



**BLEECKER AREA MERCHANTS' & RESIDENTS'  
ASSOCIATION**  
**215 Thompson Street, Box #337, New York, NY 10012**

**Merchant Chair**  
**Treasurer**

*Sam Jacob*  
*Russell Blount*

**Resident Chair**  
**Secretary**

*Shelly Warwick*  
*Mark Fiedler*

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**Website:** <http://www.bamranyc.org>

**BAMRA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**Wednesday, September 5, 2018**  
**Community Room, 505 LaGuardia Place – 6:30 pm**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m.

As Resident Chair Shelly Warwick was recovering from major surgery, Secretary Mark Fiedler chaired the meeting.

Treasurer Russell Blount reported that BAMRA is now receiving its monthly bank statements and the bank balance as of September 5, 2018, is \$33,780.54. In response to the question whether we had received payment from our street fair, Ray Cline noted that the event was shared with the Village Reform Democratic Club (VRDC) and that we would be “fighting” for our share of the income.

A motion was proposed, seconded and unanimously adopted to bring Resident Chair Shelly Warwick flowers for her convalescence from surgery. Ray Cline, whose daughter Jenny is taking care of Shelly’s cabin, volunteered to bring them.

The minutes of the June 6, 2018 general membership meeting were made available in printed copies, as Mark did not have access to the BAMRA website in time for this meeting. After members took the opportunity to read them, they were approved by unanimous vote, as was the agenda.

Ray Cline reported that a certain disabled person, with the help of an attorney, as “shaken down” at least one local merchant—Mercer Books, on Mercer Street south of Bleecker Street, in an area already depressed by NYU’s construction—for \$5,000 with regard to compliance under the Americans with Disabilities act. (This has happened to at least one other local business, Da Marcella at 142 West Houston Street, which was forced to close this past July; see <https://nypost.com/2018/07/23/restaurateur-i-had-to-close-over-handicap-ramp-shakedown/>.) Even though the owner believes his store has complied with the law for the 27 years it has been in business, \$5,000 is much less than the cost to litigate the issue. Some options to help him were discussed: arranging for pro bono legal help through VRDC (which Ray said he would pursue); publishing a story in a local newspaper to alert other merchants and the public. Also discussed were possible ways that BAMRA could help, short of funding the litigation, such as posting flyers for the store. It was proposed that we send an email informing local merchants of this trolling activity, and possibly enlist an attorney (pro bono?) to prepare an *amicus curiae* brief to help with any litigation.

The subject of Haven Green, the new 122-unit, LBGTQ-friendly, “100% affordable” senior housing project in Little Italy which was presented in last month’s general membership meeting, was discussed again. By way of its significance for our area, it was noted that residents of our neighborhood will be given preferential treatment in the lottery; also that its being built on the site of a community garden (i.e., Elizabeth Garden) has led to considerable community opposition. Moreover, the neighboring 10-story U-shaped building would keep the proposed green space in perpetual shade. An alternative site has been identified, but it is in Corey Johnson’s City Council district, not Margaret Chin’s, and Ms. Chin would like to have credit for the project.

There was no update from the NYPD 6<sup>th</sup> Precinct, as the officers had to respond to an emergency call.

There were no new liquor license applications coming before Community Board 2 Manhattan. Of this month’s renewal applications, Monte’s Trattoria (97 MacDougal Street) was noted on the occasion of their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. No objections were raised as to the other two renewal applicants, Off the Wagon (109 MacDougal Street) and The Half Pint (76 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street).

Next was a discussion of the possibility of changing the date of BAMRA’s general membership meetings (now held the first Wednesday of each month) as a result of Community Board 2 Manhattan changing the dates of its SLA Committee meetings (tentatively planned for the first Tuesday and Thursday), so that we might hear liquor license applicants in advance of the Community Board. The last Wednesday of the month would conflict with the 6<sup>th</sup> Precinct Community Council meetings, but the last Tuesday or Thursday might work. (It was noted that Thursdays are “long days” for restaurants, preparing for the weekend.) In addition, we would have to visit the CB2 office in advance of each meeting to identify the liquor license applicants, as the next month’s calendar will not yet have been posted to the website. It was proposed that we solicit the opinions of our members regarding the meeting date, and that we speak with Florence Arenas, who handles these matters at the CB2 office, about getting the list of applicants in advance.

Next was a discussion of BAMRA’s role in landmarks and historic preservation. It was proposed that we revive our yearly contribution to the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation. A motion was proposed but not seconded, to make an immediate donation to GVSHP, but no amount (\$100? \$150?) was agreed on. It was proposed that we determine what we have contributed in the past, and that we forward GVSHP’s relevant emails to our members.

The final agenda item was expanding BAMRA’s role in the community. It was noted that Terri Cude, who runs BAMRA’s document shredding and learn-to-ride-a-bike events in addition to her duties as Chair of CB2 Manhattan and Democratic Party District Leader, is concerned about not being the “bottleneck” with regard to further activities. The following, suggested by Terri (thank you!), were discussed:

- Fire Department CPR training (could be at the beginning of a BAMRA meeting, though might have to start 1/2 to 1 hour earlier than the usual 6:30 start time). Free.  
<http://www.fdnysmart.org/cpr> (click "request a class for 15+)

- An October paper shred to add to our April one. We often get asked when our next shred will be, and it seems most of the other shred events are in the spring. The cost is about \$450 for two hours (which is plenty of time). <https://www.timeshred.com/services/shredding-events/> (call and ask for Joe Schepis, since we may be getting a lower rate than the usual Community Shred rate). (As this would conflict with Ray Cline's vital election-season work, it might be better to have this the week after Election Day.)
- An adult bike skills/Citi Bike course in Mercer Playground. See options at <https://www.bike.nyc/education/classes/>. Last year Terri worked with Sameer Tolani <stolani@bike.nyc> for the kids' one, but they do have several other programs that might be useful, especially with the growth of Citi Bikes and other bike commuting. Might be nice if we helped people learn to ride SAFELY rather than running into pedestrians....
- Another "Operation Safe Child" (kids identity cards - especially if they're still doing the Rock Wall) with NYPD Community Affairs like we did several years ago in Mercer Playground. <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/bureaus/administrative/youth-services.page>
- Announce that merchants can check the CB2 Calendar at [cb2manhattan.org](http://cb2manhattan.org) to participate in the new Economic Development & Small Business Committee meetings. The next meeting of that committee is September 27th.

It was also noted that BAMRA receives 100 daffodil bulbs each year from the NYC Parks Department, and should be planted in the fall, before the ground freezes, and we could host the same kind of planting event that we have in the past.

It was also noted that we need to proceed with our order for trash receptacles and our state tax exemption in that regard.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**To-do list:**

Seek feedback from members on monthly meeting date

Research GVSHHP contribution

Research possibility of legal help (*amicus* brief) regarding trolling

Send emails to merchants regarding ADA trolling (have they been attacked?) and CB2 Economic Development & Small Business Committee

Follow up on trash receptacles and state tax exemption