

DRAFT

Chinatown Working Group Full Meeting

Date/Time: Monday, October 4, 2010 - 6pm

Location: 191-193 Canal Street, 2nd Floor; American Legion Post 1291
Minutes

Attendees:

265/275 Cherry Street Tenants Association (Ricky Leong), 318 Restaurant Workers Union (Chen), AALDEF (Bethany Li), American Legion (Gabe Mui), Asian American Arts Centre (Robert Lee), Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (Mitchell Grubler), CAAAV (Esther Wang), Chatham Towers (Jeanie Chin, Anna Goldstein, Toby Turckel), Chinatown Business & Property Owners (Douglas Woodward), Chinatown Partnership (Wellington Chen, Charles Lai), Chinatown Small Business Association (Song Mei Rong), Chinatown Tenants Union (Mu Jin Huang, Wan Jin Li, Wen Dao Yu, Kun Jiao Wang, Zhi Qin Zheng, Weiman Zhu), Chinatown Youth Initiatives (Elisa Espiritu), Chinese Progressive Association (Mae Lee), Chinese Staff & Workers Association (Wendy Cheung, Josephine Lee, Subvinu), Community Board 1 (Michael Levine), Community Board 2 (Ed Ma, Jim Solomon, Antony Wong), Community Board 3 (John Leo, Gigi Li), David Gentile, Department of City Planning (Reza Tehranifar), Friends of Columbus Park (Paul Gong), Good Old Lower East Side (Damaris Reyes), GOP Downtown (Jimmy Chue), Immigrant Social Services (Lillian Moy), Indochina Sino American Community Center (Peter Cheng), Lin Sing Association (Jimmy Chue), Lin Ze Xu Foundation (Suk Lam), Lo-Down (Ed Litvak), Lower East Side BID (Tim Laughlin), Lower East Side Residents for Responsible Development (Rob Hollander), M'Finda Kalunga Community Garden (K Webster), National Mobilization Against Sweatshops (Michael Lalan), NoHo Manhattan (Zella Jones), Nuyorican Poets Café (Susan L. Yung), Office of Comptroller John Liu (Jaspar Li), Office of Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer (Jen Hong), Office of Manhattan District Attorney (Teresa Ye), Office of State Assemblymember Sheldon Silver (Karen He), Office of State Senator Daniel Squadron (Lily Fan), P.S. 130M Parents Association (John Lo), Seward Park Shareholders Group (Debbie Finston), Two Bridges Neighborhood Council (Victor Papa), Sing Tao Daily News (Bonnie Li), United Fukinese American Association (Jimmy Cheng), World Journal (Luna Liu)

Co-Chair Report: (Jim Solomon) Asks for a show of hands who is coming for the first time to the meeting. Jim Solomon announces his last time as co-chair for the meetings. Asks for introductions from everyone around the table, and for everyone to sign in. Report back from Steering Committee meeting and discussed agenda: a) Asks Doug to present calendar and timeline. b) Question of whether we should move process forward for committee proposal where there are consensus. c) Question whether there should be further discussion to change governance structure. d) Question of co-chairs; currently one from community board and another from community; Jim and Thomas elected in September two years ago; asked to extend their term; term supposed to be over on this date. Jim announces he will not run for co-chair another time. Shares letter.

I. Presentation from Doug Woodward about CWG Timeline: (Please refer to distributed timeline)

(Doug Woodward): Lays out timeline for 197-A plan to be followed by 197-C plan. Says most all have been modified and City has not followed any 197C plan as other communities have laid

out. First task is reorganization of CWG leadership. Outreach to groups in the community four month duration. Some tasks overlap and will be done at the same time. Time for review by consultants and questions whether \$150,000 enough for the scope. RFP responses due June 2011; will go through series of review and interviews; members will get a chance to review different planners.

(Jim Solomon): Selection process undecided by the CWG.

(Doug Woodward): Plan to start planner working at beginning of 2012. Timeframe similar to that of SPURA and LES/ EV Rezoning Plan. Will work with DCP when submitted. After submitted will take another 14 months for ULURP and certification process; required by City. Estimated Summer 2014. Reason why 197-A not move forward is because of lack of funding.

(Ed Ma): Asks what is the difference between 197-A and 197-C and why not just adopt the 197-C because 197-A takes too long. States 197-C only takes one year to complete.

(Doug): Remarks needs plan from 197-A to do 197-C.

(Jim): 197-A more comprehensive plan beyond zoning. Says to put on the website as a projected timeline and not the decisive timeline.

(Esther Wang): Year's time for selection process of planner seems too long.

(Councilmember Margaret Chin): Praises CWG members for devoting time to this, and work that has already been done. Commits to working with leadership on recommendations that can be implemented right away, e.g. parks, rats, resources to local schools, better living conditions for tenants.

II. Moving forward with Certain Committees: (Jim) says 80% of what CWG has done has brought consensus; even though many disagreements. Parks, Immigration, Education, proposals are ready to go. Proposes to present their plans and to vote on it in November. Asks what needs to be done to make them presentable to the whole group. Question is should proposed final preliminary action plan be voted by full CWG. Asks for volunteers to translate the plans to Spanish and Chinese.

(Someone, not sure who) volunteers to translate the documents.

(K Webster) offers to get someone to translate the Education Plan, in two weeks.

(Josephine Lee): Recommends Councilmember Chin's office provide some funds for general translation services, for particularly general meetings and document translations.

(Jim Solomon): Asks if there are discretionary funding for this service.

(Councilmember Chin): Says will try.

(Bethany Li): Proposes to have another town hall or some other outreach to let broader community know what these final plans are for these three committees.

(Jim Solomon): Says proposals already presented in town hall meeting in February. Asks if Bethany is proposing town hall.

(Mae Lee): Says immigration services proposal has been through two town hall meetings. Says many people already has reviewed it and needs to be implemented. Asks if something missing

from the plan.

(Esther Wang): Asks what does it mean to be a final plan that CWG endorses.

(Jim Solomon): Says now plans have only been endorsed by working teams and not by full group. Working team meetings opened to everyone, people should go.

(Rob Hollander): Says discussion premature because people should read the plans first, and see what is needed with the plans.

(Michael Lalan): Reporting back to the community what plans are will be more accountable. Modifications because CWG has grown in membership, in diversity. Town hall meeting would be more accessible and different than working team meetings.

(Mae Lee): Proposes to go to different city agencies to start presenting the plans.

(Bethany Li) Talks about other forms besides town hall to report back to the larger community

III. Should there be a subcommittee established to talk about changing the governance structure of the CWG?

(Michael Lalan): Need to recognize progress and shortcomings of CWG- still need to be more accountable to the community. Share work amongst different members of the community and CWG. Says clear from Jim's speech last week that his workload is tremendous and needs to be shared and democratized amongst the CWG members.

(Bethany Li): Distributes document summarizing recent discussions on how to democratize the leadership body and to divide the different areas into different committees; e.g. fundraising, administrative, outreach, etc.

(Victor Papa): Summarizes recent past discussions. Says organization is evolving and that it is clear that different areas of work should be shared and separated into separate committees; in agreement between those in discussion. Says community board should be represented in leadership of CWG, take more interest in it as co-sponsors, and recognize they are not the only planning body.

(Jeanie Chin): Says that CWG is expanding in area and in membership and that the leadership body and organizational structure needs to reflect expanding membership.

(Jan Lee): Says option A and B not a good framework and that many people are still not able to weigh into the discussions and that structure needs to be changed.

(Ed Ma): Says option number 1 is more reasonable because steering committee not functioning well, no consistency, no consolidation, leads to not much confidence in the group.

(Josephine Lee): Says disagreed with having to take this vote because of course structure needs to change. Says CSWA represents thousands of working families and residents in community; but only has one vote. Developer only has one vote but only represents his own profit interests. Says anyone who knows community knows that CWG voting structure not representative of the community.

(Wendy Cheung): Says working low-income people make up the majority of the community. Says grew up in public housing in the LES and has been in the community for many years, but

doesn't recognize many of the faces around the table. Need to change governance structure to be more democratic.

(Rob Hollander): Asks to clarify what it is members are voting on. Understand not a proposal to change the structure, and that vote only for whether or not to have subcommittee to improve the structure.

(Jim Solomon): Thinks that every process can be better and agree that structure should be changed. But says have concerns about process being used recently not consistent with principles of CWG. Says process by invitation only and many people do not know. Says asked Danny if he could post the meeting on the website publicly, but Danny said no.

(Michael Lalan): Says Jim is lying and not being fair about statement. Had asked for names of people who wanted to join.

(Mei Rong Song): Says is a small business owner and heads a coalition of small business owners; has already been to several meetings but doesn't have the right to vote. Says has come here several times but feel doesn't care about her opinions.

(Elisa Espiritu): Says had called her but had a language barrier.

(Jimmy Cheng): This is called the Chinatown Working Group. Should have Chinese translator. Co-chairs should live and work in Chinatown. Shouldn't come from uptown or upstate to come here and be the co-chair. Says does not feel happy with the CWG. Has to speak the Chinese language. Represents 40,000 Fujianese residents in Chinatown. How many percent of new immigrants here is here in this room. Language is a problem. No one can come because cannot understand. Taking all the power away from them. This is called the Chinatown Working Group- why are there no Chinese. Not called the Downtown Working Group. Not right for these people to represent me. Co-chairs must live and work and come from Chinatown.

(Damaris Reyes): Clear from the past few weeks that we need a new structure and that there needs to be something new. Problem is we don't know what that new thing is. Says that it should not be up for consideration but that there should be a subcommittee for new structure. Says current proposals doesn't say clearly how to change the structure and deal with representation and digital divide.

(Peter Cheng): Says no reason why Jim, who is not Chinese, cannot represent us.

(Esther Wang): Need to be more inclusive. How can majority of people in the community be more represented here in CWG through concrete vote.

People vote for subcommittee to change governance structure.

IV. Propose electing acting co-chairs for three-month term: Everyone agrees.

V. Nominations for acting chairs:

Community board representative nominations:
John Leo nominates Gigi Li and she accepts.
Jim Solomon nominates Ed Ma, but he declines.

Community organization representative nominations:

Jeanie Chin nominates Bethany Li and she accepts.

K Webster nominates Mae Lee and she accepts.

Ed Ma nominates Paul Gong, but he declines.

Elisa Espiritu nominates K Webster but she declines.

Doug Woodward nominates Elisa Espiritu, but she declines.

Robert Lee nominates Rob Hollander, but declines, not a voting member.

John Leo nominates Victor Papa but he declines.

Doug Woodward nominates Dameris Reyes she accepts and then withdraws.

Jim asks whether there should be one or two rounds of votes. 13 for two rounds, 9 for one, 4 abstain. 26 ballots total.

(Esther Wang): Suggests people sign up today to participate in the subcommittee.

(Community announcements)

(Zella Jones): Proposes publish statement about co-chairs in the press. There is disagreement because people have not had time to look at it and agree on content.

Vote: 28 members participate in voting: 23 vote for Gigi Li and 5 abstain. 18 for Mae Lee, 10 for Bethany Li.