

Community Board 12
Washington Heights & Inwood
530 West 166th Street New York NY 10032
Phone 212-568-8500 Fax 212-740-8197
Website: www.nyc.gov/mcb12

Business Development Committee (BDC)
Minutes for February 6th 2018

Present: Dr. Jason E. Compton, Chair; Eleazer Bueno, Asst. Chair; Sara Fisher, Rud Morales, Bruce Robertson, Public Member

Absent: Glennis Aquino

1. Welcome / Opening Remarks

Meeting called to order at 7:05PM by Dr. Jason E. Compton.

Dr. Jason E. Compton presided as Chair and Eleazer Bueno, Asst. Chair was taking minutes.

Public and Committee members were welcomed

This meeting is a regular meeting of the Business Development Committee but it is being combined with the Public Hearing: Do you know how the Inwood Rezoning Proposal will affect your local business? The chair reminded attendees that the purpose of this public hearing was to draft comments for the Inwood Rezoning Proposal. The comments that we are drafting are specific to that which affects local businesses.

2. New Business

Small Business Job Survival Act (File #0402-2014)

There was a presentation by David Eisenbach on the Small Business Survival Act.

The act was first past 30 years ago. There was a claim that it is the “most vetted piece of legislation” and under the current administration it has not even has a public hearing.

A few key points were mentioned:

- In actuality Landlords only offer/extend lease renewals to small businesses when they're given cash under the table. The predictability on getting renewals are subjected to the amount dispensed to Landlords. The bill will stop that.
- If the agreement is no made with Landlord, the process can a) Go thru an arbitration process where one is selected. b) Go thru a mitigation process when an arbitrator chooses the best available option for the tenant.
- Property Taxes should not be passed along to tenants. This act will help prevent it.

This presentation was followed by a Question & Answer section. Below is a listing of a few questions.

How does the law protect small businesses? *Using arbitration, mitigation and not having to pay cash for a renewal.*

How do BIDs help? *This process is perceived as difficult considering a large portion is landlord controlled.*

How does a BID help the rezoning? *Current structure is weak and is conducive to corruption.*
Were BIDs created to help city services? *This is a different city but originally that was the premise. Gale Brewer's office has a mitigation plan.*

Inwood Rezoning Proposal

There were four different presentations. The powerpoints and written presentations have been submitted to the Community 12 office and can be reviewed in their entirety. Below are a few key points mentioned.

EDC presentation

Conversation regarding rezoning began in 2003 while Bloomberg was the mayor.
This presentation will only highlight briefly the current rezoning not done since 1961, the new housing needs fulfilled, the new commercial square footage and the parks improvement.
The rezoning proposal is in part an economic development plan.

SBS presentation

Workforce will help facilitate work transitions to displaced employees hence the workshops designed for new hires and employers.
Pro Bono lawyers are provided for small businesses to help them negotiate leases.
Finance help offered current businesses needs
Help with facilitating city bureaucracy navigation
Help with facilitation government assistance

Neighborhood 360

3 year grant
Report on study made on Inwood corridor
Current sanitation services provided
Workshops engagement
Building merchant association

ISBC presentation

There was a presentation by a local business owner.
The importance of local businesses to our community was addressed
Concerns regarding tax/rent increases and potential displacement

Q&A

Liz Ritter 1. Impact on small businesses? City has not defined plans as of yet. City responded that they are in the process of scoping out all small businesses in Inwood. New rezoning will allow commercial leases on 2nd floors not currently allowed.

Rud Morales. 2. There hasn't been any real outreach except for Gale Brewer's office. No follow up on emails.

Maria Luna. 3. Pro Bono lawyers are provided. What has the SBS grant been used for? 181 BID partnered. Real concerns as to how the grant is being spent.

Zulay Mateo. ISBC Presentation

Represented Bodega Associations and 9th ave businesses.
Jobs are important to keep houses.

Phil Simpson. ISBC

Examples of LIC and Williamsburg to show damaging impact on small businesses
Existing leases of commercial tenants are designed to the benefit of landlords
After rezoning is passed property taxes will increase and it will be passed along to tenants

Demolition clauses on leases are a big concern
EDC is spending almost 100,000 explaining away project
Scope of work does not include small businesses protection
EDC only estimates a handful of about 100 jobs will be lost
Page 2 of city's proposal on the socioeconomic potential impact is cited

Sara Fisher. Comment. The environmental potential impact is not completed.
Jennifer Chang. Dr. Veterinarian. Testimony Over 10 years. Valuable to our community. Hires locally. Existence is challenged. Landlords are incentivized not to renew.

3. Old Business

Dyckman Corridor Bike-Lane

Due to time constraints, this issue was tabled until our next meeting.

Status Updates

- Collaborations with the Washington Heights Chamber of Commerce
- Gender Pay Equality Workshop
- Street Vendor Modernization Act
- GWB Terminal Market-Mercado

Due to time constraints, this issue was tabled until our next meeting.

4. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Eli Bueno, Asst. Chair. The motion was seconded by Sarah Fisher.

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Business Development Committee (BDC)
 Request to be included within the Land Use Committee Resolution

After the Public Hearing on February 6, 2018, the Business Development Committee drafted the following requests to be included in the Land Use Resolution on the Inwood Rezoning Proposal.

Statement from Dr. Jason E. Compton Chair, Business Development Committee:

“While we understand that this proposal is an economic development plan for our community, we feel that existing business owners are at risk. We ask that the follow (6) points be included in any rezoning proposal within our community.”

| Request | Reasoning |
|--|---|
| Small Business Jobs Survival Act be in place before any rezoning plan | <i>This will increase lease holders negotiating power when attempting to renew a lease after the rezoning is in effect</i> |
| Offer a 3-5 year tax abatement for new/existing property owners | <i>Taxes inevitably will be passed on to lease holders. This 3-5 year period will give lease holders an opportunity to determine if the effects of the rezoning with help or hurt future business potential</i> |
| Tax incentives for landlords that renew affordable leases to existing lease holder prior to the rezoning | <i>Encourage landlords to renew leases to existing business owners</i> |
| Restrictions on franchisees leasing within the rezoning section | <i>This will support local businesses</i> |
| No new commercial leases issued greater than 3000ft | <i>This will discourage big box stores</i> |
| New / Increased taxes on landlords that exercise demolition or construction clauses | <i>A protection for lease holders that will be displaced secondary to demolition or construction clauses</i> |