

**DOWNTOWN INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS
MEETING MINUTES**

August 27, 2014 6:30 pm
125 Greene St.

Meeting was called to order by DID president Jeanne Wilcke.

1. NY STATE CONSTITUTION: AMENDMENT ON REDISTRICTING

The amendment on redistricting will be on the November ballot. Common Cause appeared before us and spoke why they advocate a vote AGAINST the redistricting amendment. Citizens Union will speak to DID in October. They advocate FOR the amendment.

Highlights from Common Cause:

- Common Cause and others requested the word "independent" redistricting commission be removed from the ballot language. They say the commission that redraws voting districts is absolutely not independent. The Governor's administration refused. Common Cause is suing in the courts. UPDATE: The court ordered the removal of the word "independent" saying the proposed redistricting commission: "cannot be described as 'independent' when eight out of the ten members are the handpicked appointees of the legislative leaders and the two additional members are essentially political appointees by proxy".

- A 10 member, even-numbered commission creates deadlock. In the event of a deadlock, redistricting goes back into the hands of the Legislature. Exactly what should not happen.

- The commission is picked by people having a direct stake in preserving the status quo and is not impartial. It "enshrines bipartisanship in our constitution".

8 members are picked by leaders of the state Legislature. 2 members are picked by legislative appointees.

- The voting map starts with the existing lines of districts., which have already been gerrymandered for personal and political interests. Common Cause and others advocate for drawing new voter districts, not taking old districts and reworking borders.

- While we desperately need a transparent and fair redistricting process, the little good that the amendment on redistricting does is grossly outweighed by the same old misleading language that it is "for" the people and instead protects the status quo.

2. GOVERNOR & LT. GOVERNOR ENDORSEMENTS

Last May DID General Membership voted "No endorsement at this time" for the positions of Governor and Lt. Governor. At the Executive Committee meeting July 28, 2014, the Committee voted to reopen the endorsements and recommends the General Membership endorse Zephyr Teachout for Governor and Timothy Wu for Governor.

VOTE: Unanimous to endorse Zephyr Teachout for Governor and Timothy Wu for Lt. Governor

See attached Press Release.

3. RESOLUTION AGAINST THE WOMEN'S EQUALITY PARTY

A resolution was proposed AGAINST the new Women's Equality Party.

VOTE: Unanimous AGAINST the new Women's Equality Party. See attached resolution.

4. EXPAND GRANTS OF CLEMENCY IN NY STATE

Resolution requesting Governor Cuomo to address the expansion of grants of clemency.

VOTE: Unanimous to request Governor Cuomo address the expansion of grants of clemency. See attached resolution.

Information: Candles for Clemency - a silent vigil will be held the evening of Saturday September 6th in Mt Kisco to bring attention to the issue. To reserve a seat on the buses leaving from NYC contact: info@didnyc.org

5. ENDORSEMENT OF FOOD & WATER WATCH

Discussion on DID's support and endorsement of Food & Water Watch's efforts to ensure the food, water and fish we consume is safe, accessible and sustainable.

VOTE: Unanimous to support and endorse Food & Water Watch. See attached resolution.

6. SEPT. 11 JUDICIAL FORUM CO-HOSTED BY DID & VRDC

DID & VRDC are co-hosting a forum to hear the judicial candidates for Supreme Court. Immediately after the forum, DID will meet to endorse a candidate. 6:30 pm, Thur Sept 11, 2014, 505 LaGuardia Place.

The JUDICIAL CONVENTION will be held Tuesday Sept. 16 from 6 to 8 pm at the SVA Theater, 333 W 23rd St. At that time DID judicial delegates will nominate our endorsed candidate.

***UPDATE:** DID unanimously endorsed Honorable Kathryn Freed. Subsequently she was nominated at the Judicial Convention and will appear on November's ballot. Kathryn Freed is a Judge, former City Council Member, District Leader and former president of Downtown Independent Democrats.*

7. SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21st - this is big!

THE PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH & U.N. SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

World leaders will be in NY for this pivotal UN summit on the climate crisis. We will be joining tens of thousands to advocate for a powerful and extensive global agreement. The march will start at Columbus Circle at 11:30 am. <http://peoplesclimate.org/march/> <http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/>

***UPDATE:** Wow! Almost half a million showed up! Thank you to all the DID members who supported and marched.*

8. SOUTH STREET SEAPORT

Michael Kramer spoke on the machinations of the Economic Development Corporation and Howard Hughes Corporation which have subverted the hard work of the Seaport Working Group and make its efforts meaningless. A resolution will be drafted demanding a transparent planning process including a Master Plan. (DID is a partner of the Save Our Seaport coalition.)

VOTE: Unanimous for a resolution demanding a transparent process and Master Plan for the South Street Seaport. See resolution attached.

9. TELL VOTERS TO VOTE ON THE DEMOCRATIC TICKET LINE IN NOVEMBER

Sean Sweeney spoke on how important it is to get the word out to vote on the Democratic line. Many are often not aware that the amount of Judicial Delegates we get is based on the number of votes on the Democratic line.

10. ENDORSEMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP OF THE NY STATE SENATE

Paul Newell, District Leader, and David Marshall spoke for State Senate candidates who pledge to support the Senate Democratic Caucus.

VOTE: Passed, 2 against. SEE RESOLUTION ATTACHED.

Meeting adjourned.

August 28, 2014

DOWNTOWN INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS ENDORSE ZEPHYR TEACHOUT FOR GOVERNOR & TIMOTHY WU FOR LT. GOVERNOR

The Downtown Independent Democrats - unanimously - endorsed Zephyr Teachout for Governor and Timothy Wu for Lieutenant Governor.

Zephyr Teachout zeroes right in on issues of great concern to us: Fracking, government corruption, infrastructure investment, schools, natural resources, the business economy upstate & downstate.

Her legal and academic expertise are well suited to the job at this time in our history. She is an expert on political corruption and antitrust/big bank issues. She's clerked in the US Court of Appeals, was a director in Howard Dean's campaign, and was part of a foundation which focused on the role of money in politics and advocating for policy changes. She also hang glides. We like the whole package.

Timothy Wu has the attitude and forward voice to push NY State into the future. He believes in open democracy as well as an open internet. That works for us. His background is extraordinary, from antitrust issues to technology. He is the one who coined the term "net neutrality"!

Timothy Wu is a forward-thinking policy maker, Harvard-educated lawyer, renowned author and fighter for the consumer.

"Zephyr" is a word for a breeze or a light wind. Along with Timothy Wu, we need this fresh air in our government.

See also District Leader Paul Newell's endorsement for governor: [http:// newellnyc.org/teachout-wu/](http://newellnyc.org/teachout-wu/)

Resolution AGAINST the WOMEN'S EQUALITY PARTY

The Downtown Independent Democrats oppose the formation of the Women's Equality Party in NY State.

This new party is not FOR women. Instead it is USING women for political play.

A legitimate party or good government group grows from a grassroots movement. This party was instead formed by people with strictly political motives. The founders are at the top of the political pyramid and are acting solely in pursuit of more political control by gaining an additional party line on the ballot.

We are disappointed others have been pulled into this political gambit. Women are not pawns to be used for such political game-playing purposes.

VOTE: Unanimous

AUGUST 27, 2014

FOOD & WATER WATCH

Resolution Supporting & Endorsing Food & Water Watch

The Downtown Independent Democrats strongly support and endorse Food & Water Watch in their good efforts to ensure the food, water and fish we consume is safe, accessible and sustainable.

Food & Water Watch: www.foodandwaterwatch.org

VOTE: Unanimous August 27, 2014

EXPAND GRANTS OF CLEMENCY IN NY STATE

In New York State, the authority to grant clemency is an executive power that may be exercised only by the Governor. The five Governors preceding Governor Andrew Cuomo exercised their executive clemency power approximately 229 times in the aggregate. Governor Cuomo has granted zero (0) clemencies during his over three and a half years in office.

Individuals who have served time and have demonstrated that they been successfully rehabilitated should be considered for clemency and reunited with their families. It is incumbent on the state's chief executive to exercise the power of redemption, justice, reconsideration, compassion and forgiveness.

The Downtown Independent Democrats urge Governor Cuomo to reconsider his refusal to grant clemencies to individuals that have been successfully rehabilitated and have shown genuine remorse, and to those incarcerated who have also received unjustly harsh and morally unjustified sentences.

Vote: Unanimous

August 27, 2014

RESOLUTION DEMANDING A TRANSPARENT PROCESS AND MASTER PLAN FOR THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT

The NEW YORK CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (NYCEDC) and the HOWARD HUGHES CORPORATION (HHC) have completed another insider deal"at the South Street Seaport.

NYCEDC announced that Howard Hughes Corp. submitted documentation "as a formality" to meet an August 31, 2014 "milestone" to apply to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission to move the historic Tin Building at the South Street Seaport.

Howard Hughes Corp. was supposed to present their plan to the NYCEDC SEAPORT WORKING GROUP as part of the "pre-certification" process for compliance with that group's recently announced GUIDELINES and PRINCIPLES governing development going forward in the area south of the Brooklyn Bridge.

We demand a transparent planning process, including a Master Plan, for the South Street Seaport. Howard Hughes Corp. should not be allowed to submit incomplete information to "meet milestones" that effectively renders the hard work of the SEAPORT WORKING GROUP meaningless.

Downtown Independent Democrats is a partner of the Save Our Seaport coalition.

VOTE: Unanimous

AUGUST 27, 2014

CANDLES FOR CLEMENCY SILENT VIGIL ON SEPTEMBER 6th

The Downtown Independent Democrats support the silent vigil CANDLES FOR CLEMENCY to be held on September 6, 2014 which will advocate for the expansion of grants of clemency in NY State.

Buses will leave between 6 & 7 pm on September 6th. To reserve a seat on the bus contact info@didnyc.org Contribution towards the buses is \$13 or more if you can, but not necessary if you can't. More important is that you join in.

Vote: Unanimous

August 27, 2014

ENDORSEMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP OF THE NY STATE SENATE

The Downtown Independent Democrats endorse the Senate Democratic Caucus for leadership of the New York State Senate. In 2014, we support State Senate candidates statewide who have pledged to caucus with them. In particular, we appreciate the longtime progressive leadership of Oliver Koppel in the Bronx and John C. Liu in Queens.

August 27, 2014
