

Land Use and Waterfront Committee

Minutes of Meeting Wednesday, January 4, 2017
Bellevue Hospital Center, 462 First Ave,
New York, NY 10010, The Rose Room

Attending: Committee Members: Ellen Imbimbo (Vice Chair), Adam Hartke, Kathleen Kelly, Terrence O’Neal, Lawrence Scheyer, Ann Seligman, Lou Sepersky, Letty Simon, Kathy Thompson, John Petit West.

CB6 Board Members: Rick Eggers (CB 6 Chair), Sandra McKee, Claude L. Winfield, Jesus Perez (CB 6 District Manager),

Reps: Howie Levine (CM Garodnick),

Not attending: Fred Arcaro, James Collins, Colleen Curtis, Ray Knowles, Keith Powers, Sandro Sherrod (Chair)

The meeting, chaired by Vice Chair Ellen Imbimbo, was called to order at 7:15 PM.

Attorney Michael Nacmais, representing Crunch Fitness, made a presentation on BSA app, #117-07-BZ for 22 E. 34th St. – Extension of term of special permit allowing Physical Culture establishment within portions of existing 21 story mixed use building. He advised that the current extension was granted in 2007, and in 2012 the BSA signed-off on Crunch Fitness becoming the new operator of the fitness facility in 2011. He advised that there have not been any complaints, and the proposed new operating hours should have no noise impact. The new hours are: M-Th: 5AM – 11PM; F: 5AM –10PM; Sa: 7AM – 9PM; Su 8AM – 9PM. A resolution of no objection to the requested extension passed unanimously, but (according to CB 6’s LU&W committee policy, approved by **CB6**) it is for only 5 years (instead of the requested 10 year extension).

The Vote was: 10 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstaining; 0 Not Entitled to Vote.

Nobody appeared in connection with BSA # 7-97-BZ (575 Lexington Ave.), so the Committee voted unanimously to lay it over to next month to afford the applicant a second opportunity to make its case.

The Vote was: 10 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstaining; 0 Not Entitled to Vote.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a detailed discussion related to the East Midtown Zoning Plan which the committee was advised was Certified by the Department of City Planning for ULURP the previous day. CB 6 Chair Eggers explained that the deadline for CB 6 to comment on the plan can be met if the Board passes a resolution at its March 8, 2017 meeting.

Lawrence Scheyer and Lou Sepersky reminded the committee that the recently opened Q train extension which hooks up with the existing downtown subway on the West Side at 7th Ave. & 57th St. does not address the crucial need to fund and construct the full-build Second Avenue Subway passing through CB 6 on Second Ave. to deal with the greater density East Side rezoning and LIRR East Side Access is going to bring to CB 6 – with no serious increase in transit capacity. Second Ave. Subway was supposed to have replaced the Second and Third Avenue Els, which were demolished decades ago. Therefore, Mr. Scheyer and Mr. Sepersky recommended to the committee that any re-zoning ought not to go into effect until at least such time construction of Phase 3, and maybe Phase 4, (the “T” line) of the Second Ave. Subway are well underway.

Terrence O’Neil exhibited slides with maps and photos showing where projected and potential development sites had been identified. He also mentioned that in an alternative included in the plan, the easterly boundary offered had shifted somewhat west and leaves out some of the area East of 3rd Ave. He and John Petit West led a discussion. Concern was raised about the impact on CB 6 of the plan’s provisions for distant transfers of landmarks’ air rights: it benefits landmarks located mostly in CB 5, which is already densely occupied by offices, and it transfers the burdens caused by a dramatic extra boost in building heights to much less dense CB 6, which is far more residential in character. The methodology was discussed by which the FAR right next to a residential area could increase, with “bonus” FAR added for transfer of development rights, and FAR could also be added by contributing

money toward enumerated subway station improvements in yellow and red “transit impact zones”. On top of all that, Mr. West pointed out the possibility for adding another 3 FAR by obtaining a special permit for open and enclosed public concourses (section 81-645), an arrangement which did not work out well on Water St. in Lower Manhattan. Kathy Thompson pointed out that the real estate market is hot and developable sites are being built up at a rapid pace under the current zoning rules – even as rezoning was being discussed. It was agreed that the goals developed by the multi-board task force in response to Mayor Bloomberg’s rezoning proposal ought to be revisited, and they could be applicable here: e.g., homogeneous office development is less desirable than a vibrant mix of uses.

Next month the Land Use Committees of both CB 5 and CB 6 will meet on the same night, so CB 6 Chair Eggers assured the committee that he is maintaining communications with CB 5 and the thoughts of the respective committees are being shared. Vice Chair Imbimbo encouraged everyone to read and become familiar with all of the materials which had just been released, and advised Bob Tuttle from Department of City Planning will be attending the LU&W committee meeting in February.

Old Business: the committee remains in the dark about intentions of NYC Economic Development Corporation with respect to any renewal of the expired lease for the 34th St. heliport. They have not sent a representative for many months. What is known is that there is supposed to be a ULURP application, and it has been delayed.

There was no other old or new business.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45. Minutes prepared by Lawrence Scheyer