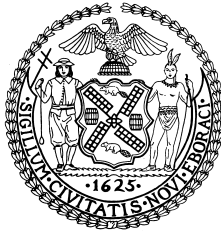


Alida Camp  
Chair

Will Brightbill  
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620  
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)  
www.cb8m.com - Website  
info@cb8m.com - E-Mail

**The City of New York  
Community Board 8 Manhattan  
Small Business Committee  
Community Board 8 Office  
505 Park Avenue, Suite 620  
Monday, January 6, 2020 at 6:30 PM**

**MINUTES:**

**Community Board Members (Present):** Paul Higgins, Michael Mellamphy, Alida Camp, Sarah Chu, Billy Freeland, Barry Schneider

**Community Board Public Members (Present):** Jennifer Gao

**1a. Discussion on Neighborhood Loading Zone program and its impact on Community business.**

An initiative through the DOT that would dedicate curbside access for deliveries and e-commerce such as “Uber” pick-ups. The city has enacted a pilot program since 2017 in Chelsea and The Upper Westside.

It has been geared to residential blocks as opposed to more commercial corridors. It has been problematic for residents in terms of street parking. As for business owners it has been an additional headache on top of the expansion of bus lanes and bicycle lanes.

The program has been proposed along Lexington Avenue where parking space is already at a minimum. Lexington Avenue is already swamped between traffic and bus lanes, which negatively impacts small business along that corridor.

City agencies, such as the DOT, don’t reach out to local business to get their opinion on proposals like this and how they may affect their bottom line.

More and more we are losing parking spaces around the neighborhood. At the same time we are experiencing more and more double parking along many of our side streets. Much of this is because of contractors who need to park on the street while they are working. Matt Bauer of the Madison Avenue BID reports that 18 months ago DOT removed loading zones across the city in favor of 3 hour “parking” zones. This has also led to more and more local business being “blocked”, where customers cannot see the storefronts from the street. It negatively impacts their trade.

The DOT does not have a time frame for the proposed program. It is focused primarily on residential issues and concerns but it affects local business owners as it

1. Blocks Business
2. May cause fewer turnovers

3. Creates less parking for business owners, staff and customers
4. Leaves less space for deliveries for local business

The New York Times has reported that it would negatively impact restaurants.

Some solutions to the problem of parking come from what other cities have done. Boston has a residential parking permit program. In the beginning it was quite an expensive program for most residents and was proposed in an economically disproportionate manner. It has become a much more feasible program since its inception.

Congestion pricing may help the situation or cause more havoc around the city.

Staggering delivery hours for bigger businesses around the city based on neighborhood could also alleviate congestion.

It was also mentioned in the meeting that the city is actively trying to eliminate parking garages.

**1b. Local Business networking event** our public member Cortney Bond graciously hosted our first ever Local business mixer at her establishment, UES on 2<sup>nd</sup> avenue between 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> street. The event took place on December 16<sup>th</sup>. It brought together 68 local business owners as well as a number of local residents. It was a wonderful opportunity for local business owners to meet, chat and exchange experiences and ideas as well as taking a well-deserved celebratory break in the midst of the holiday season. It was an opportunity for a diverse group of business owners to connect and build relationships as well as a chance for the small business committee to meet many of our local entrepreneurs who otherwise may not have the time to make it to monthly meetings. It proved to be a great way to spread the word about local business as well as CB8 and how we can be an ally to our local business owners.

Social media and emailing by Cortney, her staff and The Small Business Committee proved most effective in spreading the word. Jennifer Gao, public member of the committee and Cortney's staff also canvassed many business owners to let them know and encouraged them to attend. We are hopeful that this is something that could become a regular event at various businesses throughout our neighborhood. Not only did this one prove to be beneficial in a networking sense. It also showcased a very important and vibrant local business in our community.

Some notes on the event. Timing can be a problem for some business owners. Maybe some future events could be a breakfast or lunch type of event.

Also perhaps these events can be promoted on the CB8 website to reach a wider audience. The idea of setting up a Facebook page for Local CB8 business has also been put forward. Although there are questions about its feasibility it proves to be a very popular idea.

Perhaps planning these events around various "holiday" times of the year could be another way to make sure people take notice and attend.

Madison Avenue BID has been hosting monthly merchant network events since 2004. Business owners have used these events in the past to offer discounts and sell to each other while also showcasing their business. They usually get people to attend by sending out email notifications. They would be willing to share their email lists with the committee.

Another idea put forward was a small business welcome package to be sent to all business and new business in the neighborhood.

**1c 2020 Small Business Committee calendar.** We have a number of items that we want to get on our upcoming agenda for 2020.

- Public safety issues. We are hopeful of a meeting with representatives of the 19<sup>th</sup> precinct to discuss a number of issues from the surge in fake bills and how business owners should deal with them to all issues of safety.
- Future Local business networking event. Building on the success of December's event we hope to reach more and more local business owners and bring them into the conversations that affect our local community.
- Impact of minimum wage on local business.
- What local residents, as well as city agencies, can do to support local business.
- Organizing workshops for local business owners. Financial education!

Sarah Chu asked if there was a way to create a non-profit online food delivery service to compete with the likes of Grub hub, Seamless and Ubereats, which are hurting many of our local business. This led to question what other cities around the country might be doing to help their local business thrive.

**1d Vacant storefront project** Our fellows have completed their journey around the neighborhood (59<sup>th</sup> street to 96<sup>th</sup> between East end and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue) and although data was still being compiled at the time of our meeting they were able to confirm 363 vacancies as of the end of 2019.

**Other business.** Public member Jennifer Gao asked how could she make sure her store and signage is still seen from the street when construction workers put up scaffolding and begin construction work around her business?

Some members of CB8 are concerned that Target opening a second store in our neighborhood may have a detrimental effect on local business. They have asked for suggestions as to what business corridors Target should come take a look at before moving in to see what types of business they may be impacting.

Paul Higgins and Michael Mellamphy  
Co-Chairs, Small Business Committee