

MINUTES

Further consideration of a proposal by Urban Recovery House to establish a 25-30 bed methadone-free rehabilitation facility for self-pay clientele at 110 Beard Street (between Richards/Van Brunt Streets).

Benjamin Solotaire, co-chair of the Youth/Human Services/Education called the meeting to order. He introduced Urban Recovery House (URH) and described their business as a private, methadone-free, for-profit rehab facility with 28-day treatment stays. He explained that this joint committee meeting with EWCDH was scheduled because additional questions were raised at the last general board meeting on February 12, 2014.

URH does not need Community Board approval, but is required by OASAS to inform the community. They came to speak with YHSE Committee Chairs, Benjamin Solotaire and Paige Bellenbaum over two months ago, and then presented at two community meetings prior to tonight's joint committee meeting.

Rick Luftglass explained that there are concerns regarding the use of a manufacturing-zoned property to be used for a non-manufacturing business and the impact that this will have within the waterfront manufacturing area. The Economic Development committee is interested in obtaining more information about the business and development plans for Urban Recovery House, who is leasing the space from the owner/developer of the property.

Michael Mosberg of URH said they have agreed to come to every community meeting even though they do not require CB6 approval. He confirmed that the OASAS application requires that they let the community know, but URH stated that they are also interested in working with the community and being fully part of the neighborhood.

Mr. Mosberg stated that he lives within a mile of Red Hook, and that through a personal experience he discovered that there is not a single pay-for-services drug rehab in NYC, only non-profit businesses. If someone wants to pay for their rehabilitation, they must leave New York and he feels that there is a market for a business to provide this type of service locally.

Questions were taken:

1. In answer to the question of whether the development makes use of the **Community Facility** bonus for additional space, the answer was that they are taking no bonus and it is not a designated community facility. The development is in an M1-2, it is being represented as an as-of-right project and does not require a variance.
2. In answer to the question of why a **Hotel designation** was issued by the DOB, Ms. Mosberg stated that they met with the DOB official (a name was given) who was not sure how to qualify the use, but decided that since it is part medical and part hotel it fell into two use groups. The DOB decided to go with Hotel designation
 - a. The question was asked if the reason for the 28-day treatment stay was because 29 days is considered to be the maximum stay for a transient hotel by the DOB. The answer was that 28 days is a standard treatment length.

3. URH was asked why this **location**, where else they had looked, for how long, and why a Red Hook manufacturing zone was chosen. Mr. Mosberg stated that he was told that this use type can only be placed in a manufacturing zone and he spent two years looking at locations, all of which were along the Brooklyn waterfront M zones (Red Hook, Gowanus, Williamsburg). He was asked why only in this part of Brooklyn, why not further out where property values and zoning codes might be more flexible. Mr. Mosberg stated that he lives nearby and he would like his business nearby.
4. A request was made for greater detail about the **development plan** and the size of the facility. The partner, Cal Nathan stated that it is situated on a 100,000 SF lot, on which 200,000 SF can be built, and that the URH is only building a total of 20,000 SF. Mr. Mosberg explained further that the building will be five stories, with a footprint of 5000 SF. There will be four habitable floors raised above a ground floor of parking to account for potential future flooding. A. Krasnow noted that 110 Beard Street is listed as a 58,500 SF lot. Mr. Nathan clarified that the developer owns more than just Lot 16, and can combine his lots for a total of 100,000 SF. Therefore, the 20,000 SF building is completely as-of-right.
5. Mr. Mosberg was asked by the committee to learn more about the **building and business plans**. URH has gone before the DOB and OASAS with their proposal, so must be more information available on which to judge the merits of the project. Mr. Nathan gave the name of the consultant who prepared the drawings and the application, and then stated that the picture of the building was in a powerpoint that had been shown at an earlier meeting. He displayed the proposed rendering of the building on his tablet. The building is a solid, handsome 5-story brick structure with large loft-like windows and architectural detailing resembling turn of the century industrial buildings. There was no information given about specifications that an intensive drug-rehab facility might require and how that might impact the size or requirements of the building.
 - a. In response to the question about the rent that the URH will be charged and how that might inflate other rents in M1 zone, given that the M1 zone and IBZ status are intended to protect land for industrial use, Mr. Mosberg stated that he did not have to share his business plan.
6. Question was asked regarding how many **jobs** the business will generate, and how many will be available to local residents. Mr. Mosberg began to describe the types of jobs and number of positions, and said that certainly they would draw from the neighborhood whenever they can, most readily for the unskilled jobs.
7. Concern was expressed about the **long-term plans** of the owner. Mr. Mosberg was asked how long a lease URH expects to sign. URH has no assurance about the length of the lease and has no agreement in place with the owner. Committee member suggested that URH is only a tenant, and that this substantial building conveys the look of a loft residential building or hotel, therefore, the concern about the long-term plans of the owner.
8. There was a comment that the business is being represented as as-of-right, and that the line of questioning should stay on the business of URH. Will URH consider doing outpatient services in the future if it is successful? Mr. Mosberg replied that it is only in-patient now, and will remain in-patient.

Non CB6 members were invited to ask questions:

9. **Jobs:** What guarantee is there of jobs for the community. The response above was restated. (*how, or is, this included in the benefits agreement?*)

10. **Quality of life:** “How can you be sure that people from URH will not come out and go into the projects for drugs? We spent 40 years getting the drugs out of the neighborhood. When those patients get out they will come right over looking for drugs in the projects.” Mr. Mosberg answered that patients have no money, wallets, credit cards or phones while they are in the facility. They would have nothing to go buy drugs with. When they are released they will be driven out of the neighborhood to a hotel or back to their home.
11. **Outreach:** Question was raised about outreach to the neighborhood for this and previous community meetings. Frances Brown of Red Hook East said that she was not notified and did not see any posters. Mr. Carter said that he had contacted Ms. Marshall (RHWest) and someone from RHEast. URH have met with Red Hook Civic Association, Red Hook Initiative, Council Member Menchaca’s office and CB6.
12. **Community Benefits?** Mr. Mosberg stated that URH will have open classes for the community, educational courses and free assessments and referrals. Other community benefits are being worked out with CB6, RHI, and Council member’s office.
13. Will there be an **Advisory Committee?** Mr. Mosberg stated that there will be an advisory committee that includes community members. It was discussed that the inclusion of community members on this committee will help to keep the Community Benefits agreement active and used.

Discussion continued after the meeting, without URH present. There was agreement on the main issues, but disagreement on which issue was more critical: the Urban Recovery House – a rental business, or whether the owner/developer is using the URH as part of a longer range plan. A discussion ensued regarding the lack of criteria or community plan by which to make a decision on land use. With IKEA and Fairway on either side, why shouldn’t a small building/business like this be built? The 197A plan seemed to support this development, but it is almost 20 years old, and in the current climate, should there be a real effort to maintain an industrial waterfront. Or with the BASIS School and URH, should the uses be allowed to change. It was agreed that the Economic & Waterfront Development should start to look more pro-actively about how CB6 would like to see the waterfront evolve.

In support of the Urban Recovery House: URH seems to honestly care about including the neighborhood and have come each time they were asked even though they do not need CB6 approval. It was commented that the URH team seems a little new to this, and that this may be their first business venture. Mr. Mosberg seems to have given a lot of effort to the Community Benefit agreement. The free assessments and referrals is a huge benefit and he may not even realize how much he offered. Comments were made that a healthy business is better than no business on the site, and that the business presents itself as being independent without needing any financial subsidies.

Against support of the land use: There is tremendous concern about the owner’s long-term plan. Mr. Nathan mentioned that the owner has acquired more than the just the 110 Beard St. lot. There is distrust among EWCDH committee members about the larger motives of the development. It was felt that more clarification is needed regarding how a 20,000 SF building gets built for one potential tenant, who has no track record in the business that he is providing, and without an agreement in place between them.

A decision was made that the Y/HS/E Committee, who support the URH as a viable business for Red Hook, and the EWCDH Committee, who do not wish to support the land owner’s development plan without more information, will present separate motions.

**Y/HS/E made a motion to support the Urban Recovery House
EWCDH will prepare a motion identifying the concerns that they would like to have on record**

The Motion put forth by the YHSE Committee is as follows:

The Youth/Human Services/Education committee supports the efforts of Urban Recovery House, a private pay, methadone free, substance abuse treatment center serving 25-30 patients to open a facility at 110 Beard St in Red Hook with the conditions stipulated in, but not limited to, the Community Benefits Agreement, attached, with the addition of the formation of a Community Advisory Board to be in place prior to the opening of the facility.

There was not a quorum, but the motion passed 6 in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstentions.

Presentation and discussion with representative for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene on Take Care New York: A Policy Agenda to Improve the Health of All New Yorkers.

In addition to the URH the committee heard a presentation from Heidi Exline from the DOHMH regarding their Take Care New York: A policy agenda to improve the health of all New Yorkers program.

Developed in 2004 with new goals laid out every four years this is a program to enlist communities around NY to help improve the health of all New Yorkers. They have over 600 community partners, including schools, CBOs, and faith based organizations, working on ten priority areas: Tobacco free living, Healthy Eating, Active living, Heart Health, HIV Prevention, Mental Health Promotion, Alcohol and Substance abuse reduction, Cancer prevention, Healthy outdoor and indoor air, and Quality Preventative Care.

They have many ways for community engagement including of course a website which will be launching in spring 2014 that anyone can register at and track their own progress in over 70 indicators.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes were submitted by Ariel Krasnow.