

2012

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## **ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTION MINUTES**

### **April 23, 2012**

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#### 1. REVERSE UNLIMITED CORPORATE MONEY IN ELECTIONS

Resolution passed requesting elected officials ask Congress to amend the Constitution to reverse unlimited corporate money in elections. See Resolution below.

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#### 2. PUBLIC FINANCING OF NY STATE ELECTIONS

A discussion was held in support of a public financing election system for New York State. The State of New York should create a system similar to New York City. There was unanimous support for a resolution on this issue. District Leader Paul Newell will draft a supportive resolution for the next DID meeting.

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### 3. SAVING THE EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE ARTS PROGRAMS, 197 East Broadway.

Representatives of a coalition of educators, artists and community spoke about changes in the Educational Alliance Arts School and asked DID for support to save the art studios and programs at 197 East Broadway.

After renovation of the building, art studio space will be reduced and become art rooms, not studios, and moved from naturally lit space to below-grade space. The welding studio and heavily used black and white film darkroom will be eliminated. There are few places left to pursue such art specialties, and they are important to the continued support of the arts historically (as in black & white film) and for future generations. Without education and artists skilled in these techniques, these art forms become at risk.

A discussion ensued that covered the history of the over 100-year institution as well as its cultural value for progressives. Numerous renowned NY artists and sculptors have come out of the school. The arts program is self-sustaining through fees and not only provides instruction and studios for adults, but also unique education for teenagers and children that is not comparable to public school programs.

DID offered unanimous support for the initiative to save studio space and programs important to this cultural gem and NYC.  
Coalition Committee to Save the Art School: [oc2sas.wordpress.com](http://oc2sas.wordpress.com)

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### 4. PRESERVATION OF THE FULTON FISH MARKET BUILDINGS & A PUBLIC MARKET

Robert LaValva submitted a resolution to support the preservation of the Fulton Fish Market Tin Building & New Market Building and their restoration as a public market to foster small businesses, with administration by the New Amsterdam Public Market Association. There was extensive discussion about this topic—all of it was supportive.

Passed unanimously. See Resolution below.

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## 5. SPECIAL LITTLE ITALY DISTRICT

The Department of Buildings & some developers are out of compliance and showing disregard for the Special Little Italy District zoning regulations. The Bowery Alliance of Neighbors have requested a Community Board 2 Task Force or similar to oversee DOB permits and force DOB and developers to comply. DID voted unanimously to support this initiative.

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## 6. RENT STABILIZATION IN 421-G FINANCIAL DISTRICT BUILDINGS

District Leader Paul Newell briefed DID and Manhattan Community Board 1's Housing Committee about the status of 421-G tax abatements in the Financial District. Many buildings took a federal tax subsidy to finance the conversion of commercial buildings into residential units. Many of the building owners are raising rents despite affordable housing mandates that came with the 421-G tax abatements. A successful test case was tried in New York City Housing Court, however, these cases cannot be bundled. In addition, the decision of the judge does not set judicial precedent. Paul is doing outreach to Financial District Residents to get them involved and keep them informed of their rights.

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## 7. NYU 2031 PLAN

A City Planning Commission Hearing will be held at 10 AM on Wednesday, April 25.

Jeanne Wilcke will attend as President of DID and testify against NYU's 2031 Plan.

Members reaffirmed DID's strong opposition to the NYU 2031 plan.

After the City Planning decision, the application moves to City Council.

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## 8. HYDROFRACKING

- Funds for studying the health impacts of hydrofracking were removed from the NYS Budget.

The amount of funds were small in the overall budget (approximately \$100,000). Discussion was held on toxic waste associated with hydrofracking and that it was critical to study health impacts. The environmental disaster of Love Canal in NY State was cited as an example of the importance to assess impacts beforehand.

- There are new attempts in NYS to frack with liquid propane gas eliminating the need to drain & pollute our water supply. Trucks with water would be replaced with trucks with highly flammable material transported to well sites. The natural gas industry says it has studies that prove their proposed method is safer.

DID voted to call for independent, unbiased studies to replace the ones being used by the natural gas industry should hydrofracking with liquid propane gas be considered. See Resolution below.

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## 9. REQUEST FOR FUNDS TO HELP VOLUNTEERS DURING THE 2012 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Tribeca for Change (TFC) requested \$500 from DID to help pay for buses that will transport volunteers campaigning for President Obama in swing states. DID voted unanimously to give TFC \$500 for their efforts. If you are interested in volunteering email DID at [info@didnyc.org](mailto:info@didnyc.org).

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## 10. DID ELECTIONS

### RESULTS FOR OFFICERS

President	Jeanne Wilcke
Vice President	Adam Silvera

Vice President      Jim Stratton  
Secretary            Adam Malitz  
Treasurer           Sean Sweeney

## RESULTS FOR DID EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Prince Agarwal  
Joyce Brody-Skodnek  
Harold Donohue  
Tom Goodkind  
PJ Kim  
Leah Kozak  
Jeff Kurzon  
Michael Kramer  
Art Kriemelman  
Dodge Landesman  
Alan Schulkin  
Elliot Silber  
Stuart Zechman

All were elected unanimously, without opposition. Congratulations!

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### 11. RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PRESERVATION OF THE FULTON FISH MARKET TIN BUILDING & NEW MARKET BUILDING AND THEIR RESTORATION AS A PUBLIC MARKET TO FOSTER SMALL BUSINESSES, WITH ADMINISTRATION BY THE NEW AMSTERDAM PUBLIC MARKET ASSOCIATION.

Whereas The Downtown Independent Democrats support the evolution of the East River Esplanade as a world-class public space and premier destination that will strengthen the local, State, and regional economy, create new businesses and entry-level jobs, and improve the quality of life in Lower Manhattan; and

Whereas The New Amsterdam Public Market Association has since 2006 promoted the preservation and revitalization of the Fulton Fish Market Tin Building and the New Market Building as a wholesale and

retail public market to serve as the thriving commercial and cultural anchor for the South Street Seaport and East River Esplanade; and

Whereas The Fulton Fish Market Tin Building and New Market Building comprise one of New York's oldest and most venerable public sites, in continuous use as a market since 1642, and are recognized by our State and Federal governments as landmarks of national significance; and

Whereas The New Amsterdam Public Market Association is endorsed by Community Board One and every elected official representing Lower Manhattan, and has been granted funding from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation to expand its successful operations and strengthen its mission of local and regional economic development;

Now, therefore, the Downtown Independent Democrats resolve that the Fulton Fish Market Tin Building and New Market Building be preserved and restored as a public market, to be administered by the New Amsterdam Public Market Association; and that said Association merits New York State Regional Economic Development Council Funding to restore these unique and irreplaceable buildings for this purpose.

April 23, 2012

Contact:

Robert LaValva  
President  
New Amsterdam Market  
[www.newamsterdammarket.org](http://www.newamsterdammarket.org)

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RESOLUTION REQUESTING NY STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS  
ASK U.S. CONGRESS TO AMEND THE U.S. CONSTITUTION TO  
PROHIBIT UNLIMITED CORPORATE SPENDING ON ELECTIONS.

Whereas Hawaii and New Mexico have passed resolutions calling on the U.S. Congress for a constitutional amendment to prohibit

unlimited spending by corporations in elections; and

Whereas Legislation is pending in 17 other states, 147 cities have passed similar resolutions and 11 Attorney Generals have added support; and

Whereas A Vermont Senate resolution asks Congress to consider an amendment to clarify that "money is not speech and corporations are not persons under the U.S. Constitution";  
( <http://currenteventsii.yuku.com/topic/16773/Vermont-Sends-a-Strong-Message-Overturn-Citizens-United#> )

Therefore be it resolved that the Downtown Independent Democrats request NY State elected officials ask Congress to amend the U.S. Constitution to prohibit unlimited corporate spending in elections.

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RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT STUDIES BY THE NATURAL GAS INDUSTRY ON USING LIQUID PROPANE GAS IN HYDROFRACKING SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON. STUDIES MUST BE INDEPENDENT AND UNBIASED SHOULD THIS TECHNOLOGY EVER BE CONSIDERED IN NY STATE.

Whereas There are new attempts to hydrofrack with liquid propane gas eliminating the need to drain and pollute our water supply; and

Whereas The natural gas industry says it has studies that prove this proposed method is safer; and

Whereas Trucks with water would be replaced with trucks with highly flammable material transported to well sites; and

Whereas We strongly doubt the credibility of partisan studies done by the industry;

Therefore be it resolved that the Downtown Independent Democrats request that NY State elected officials and agencies require independent and unbiased studies be done should hydrofracking with

liquid propane gas ever be considered, in NY State; and

Further be it resolved that besides health, agriculture and wildlife impacts, studies must include traffic, road and safety impacts of transporting large amounts of liquid propane gas in NY State.

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