

PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

MEETING MINUTES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE September 24, 2020

PRESENT:

Nick Fazio, Julia Gomez, Katherine Broihier, Camelia Tepelus, Laura Spalter – Chair,

Margaret Donato, Daris Jackson,

Dave Gellman Robert Heisler, Daniel Ranells, Kimberly Lyons, Pierina Sanchez, Moses

Esema, Marianna Miller – D’Alessandro, William Beltran, Linda Manning – KRVC, Shari

Hall – KRVC, Clarence Stanley- SBCD, Harry Dannenberg – SCORE.

1. Introductions by all present were made and Chairman Nick Fazio thanked the members and guests for their attendance.

2. Call to order at 7:05

3. Approval of minutes of June 30, 2020 meeting. Minutes approved by acclamation.

4. COVID19 Merchant impact report and discussion: Katherine Broihier of Kingsbridge BID presented and discussion was held. The reported 17% vacancy rate within the BID is better than earlier projections, and there have been 7 new start-up business ventures since the pandemic began. Many businesses are still falling behind on rents. It was

reported that NY City Council is considering legislation that would give retail merchants outdoor vending options comparable to the Open Restaurants program. Ms. Broihier also brought up issues associated with the lack of enforcement of illegal vending and public safety concerns that impact economic development.

Pierina Sanchez asked if there were any merchant complaints about superfluous Con Ed utility charges. No complaints were reported at this time.

5. Mr. Clarence Stanley, Executive Director of the Small Business Development Center at Lehman College, presented on the programs and resources available to our constituent entrepreneurs. Please contact sbdc.bronx@lehman.cuny.edu, (718) 960-8806, sbdc.bronx@lehman.cuny.edu for more information.

Mr. Harry Dannenberg, SCORE Director of Community Development for the Bronx, NY, presented on small business mentoring resources and educational programs conducted by SCORE. Mr. Dannenberg can be reached at harry.dannenberg@scorevolunteer.org, NewYorkCity.SCORE.Org.

Mr. Stanley and Mr. Dannenberg are interested in increasing the profiles of the SBDC and SCORE in Community District 08. Resident Kimberly Lyons suggested developing and distributing a fact sheet/ flier to be distributed through various means.

6. Report on Open Streets for Restaurants on Johnson Ave by resident Robert Heisler, Linda Manning and Shari Hall of KRVC. The vast majority of businesses have reported

increases in sales attributed to the initiative. Linda Manning of KRVC asserted that the psychological and social impact on the community has been extremely helpful during the crisis. There will be more KRVC-sponsored Open Street events on Johnson Ave: 10/18, 10/25, and 10/31. Contact KRVCD.C.ORG or the board office for more details.

Chair Laura Spalter indicated that the board office will be in contact with DSNY to encourage Sunday pick-ups to coincide with Open Street events and complement KRVC's efforts.

7. Graffiti Removal Update: Camelia Tepelus pointed out that there was action taken to by Andy Cohen's office to clean up graffiti in the Knolls Crescent area, but that more graffiti appeared since the clean up efforts. The board office and CM Rodriguez's office are working together on addressing the issue in Marble Hill. The committee will keep the board office informed of any new issues with graffiti throughout the district.

8. Report of collaboration with Manhattan College and CUNY Hunter:

Nick Fazio reported that there are students interested in using our district as a subject of study for research projects in their respective public policy programs. The committee is working with professors from each institution to help design projects that will be beneficial to the community and to the education of the students.

9. Outstanding Business:

Merchant Award - The Economic Development Committee was in favor of moving forward with the Merchant Award and will meet with the board office to review the current nominations and discuss next steps.

City Bench Program – Discussion was held regarding potential locations. Daniel Ranells suggested collaborating with the Aging Committee to discuss ideas for locations.

10. New Business:

EDC and SBS Budget Consultations were discussed. The board office is engaging EDC to see if a representative will attend a future committee meeting. Nick Fazio thanked SBS representative Janet Peguero for her help over the summer.

Nick Fazio reiterated points made by Executive Director Stanley that access to capital is the greatest challenge impacting our local small businesses and start-ups. The committee will try to get an expert on this topic to present at a future meeting.

Camelia Tepelus congratulated Kingsbridge BID for being recognized as having “the lowest change in inactive storefronts post-COVID.” Congrats to Katherine and Kingsbridge BID!

Adjournment: Nick Fazio thanked everyone for their participation and attendance. The next meeting will be held on 10/22.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:37 PM