



ARTS, EDUCATION AND TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
W/ ALL ADVIORY COUNCILS  
TO DISCUSS:  
CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS IN LOWER MANHATTAN  
OCTOBER 22, 2003, 5:30PM – 7:30PM  
1 LIBERTY PLAZA

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The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) held a meeting for the Arts, Education and Tourism Advisory Council to discuss current cultural developments in Lower Manhattan. The topic of cultural amenities is an important element in the entire revitalization effort of Lower Manhattan and all other Advisory Councils were invited to attend and participate in the meeting. LMDC Chairman, John C. Whitehead opened the meeting by reminding the Advisory Council members in attendance that there is a great opportunity to develop a wonderful cultural attraction at the World Trade Center site and beyond. Chairman Whitehead reminded the members that the LMDC had recently issued an Invitation to Cultural Institutions (ICI), which allowed anyone who had an idea for what should take place in the cultural space at the World Trade Center site to submit it for the LMDC to review. With that said, Chairman Whitehead continued his remarks with a brief overview of where the cultural space is expected to be located within the 16 acre site.

Chairman Whitehead continued by recognizing that there are many constituencies that need to be considered when imagining what should be included in the site. He then emphasized that the purpose of the meeting was not solely to update Advisory Council members on the on-goings of redevelopment, but to hear from the members on what they think should be done with the cultural potential in Lower Manhattan. Chairman Whitehead called on members for an outpouring of ideas that will be taken into consideration as the review process for the ICI moves closer.

The meeting was then turned to Anita Contini, the Vice President & Director for Memorial, Cultural & Civic Programs, for the LMDC. Ms. Contini began by thanking Richard

Schwartz and Nicki Clarke of the State Arts Council and Kate Levin, the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs for their assistance to the LMDC with the ICI process. Ms. Contini continued her remarks with a detailed presentation of the ICI process. She commented that this was the first time that cultural institutions have been asked to be involved in a planning process of this size and that it was an immense opportunity for institutions to share their ideas and proposals for future cultural amenities. Ms. Contini emphasized that an interpretive museum of the 1993 and 2001 attacks at the World Trade Center is a very important cultural element at the site and also mentioned that the ICI was specific to the World Trade Center site at this time and cultural entities for off-site attractions would be addressed at another time.

Ms. Contini continued her presentation by listing possible cultural attractions/programs that could be proposed for the World Trade Center site. Among them, she listed museums, educational institutions, performance and multimedia organizations and international centers. She then continued to share the LMDC's timeline of reviewing the proposals and collecting the information to further develop the cultural plans for the World Trade Center site. Ms. Contini finished her presentation by again remarking on the potential that lies with in the World Trade Center site for cultural amenities and programs and how it is essential for the cultural community to take advantage of the opportunities to create something magnificent. She then stated that the LMDC is interested in hearing ideas from the Advisory Council members of what they feel should be developed culturally. Ms. Contini turned the meeting over to Jennifer Brown, Assistant Vice President for Community Affairs & Government Relations, for an update on the History & Heritage initiative prior to opening the floor up for remarks.

Ms. Brown introduced Mark Albin, Director of the History & Heritage marketing initiative and David, Ridley, Project Manager for the Development Programs & Economics Department. Mr. Albin and Mr. Ridley gave a brief update of the History & Heritage marketing campaign that was developed by the LMDC in order to promote fourteen institutions that are located in Lower Manhattan. The two gentlemen described the initiatives formulated to promote these existing cultural amenities. The initiatives mentioned included a 32-page insert in the New Yorker Magazine, downtown walking maps that highlight the fourteen organizations, and palm cards promoting the campaign and the institutions.

Once they concluded their presentation, Ms. Contini took a moment to introduce Nicki Clarke, the Executive Director of the New York State Council on the Arts and asked her to say a few words about the States involvement in the cultural development process. Nicki expressed that the State has a very high level of commitment to careful consideration of the ideas that the ICI process has produced. She also mentioned that the process of the City, the State and the LMDC working together and having cultural institutions bring forth their ideas for consideration has been a brilliant process that she believes will truly lead to a cultural mix that will work for the World Trade Center site.

With that, Ms. Brown opened the floor for remarks from Advisory Council Members. The first comment was a question pertaining to how the proportions of the different parts of the site were distributed and specifically the amount that was noted for the museum of September 11<sup>th</sup> of 100,000 to 180,000 square feet. Ms. Contini responded by acknowledging the flexibility that has been incorporated into the Libeskind site plan offering from 100,000 to 180,000 square feet of space for this component, but explained that the elements of the cultural square footage allotment had yet to be identified. She continued to explain that there are so many unknown factors at this point in the process that allocating the cultural space specifically is too difficult and the current site plan offers a tremendous amount of flexibility for planning purposes. She finalized her statement with referring to the fact that the purpose of the ICI process that is in place is not to necessarily focus on square footage and size but on the content and programming.

A second comment from a Lower Manhattan resident offered a suggestion to include a cultural model like Lincoln Center rather than an institution like the New York City Opera. It was suggested that having the combination of performance alternatives would be more beneficial to revitalizing the Lower Manhattan area. Another neighborhood resident suggested that whatever the mix of institutions may end up being that they offer daytime and weekend programming along with the expected evening programming. A representative from a Lower Manhattan arts council offered the suggestion to include outdoor programming or outdoor space for cultural activity. Another council member agreed with the previous statement and proceeded to further support the incorporation of an amphitheatre or some other outdoor civic space that would compliment the civic purpose of the park's and open spaces incorporated into the current site plan and not just rely on the defined cultural area for programming. This comment was further explained to suggest that an outdoor space of this type could be used for many cultural

activities and allow for those respondents to the ICI that aren't included in the final plan to still be incorporated into the Lower Manhattan community. Another comment built on the previous two comments suggests that areas and programming be designated for not only cultural fulfillment but for emotional fulfillment in light of the area being a memorial space and a historical space. Most specifically there should be a play area, a story area, or a performance area for children to bring the sounds of life back to the neighborhood.

The next comment questioned how much of the previous World Trade Center site's cultural entities would be considered, in terms of what worked and what didn't work and also, how much of the decisions for the selected organizations will be based on their economic impact to the area and ability to attract funding for their own building. Ms. Contini addressed the first part of this question by explaining that what existed at The World Trade Center site was an extraordinary place and the people involved in the process keep what was there as top of mind and only hope to improve upon what was previously at the site. In response to the latter part of this question, Chairman Whitehead explained that several responses to the ICI propose building with their own funding; however there were submissions that were looking to fill space in vacant buildings. Kate Levin also reiterated that they were not at the market-driven part of the process yet and at this point they are much more concerned in determining what the cultural content should consist of for the site.

Another comment concerned the context of the cultural institutions among restaurants and shopping. An example was made of Lincoln Center and its proximity to shopping and restaurants and it was urged that those elements of the cultural experience were being considered. The next comment suggested the inclusion of a Chinese Garden for the site as well as the inclusion of restaurants with fast food capabilities. The next comment suggested that the cultural components that are selected incorporate their individual components into the retail aspect and create a courtyard of retail opportunity for all the organization to share.

The next comment offers the idea of certain respondent's to the ICI to be selected and utilize the space to develop partnerships and serve as a resource space for smaller institutions. This was further discussed by explaining that smaller institutions would need an avenue to feel they could be included in the plans. This comment also voiced concern that smaller institutions were discouraged from the process because of the media reports of the New York City Opera already being a major component. This comment was followed with further concern about the

institutions that will eventually be chosen and if these institutions would be able to design their own buildings if they were in fact going to be funding them and if they could choose their own architects. Chairman Whitehead specifically addressed the concern regarding the New York City Opera by stating that the Opera does not have an inside track to gaining a position with the site, however they do fulfill the desirable elements of a large, distinguished quality organization that is eager to move downtown. He reiterated that the process was as open as it can be and that the point of the meeting tonight was to gain more of an understanding of what the community would like to see happen.

The next comment followed up on the previous discussion by referring to the process of developing Lincoln Center and how it was necessary to have Bill Schuman take on the role of the guiding hand in its development and that this process for Lower Manhattan may also need such a guide. The participant continued to explain that the public expects something more than business as usual to develop on this site and that a less than public process may eventually be necessary to make all the pieces fit together in an appropriate way. This comment was followed by a suggestion to incorporate programming that stimulates a permanent international festival celebrating the roots of the city as well as the World Trade Center and embraces the rest of the world.

The next comment encouraged the inclusion of plenty of public restrooms. The following comment posed the question of whether the LMDC had received any proposals from peace institutions. Chairman Whitehead responded by explaining that several ideas have been submitted but the proposals are vague at this point in the process. Ms. Contini also mentioned that there will be numerous opportunities to include various programming to the institutions that are selected. The next comment addresses the need to include opportunities for artists that are not currently a part of the Lower Manhattan community. The following comment identified that performing arts and visual arts centers are being highly considered, but it was suggested that educational institutions also be a part of the mix. The following comment reflected on the need to incorporate the theme for World Peace into programming and organizations that will bring children, students, artists and musicians together from around the world.

The next comment questioned how many visitors to the site there are at this point and how much that number is expected to grow, and how they will be accommodated. Chairman Whitehead responded by saying that the projected numbers were not reported yet, but they were

in the process of being determined for further analysis. Ms. Contini followed up this statement by explaining that the planning department of the LMDC was currently working on analysis of similar areas so eventually the configuration of access and security could be addressed among the cultural components of the World Trade Center site. Chairman Whitehead continued to explain that the World Trade Center site is a place that has been highly publicized all around the world and it will be built with very high visitation numbers in mind. Along with that current line of thinking, it is necessary to evaluate the facilities and restaurants that will keep people who visit Lower Manhattan downtown for longer periods of time.

The next comment offered two recommendations with the first being to include some kind of system of transportation to go to other existing cultural institutions downtown and the other being access to Liberty Island and Ellis Island from the World Trade Center site. The final comment of the evening stated that the goal for all constituents is to create a dynamic, vital and interactive space with lots of different things for people to do at all levels, and at all price points so that there is a real experience for people when they are in Lower Manhattan. It was stated that this specific result will depend on not only new cultural uses and enduring cultural uses, but programming and the infrastructure to make it happen.

Chairman Whitehead concluded the meeting by encouraging Advisory Council members to follow up the meeting with letters or any additional comments and reinforced the fact that the LMDC was still open for ideas.

#### Advisory Council Members Suggested Considerations:

(Notes recorded during meeting)

- Consider a cultural component equivalent to Lincoln Center. It is an appropriate composition for downtown.
- Keep cultural programming a priority as well as the content of the cultural institutions.
- Allow for outdoor programming for both day & night activities.
- Consider the area south of Liberty Street for an amphitheater and residential culture programs.
- Think beyond the site.
- Remember the children, especially the children of victims of 9/11.
  - Allow for a play area for children
  - Cultural programs for children
  - Education programming
- Perform a comprehensive review of what worked culturally at the site prior to 9/11 and what didn't and try to avoid making similar mistakes.
- Plot cultural institutions with commercial entities, i.e. restaurants & retailers to allow for an integrated experience and lengthen the amount of time visitors will stay downtown.
- Incorporate retail into the cultural development. Consider a retail cluster specific for cultural merchandise and institution promotional material.
- Allow space for smaller institutions to incubate and create awareness for themselves.
- Define architectural expectations
  - Will institutions that pay for the buildings themselves have architectural jurisdiction?
  - Will there be an architectural theme that will need to be maintained and upheld by institutions coming to the site?
- Evaluate cultural ideas and help shape them to become something more than what is expected.
- Allow for a broad international component.
  - Allow for flexible opportunities for short-term exhibitions
  - Recognize New Yorker's openness to new ideas
- Allow for plenty of public restrooms.
- Link all cultural facilities by a common theme, i.e. World Peace
- Have a peace related facility with content and programming heavily focused on theme.
- Allow for local artist access-help foster local talent and economy.
- Include education institutes
  - Support programs of smaller scale
  - Tolerance & Diversity programs for all ages
  - History programs
  - Adult Education-
    - Partnership programs w/ business community
- Create an inviting atmosphere
- Protect the existing cultural institutions downtown.
- Consider the potential number of visitors and the impact of those numbers.
  - Make area dynamic and integrated to cater to residents, workers and visitors.