

Russell Squire
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
Arts Committee and
Small Business Committee Meeting
Monday, March 8, 2021 – 6:30 PM
This meeting was conducted via Zoom**

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee chair to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

MINUTES:

CB8 Members Present: Gayle Baron, Lori Bores, Loraine Brown, Alida Camp, Anthony Cohn, Elizabeth Rose Daly, Billy Freeland, Wilma Johnson, Valerie Mason, Margaret Price, Barry Schneider, Russell Squire

Item 1: Presentation by Barbara Anderson, a co-founder of Art on the Ave

We began by noting the Committee’s purpose of bringing more art to the Upper East Side.

After the introduction, Barbara Anderson, a co-creator of Art on the Ave spoke about the creation, execution, and results of the project. Vacant storefronts and occupied stores became a gallery to showcase local artist’s visual art, in window displays with the theme of healing. As pedestrians walked by, they were able to view the art and, when interested, listen to the artists’ comments by scanning the QR code. The successful project brought more pedestrians to Columbus Avenue, familiarized the public with the storefronts for those interested in leasing, and generated sales of approximately \$54,000 of art, which had ranged in price from \$600-\$2000. Other geographical areas have reached out to Art on the Ave to create displays.

Barbara outlined the difficulties in convincing landlords to allow use of their spaces, the need to partner with a BID to provide insurance and funding (Art on the Ave has become a 501(c)(3) corporation, the enthusiasm of some stores to house displays, the need to set it up aesthetically like a gallery, the agreement to go into a space only twice, and the need to keep the art on display for the duration of the project.

The East Midtown Partnership expressed interest in working with Art on the Ave.

Board members expressed interest in developing a similar approach to working with artists including local artists, top student artists, artists who reside in NYCHA.

The Committee will establish a working group to bring art displays to vacant storefronts on the Upper East Side.

RESOLUTION

After discussion, the committee unanimously passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS art brings joy, ideas, beauty and other positive impact to communities; and,

WHEREAS Community District 8 has many vacant storefronts along each of its commercial corridors;
and,

WHEREAS the number of vacant storefronts has been increasing, with the COVID-19 crisis leading to more vacancies; and,

WHEREAS vacant storefronts are a blight on the streets, leading the sense of community to diminish, and pedestrians to have safety concerns; and,

WHEREAS Community District 8 has local artists, student artists and artists residing in NYCHA Housing; and,

WHEREAS artists in Community District 8 residents and other pedestrians would benefit from increased public exposure; and,

WHEREAS small businesses and landlords would benefit from art displays in vacant storefronts; and,

WHEREAS artists are small businesses; and,

WHEREAS, in 2019, the NYS Comptroller's study assessed the financial impact of the arts as \$70 billion, demonstrating that the arts are a critical economic engine; and,

WHEREAS thriving small businesses and artists would improve the quality-of-life for those in Community District 8; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that Community Board 8:

1. Supports bringing Art on the Ave to the Upper East Side, and Roosevelt Island including working with local BIDS and Neighborhood Associations;
2. Will facilitate relationships between the BIDS/NAs and Art on the Ave, and other individuals/entities as appropriate and necessary;
3. Shall endeavor to create gallery or other exhibits for local artists, student artists, and NYCHA artists using the Art on the Ave, or another, model.

VOTE: 9-0-0

In Favor: Gayle Baron, Lori Bores, Alida Camp, Brian Correia, Billy Freeland, Valerie Mason, Barry Schneider, Lorraine Brown, Peggy Price, Russell Squire

Item 2: Preliminary discussion of performance art in public

The applicability of the Mayor's Open Culture Program to our community. We have no streets eligible to participate in the program. However, James Cagney Place was suggested as a venue for outdoor performances. The Committee will pursue James Cagney Place as well as parks as sites for performing arts.

Item 3: New Business

Alida Camp, Chair, Arts Committee

Alida Camp, Valerie Mason, Co-Chairs, Small Business Committee