

Sunset Park Task Force
Tuesday June 10th, from 5:30pm - 7:30 pm

ATTENDEES

Task Force Members

1. Julio Pena III, Community Board 7
2. Edie Sharp, Sunset Park Resident
3. Edward Cerna, Councilmember Alexa Avilés' Office
4. Pat Whelan, Sahadi's Fine Foods
5. Grace Gribbon, Equinor
6. David Estrada, Sunset Park 5th Avenue BID
7. Ahmad Perez, UPROSE
8. Kat Trujillo, UPROSE
9. Jessica Bravo, US Representative Dan Goldman's Office
10. Edie Sharp, Sunset Park Resident
11. Esther Sosa, Sunset Park Resident
12. John Santore, Sunset Park Resident
13. Edward Cerna, Councilmember Alexa Avilés' Office
14. David Bolotsky, Uncommon Goods
15. Carlos Calzadilla, State Senator Andrew Gouardes' Office

Members of Co-Convening Organizations

1. Gregory Vayngurt, NYCEDC
2. Jesse Solomon, SBIDC
3. Brady Meixell, SBIDC
4. Jennifer Brown, NYCEDC
5. Hazel Balaban, NYCED
6. Stacy Julius, NYCEDC
7. Gustavo Moran, NYCEDC
8. Gabe Lefferts, NYCEDC
9. Mary Benedetto, NYCEDC
10. Alex Jacoby, NYCEDC
11. Julia Zita, NYCEDC
12. Mary Beth Williamson, NYCEDC
13. Mikelle Adgate, NYCEDC
14. Nse Esema, NYCEDC
15. Nicole Spina, NYCEDC
16. Romulo Garza, NYCEDC
17. Sam Jung, NYCEDC
18. Nick Huffsmith, NYCEDC
19. Anita Chopra, NYCEDC

MEETING NOTES

Part I: Welcome, Introductions (Gregory)

- First, we'll discuss EDC Assets, then the CM will join halfway through. If you have questions on EDC Assets, ask them right after rather than towards the end.
- John: I object to the agenda. The organization hasn't met in 10 months. I assume there was a reason for this, but it hasn't been shared. The agenda hasn't been shared until now. If EDC doesn't want to talk about it, it's not on the agenda. The Task Force has operated this way for years. Organizations that represent the public interest shouldn't be operating this way. I ask all electeds to change the way the Task Force is functioning, starting with this. I have not heard anything from the CM since the last meeting.

Part II: Sunset Park Asset Updates

- Economic Mobility Network
 - NYCEDC is investing \$1.4M in the Economic Mobility Network. SBIDC was selected to lead. Partners are BWI, Chinese American Planning Council, OBT, Center for Family Life

- Jesse: We're excited about these partnerships, which aim to unite all area workforce development organizations. We're eager to onboard more workforce and employer partners. We'll continue discussions in this space and with the Community Board once the work is underway. The goal is to collaborate on existing training programs and create new ones.
- Julio: What's the timeline for the contract?
- Mary Beth: This is a four-year commitment.
- Edward: Will you be collecting data?
- Jesse: A significant part of both the RFP and our proposal involved integrated data collection across partners. This will help us better track Sunset Park residents' job placements and training participation. While some of us have collaborated before, this initiative provides a truly holistic opportunity. Data collection is definitely part of the plan.
- Esther: Is the proposal available for public review?
- Mary Beth: This was a competitive public procurement process, and proposals are typically not made public due to procurement regulations. However, we are committed to regularly reporting on progress with SBIDC as the initiative advances. We will track metrics and implemented projects.
- John: Expanding on Esther's point, the concept of data collection seems complex. Information collected by EDC/SBS, such as detailed W1C data and BAT surveys, isn't always shared publicly. We've heard in the past that mandating disclosure is difficult and that efforts are made to avoid creating red tape for businesses. How much data do you anticipate collecting, and how readily available will it be? Will we truly know who is getting jobs, where they are placed, their earnings, and benefits? Are these initiatives benefiting local people?
- Mary Beth: W1C data is governed by SBS. However, for this specific initiative and the contract with SBIDC, we are approaching data comprehensively. Their proposal included participant demographics, from zip codes to racial demographics. It also aims to track outcomes beyond initial participation, such as average starting wages. We are still finalizing what is feasible, but we are committed to tracking as much as possible. This data will inform how we use evidence to redesign and modify program direction.
- Jesse: We are currently in contract negotiations, so nothing is final. However, the core idea is to establish a network of providers across the community. While these providers also offer programs outside of Sunset Park, this specific initiative will focus on this community. At SBIDC, we are experienced in data tracking, despite numerous challenges with public procurement and contracts that often limit data sharing. We are committed to developing a system for data sharing among organizations and for reporting back to the public. We welcome your input as we strive to effectively communicate our impact. We're also exploring collaboration with those experienced in similar data systems.
- SBMT (Nick)

- Empire Wind 1: Federal "stop work" order for offshore construction was lifted last month, allowing it to resume. Onshore construction continued throughout the stop work period. Transmission facilities were approved in February.
- Pier 39 South: Tie rods and support beams are complete.
- Shoreline Protection: Platforms and shoreline protection are underway. Wall repairs are being conducted between 31st and 33rd Streets.
- Crane Pad & Paving: Concrete pours for the crane pad are ongoing, and asphalt paving began in May.
- Building Exterior: Outer wall installation is progressing, and underground utilities for the structure are complete.
- MADE Campus (Gabe)
 - Waverly Neer, VP for Bush Terminal, is currently on vacation.
 - Phase 1 Completion (Building A & Site Work): The initial investment phase for Building A and surrounding site work is complete, including interior and exterior finishes. Leasing is underway for three sections:
 - Floors 3-5: Traditional leases for fabrication, design, media, R&D, green tech, and maritime tech. The first tenant is a woodworker, with term sheets for an A/D design specialist and a 3D design studio.
 - Public-Facing Businesses: This arm includes craft workshops, workforce training, or showrooms for fabrication companies.
 - Ground Floor: An operator will maintain a cafe, lobby, and event space.
 - Open Space: Five acres of surrounding open space are substantially complete with plantings.
 - Campus Access: 43rd Street will open this summer, provide full campus access while maintain safe access to the park.
 - Phase 2 (Building C): Design and interior renovation are underway.
 - Pier 6: Final design has been approved by PDC; construction begins this fall.
 - Cafe Building: Procurement for a food/beverage operator is in progress to serve tenants, park visitors, and pier users.
 - Programs: Plans are in place to implement recreational boating and environmental education programs.
 - Community Events & Classes: Mixteca has begun hosting OSHA training. Raising Health will hold a food event and will conduct five-day-a-week English as a Second Language classes, along with OBT classes from July through next summer. In December, a holiday market featured dance performances, and the Music Collective hosted one-day choirs in the annex space.
- BAT (Hazel)
 - Community Solar: Installation began last week, with solar panel deliveries commencing on the 22nd.
 - Site Enhancements: Significant investments have been made in branding, furniture, landscaping renovations, and a new exhibit.

- Website: A new website with an events calendar is now live and includes information on Pier 4 closures.
- Tenant Updates:
 - Button Down Garment: Expanded into a 33% larger space.
 - OKO: Engaged in food production and sauce packet manufacturing.
 - Re:Dish: A circular economy initiative focused on eliminating single-use plastics by delivering, retrieving, and cleaning reusable containers for institutions.
 - NYES: Recently expanded and continues to grow, employing over 400 people, with a significant portion of its workforce local to Sunset Park.
 - GS Project Studio: Exploring expansion.
 - BAT Clay Studio: A new ceramic studio and exhibition space.
- Pier 4 (Megha)
 - Dates of pier closures – 6/21, 7/18, 7/19, 8/29, 8/30, 9/19, 9/29
 - Events at west lot and ferry plaza throughout summer
 - Vessel Departures (Gustavo)
 - DockNYC operator at pier 4. NYPD vessel operators. Met to discuss verticals to ensure public safety and better streamline activities.
 - No vessel departures on event days.
- BATWorks (Nse)
 - BATWorks, formerly known as the Climate Innovation Hub, is a pivotal initiative stemming from last year's Green Economy Action Plan. A primary goal of this plan is to accelerate innovation in climate technology, leading to the development of this hub at BAT. An RFP for the space, released in March, allocated up to \$100 million for its design and fit-out. The RFP sought a consortium of operators to manage the facility and deliver programming.
 - The selected consortium is led by LACI (LA Cleantech Incubator), with key partners including the Cambridge Innovation Center (CIC), NYU Urban Future Lab, CUNY, and Perkins and Will. Workforce development will be a collaborative effort, with SBIDC, BWI, OBT, and Solar1 working closely with LACI to create programming.
 - This 200,000-square-foot facility is designed to empower emerging market innovators, small-to-medium companies, and growing companies to develop and rapidly prototype products. It will feature both work and convening spaces, and crucially, will offer workforce training for green economy jobs, with a specific focus on the Sunset Park and surrounding community.
 - LA Cleantech Incubator
 - Nonprofit clean tech innovator founded by City of LA
 - Helped 475 startups raise \$1B in funding, generated \$350M in revenue, and created over 2,626 jobs, deployed \$25M in green tech pilots
 - Will oversee pilots, host events, support regulatory TA, build equitable workforce pathways via train the trainer models
 - "Software" for the hub

- Cambridge Innovation Center
 - “Hardware” for the hub
 - Space operator and global leader in innovation companies
 - 11,000 companies at 1.5M sf in 10 cities
 - Hyper focused and specialized hubs.
 - Member companies have raised nearly \$40B in venture capital
 - In Providence, offshore wind hub
- The ground floor of BATWorks will be dedicated to business development, incubation, prototyping, and workforce programming, with LACI directly operating its programs there. The seventh and eighth floors will provide coworking spaces and labs for startups and innovation companies that pay a membership fee for dedicated space. Priority areas for the hub include energy, building decarbonization, and green transportation and logistics.
- Short term
 - 10+ pilots per year
 - Convenings
 - Plans for start-up incubation and workforce training
- Longer-term
 - Incubation 10-15 companies/year
 - Targeted facilities delivered
- Fall 2025 – begin hub activities at temp facility
- 2028: BATWorks Opening

Part III: Q&A

- Ahmad: We challenge the information presented today, believing this is a "Trojan horse" for gentrification and an "over-glorified WeWork." These organizations lack community presence. CIC (Cambridge Innovation Center) has a documented history of driving real estate market prices up, as seen in Philadelphia. The EDC must embed protections for Sunset Park businesses and residents, prioritizing their needs. This appears to be a rubber-stamping exercise for the EDC.
- Nse: I acknowledge your points and feedback. We've been in conversation. The EDC's stance remains that CIC's Philadelphia location occupies 6 floors of a 14-story high-rise in University City, an area that has experienced decades of institution-led growth from Penn and Drexel. We are closely monitoring developments in Sunset Park and are happy to share details. As part of this, we are investing in BAT to stimulate local job creation. Notably, 62% of employees at EDC-owned assets in Sunset Park reside in Brooklyn. The EDC does not engage in residential development, but we are listening to community concerns.
- Ahmad: We appreciate those points, but this sounds like the EDC disagreeing with CIC's own statements, as they openly pride themselves on increasing real estate values.
- Julio: Echoing UPROSE, there are many concerns about an outside organization with no community experience operating BATWorks. However, I am encouraged by the involvement of local community partners. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity on the

waterfront, so we must honor the community's context and history while recognizing the need to improve our working waterfront. Was there an RFP for LACI and CIC, or a cost associated with LACI being the operator?

- Nse: A competitive RFP was issued in Q1 last year, eliciting 8 responses. The LACI consortium includes local partners. We had several finalists, but one strong finalist, led by Yale (which UPROSE was part of), unfortunately withdrew. The \$100 million of city money is for facility upgrades, not for consortium partners; it's exclusively capital dollars, ensuring the value remains with the facility. LACI will have an operating agreement outlining their services, including pilot program operation, events, workforce development, and incubation programming.
- Edie: Where in Building A will BATWorks be located?
- Nse: It will occupy 200,000 square feet at the south end of Building A.
- Edie: How does this interact with other investments?
- Nse: We view BATWorks as a key component of the broader Climate Collaborative, a formation that also encompasses Governor's Island and the Navy Yard.
- Edie: So, it's all part of a strategic plan to integrate these resources. Is it connected to the Economic Mobility Network (EMN)?
- Jesse: It's a separate initiative, though some partners overlap. There is no workforce funding for the LACI consortium; our involvement is in-kind, focusing on resource sharing and commitment. The Economic Mobility Network, which begins this summer, does provide us with resources.
- Esther: It sounds like you're still negotiating the scope of work with LACI. We'd love to hear about the metrics you're requesting from them.
- Nse: The contract with LACI regarding workforce and incubation programming will not be finalized until 2028. We are developing a milestone-based contract, where subsequent steps are unlocked based on initial deliverables. LACI is responsible for a pilot operation plan that will include target sectors for companies and their origins. Detailed plans will codify clear metrics for delivery. We are ensuring that even as operating plans are articulated, they include how we will work with and recruit from the Sunset Park community.
- Ahmad: Given that CIC is responsible for day-to-day management, have they provided information on the cost of space? Are there any incentives for Sunset Park-based companies? CIC has brought in companies like Johnson and Johnson to other facilities they've operated.
- Nse: We are reviewing pro formas for projected income and how that impacts potential fees. We don't have a definitive answer yet. In existing facilities CIC operates, such as in Philadelphia, they offer programs with various types of discounted or free space for specific local companies.
- John: Regarding LACI and CIC's specific track record, how can we quantify their impacts elsewhere? Who received the jobs, and what types of jobs has LACI produced in the past?
- Nse: Their RFP submissions, which span hundreds of pages, articulate their impact in Los Angeles. We've conducted extensive vetting and spoken with many of their local partners.

- John: I don't want to be solely critical, as much of this is impressive. Was anyone involved in crafting these RFPs, as it seems many EDC RFPs originate solely from the EDC? Were any elected officials or organizations involved in its creation?
- Nse: For this RFP, you're correct that it's been years in the making. The Green Economy Action Plan involved a 1.5-2-year process of extensive stakeholder consultation to define NYC's green economy vision and identify priority areas. Separately, we consulted with numerous international, domestic, and NYC-based organizations involved in climate innovation. We recognized early on the need for a unique approach to our objectives. We articulated a high-level vision and invited interested entities to submit a one-page summary outlining their interest and potential contributions. We received 120 submissions, which we shared with the broader ecosystem to aid future consortium formation. We also briefed elected officials prior to releasing the RFP and as part of the Green Economy Plan.
- John: You mentioned 62% of jobs at Sunset Park assets are held by Brooklyn residents.
- Jennifer: We will issue an annual report on Sunset Park assets. Let's discuss what you see in that report and what you'd like to see in the future. That figure comes from the tenant survey of assets in that report.
- Esther: You mentioned extensive initial consultation for the RFP. Now that the RFP is out and you're negotiating the contract, is there an opportunity for consultation with local groups to inform the metrics collected?
- Nse: Yes, absolutely. We consider this current conversation part of that ongoing dialogue, and we are having other discussions. After this, I'll review the contract to ensure this input is incorporated. This isn't just about sharing information; it's about incorporating feedback.
- Kat: Did elected officials receive a blind briefing on the RFP responses?
- Nse: They did not. As a reminder, we had a couple of strong finalists, and one unfortunately withdrew.
- Edie: Could you elaborate on NYU's role in this?
- Nse: NYU and CUNY are involved in workforce and incubation, with some details still being fleshed out. NYU is contributing to their K-12 program in partnership with NYC public schools. NYU Urban Future Lab currently operates an incubation space at MetroTech and seeks partnerships to support additional companies that come through their pipeline. CUNY has discussed their iCore program, which supports existing CUNY students who want to commercialize innovations into startups. We also have ongoing conversations with the Building Performance Lab.
- Edward: Regarding the MADE campus cafe RFP for vendors, what outreach efforts are being made to ensure local vendors are considered? What has been the EDC's outreach for programming the space, particularly to organizations like CPC, Mixteca, and smaller CBOs upland?
- Jennifer: We've discussed programming with CB7. The building only became occupiable in December. We are not exclusive regarding partnerships and welcome conversations. The RFP hasn't been issued yet; the RFEI for food/beverage is the first step and was

shared with CB7. The RFP is coming, and we would appreciate any help in disseminating it to local operators.

- Gabe: We aim to craft a comprehensive outreach strategy. We're currently focusing more on the legal structure of the outcome. We will lean on David, the Chamber, and other newsletters to publicize the opportunity, spreading it as widely as possible.
- Edward: What is the current tenancy rate at BAT?
- Nse: It fluctuates, but currently, it's 91%-92% occupied. A few months ago, it was 96%.
- Edward: Why wasn't Pier 6 construction paired with MADE in the summer? Why is MADE waiting until fall?
- Gabe: This is due to coordination with OMB and the permitting required for the construction certificate to proceed.
- Jennifer: We can provide more specific details on the reasons later.
- Esther: What percentage of the MADE campus is available as public space?
- Nse: The only space not fully public is the annex corridor, which contains two tenant spaces for maritime educational nonprofit uses. The lobby corridor and gathering areas are fully public and accessible from 8 AM to 8 PM. Tenants have 24/7 access. The annex is an event space available for community groups to host their own events with advance planning. There will also be ticketed private programming. To utilize the space, reach out to Gabe, Nolan, and Megan on the events team. There's also a website to submit event inquiries. We can arrange tours of MADE for anyone interested.
- John: Is there an opportunity for public input on cafe RFP?
- Gabe: The timeline for the RFP is still a couple of months away.
- John: I FOILED responses to the RFEI and was told they couldn't be provided while the RFP was being crafted.
- John: What is the decision process for tenants? Is there any community consultation on who is brought in? Slow Factory was brought in and then cancelled.
- Jennifer: We are actively leasing Building A; Building C isn't leasing yet. Building A has 140,000 square feet of leasable space. At the unveiling, we set the tone for the types of tenants we're seeking. These footprints are smaller, unlike BAT's larger ones; we're looking for smaller-to-medium-sized businesses. We welcome your input on this. There's an open call for leasing inquiries, followed by interest discussions, tours, and negotiations, just like any other landlord. Our first tenant moved in on May 1st.
- The \$97.8 million announced for Building C was a point of contention. CM Aviles stated she was not aware it was in the City Budget previously.
- Edward: He's asking if there was a line item in the overall city budget. The reality is that it was there, but the CM was not privy to that information before entering the council chambers. No, she didn't have advanced knowledge of it.
- Gregory: We will look into the timeline of that.
- John: Are there any other capital expenditures for Sunset Park in this budget that haven't been publicly released?
- Jennifer: The budget cycle involves multiple phases for requesting city capital funding. We have significant capital needs for BAT. It's no secret that we desire a substantial amount

of capital investment in BAT. I cannot confirm what may or may not have been requested for the July budget.

- John: Steiner Sequel is 7 years behind schedule. Is it still happening? Can elected officials state if they support or don't support it?
- Jennifer: It was selected as part of a competitive bidding process and announced in 2020. COVID and an industry downturn, along with a strike, had a major impact. Is it still happening? Our intent is to move forward and get an updated timeline. We are currently in discussions with Steiner. It is not canceled; we intend to proceed.

Part IV: SPTF Next Steps

- CM Aviles: I want to address the SPTF (Sunset Park Task Force) generally. Regarding John's question on Steiner, my stance remains agnostic because its development was City Hall-driven for many years. My priority is accountability and transparency. While not my ideal project, I haven't raised major objections due to extensive community deliberations over the years. I seek clarity on its progression and the materialization of Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs).
- We've been assessing the Task Force's efficacy. While much work has been accomplished, there's growing frustration with its purpose and perceived "mission creep," leading to a feeling of being rudderless. This largely stems from the structure and a desire for EDC accountability. As an advisory body, the frustration arises from its limited decision-making power and input.
- Therefore, we propose a different structure, realigning expectations for the Task Force. Two key points:
 1. Our office proposes separating the Special Project Purpose Fund into a distinct entity and fund.
 2. The Task Force itself would continue under a refreshed understanding.
- We've heard that the most significant value of the Task Force is information sharing: providing information, feedback, and questioning major EDC projects in the community. We intend to maintain this, but we must guard against the misconception that this body constitutes comprehensive community engagement. It's only a small part, and the EDC needs to improve its broader community engagement efforts.
- This means I will return with a final structure that clearly defines this space as an advisory body. While some level of accountability exists, we see its limitations. It is not a decision-making body, and we need to find other methods to achieve greater accountability and transparency. Separately, we still need a forum where EDC and community stakeholders can gather to discuss projects, share feedback, and question community developments.
- The Special Projects Fund should not be governed by the same challenging methodology. This round, unlike others, was not geographically limited to our community, resulting in funds going elsewhere. We now have an opportunity to create something new, potentially using a participatory budget model with greater community engagement, to fund projects with direct neighborhood impact. We aim for maximum democratic participation in designing this process. Perhaps a slightly different name than "Task Force" would be

appropriate, given its non-decision-making role. The proposal centers on structuring the Special Projects Fund for the community.

- Edie: Can you elaborate on how this vision will materialize? Will your office be seeking input?
- CM Aviles: The broadest formulation of this has come from consultations with both Task Force and community members. We will present a more refined package to you and seek feedback from Task Force members. The goal is to retain the Task Force's value as an information-sharing platform. We've explored different engagement forms and structures with EDC, including community-set agendas and Town Hall-style meetings in partnership with my office. We envision a structure where EDC provides background support. Capacity is a major challenge without third-party administration, leaving EDC and the gracious participation of SBIDC to navigate stakeholder coordination without compensation. We welcome feedback; it's time for a refresh. If we establish that this is primarily about information sharing, we can pursue accountability through other avenues. The Special Project Fund offers a unique opportunity to engage community members differently.
- Gregory: In partnership with the CM's office, we are exploring ways to improve and enhance productivity. EDC, the CM's office, and SBIDC will keep you updated. At the next meeting, we will discuss this as a body to determine if we can move in this direction.

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm.