

Sunset Park Task Force
Monday, October 16, 2023, from 4:00-6:00 pm

ATTENDEES

Task Force Members

Andrew Gustavson, Turnstile Tours
Carlos Calzadilla, State Senator Gounardes
Councilmember Alexa Aviles
David Bolotsky, Uncommon Goods
Daniel Veliz, OBT
David Estrada, Sunset Park BID
Damaris Gonzalez, DG Tax
Dina Rabiner, Brooklyn Chamber of
Commerce
Edie Sharp, Resident
Edward Cerna, CM Aviles
Elizabeth Yeampierre, UPROSE
Emily Riquelme Beaufort, NYC DOT
Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar, AM Mitaynes
Esther Sosa, Resident
Evelyn Ortiz, OBT
Jeremy Laufer, Community Board 7
John Santore, Resident
Katie Walsh, Community Board 7 & Resident
Mayra Molina, Rep. Goldman
Nebraska Hernández, UPROSE

Pat Whelan, Sahadi Fine Foods
Rebecca Berger, NYU Langone
Sebastian Baez, UPROSE
Steve Mei, CPC
Steve Leone, Industrial Carting

Members of Co-Convening Organizations

Brady Meixell, SBIDC
Christine Paglialunga, NYCEDC
Isabelle Bui, NYCEDC
Jacqueline Ting, NYCEDC
Jesse Solomon, SBIDC
Kathleen Chan, NYCEDC
Max Taffet, NYCEDC
Nse Esema, NYCEDC
Stacey Julius, NYCEDC
Tara Das, NYCEDC

General Public

Hassaan Chaudhary
Hunter Armstrong

MEETING NOTES

Part I: Welcome, Introductions

- Presenter: Christine Paglialunga
- Introductions are made, followed by an overview of the meeting agenda.

Part II: NYCEDC Green Economy Overview

- Presenters: Nse Esema, Christine Paglialunga
- The New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) is currently crafting a report about the green economy in New York City. This report will be released in the coming months and focuses on the economic impact of eight core green economy

sectors in NYC: energy, buildings, transportation, waste, consumer products, finance, resilience infrastructure, and policy advocacy. These sectors not only create jobs but also promote human health benefits. The environmental justice piece will be explored in a separate report.

- NYCEDC's Sunset Park portfolio is an innovative ecosystem for industrial and advanced manufacturing, providing opportunities for green jobs and revitalizing neglected older buildings to meet contemporary sustainability and resiliency standards. NYCEDC recently initiated the Pilots at BAT program to further support emerging climate innovations and new climate tech businesses.

Select Comments from Q&A:

- The Pilots at BAT program strongly encourages local businesses to participate, with a specific focus on promoting involvement from M/WBE businesses and companies with a climate-related focus. These pilot opportunities are offered at no cost, meaning companies do not receive financial support for their pilot projects. Eligible companies are required to have a market-ready product.
- The most valuable support that the Task Force can provide to the pilot program is directing businesses and entrepreneurs toward participation, especially those whose values align with the program's goals. This guidance ensures that the program attracts companies that are not only capable but also share a commitment to the broader objectives of the initiative.
- It's important to recognize that while certain businesses may promote green products, their overall processes might not align with environmentally friendly practices. To establish a level playing field and ensure a comprehensive commitment to sustainability, it is crucial to prioritize non-toxic processes throughout the entire business operation. This approach goes beyond showcasing eco-friendly products and emphasizes the need for a holistic, environmentally conscious framework.

Part III: OBT Programs and Services

- Presenters: Evelyn Ortiz, Daniel Veliz
- OBT, or Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, is driven by a mission to break the cycle of poverty through education and skills training. Annually, they extend their services to over 1,000 individuals, specifically targeting two primary groups: young adults aged 17-24 who are out of school and out of work, and unemployed or underemployed adults. OBT has two locations in Sunset Park, with other locations in Bushwick and Jamaica.
- OBT is currently looking to expand in the manufacturing industry and develop partnerships with another organizations.

Select Comments from Q&A:

- Ensuring a prominent presence in the community has been crucial for citywide job recruitment. OBT actively participates in community events, engage with organizations providing construction training, and establish partnerships with schools. There is a growing interest in establishing a partnership between OBT and maritime schools, and part of the envisioned collaboration involves resetting this partnership.
- OBT can provide data on the origins of trainees, workers, and students in the future. As classes increasingly transition to remote formats, they anticipate a shift in data for this.
- In the context of NYCEDC's focus on climate innovation and its connection to STEM, there is a concerted effort between NYCEDC and the Mayor's Office to integrate more of these elements into classroom activities and DOE programming.
- While students who gravitate towards STEM are likely to fare well, those on the margins facing life challenges often feel a deep sense of injustice and are more likely to engage in youth organizing. The key is to reach them during middle school when they're still enthusiastic, as it becomes increasingly challenging to connect with them once they reach high school.

Part IV: Asset Related Updates

- Presenters: Christine Paglialunga, Brady Meixell
- Key updates about NYCEDC assets and the Workforce1 Center were shared.

Select Comments from Q&A:

- For Pier 6, the community expressed a desire for a cultural pier featuring local small businesses selling affordable food and offering various activities that would support the park. In the design, there needs to be an emphasis on incorporating greenway/blueway elements and honoring those aspects. It's crucial that the offerings at Pier 6 remain accessible and not be priced like those at the High Line or Brooklyn Bridge Park.
- NYCEDC has initiated discussions with community stakeholders for Pier 6. These conversations serve as a starting point, aiming to formulate a well thought out and informed engagement plan that fosters productive discussions with the broader community. NYCEDC can provide a list of organizations that it has engaged with to date.
- NYCEDC conducts periodic surveys of Brooklyn Army Terminal tenants, previously on an annual basis, but the frequency declined during COVID due to resource constraints. The last survey was conducted just over a year ago, where NYCEDC requested information including the number of employees from all tenants. Collecting such data proves challenging as businesses aren't obligated to provide it. To address this, NYCEDC is exploring the possibility of making it a lease requirement, although renegotiating the 120 existing leases poses difficulties. Despite these challenges, obtaining this information is essential, and NYCEDC can share the data that we currently have.

The meeting adjourned at 6:24 pm.