

Gilsenan, Michael

From: Kelpin, Gerry [NYCDEP/QUEENS/GERALDINEK]
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2002 2:13 PM
To: Miele, Joel A. Sr.; Sturcken, Charles
Cc: Avaltroni, Robert; Gilsenan, Michael
Subject: Meeting of the Residents Advisory Council to the Lower Manhattan Dev. Corp.

As per you request, I attended the above meeting that was held on 2/12/02. For some reason, they did not have us as confirmed but were pleased that a representative of DEP was able to be at the meeting.

A broad goal of the Residents Advisory Council is to identify for the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) the needs of the lower Manhattan residents since 9/11. Some of the items that would be of value to LMDC would be to identify short and long term needs and set some priorities among these items. LMDC has received some amount of funding to be used to satisfy the identified needs and address and hopefully resolve issues. The role of the ex-officio members was not discussed nor how they might interface with the residential members or the LMDC itself. I suspect that will be made clearer in time.

There was a quick discussion of the structure of the LMDC, the staff that had been brought on board to date, etc.

The discussion then turned to the tenants issues, which I'll try to summarize as bullets.

- What can be done to attract people back to the area, both residents that have not returned and new folks?

A big issue is air quality, both outdoor and indoor. In terms of outdoor air, for the agencies, it may be working on getting a more precise and understandable message out. The issues for indoor air are the same as those raised at the Senate hearing, various meetings, public forums, etc. The idea for needing to test for such things as fiberglass, metals, asbestos and hazardous air pollutants in every apartment to be able to dislodge the stigma that the apartments have been cleaned and are "safe" was supported by the representatives of this group. The DOH representative was asked to provide some more detailed information about the ATSDR/DOH indoor air study. The request was made to try to get at how many of the apartments that were professionally cleaned were found to be in the group that were reported as having fiberglass and/or asbestos present.

Another issue is transportation and access. In terms of making people comfortable about the area, the problem is the preception that you can't get there - check points, no mass transit. The people that are there have the problem with very poor access with streets closed and getting from east to west, across west street, around the site on the west side, etc. Bus service has been relocated which is another problem for the residents. This issue also includes parking or the lack of it for visitors and residents.

Recreation space - play spaces for kids, park space has been lost. There were a couple of suggestions on how to return some of that or provide temporary space. If you can't offer services to people, why would they think about coming back or moving into this community.

Improve the appearance of the area - While streets are being washed, sidewalks need to be maintained/cleaned on a regular basis. Replace the Jersey barriers with planters was another example of a more aesthic way of closing a street, which is used elsewhere in the City.

- Clean up needs and funding issues - There was a discussion about different experiences with building and apartment clean ups. What was covered by insurance companies; what FEMA paid for; other sources of funds and problems with cleaning. A big issues was the clean up of walls, floors vs. personal items as well as furniture, rugs, drapes, etc and how that difference is covered by insurance or mostly not. Related issue - phone service is still out in a lot of Chinatown and lower east side.

- Increasing capacity of Con Ed substation on South St - issues with EMF; safety of residents and security concerns - request that Con Ed address all of these. Con Ed is to put in a shield between common wall of substation and residential building to address EMF concern. Issue is timing - station needs to be on-line for the summer but shield may not be in place at start-up.

- Parking - issue for lower east side as well. Mayor's Office indicated that permits were being cut back and vehicles were being towed, PD or otherwise.

-Construction Activities - seems streets are dug up, paved and then opened up again. Repaving is not done well even if it is final. Need coordinated approach to street work. Mention of the appointment of a Construction Activities Czar - no name was mentioned, or anything else. There was a comment that the infrastructure meeting was not providing this coordination.

- Financial Aid/Incentives - some ideas were mentioned - rent abatement; real estate tax adjustment.

The final discussion was on identifying short and long term goals. Discussion was made to table long term goal discussion to next meeting but general idea would be to develop recommendations for the redevelopment of lower Manhattan, as defined by LMDC charge. The short term goals -

- satisfy people's concerns about air quality and be able to demonstrate that the air is "good"/"safe"
- address transportation and access issues
- create recreation space by taking advantage of some opportunities that were identified
- address Con Ed substation issues.

The next meeting of this group is scheduled for March 14, same time. Location could change.

I am sending a copy of the agenda and the information on participants by interoffice mail.