

# Office Hours with the Commissioner Queens, Broadway Library

May 20, 2017

## INTRODUCTION

Eddie Torres:

- Welcome

CM Jimmy Van Bramer:

- Welcome. Importance of this meeting.

Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl:

- Plan process
- What We Heard presentation

## DISCUSSION

### Information Sharing

- IDNYC card
- Voucher for children in schools to get into cultural institutions and events. Assigned as schoolwork so that children must attend and bring their parents.
- Commissioner: IDNYC works and has increased the number of memberships from various sectors of the city.
  
- Art in transit system
- Use MTA to advertise events
- Commissioner: We need to bring art out into the streets. Ex: festivals.
  
- Fliers in libraries to advertise cultural events can't be posted if the event is not free.
- CM: Libraries don't have the capacity to post all fliers.
- Alternative ways to use libraries to advertise cultural events.
- Partnership between DCLA and libraries to spread the word through websites.
- In the libraries there could be a place where people input their information and then everyone has access to it.
- Libraries are great community spaces, they could be hubs for artists.
  
- Renovation of park did not consult with the community for design input. Need a place to post fliers to advertise park activities. Need power outlet for festival.
- CM: There was an engagement strategy for the park renovation. Suggestion boxes and visioning sessions. Further renovations might include bulletin board and power outlet.
  
- Commissioner: An app is a good option for a system of information sharing.
  
- LinkNYC shows what is going on in the neighborhood.

### Health of the Cultural Sector

- DCLA grants should stipulate that artist be paid a living wage
- Commissioner: Figure out a way so that this doesn't limit small organizations. Maybe percentage of budget.
  
- GIG and smaller organization divide. How can the organizations collaborate? The CIGs only call on special occasions and ask smaller organizations to collaborate for free. It is unfair.
- Commissioner: one of the proposals is board sharing. He has talked to several boards and people are excited.

- Small organizations need to collaborate. Smaller groups can model how groups should collaborate to create community. Collaborate for exposure and to share resources.
- Is there a way for the commercial and the nonprofit world to interact? They can support each other.
- Commissioner: DCLA can only give grants to 501C3s. but the Borough Arts Councils have more freedom. Also Mayors office of Media and Entertainment.
- DCLA should coordinate convening of neighborhood artists/cultural workers. Get people together.
- Commissioner: The agency cannot do so much programming because it would require much more staff.
- Commissioner: we could use office hours with the commissioner to get groups together. Ex. One day in queens with artistic directors.

#### **Affordability/Neighborhood Character**

- Rezoning processes. Cultural organizations scared they'll loose their space.
- Commissioner: work with EDC, HPD, DCP in rezoning processes.
- Commissioner: Spaceworks model.
- Commissioner: There is a recommendation on neighborhood character, that addresses these issues.
- Gentrification. Regulation to incentivize developers to keep arts spaces in the neighborhood.
- CM: Art has to be a part of any rezoning process.

#### **Art in Public Space**

- Programming in public spaces, open to everybody, usually attracts the same crowd as cultural institutions. Outreach to attract a more diverse crowd. Audience development.
- Transportation is an issue. Example in Socrates park with bike valet. How did the plan take this into consideration?
- Commissioner: there should be events for everyone to participate in their neighborhoods. Programming should be spread out so that everyone has access to it.
- Commissioner: Make events bike friendly as a way to solve transportation issues.

#### **Community Boards**

- CBs can create data bases to share. Survey cultural organizations in each community board. Get CBs more involved.
- Commissioner: Cultural Ambassadors could be connected to community boards and council members.
- CBs are resources that should be used, but people don't know about them. People should know more about what a good resource they are for artists and cultural organizations.
- Commissioner: Agree. Also, get to know your council member.
- CBs can get people in touch with council members

#### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Commissioner and CM Van Bramer

## COMMENTS ON WHAT WE HEARD PROPOSALS

### Equity

2.5. Encourage and support increased language access, including ASL, for cultural programming and funding opportunities to reach broader, more inclusive audiences.

- Provide information in multiple languages and formats. [for whom? Audiences]
- Increase languages represented on DCLA and re-grant panels. [for whom? Organizations]
- Support translation-related expenses for DCLA grantees. [for whom? Audiences]

[This proposal is organization and audience facing – where / how do artists fit in? Explicitly acknowledge artists.]

### Social & Economic Impact

2.2. Continue support for the City and other stakeholders' global promotion of Broadway, museums, galleries, theaters, and cultural attractions in every borough.

[Call out music alongside theaters]

[Link up with Libraries more constructively – have catalogue of arts & culture groups at each library for residents to discover more about their own neighborhoods. Incorporate proposal into NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER]

### Citywide Coordination

1.4. Hold meet-and-greet sessions for cultural organizations and City agencies to facilitate collaboration and share information on upcoming opportunities.

[Use office hours format to respond to community needs, not only interests of DCLA or general meet-and-greet sessions, for example – meet in Queens and bring together all the Artistic Directors of theaters in Queens or all Artistic Directors of theaters of color in Queens.]

2.3. **ADDITION** Support opportunities for cultural organizations to convene together to share information and learn from each other how to be best supported by City services.

### Health of the Cultural Sector

2.1. Encourage cooperative organizational models and partnerships, including shared administrative tools, co-working spaces, and shared board members.

[Expand this recommendation – include support of more collaborative resources across sectors such as IT services, marketing and social media training, digital tools and resources training, audience development, and artists' services (headshots).]

2.4. Work closely with the MOME to promote literary arts and the publishing industry including independent bookstores.

[Expand recommendation to include independent theater, music, and recording spaces. Independent spaces within these industries do not always fall under DIY and these spaces need to be equitably supported.]

2.7. **ADDITION** Support collaboration between for- and non-profit cultural sectors through the Arts Councils.

### Art & Culture in Public Space

2.2. **ADDITION** Actively encourage and support diverse programming in neighborhood parks.

[Offer guidance for connection to council members, community boards, and other local stakeholders who can tap into local politics.]

[Athens Square Park as a precedent for capital process for parks/plazas to be public spaces well-equipped for arts and cultural programming, e.g. outlets, lights, sound, etc.]

### **Neighborhood Character**

1.3. **ADDITION** Encourage collaboration between local arts councils, community boards, and City Council to support existing local arts and cultural organizations to thrive in place.

2.4 **ADDITION** Encourage capital investments at local arts and cultural sites to facilitate local community awareness and participation.

- Consider formal and informal landmark signage, bike friendly events, and bulletin boards for local businesses marketing in parks, plazas, and other community spaces.

3.1 Incorporate local arts and culture organizations and priorities in neighborhood planning and re-zoning.

- **Incentivize developers to build community spaces and/or artist studios.**

3.3 **ADDITION** Support and prioritize existing neighborhood arts and cultural organizations to thrive in place.