

Lowline Community Engagement Committee Meeting Recap September 22, 6-8pm, Lowline Lab, 140 Essex Street

Longtime residents of the Lower East Side, local advocates and organization leaders gathered on September 22 for the Lowline's third Community Engagement Committee meeting. Below you will find a detailed meeting recap. Questions and comments can be sent to community@thelowline.org.

The agenda for the Committee meeting was outlined as follows:

- Arrival (6:00 - 6:15pm)
- Proposal overview (6:15 - 6:35pm)
- Q&A (6:35 - 6:45pm)
- Introduction of Community Design Facilitator: Karp Strategies (6:45 - 7:00pm)
- Group discussion (7:00 - 7:30pm)
- Next steps (7:30 - 7:45pm)

1. Proposal overview

- a. This past summer the New York City Economic Development Corp. (EDC) [conditionally approved](#) the Lowline's plan to turn the abandoned trolley station below Delancey Street into a vibrant community space, the world's first underground park. This month, the Lowline released the proposal in full.
- b. The proposal lays out a potential scenario for what the Lowline could become, but the community visioning process will help inform the actual schematic design and all figures listed are projections. During the next year, there will be a community engagement process comprised of different types and sizes of events, catering to different demographics and members of the Lower East Side community. Throughout this process, participants will have a direct impact on programming, design, potential uses, and operational issues.
- c. The proposal was published by The Lo-Down, and can be found via [this link](#).

2. Introduction of Community Engagement Facilitator: Karp Strategies

- a. The Lowline team released an RFP for a Community Engagement Facilitator, selecting Karp Strategies due to their expertise and wealth of experience.
- b. Karp Strategies was selected by the Lowline just a few days prior to the Community Engagement Committee meeting. They organized this preliminary meeting with very little warning. Dan Barasch stated that their willingness to jump on board is a real testament to their commitment and anticipation in facilitating this effort.

3. About Karp Strategies

- a. Under the direction of the Lowline, and advised by the Community Engagement Committee, **Karp Strategies** will lead this engagement and assume responsibility for project delivery. The lead from Karp Strategies will be Rebecca Karp, Founder of Karp Strategies, who has a decade of cross-sector experience.
- b. Karp Strategies will be joined by **rePLACE Urban Studio**, an urban design practice dedicated to creating places that improve how our urban environments

perform socially, economically and ecologically. The lead from rePLACE Urban Studio will be Erik Kath, Associate Director at rePLACE, who has 15 years of experience in urban design, architecture, and community-driven planning.

- c. Also joining this process is coUrbanize, who will serve as the technology platform partner. coUrbanize is a community engagement and communications management platform for urban development projects.

4. Group discussion

- a. Karp Strategies split the room up into two groups to lead a lightweight brainstorm covering the below topics. Responses compiled are a compilation of ideas from both groups:

- i. **What populations are the hardest to reach?**

- a. Seniors
 - b. Immigrants (Mandarin, Cantonese, Fujianese, Spanish are the most prevalent languages spoken)
 - c. NYCHA residents
 - d. Property or business owners
 - e. People with low income
 - f. Students
 - g. Single parents

- ii. **What are some suggested outreach methods?**

- a. General ideas:
 - i. Door to door outreach, personal introductions and flyering
 - ii. Attendance at local community events, garden events
 - iii. Attend events that highlight local people and students who may otherwise be under recognized
 - iv. Ensure elected officials are apprised on the meetings and receive regular updates
 - v. Ensure transparency and post updates from all meetings online
 - b. Seniors:
 - i. Meals on wheels
 - ii. Flyers
 - iii. During meals at senior centers (Manny Cantor, Good Companions, etc.)
 - iv. Tompkins Square Park food giveaway
 - c. Immigrants (Mandarin, Cantonese, Fujianese, Spanish are the most prevalent languages spoken)
 - d. NYCHA residents
 - i. Essex Street Market during high traffic times
 - ii. Door-to-door outreach and flyering
 - iii. Meet with tenant leaders in every building to build trust
 - e. Students

- i. Social media (Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook)
 - ii. Boys Club
 - iii. CBO's
 - iv. Using digital platforms in ways that attract youth, for example, a version of PokemonGo
 - iii. **Where are the best places to reach these groups, as well as the wider spectrum people living and working in the Lower East Side?**
 - a. Community centers and CBO's
 - b. Housing complexes
 - c. Places of worship
 - d. CPC and ISS
 - e. Community gardens and city parks
 - f. Playgrounds near schools
 - g. Essex Street Market
 - h. Street fairs and farmers markets
 - i. Subway and bus stations
 - j. Libraries
 - k. Laundromats
 - l. Schools
 - m. Health clinics
 - n. QR codes places strategically outside and around areas where people gather

5. Suggested next step

- a. During the group brainstorm, it was brought up that the name "Community Engagement Committee" might inherently suggest support of the Lowline, whereas the goal of the Committee is to welcome all people in to express their ideas, whether they are in support of the Lowline or not. Community Board 3 suggested a change in the name may be a good step toward driving this point home. One potential name that was brought up is "Community Advisory Board". This will be a topic of discussion at the next meeting.

6. Next Community Engagement Committee meeting

- a. We will announce the next meeting in the coming weeks. Stay Tuned!

Attendee List for 9/22/16:

Mohammed Alam, local resident
Katie Archer, Delancey Street Associates
Dominic Berg, local resident
Michele Benjamin, local resident
MyPhuong Chung, local resident/
Lynne Guey, NYCEDC
Jan Hanvik, Cross the Bridges
Rae Ishee, Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects
Sue Lalchan, Grand Street Settlement AmeriCorps Program
Zarela Maldonado, local resident
Shantelena Mouzon, Parent of Young Designers Program student
Nasir Mouzon-Cooley, Former Young Designers Program student and current Lab Ambassador



lowline

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Lisa Nash, Our Power
Signe Nielsen, Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architects
Tim Laughlin, LES Partnership

Lowline Attendees for 9/22/16:

Dan Barasch, Lowline Co-Founder
Melanie del Rosario, Lowline Program Manager for Young Ambassadors
Justin Rivera, Lowline Lab Site Manager
Robyn Shapiro, Lowline Deputy Director
Courtney Surmanek, Lowline Manager

Consultant Team Attendees:

Rebecca Karp, Principal of Karp Strategies
Erik Kath, Associate Director of rePlace Urban Studio
Evelyn Thomas, rePlace Urban Studio

Confirmed Committee members to date:

Dominic Berg, local resident
Rabbi Aviad Bodner, Stanton Street Shul
David Bolotsky, Friends of Gullick Park
Huy Bui, An Choi and Plant-in-City
Thanh Bui, Grand Street Settlement
Simon Chiew, Chinese-American Planning Council
Scott Conti, New Design High School
Talia DeRogatis, Henry Street Settlement
Alison Fleminger, University Settlement
Trevor Holland, Two Bridges Tenant Association
Linda Jones, local resident
Meghan Joye, local resident, local business owner
Sue Lalchan, Grand Street Settlement AmeriCorps Program
Tim Laughlin, Lower East Side Partnership
Brett and Ella Leitner, local residents
Gigi Li, local resident
Shantelena Mouzon, Parent of Young Designers Program student
Anchael Ng, local resident
Carmen Orta, Seward Park Extension
Nancy Ortiz, Vladeck Houses
Daisy Paez, Grant Street Guild Residents Association
Victoria Reichelt, local resident
Anne Saxelby, Essex Street Market
Risa Shoup, Fourth Arts Block
Carolyn Sickles, Henry Street Settlement / Abrons Art Center
Nadia Tykulska, Fourth Arts Block
Alan Van Capelle, Educational Alliance
Thomas Yu, Asian Americans for Equality