; have limited audience with people who live in these communities as seen in Assemblymember Glick primary result. When you are trying to do what is right people will attack.

Q&A from public with Council Member Marte:

- Q from resident. Broadway Residents Coalition has been working closely with precincts on 311 and have been provided other ways to get in touch with them. Looking forward to working with Dan Hogle. How do we include your office? Send you all 311s? A: Send 311 numbers and photos/videos helpful. Organizing one person in group to send is helpful.
- Q from resident. Traffic on Broome St. is unrelenting. Verrazano Bridge toll reversal didn't seem to help, more people driving. Been 40 years trying to get traffic officers on Broome east/west of Broadway. 5th Pct throws up hands. Need to have someone stop blocking of crosswalk. 8 hours of honking on Fridays. Glad new park is there; been 20 years in making. If you can do anything to get more green and replace artificial grass with real grass please do. Seeing more interest in nightlife along Broadway and other areas. Real quality of life issues. Fake museums are insulting to the artist community. Experiential places calling selves museums who want to do things at night with liquor. Don't want places like Showfields. A: We can follow up with Precinct. In a more general view, DOT is looking at Canal, going to look at Broadway. Our stance is if doing anything Downtown, need to consider Broome. If you make Canal better, can't make Broome worse.
- Q from resident. Not just Broome, traffic backs up West Broadway. 2 things to be

done to address this. Lots of issues with placard abuse on Centre and Lafayette which are getting new bike lanes. CM Restler has proposed legislation where citizens can report placard abuse; do you support this? A: CM Marte is cosponsor of that legislation, worked together to draft. Organizing Council to get enough sponsors. Governor said congestion pricing not happening next 2 years. I think we should find ways to go after a lot of trucks even if congestion pricing doesn't happen in near future. Big trucks shouldn't be allowed in Lower Manhattan. Should be places in City they can offload onto cargo bike or other smaller vehicles. Transition into greener environment and have less traffic.

- CM Marte needed to leave meeting for next event, suggested doing another similar event in future. Can contact District1@council.nyc.gov with any questions there wasn't time for, Mark requested attendees please also copy mdicus@sohobroadway.org if they do.

Mark Dicus ended meeting with general BID update:

- Introduction of new Director of Community Affairs and Operations Dan Hogle. Joined 4 weeks ago. Has been in touch with agencies such as NYPD, DOHMH, on the street, made much progress in short time. Worked to have expired permit of problem ice cream truck removed. Also working on beautification and with managing Clean Team.
- Composting pilot program restarted, thanks to those participating.
- Since April, Guess has reopened. ATTIK, Frankies Bikinis, MAIA, Rumi Lifestore have opened. Coming soon: LYLAS/Museum of Women, Target, Bibliotheque, Fila, House of Cannabis, SoHo Food Gallery. Busy this summer and looking forward to Fall.

Q&A from public with Mark Dicus:

- Comment from Konstance Patton, SoHo Renaissance Factory. Excited CM Marte is part of things happening, have known him 15 years. SRF art collective has residency at Fulton Center with Art on the Avenue, workshops at Seaport, activation with ChaShaMa. Looking for community partners. Artists and educators, contact konstance@srfstudio.com / sohorenaissancefactory.com A: Mark endorses SRF who has been partners with SBI in past.
- Q from Mitchell Grubler, Bowery Alliance of Neighbors/Bowery Block Association. Saw SBI Public Realm Framework & Vision Plan with proposal to restrict traffic on Broadway but divert SoHo traffic along Bowery, Varick. Want more explanation. A: Vision plan published last fall. Not official plan endorsed by Council Member or DOT. Ideas to be considered and for discussion and study. Point of proposal was not to divert all traffic on Broadway but rather to divert through traffic away from Lower Manhattan at large.

No other attendees had questions; meeting adjourned.