

Minutes of the Chinatown Working Group (CWG) Full Group Meeting  
5:30pm – 6:30pm, Monday, December 1, 2014  
Two Bridges Senior Apartments, 80 Rutgers Slip

Voting members present: Asian American Arts Centre (Robert Lee); Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler); Chinese Progressive Association (Mae Lee); Chinese Staff and Workers Association (Wendy Cheung, Wah Lee); Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence (Anj Chaudhry, Kyla Cheung; Edwin Jheng; Yuang Rui Zhi); Community Board 1 (Michael Levine); Community Board 2 (Antony Wong); Community Board 3 (MyPhuong Chung); National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (David Tieu); Two Bridges Neighborhood Council (Victor Papa, Wilson Soo); 61 Delancey Street Tenants Association (Zhi Qin Zheng); 197 Madison Street (Chao Zhuo Chen)

Also present: Trever Holland (Two Bridges Tower Association); Rob Hollander; Chris Walters (Hunter College); Susan Yung (FROGG)

Media: Sing Tao Daily (April Xu)

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Meeting called to order at 5:26pm, Wilson Soo and Antony Wong presiding.

1. Introductions.
2. Agenda approved by all present.
3. July minutes approved by all present.
4. CAPZ discussions on subdistricts B, C, D and E, Victor Papa reporting.

Victor Papa: Regarding subdistrict B, CAPZ met on September 15 at Alfred E. Smith Houses and voted for option 2 in areas within the study area and option 1 for areas outside the study area. The outreach for the meeting was extensive, including every elected official and NYCHA representatives. But the turnout was poor.

We met again on October 20. The group needed more information before any vote could be taken. Eva Hanhardt submitted written answers to our questions (refer to Nov 3, 2014 CAPZ minutes). She then attended the CAPZ meeting on November 3. At that meeting the group voted for option 1 on subdistrict E1, and option 1 on subdistrict E2, the Bowery subdistricts. The community boards abstained. In favor were Two Bridges Neighborhood Council, Chinatown Business and Property Owners, Chinese Staff and Workers Association and National Mobilization against Sweatshops and CAAAV (to be added in the Nov 3, 2014 CAPZ minutes). The Chinatown Business and Property Owners questioned the methodology regarding subdistrict D and asked Pratt to disclose of the name of the consultant who did their analysis. Pratt would not disclose that information as they had already provided Chinatown Working Group with all it had to provide in terms of the finished product.

CAPZ met again on November 24 to discuss subdistricts D and C. On subdistrict D the vote was 5 in favor, 2 abstaining and 1 against on option 2. On C, the group did not vote for an option. Anj volunteered to draft up an alternative.

Anj Chaudhry: I contacted two groups, Urban Justice Center and ANHD about alternative options. I will be meeting them on Friday, December 12.

Michael Levine: What are you looking for?

Anj Chaudhry: We thought the heights in the options on C were too high and would take away from manufacturing without giving anything. We are not confident that the inclusionary housing would be realized. We're also concerned about more luxury development. We objected to a 350 foot tall luxury development right by Smith Houses. Even 55% affordable housing wouldn't justify the amount of luxury development.

Antony Wong: CAPZ will tentatively meet December 15 or 16 depending on schedules. We have been given a go-ahead from community board 3 to vote first. Please bring the options to your constituencies for their review. C will be discussed at CAPZ.

Trever Holland: On C there was outreach, but for D, no outreach. D is commercial zone including parking. I ask that you revisit D to address commercial overnight parking. CSWA also asked to take a position on the Extell development. Victor, you objected. Why?

Victor Papa: It's not part of our mission.

Anj Chaudhry: A number of groups are concerned about the Extell development. The Extell development is included in the Pratt plan and there is a proposal for rezoning. We agreed with CSWA's suggestion that CWG ask Extell to follow the zoning proposed by Pratt.

Wendy Cheung: If people here think it's important, then we should raise it.

Victor Papa: I'm not going to entertain this [xxxx].

David Tieu: I think we should consider and at least discuss.

Victor Papa: I think we shouldn't. Do you think any position we take would make a difference to Extell?

[Various voices]: Yes.

David Tieu: Unless you have a relationship with Extell.

Victor Papa: Of course we have a relationship with Extell.

Trever Holland: Why not take a position?

Victor Papa: Because the CWG does not take positions.

Rob Hollander: Decorum, please.

Victor Papa: Two Bridges is out of the Chinatown Working Group. [Still in the Chinatown Working Group.]

Wilson Soo: Will CWG then take a position on each development that has occurred since its inception?

Anj Chaudhry: Eva recommended that we could take a position since the development accepts public funds.

Michael Levine: That would create a problem for Community Board 1. I would have to withdraw from CWG because CB1 is not here to vote on any specific projects in CD3, we are voting only on planning proposals. So we have to weigh whether CWG would lose more membership over such a position. Taking specific positions is out of the jurisdiction of Community Board 1.

Anj Chaudhry: If we are a coalition, then we should have a process. We don't all have to agree on everything. Groups don't have to withdraw over every dissent.

Michael Levine: We don't have a quorum.

Rob Hollander: There might be other options, for example communicating with Extell. I see no reason not to discuss Extell and figure what is best for CWG to do.

Michael Levine: We can't discuss tonight. It requires more education. The co-chairs should decide how to go forward.

Edwin Zheng: [In translation] I participated in a few of the Pathmark actions. The loss of Pathmark has had a great impact on all types of tenants of all races. You can see in the newspapers how upset local residents were about it. I ask you respectfully to consider the Pathmark issue because it affects many people. Thank you.

Mae Lee: I too miss Pathmark and am concerned with the development there. I request that this be put on the agenda for the next meeting, and discuss whether we can take a position on this or all developments.

Wah Lee: I've been in CWG for a long time. Our mission covers anything about land use. We should come to a decision after discussion. We're in this together because we care about this community and this area. It is irresponsible for any group to leave simply on the basis of a single disagreement. It gives the impression that there is no investment in the community or care for the community, just to up and leave.

Mae Lee: I too have been coming to these meetings for a long time. I would like to see a vote on a plan and move on. I believe that there will be time for this group to advocate on other issues.

Trever Holland: I asked a simple question and in response a member announced that he would leave the group.

Michael Levine: Please spread the word about the next meeting.

Trever Holland: The outreach is simple, but it wasn't done. I'm simply asking for outreach.

Michael levine: Can we have a table of what we have voted for and what is left to be done?

Antony Wong: Next meeting we will try to vote on subdistricts B, D, E1 and E2. CAPZ will still be discussing C later on this month.

Anj Chaudhry: We also agreed to discuss the area north of Grand Street. There are recommendations in the plan for that area.

Antony Wong: We will also discuss whether to take a position on the Extell development.

#### Community announcements

Bob Lee: The city will be voting on a comprehensive arts funding plan. I can send you information. I am not clear whether the arts community will benefit.

Antony Wong: Thank you. Meeting adjourned, 6:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Rob Hollander, Secretary