

Cultural Institutions Group

Testimony to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations

September 29, 2014

Good morning Chairman Van Bramer, Council Member Levin and members of the Committee. I am Sara Marinello, Executive Director of Government and Community Affairs at the Wildlife Conservation Society. I am here today to represent the Cultural Institutions Group – a diverse group of 33 non-profit institutions - zoos, botanic gardens, museums and performing arts spaces located on city property throughout the five boroughs – that together touch the lives of millions of New Yorkers all across the city.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Intro 419, a proposal to establish a comprehensive cultural plan. We once again applaud your vision and leadership in working to ensure all New Yorkers have access to a variety of cultural offerings – an aspiration we share as we work with the City Council and the Administration to expand admission and education opportunities through programs like Urban Advantage, CASA and the new Municipal ID membership offer as well as through our institutions' variety of individual programs.

As much as the CIG supports the concept of a comprehensive cultural plan, many of our questions and concerns expressed at the committee's hearing last fall regarding scope, funding for and timing of the plan remain.

The administrative burden and cost of developing such a plan should not be placed solely on the Department of Cultural Affairs. Costs could easily exceed \$500,000. As a comprehensive citywide effort, funding over and above the adopted FY15 cultural budget must be identified to create a plan. Otherwise the process will hurt the very sector it is intended to help.

For this plan to be truly comprehensive, the scope of research, information gathering, and public discourse outlined in Intro 419 must not only ensure the responsibility of active participation by all relevant city agencies but should also shine a light on the resource needs of the city's existing rich cultural resources, many of which touch every community in the city.

It is also important for the plan to be fully inclusive of all forms of culture and go beyond the arts to other parts of the cultural sector including science-based cultural institutions. There are several instances in the bill where the word arts should be changed to culture.

In addition, the working group and citizen's advisory committee should include diverse representation from the cultural community including at least one CIG as well as representation from all five boroughs including one appointment by each borough president.

Lastly, for the plan to be truly meaningful and impactful, the deadline must be extended well beyond July 2015 to ensure a robust and transparent planning process.

As a major stakeholder in the cultural agenda of this city, the CIG looks forward to working with the Committee in strengthening Intro 419 in order to create a viable and "living" Cultural Plan.

Thank you.



**New York City Council
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations
Hearing on Int. 419 – A Cultural Plan for the City of New York**

Monday, September 29, 2014, 10:00 AM – Council Chambers, City Hall
Testimony Presented by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl

Good morning Chair Van Bramer and distinguished members of the committee. I am Tom Finkelpearl, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and I am here to present testimony regarding proposed legislation that would amend the City Charter to require a comprehensive cultural plan for New York City. With me today are members of the staff of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

First, thank you for the opportunity to engage in a dialogue around strategies for effectively employing the City's resources to foster more equitable and expansive access to the arts. It is my sense that there is a lot of agreement in this room today about the potential role of culture in the city. We want widely-available opportunities for cultural engagement. We want a city that is affordable and hospitable for artists. We want public spaces enriched with artistic offerings. We want a cultural policy that touches all communities, reinforcing and building on the creativity that is already here. We want to build access to resources across all five boroughs. The question at hand is how to get this done -- how to enrich and support the robust cultural life of New York City. I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the City Council, public and private partners, and residents throughout the City to determine where we should focus our efforts in this regard.

Over the past decades, a handful of cities across the United States have undertaken their own planning processes related to art and culture, including Austin, Denver, and Chicago. In preparation for this testimony, I reviewed some of these plans. I spoke with Chicago's Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, Michelle Boone, and to Gail Lord, whose firm prepared Chicago's plan -- which is considered state-of-the-art. After this preliminary research I was left with the feeling that their broad-based planning exercises were beneficial for those cities. There



is much to admire in the recommendations in each plan, and many of them achieved an impress degree of public engagement. In some cases, like Austin, TX and Portsmouth NH, a primary recommendation was to establish a Department of Cultural Affairs. Boston just hired its first head of cultural affairs in a generation. She will launch a cultural master plan but will oversee a budget of only \$1.3 million. In Chicago, the number 1 recommendation was to reinvigorate arts education in the public schools. But many of these plans outline strategies to achieve a robust level of financial and civic support for culture which is already the hallmark of New York City and this Administration's approach. As you know, arts education in the public schools is high on our agenda. DCLA is America's second largest public funder of culture -- second only to the federal government.

Before getting into more detail, it is important to note that the word "culture" often is confused with "art." The proposed legislation talks a lot about artists, arts education, art in the community, and so on. But our agency oversees and funds zoos and gardens, as well as museums that focus on history and science. So it is important to recognize the full range of what we consider to be cultural activity. This means understanding and assessing the value of exposure to nature, the role of experiential education in science-- and how access to these experiences is distributed in our city. Also -- should we confine our inquiries to the nonprofit sector where we focus most of our attention, or should we include the for-profit arts from Broadway theater, to the motion picture industry, to music clubs? What about the dance group associated with Mexicanos Unidos de Queens and other small, informal groups that contribute to creative vitality to neighborhoods all over the city? New York's cultural sector is enormous -- especially when defined broadly.

Let me be clear, many of the ideas in the proposed legislation are closely aligned with our priorities at DCLA. For example, the statement of legislative intent recognizes the importance of understanding the scope of cultural services throughout the City. Yes, it is important to know where services are robust, where they are thin, and how the gaps can be filled. While we are always listening to our constituents, we need to undertake an in-depth, data-driven assessment



of these offerings in their entirety. If we want an arts policy that serves the entire city, first we need to understand where we are falling short. We have been discussing how this might be implemented. This has been a theme in other plans. Denver's plan, for example, has a lot to say about the distribution of cultural resources.

And we are open to other recommendations contained in the legislation, such as simplifying the process for presenting art in public places. A stakeholder dialogue in collaboration with city agencies, public art organizations, and artists that examines the potentials for art in the City's public spaces could open the doors to a richer intersection of art and urban space.

The legislation proposes that we find ways to help artists thrive in New York in our current real estate environment. Two years ago Cultural Affairs helped to launch Spaceworks, whose executive director will testify later today. Spaceworks is dedicated to expanding the supply of affordable workspace for artists in New York, a response to exactly your point about the retention of creative talent. I am a big fan of this initiative. But a comprehensive analysis of the real estate environment in relation to artists needs may be beyond the current scope of the agency's resources or functions. Also, it is important to understand that New York's real estate environment presents issues for low and middle income individuals across the board -- not just artists. The opening of P.S.109 in East Harlem next year will be a great moment for the discussion of the complexities of artist housing and its relationship to affordable housing as a whole.

We also wholly support the legislation's encouragement of interagency collaboration. This has been a part of Cultural Affairs' DNA for some time, often with a lens of equity and access. Our SPARC program, in partnership with the Department for the Aging and local arts councils, funds artist residencies in our senior centers; Materials for the Arts, which we run in collaboration with the Department of Sanitation and Department of Education, recycles and distributes materials to schools and arts organizations across the City; we will continue to work with the Department of Education to improve arts education in and out of school time -- including the expansion of



the CASA program in partnership with you, the Council; and finally, it was a great day at the Bronx Zoo a couple of weeks ago when the cultural benefits package for Municipal ID holders was announced by Mayor de Blasio-- a collaboration with the Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Council, and our partners in the Cultural Institutions Group. The cultural benefits package initiative has the potential to open up our cultural institutions to whole new audiences. Since starting as commissioner, I have been meeting with other agency heads to examine additional opportunities for collaboration. This is an ongoing project that is one of my highest priorities. That having been said, mandating all agencies to analyze how they can incorporate arts to enhance their mission, as the legislation does, is in many cases outside the expertise, resource, and the legal functions of City agencies. Doing so could divert resources critical from their core functions.

It is also unclear how the oversight groups established by this bill would complement or detract from the role of the Cultural Affairs Advisory Commission established by the City Charter. Parts of the proposed bill appear to be duplicative of many of the activities and purposes of the Commission. The powers of these groups may also conflict with the City's charter in some cases.

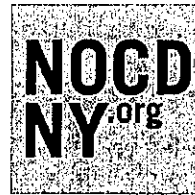
In the proposed legislation, there is a suggestion that we undertake a study to quantify the economic impact of the arts in New York. Such studies have been conducted in the past. I believe that we all understand culture's economic value, and you will continue to hear me talk about it in hearings to come. But it is an argument that works best for larger-scale institutions that can drive tourism, and does not really get at the value of more locally-based groups. This April we began discussions with Professor Mark Stern, head of the Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at the University of Pennsylvania. SIAP seeks to measure and document the relationship between the arts and social wellbeing in urban neighborhoods and track the potential benefits from investment in cultural vitality. Professor Stern has agreed to perform a study focusing on New York's cultural vitality and has already started with an analysis of demographic data from the U.S. Census and other sources. With preliminary results



expected by late next spring, this study would be an excellent way to focus our cultural planning activities and to provide a solid foundation for a deep, evidence-based analysis of New York's cultural assets. Reviewing some of the testimony presented last November at the hearing on the initial cultural plan legislation, one motif was that some people were worried about diverting substantial resources from the Department of Cultural Affairs. Our engagement of Social Impact of the Arts Project is being funded by private philanthropy.

I do not want to suggest that we are opposed to planning. Quite the contrary, many of the programs and initiatives I have been talking about are the result of planning, analysis, and community input from a variety of stakeholders, including our partners in the City Council. But from an administrative perspective, we are a relatively small agency. We deliver around \$150 million every year in operational funding and around the same in capital support for cultural institutions (something no other city in America does, by the way). We spend less than 4% of our budget on staffing. Planning is absolutely necessary – the question is how to plan effectively. My hesitation relates to the breadth of the plan as it is currently written. There are many suggestions in the legislation that would benefit from a targeted study that would allow us to dive deeply into an issue and come up with substantial initiatives. Again, I appreciate the spirit in which the plan is presented, and I think we have a lot of the same goals. My question is how we can most effectively achieve them. Broadly-based cultural plans typically take a minimum of one year – and sometimes up to two years – to complete, diverting the human resources of the cultural agency during that period. There are suggestions in the plan we could dive into right away. As I said at the top, I am open to this dialogue. I have been listening carefully since my appointment. I would like to continue this now by listening to some of the groups presenting testimony after me.

Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.



Caron Atlas, Director, Arts & Democracy Project and Co-Director, Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts, NY (NOCD-NY) Testimony

Oversight: In relation to a Comprehensive Cultural Plan, September 29, 2014
NYC Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergruop Relations

Majority Leader Van Bramer and committee members, I'm Caron Atlas and I direct the Arts & Democracy Project, which cross-pollinates arts and culture, participatory democracy, and social justice. I also co-direct Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY (NOCD-NY), a citywide coalition that has come together to use our creativity to revitalize New York City from the neighborhood up. We support the comprehensive cultural plan and welcome the opportunity to become part of the planning process.

New York needs a transparent cultural plan so the city can be explicit about its cultural policy and how it furthers a progressive agenda. An implicit policy disconnects culture from social change and prevents us from having a conversation about the value of arts and culture in our communities and in the city.

The plan should reflect and support a broad and dynamic definition of arts and culture and the recognition that culture and creativity are an integral part of strong and resilient communities. The planning process and the cultural policy it shapes should be grounded in our neighborhoods, valuing the knowledge, leadership, and creativity within them.

We believe that the people most impacted by policymaking need to play a leadership role in determining that policy, and that includes members of our communities, artists, and the diverse range of cultural organizations and networks reflecting the demographics of our city. It should be a plan for all of New York City, what it is now and what it might become.

We recommend that the plan draw on existing resources, such as NOCD-NY's innovative uses of public space profiles and the cultural asset mapping of our members. Our colleagues have much to offer as well, and the process should incorporate this field knowledge. Also of value is grounded research, such as that done by the Social Impact of the Arts Project.

Culture is connected to such issues as economic stratification, racial segregation, immigration, education, and community development, to name a few. We want to help create a plan that recognizes this and factors in the realities of NYC's changing demographics, gentrifying communities, and income inequality.

This plan will further the role of arts and culture to strengthen community identity and networks and provide opportunities for dialogue across difference. It will support the important intersection between cultural innovation and an inclusive economy and help longtime residents stay in their neighborhoods and feel like they belong there. It will promote cultural impact studies for new

development projects to assess the impact of development on a neighborhood's cultural fabric.

A successful process and outcome will promote cultural and racial equity ascribing value, and increasing access and equity to, diverse communities and cultures through its grant making, capital allocations, definitions of excellence, design aesthetics, compositions of commissions and peer panels, and choice of where to site cultural resources and amenities. This may include, for example, "fair share" responses to the historic undercapitalization of community-based cultural centers in communities of color and low income communities.

The plan will result in the integration of arts and culture into various policymaking contexts in a sustained and systemic manner through cultural liaisons in all agencies and for city council members, support for capacity building and demonstration projects, and community board cultural committees.

It will result in an investment in artists and other cultural workers, protecting their rights as labor, and improving their working conditions. This is not as a special group, but as allied to others who are often freelance and independent workers, and need a living wage, fair benefits, a social safety net, affordable workspace, and protection against occupational hazards and unfair labor practices.

The plan will lift up promising grassroots practices, supporting the ingenuity within our cultural community and neighborhoods. It will result in greater support for community-based public art that gives a public face to our neighborhood social networks, and increase access to public space including plazas, parks, libraries, community centers, and the Internet.

It will increase recognition of and support for the role of arts and culture as part of inclusive civic engagement. We have seen this happen in many ways including hurricane recovery and resiliency planning, engaging diverse communities in participatory budgeting, and animating civic spaces. Many cultural organizations have sustained relationships with groups and coalitions working for progressive change; we saw that very publically in the recent Peoples Climate march.

We urge the city to take the time needed for a process that is truly participatory, transparent, inclusive, and equitable – and to avoid the many cookie cutter planning approaches that would counter these values. The plan should be a public private partnership that brings multiple experiences and perspectives to the table, funded by new dollars, and bringing new resources to the field.

We have experienced how planning tied to community organizing can be inclusive, creative, and dynamic – shifting power by bringing those who have been historically disenfranchised into leadership, and using cultural methodologies to fully engage both the head and heart. We have the opportunity to make this planning process a preview of the city policy and practice of arts and culture for a just and equitable city. We offer our network across the city, our experience, and our diverse constituency to help make this happen.

Additional recommendations are included in the brief "Arts and Culture for a Just and Equitable City, by Arts & Democracy, NOCD-NY, and Groundswell which can be found at: <http://artsanddemocracy.org/uploads/Policy%20Brief.pdf>



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Good morning Chairperson Van Bramer and Members of the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Libraries. I am Katy Rubin, Executive Director of Theatre of the Oppressed NYC, a cultural nonprofit organization creating theatre-for-social-change in partnership with communities facing discrimination throughout the 5 boroughs. Some of our partners include Housing Works, the Ali Forney Center, and the Center for Court Innovation, and this morning I am also here on behalf of many of the artists we work with in those communities. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today in regards to Intro 419.

We fully support including a comprehensive cultural plan in the city's charter. Currently, the cultural needs of all citizens of NYC are not always met. We agree there should be standards set to ensure access and impact, and we have several additional points and concerns.

1. The citizen's advisory committee should include those not often served by the city's cultural offerings, including the homeless, public housing residents, court-involved youth, immigrants, etc.; and both advising bodies should include members from all 5 boroughs. The working group can help access these points of view as well, as long as there's a priority to include community-engaged arts organizations in the group as well as representatives from the city's fine-arts institutions. The borough arts councils and NYC's cultural advocacy organizations have information about who these community-engaged players are in the cultural sector, and should be involved in the selection process of the working group.
2. The deadline of July 1, 2015 for the submission of the cultural plan may not provide enough time for a thorough planning process. A rushed process will not yield results that maximize the benefits of the plan for all New Yorkers.
3. We support that the plan addresses the space needs of artists and arts organizations. However, in addition to studio or rehearsal space and affordable housing, which are very important, the plan should address affordable office space, in the effort to allow community-based arts organizations with small budgets to succeed and be sustainable. *Sustainability must be emphasized, for the long-term vitality of the sector and for the economic health of all New Yorkers.*
4. We hope that in investigating patterns of funding to cultural organizations, the plan will not only assess which organizations are being funded and at what level, but also *how* they are being funded (i.e. simply program support vs. capacity building), and identify funding solutions that could create a sustainable funding model for culture.
5. Intro 419 does not discuss how the plan itself will be funded. New funding should be provided for the planning process to ensure the creation of a cultural plan does not have a negative impact on the cultural sector due to a redirection of much-needed funds.



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6. We particularly support the initiative to examine how arts can be incorporated into community and economic development planning processes and policies (3g). Arts are already a crucial part of these processes, sometimes under-the-radar, and we hope that this plan will involve players such as the NYC Economic Development Corporation, and will seriously investigate the impact of culture: not only ticket-buying and tourism, but also creative community problem-solving and development sparked by interaction with arts and culture. Finally, we see that arts can be a medium of participation in the policy-making process, and we hope that the plan will consider that potential strength of the cultural sector as well.

We are very appreciative of the Council for your continued focus on the cultural health of New York City, and look forward to supporting the development of this plan in whatever ways we can. Thank you.

This concludes my written testimony.



**Testimony – Tamara Greenfield, Executive Director, Fourth Arts Block,
and Co-director, NOCD-NY**

Oversight: In relation to a Comprehensive Cultural Plan, September 29, 2014

Majority Leader Van Bramer and members of the City Council - thank you for this opportunity to testify about developing a comprehensive cultural plan for NYC.

I am Tamara Greenfield, Executive Director of Fourth Arts Block or FAB, a neighborhood wide coalition of 28 arts and community organizations in the East Village & Lower East Side. I am also co-director of Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY (NOCD-NY), a citywide coalition of community based cultural leaders working to revitalize NYC from the neighborhood up.

I believe that the development of a cultural plan for NYC offers unparalleled opportunities to bring artists, residents, cultural and community leaders together to develop an inclusive vision for how the arts could be part of the cultural vitality of every community in New York City.

I recommend that we take the time needed to engage a wide range of perspectives in this important planning process. Done thoughtfully and with extensive public participation, a comprehensive cultural plan for New York City can help open up opportunity to diverse artists, increase equitable participation, and extend and deepen access to more communities.

In many past hearings, I have shared testimony on recommendations from our network of community based arts & cultural partners in NOCD-NY. I believe that cultural plan can help us to accomplish many of these recommendations, including:

Recognize and support a strong, diverse arts ecology in New York City.

- Include leadership in the planning process from all sectors, disciplines, scales, and geographies to represent the wide breadth of expertise and perspective in the cultural community.

Develop cross sector partnerships and arts-friendly public policies for each city agency.

- By including all agencies in the planning process, we can streamline and reform policies that apply unwieldy restrictions or discriminate against cultural activities on public land, trains, and other spaces.
- Establish cultural liaisons in each agency who can facilitate and support partnerships between cultural groups and city agencies to integrate arts and culture into safe streets and transportation, education, immigration, sustainability, zoning, and community development.
- Support and expand partnerships between agencies that facilitate ongoing artist residencies (SPARC, Sanitation) and community use of public space like DOT's Weekend Walks

Make information on cultural policy, creative opportunities, and public spaces more transparent and accessible.

- Create user-friendly, transparent, and easily accessible information about public agency roles, rules, and processes for gaining access to outdoor public space or partnering with city agencies.

Invest in neighborhood infrastructure to support civic engagement and cultural equity in all communities.

- Continue capital funding for community based arts and cultural organizations, like the Bronx River Arts Center and Nuyorican Poets Café.
- Think creatively about reuse of spaces to facilitate projects like the Riverside Campus for the Arts and Environment in a former brownfield in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx
- Create space-sharing agreements between private and public sector parties that facilitate community uses, like the Queens Museum's Heart of Corona plaza project.
- Create more opportunities to establish ongoing workspaces in city-owned property like libraries and recreation centers through long term leases, nonprofit partnerships and RFPs

Explore creative policy approaches to support neighborhood-based culture.

- Let's use every tool at our disposal, from publicly funded marketing and promotion (i.e. NYC & Co, MTA maps), to reduction in bureaucratic barriers (i.e. SAPO) and enforcement of illegal

conversions of manufacturing space, to information sharing, to more radical approaches like community land trusts, and tax credits.

FAB and NOCD-NY are both eager and ready to be active partners, conveners, and contributors to the comprehensive cultural plan. We look forward to working with you to build a just, equitable and creative City. Thank you for your time.

Statement by Sheila Lewandowski, Executive Director
The Chocolate Factory Theater
New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Relations
Presented – Monday, September 29, 2014
Int. No. 0419-2014 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan.

Good afternoon, Chairman Van Bramer, Council Member Levin, members of the City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations and sponsors of Introduction No. 1136. This is probably one of the most prestigious, diverse and powerhouse set of sponsors I've witnessed. It shows that this is the time for New York City to officially and formally recognize one its greatest assets - arts and culture.

My name is Sheila Lewandowski, Founder and Director of The Chocolate Factory Theater, a nonprofit award-winning performing arts venue in Long Island City, Queens. I thank you for this opportunity to testify. I won't repeat the words from my November 2013 testimony to this committee on this topic, but have attached it in further support of your vision and action on this. I'll just share a few thoughts in regards to the plan as written.

- The Legislative Intent provides July 1, 2015 as a day for a comprehensive cultural plan to be submitted by or before. I agree with some of my colleagues that there is a lot to do in little time. How about a public check-in by that date with a completion date of May 1, 2016? Or the structure of the committee by January 1, 2015, presentation of a plan of action by June 1, 2015 and plan completion by 5/1/16?
- I recommend having representation from the performing and visual arts on any working committees since their needs are VASTLY different. Ideally a representative working artist who has lived and worked in NYC for at least 10 years from the visual, performing and community-based arts communities as well as an experienced arts educator. Best if each is dedicated to their field and respected.
- In section 3.e there is reference to the variety of real estate needs of artists including studios and housing These are all critically important, but supporting presentation or exhibit spaces is critical, too. There is a reason places like The Chocolate Factory are not opening or only temporarily open. I think more decentralized and smaller presenting spaces could help communities throughout the city.
- In the Legislative Intent concerns about equity by geography is clear and it is justifiable. However, I would add that diversity in services should be considered, as well. Communities are also niche based.
- Are there terms for the Cultural Plan Action Group? How about 3-year terms with annual review by the appointee?

This is a very exciting time. Again, I thank you all for your vision and action.

Statement by Sheila Lewandowski, Executive Director
The Chocolate Factory Theater
New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Relations
Presented – Tuesday, November 19, 2013
Int. No. 1136 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan.

Good afternoon, Chairman Van Bramer, Council Member Levin, members of the City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries & International Intergroup Relations and sponsors of Introduction No. 1136. My name is Sheila Lewandowski, Founder and Director of The Chocolate Factory Theater, a nonprofit award-winning performing arts venue in Long Island City, Queens. I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

There are other cities and countries around the world that have cultural plans including but not limited to Ontario, Vancouver, Hamilton in Canada; Surrey, British Columbia; Cairns, South East Queensland, Wollongong, Newcastle and other regions in Australia; Madison, Wisconsin, US passed a resolution this August authorizing the development of a Cultural Plan; Austin, Texas; Chicago, Illinois; Tallahassee, Florida; Roanoke, Virginia; Decatur, Georgia; Providence, Rhode Island; Edmonds, Washington and many others in the United States and around the world. New York City is not on this list, yet.

Here is a relative statement from the 2012 Cultural Plan for Chicago.

The Cultural Plan gave Chicago the opportunity to use our collective imagination to construct a city based on arts and culture — a city that doesn't just have a "cultural plan" sitting on a shelf but "plans culturally" so that arts and culture are incorporated into all city initiatives from education to transportation! Chicago — this is OUR plan. People voted in town hall meetings and online to clearly say the top three priorities are:

- *Foster arts education and lifelong learning.*
- *Attract and retain artists and creatives.*
- *Promote culture as a fundamental driver of prosperity.*

Some of the fiercest advocates of the arts have legitimate concerns about the implementation of this or any government sanctioned cultural plan. I share some of the concerns, especially about the cost of the plan itself and the condensed timeline for completion. But I also believe the *lack of* a City sanctioned vision statement and subsequent plan creates *more risk* for New York City's diverse cultural and arts activities. Every election brings with it the risk that a new administration or council that does not value the arts will cut support from the budget, not include arts education in curriculum building, not include the needs of artists in commercial and residential planning. The inclusion of such a statement and mandate to create a plan is recognition of how New York City without the arts

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Int. No. 1136 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan.

would be Boring... NYC would not attract innovation, major corporations, families looking for the best education for their children, artists, empty nesters, or the millions of tourists each year. The plumber that lives in Whitestone might never go to the MET, but he probably watches his daughter dance in her recitals and dance teachers do go to the MET.

A Cultural Plan for New York City would provide us with a vision, a strategy or road map for incorporating arts and culture in the City's planning for economically and socially healthy communities. Currently arts and culture are incorporated into new developments, preservation, education, public spaces, marketing and more. That is *informal* recognition of just how vital arts and cultural activities are to the City's identity, economy, and continued attractiveness for development, but without a policy or plan we just keep stopping short of validation and the commitment that follows such validation.

PlanNYC launched in 2007 by Mayor Bloomberg was groundbreaking in that it comprehensively examined the infrastructure of NYC looking ahead to 2030 and an increase of residents by at least one-million and tourists in millions. This plan provided a point of focus around active and passive, private and public development and planning. Like any good strategic plan it is evaluated and evolves frequently as new data informs outcomes. Yes, many different agencies work together to achieve goals of the plan. The Department of Cultural Affairs already works with other agencies including Department of Education to support supplemental education, City Planning on public arts projects, NYC&Co. on marketing, among others. Although Intro 1136 is not putting a mandate for inter-agency work on DCA, evaluation of culture in NYC might necessitate multi-agency cooperation. Implementation of findings will likely point to a need for increased arts education that could impact DOE.

The Cultural Plan would serve a similar purpose if not the same as PlanNYC. What we must accept is that this bill is the seed of that plan and not the plan itself.

I applaud Chairman Van Bramer and Council Member Levin, and all of the sponsors of Introduction No. 1136 for your leadership and vision.

Statement by Sheila Lewandowski, Executive Director
The Chocolate Factory Theater
New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Relations
Presented – Tuesday, November 19, 2013

Int. No. 1136 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan.

If this bill passes, I hope and trust that the vision will be refined and the plan will acknowledge that outcomes will be qualifiable as well as quantifiable. Having read the draft for Intro 1136 I provide the following thoughts.

Cultural groups are one piece of a greater eco-system of arts and culture in New York City. A question to be asked by this plan is how are the services of cultural groups and artists leveraged by other businesses, planners, developers and educators.

In Section 1 what follows *“It is important to understand the scope of cultural services throughout the City, where these services are lacking and how cultural service gaps may be filled”* is a call to *“identify the current level of service of cultural groups in each neighborhood...”*

I support what I believe to be the intent of the statement, but is it possible to say the first step is to map cultural activity and this could include the work of cultural groups but also galleries, comedy clubs, choirs and more? I realize that this is a daunting task, but the full scope of cultural activity is what makes NYC the world’s cultural capital and the gap in services is somewhere between these two things. Something like *“identify cultural activities throughout the city using cultural and community partners as a means to gather documentation of activities in each neighborhood and throughout the city”* could replace *“identify the current level of service of cultural groups in each neighborhood.”*

Lastly, I thank the committee for recognizing that arts and culture cannot exist without artists. They subsidize our city’s identity with their generosity that we often call their obsessive need to create. I’ve shared this before but I will share it again. Many years ago while advocating for funds for artists a legislator asked me why we should give money to artists since they will do it anyway. While there is some truth to this statement there is a bottom from which artists will choose to leave the city. And, we cannot afford to lose all of our artists.

A statement from Vancouver, Canada’s 2008-2018 cultural plan

The creation of this strategic cultural plan signals that the City of Vancouver has made support of and investment in the creative sector a priority. The economic impact – the return on every dollar spent – of support of the arts,

Statement by Sheila Lewandowski, Executive Director

The Chocolate Factory Theater

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Presented – Tuesday, November 19, 2013

Int. No. 1136 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan.

culture, and cultural tourism has been well documented. It must be noted, however, that the intrinsic value of the arts and culture cannot and should not be underestimated. Arts and culture are prerequisites for healthy individuals, neighbourhoods, communities, and society. There is a correlation between exposure to the arts and enhanced cognitive development and the reduction of rehabilitation costs of those who are ill. Cultural participation also provides positive alternatives for our youth. Vancouver's investment is thus strategic and is requisite for a city of international distinction. Whether an individual is a practicing artist, an audience member, volunteer for a cultural institution or a worker in the cultural sector, he or she is part of building community and contributing to the economic and social health of the City.



**Testimony to
The NYC Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**

Delivered by Catherine A. Green, Executive Director, ARTs East New York Inc.

RE: A Local Law to amend the New York City charter, to enact a comprehensive cultural plan

September 29, 2014

Good morning Chairman Van Bramer and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the important subject of enacting a local law to initiate a comprehensive cultural plan for this incredible city in which we live, labor and love. I am Catherine Green, Founder and Executive Director of ARTs East New York Inc. ARTs East New York is dedicated to building a cultural infrastructure and sustainable ecosystem where the arts, economic development and social justice synchronically revitalize a community faced with disproportionate needs.

As I am sure you are aware, arts and culture are the roots of communities across the globe. According to the Americans for the Arts research report "Arts & Economic Prosperity IV", every day more than 100,000 nonprofit arts and culture organizations act as economic drivers - creating an industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue, and is the cornerstone of our tourism industry. This study documents the key role played by the nonprofit arts and culture industry, and their audiences, in strengthening our nation's economy.¹ With this research as well as our everyday experience working on the ground in our community, It is our firm belief at ARTs East New York that supporting a comprehensive cultural plan for New York City will improve livability and development outcomes that have the potential to radically change the future for existing residents of neighborhoods much like East New York, Brooklyn.

¹ Americans For The Arts. (2010). <http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/research-studies-publications/arts-economic-prosperity-iv/download-the-report>. Retrieved from americansfor the arts.org.

Enacting a comprehensive cultural plan for New York City is an essential process that will allow an equal and fair approach to providing resources to all communities that make up this great city. Amending the city's charter through a comprehensive and participatory process is a commendable and responsible approach to ensuring that New York City is indeed the Cultural Capital of this great nation.

Recommendations

New York City should take the lead on ensuring that each of its communities are an integral part of the assessment process. I am proud of this committee's diligent approach to ensuring that resources and needs are met throughout the cultural sector. This qualitative approach for communities all over this city will be the beginning of a movement to invest in neighborhoods of all shapes and sizes. To accomplish these goals the Committee should consider:

- Seeking out artists that are native to or exist in the neighborhoods studied to implement work in the very community in which they reside.
- Identifying social issues that can be addressed and or enhanced through strength of the cultural sector.
- Creating an advisory committee for each borough of individuals who are experts or have experience in innovation in the fields of the arts, real estate, social services, technology, urban planning as well as community residents to develop a strategic plan to implement this important work throughout the city.



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Testimony for Hearing on Initiative No. 419: Comprehensive Cultural Plan for NYC
September 29, 2014

I am Ella J. Weiss, President of Brooklyn Arts Council. I am here today to speak in support of creating a comprehensive cultural plan for New York City, and to offer Brooklyn Arts Council's assistance in realizing this goal. I believe that creating a cultural plan will further elevate the standing of arts and culture within the city's governing philosophy, and encourage all city agencies to support arts and culture.

Although arts and culture are deeply interwoven into the fabric of our city, making it a destination for travelers from around the world, and forming a substantial economic anchor, the sector is fragile. We need the support of all city agencies to help maintain and grow this sector, working in coordination through a well-researched, comprehensive plan.

As part of Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams' transition team, BAC coordinated a set of focus groups to explore the current state of the cultural community in Brooklyn, and discuss its greatest needs. The feedback we received highlights how artists and cultural groups face challenges in areas from transportation to housing that can only be addressed through a coordinated effort amongst city agencies. Presenting organizations and leaders of open studio events explained how unexpected transportation outages and changes hampered the accessibility and success of their events. Of course, the need for affordable living and working space was a constant refrain, as was the need for greater funding.

These complex challenges are acutely felt in Brooklyn, but also in many neighborhoods city wide, and they require complex solutions. A cultural plan will help the city marshal the resources and coordination needed to address them. Without this investment, New York City faces very real threats of losing its primacy as an arts destination, and as a place where the arts and culture elevate the quality of life across all five boroughs.

I believe it is important that funds are provided for the development of the plan without reducing existing arts and culture funding. Additionally, I encourage the Council to ensure that the working group and citizen's advisory committee charged with creating the plan reflect the diversity of the city, and to allow each Borough President to appoint a member to each group. Finally, I suggest the Council review the proposed timeline to ensure it is adequate to the demands of such an ambitious and important project. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the arts and culture in all of New York City.



Brooklyn, NY

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City Council Cultural Plan testimony – Sept. 29, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Alec Duffy and I'm the Artistic Director of JACK, a new performance venue in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn, which I started with a small group of co-founders two years ago. In this moment dedicated to the arts in our city, I thought I'd borrow a page from the Academy Awards, where they list those movie stars that had recently passed. I'd like to take a moment to list the small venues under 100 seats that have closed in the past two years in New York.

Incubator Arts Project, a theater in the East Village
The Douglass Street Music Collective in Brooklyn's Gowanus district
CenterStage NYC, a theater in Chelsea
The Red Room, a theater in the East Village
The Living Theater in the East Village
The Living Room, a music venue in the Lower East Side
Bowery Poetry Club in the East Village
92Y Tribeca (formerly Makor), a music and art venue
The Collapsible Hole, a theater in Williamsburg
Death by Audio, a music venue in Williamsburg
Dance New Amsterdam, in lower Manhattan
b.p.m., a music venue in Williamsburg
Zebulon, a music venue in Williamsburg
Joyce Soho a dance space in lower Manhattan
Brooklyn Rod & Gun – a music venue in Williamsburg
Exit Art, a gallery/performance space in Hell's Kitchen
Location One a gallery/performance space in Soho
Magic Future Box a theater venue in South Brooklyn
285 Kent, a music venue in Williamsburg

Now, of course, there's something about Academy Awards tribute that is not completely devastating, because one knows that many more humans will be born that same year and there will never be an end to the cycle of great film stars. In that spirit, I'd like to list the venues under 100 seats that I know have opened in the past two years, besides our own space, JACK:

SubCulture, a music venue on Bleecker St.
The Sheen Center, a theater run by the Catholic Church in NoLiTa
Cloud City, a music venue in Williamsburg

In the 1970s, 80s and 90s, small venues were the lifeblood of the New York arts scene – the performing artists that we now see on our biggest spaces likely developed their craft and gained their first audiences in small venues. They are a critical space for early experimentation and risk-taking, and also audience development.

But because of prohibitive rent, and no city or state structures to step in to help, it's likely these mass closings will continue, leaving the city awash in new \$10 million buildings for mid-sized organizations, but no smaller venues feeding artists into those building and developing local audiences for the arts. In my case, the only reason we were able to open JACK is that my wife and I spent \$75,000 of our own money to open JACK, all of our savings. How many other New Yorkers can we count on to do that?

We are facing a crisis. What we need is a Marshall Plan for small venue development:

- To create a stand-alone funding unit for small venues and arts organizations that provides grants of significance early on, instead of demanding a venue get on its feet alone. As it stands, small venues can't expect to receive more than \$10,000 in city funds until after many years of existence. With something equivalent to the \$5 million given by the city to a large venue, 50 small venues could get \$100,000 each, enough to radically change the prospects of their survival.
- The Council can also offer a forceful connection to real estate interests in placing arts entrepreneurs like myself in space, either in new developments or in unused buildings. I know there are other organizations that are working on advocating for that kind of action.

It is my hope hat the city senses how valuable these small venues are to the broader arts landscape, in developing emerging artists and also encouraging grassroots arts participation. If the field is left as it is, with real estate prices rising and no compensatory action on the part of the city to ensure small arts activity, there is a danger that this city council committee will preside over the death of the arts in New York City. Let it instead be a part of a massive revival of small arts organizations. Thank you for your time.

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM LIBRARY

170 Central Park West, New York, NY 10024 (212) 873-3400 www.nyhistory.org

**Testimony of the New-York Historical Society
Before the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs
Re: Comprehensive Cultural Plan
Presented September 29, 2014**

Good morning, members of the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, and thank you for the opportunity to present today. My name is Laura Washington and I am Vice President of Communications at the New-York Historical Society. I am here today to highlight New-York Historical Society's successful efforts in increasing inclusivity and visitors from all five boroughs, particularly New York City public school students. Our hope is that the New-York Historical Society's experience can be used as a role model citywide as you consider a comprehensive cultural plan.

First, some background: The New-York Historical Society is New York's oldest cultural institution. It was founded in 1804 and its holdings documenting the history of early America are considered among the most important in the country.

Over the past decade, the institution has utilized its collections to shed its reputation as elitist and inaccessible. It accomplished that by producing exhibitions that make history matter and by each year engaging NYC public schools in all 5 boroughs and more than 280,000 public school students and teachers through interactive tours, curriculum development, and teacher training and certification programs.

Since 2004, the New-York Historical has consistently mounted major American history exhibitions that move us forward. These include the 2005-6 series on Slavery in New York, the 2010 exhibition Nueva York: 1613-1945 and this year's Chinese American: Exclusion/Inclusion.

As we put together these exhibitions, we form and nurture partnerships throughout the city.

Our partners include community leaders, academic institutions, city agencies, religious institutions, and other cultural institutions and libraries such as the Schomburg Center for Research in Black History, Sandy Ground in Staten Island and Brooklyn's Weeksville, Queens Library, and Museum of Chinese in America and the Asia Society. We worked with El Museo del Barrio on an exhibition that explored the vital role Spanish-speaking people have played over four centuries of NY city history; and for Revolution! The Atlantic World Reborn, which centered on the Haitian Revolution, we had collaborators from Haitian humanitarian organizations, cultural groups, and civic leaders. Our free programming around that exhibition included the "Haiti Day" community event, which was promoted actively to the Haitian American community.

In pursuing our commitment to supplement and enhance the school curriculum, the New-York Historical Society aligns all of its educational programming materials with local, state, and federal standards. We offer low-cost or free on-site programming for visiting k-12 classes.

We offer professional development and credit-bearing courses for teachers. For example, last spring, we had a free full-day professional development program that featured remarks by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and sessions led by constitutional scholars and education professionals.

In addition to direct partnership with the schools and teachers, the N-YHS also supports students' academic achievement and the acquisition of 21st century skills through unique out-of-school-opportunities. For example, the Student Historian High School Internship program provides vocational training for New York City high school students from diverse backgrounds. For the past three years, our student historians have mounted a history exhibition on Governors Island.

The New-York Historical Society's groundbreaking exhibitions make history matter not only because they tell stories that has never been told before but also because the stories they tell is of huge consequence to us, to all of us, as Americans. I hope this information is useful to you.

**Testimony to the New York City Council
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and Intergroup Relations
RE: Intro 419**

**Paul Parkhill, Executive Director, Spaceworks
September 29, 2014**

My name is Paul Parkhill and I am the Executive Director of Spaceworks, a nonprofit that builds affordable, long-term work space for visual and performing artists around New York City. Spaceworks was created in 2011 in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs to help ensure that New York remains a place where artists can afford to produce work.

To date Spaceworks has opened two pilot sites – a rehearsal space pilot in Long Island City, Queens and a visual art space pilot in Gowanus, Brooklyn. We are currently in construction on our third project on the top floor of the Williamsburgh branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, which will offer work space for both visual and performing artists, as well as new resources and programs for library patrons and community members. We plan to break ground on a 21,000 square foot project on Governors Island this coming spring, and have several other projects in the pipeline, including two sites under consideration in the Bronx.

Spaceworks itself represents a tangible illustration of how DCLA has taken a proactive approach to addressing affordability issues within the cultural community, and how it has made efforts to extend the benefits of cultural funding to artists themselves. There is clearly a huge need: we recently received 218 applications for 3 visual art studios in Williamsburg. Based on income data we have collected at our Long Island City site, 26% of our performing artists earn below \$16,000 per year; another 22% earn between \$16,000 and \$26,000 per year; and another 18% earn between \$26,000 and \$36,000 per year. There is no question that artists are, by and large, a very low-income population.

They are also in desperate need of stable, affordable, quality space. In focus groups we have held with artists in Brooklyn and the Bronx we heard stories of artists commuting to Sunset Park from the mid-Bronx for studio space; we heard about artists shifting from studio to studio every few months; we heard about dancers injuring themselves on concrete floors, theater rehearsals in unheated spaces, and a host of unventilated, unsafe, and otherwise untenable working environments.

I want to focus my comments on the two portions of the proposed cultural plan scope that relate most directly to our work: the analysis of artist needs in the context of an unaffordable real estate market (Section 3e) and the examination of how arts can be incorporated into community and economic development planning (Section 3g).

One of the critical challenges facing organizations serving artists directly is the lack of coherent city-wide research on the resources, needs and physical distribution of visual and performing artists. The CDP plays an important role in tabulating information about arts organizations, but too little is known about artists themselves. Several studies in recent years have looked into specific segments of the performing arts community, but more comprehensive studies of the economic and space needs of NYC artists remain elusive, particularly in relation to visual artists.

One of the great challenges to this kind of research is that artists are a notoriously hard group to define: they often don't self-identify as artists in the Census, they move around a lot, they sometimes take itinerant jobs, and they frequently live and work in informal or illegal arrangements. Many visual artists in particular are unaffiliated with a guild or service organization. Spaceworks is currently putting together a scope to begin just this kind of research, which we believe needs to involve very extensive and flexible field work over a prolonged period of time. This kind of longitudinal, ground-level methodology strikes us as problematic for a City agency that must produce a major plan on a deadline.

Second, we believe that DCLA is exceptionally proactive about examining and cultivating the intersection of the arts with community and economic development, not least because this approach reflects both the theory and practice of Commissioner Finkelpearl's work at the Queens Museum. More can be done to emphasize the importance of cultural development within a broader range of agencies however, and we would encourage the Council to put more emphasis on requiring other agencies to proactively integrate arts and culture into their respective mandates. This is clearly happening at DOE in the form of expanded arts education, but we would like to see it extend to HPD, EDC, DOT, DCP, NYCHA, and DEP, just to name a few.

Development-oriented agencies can encourage community-based cultural development in a variety of ways. They can prioritize cultural and arts uses in RFPs; they can create new inclusionary provisions that mandate creative uses in new developments and/or provide incentives to integrate cultural organizations that serve low-income communities; and they can work to prioritize community-based cultural organizations in the public land disposition process.

Although all of the goals articulated in the proposed legislation are admirable, the magnitude of the mandate will require a large budget and a longer timeline, particularly since the plan must be created from scratch. Rather than tackling all of these issues at once, perhaps starting with a framework of cultural objectives and a survey of existing resources would set the stage for a more comprehensive series of studies that can, in the long run, create a substantive and grounded plan that can guide the City's cultural policy over the long term.

Thank you very much.



One Percent for Culture
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Testimony on Introduction 0419-2014

Presented by Heather Woodfield on behalf of One Percent for Culture

On behalf of One Percent for Culture and our more than 550 coalition partners throughout the city, I would like to thank Chairman Van Bramer, Council Member Levin, and the Committee for the opportunity to testify today on Intro 419. We commend you for your vision and leadership in recognizing the value of the nonprofit cultural community, including artists, and working to grow and strengthen our city's vital cultural sector.

We have had conversations with our coalition partners and fellow cultural advocates about Intro 419. While we all appreciated that you have incorporated some of our comments from the prior hearings, we still have some common concerns that we feel have not been addressed. I wanted to highlight a few of these today.

1) Funding for the Plan

- New funding must be provided for the planning process to ensure that the creation of a cultural plan does not have a negative impact on the cultural sector due to a redirection of much needed funds.

2) Timeline

- The deadline of July 1, 2015 for the submission of the cultural plan does not provide enough time for a robust planning process. A rushed process will not yield results that maximize the benefits of the plan for all New Yorkers.

3) Representation in the Process

- It is critical to ensure that both the Working Group and Advisory Committee fully represent all of the stakeholders and include members from all five boroughs of New York City. Therefore, we suggest that each of the Borough Presidents and the Public Advocate appoint ~~at least~~ at least one member to each committee.
- We also suggest that nominations for the committees' positions be taken from the cultural community including the borough arts councils and New York City's cultural advocacy organizations whose members include artists, cultural organizations, and cultural institutions.

4) Funding for Recommendations

- It is likely that the cultural sector may not be able to fulfill the recommendations of a cultural plan without additional funding. We recognize, that this is addressed in section 2.6, but this language could be strengthened.
- We would further recommend that one of the goals of the plan should be to assess the funding needs of the sector and identify funding solutions that would create a sustainable funding model for culture that ensures the long-term vitality of the sector.

5) Culture is Not Just "the Arts"

- In order for Intro 419 to be fully inclusive of the cultural community, there are several instances where the word arts should be changed to culture which includes our science based organizations.

We want to thank you again for working to increase cultural activities citywide and to support the nonprofit cultural community and artists of every discipline. We look forward to working together to accomplish these goals.

CARNEGIE HALL

**New York City Council Fiscal Year 2013
September 29, 2014
Introduction 0419-2014 – Comprehensive Cultural Plan**

Chairman Van Bramer, Council Member Levin, Members of the Cultural Affairs Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on Introduction 419, the Comprehensive Cultural Plan. My name is Jessica Silverman and I'm glad to be able to speak today on behalf of Carnegie Hall.

We believe that creating a comprehensive cultural plan for the City of New York provides an important opportunity:

1. to raise awareness of the valuable contributions artists and culture organizations make to our city;
2. assess the many arts and cultural programs that are available to New Yorkers and tourists alike, and establish how successful models of this work can be replicated and scaled;
3. to address where there are gaps in access to cultural experiences;
4. and to increase the funding pot for all cultural organizations.

It is our understanding that this bill aims to ensure that arts and culture are truly part of the fabric of New York and this is the one area I would like to briefly speak to today.

Currently the bill suggests that the plan "outline non-traditional cultural programming," however this language implies that there is a traditional place where New Yorkers should go to experience the arts. We think the creation of a cultural plan provides the chance reshape the perception of what culture means to New York City and where it should be experienced alongside consideration of programming itself.

Through its many community programs, Carnegie Hall brings free high-quality musical experiences into adult and juvenile correctional facilities, probation centers, shelters, hospitals, senior centers, and schools. Our work has shown that the arts have just as much value in these settings, as they do in a concert hall. Music-making and creative experiences are important in these settings because of their inherent value, but they also have been proven to support social development, empower participants, create a sense place where communities thrive and improve a venue's tone and temperature.

It is so important that we understand that the arts have a real role to play in making our communities more vibrant, our schools more dynamic and our lives richer. We hope that the bill, and ultimately the cultural plan, will address the important role that arts and cultural partners play in civic life.

We are happy to provide additional information about the examples I have mentioned, if that is of use. Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to share our thoughts.



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Testimony on A Local Law in Relation to a Comprehensive Cultural Plan

Submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations on September 29, 2014

Presented by Lane Harwell, Executive Director

On behalf of the service entity Dance/NYC, I advocate for the centrality of dance to any cultural planning that may be done for the City of New York. At the same time, I recognize that all of us in arts and culture are stronger when we are working together.

Representing an organization that believes in planning, I echo the observations of many in the arts and culture that, to be successful, planning must be feasible, focused, and funded. Planning must also be flexible, to allow for discovery and iteration over time to address New York's evolving needs and opportunities. These criteria may be helpful in moving forward productively.

Dance/NYC also offers new learning about the importance of "community," which invites the attention of those who may take on the labor of cultural planning both to the role of community in the potential planning process and to community as a vision achievable through planning.

Why "community"? It is the most frequent answer given by participants in NEW YORKERS FOR DANCE, a new Dance/NYC initiative featuring video statements from residents of all 51 City Council districts on why dance and culture matter to their neighborhoods. One reading of the term involves both "working directly with people" and "service to the community," lenses that may be of use to arts and culture and to the art of planning (citations from Raymond Williams's *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, page 76).



NEW YORKERS FOR DANCE learning supports the Council’s stated interest in “community input.” It encourages bringing together and taking seriously multiple and alternative voices in the potential planning process, from arts and cultural workers to the general public.

If pursued by the City, cultural planning could leverage, and build into its process, momentum toward collaboration and common messaging that is observable among advocates, service providers, and funders, all willing partners to City leadership. A recent example is the New York City Cultural Agenda Fund, jointly established by the Booth Ferris Foundation, Lambent Foundation, The New York Community Trust, and David Rockefeller Fund to strengthen and support cultural policy and equity.

By highlighting “community,” and considering both process and outcomes, I am suggesting that planning could help to scale up the creative sector’s capacity for “working with” and “service to” New Yorkers. I am also advocating an expansive view on the sector’s impacts, sometimes too neatly described in terms of economic development and of art for art’s sake.

At the same time, I am seeking tangible outcomes, which are necessary for effective planning. I am encouraged by the work of the Social Impact of the Arts Project, which is already collecting data in New York and has worked locally with Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts, among others. A review of its current literature reveals a set of concepts that can be tested empirically: for example, the ways in which the capabilities of economic well-being and of social connection as fostered by cultural engagement influence social stress, personal health, school effectiveness, and security.



Empirical evidence matters, and such testing could support a compelling directive in the Council’s current proposal, namely, that City agencies submit “recommendations of how [their] services can incorporate the arts.” By linking the arts and culture sector to the interests of other agencies, from public housing to education, a cultural plan could simultaneously expand the pie of resources and available to the sector and extend the sector’s value to New York.

Finally, I advocate deepening the sector’s engagement with underserved communities as one planning outcome, working toward a framework for addressing inequality. Focused and fundable interagency strategy could be helpful, and there are already important case studies that could be mined in a planning process. For instance, Seniors Partnering with Artists Citywide is a collaboration of the Departments of Cultural Affairs and Aging. Recently, Dance/NYC has received invaluable support from the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities in developing forthcoming initiative to increase inclusion and access to the art form for disabled people.

Dance/NYC thanks the administration and Council for engaging New Yorkers in setting priorities. This testimony offers only one perspective on community, and Dance/NYC invites its constituents in dance and all who care about the arts and culture to weigh in.

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TESTIMONY

September 29, 2014

CITY COUNCIL OF NEW YORK CITY

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations

Anne Dennin, Co-Chair, New York City Arts Coalition

Thank you Chairman Van Bramer and Council Members for the opportunity to testify today on the subject of a local law to amend the New York City Charter, in relation to a Comprehensive Cultural Plan.

The New York City Arts Coalition is a membership organization comprised of cultural groups from all five boroughs from the smallest to the largest, working in all disciplines. An, independent organization, the Coalition receives no government funding. For nearly 30 years the Coalition has served as an advocate for funding and policies that impact our shared community. Cultural Planning has been a top priority for the Coalition all these years and we are pleased that the City Council is putting forth a bill to support a comprehensive review of the cultural status of our City with recommendations to increase the strength of the cultural sector Citywide.

The Coalition has been in conversation with colleagues, arts professionals and other arts advocates and we want recognize the extensive work the Council has done in developing this bill. In our meetings we found we shared some of the same concerns and questions, only a few we raise here, as others are addressing are addressing aspects of the plan which we support.

1. Time line: Given the extensiveness of the plan we feel that a July 2015 deadline is

too short to execute its work effectively. Perhaps some stages could be put in place with final completion of July 2016. We also think that the plan should be reviewed more frequently than every 10 years.

2. Working Group and Citizen Advisory Committee: We applaud the recommendation of two groups and believe that the Council wants all stakeholders to have a voice in the plan. We recommend that the working group include professional representation from all boroughs, artistic disciplines and organizational sizes. Artists should be represented on both committees.
3. Funding for the plan and implementation of its recommendations needs to be addressed. The Cultural Sector is underfunded both in public and private sector and any plan should address the sustainability and growth of the field in the long term.
4. We would encourage the Council to further examine and define section 3. c stating that a “community decision making process to focus on neighborhoods to engage and encourage community input..” We strongly support the panel process of the DCLA with professional peers from all communities determining its grant making and hope that this process will remain in place.

Finally, the New York City Arts Coalition on behalf of all its members is grateful to the support and interest expressed by the City Council in strengthening the arts and increasing access to the arts for all communities. Please know that as an independent organization with 30 years experience supporting and fighting for culture in the City we are available to you on this important initiative.

Testimony from the NYC Arts Coalition

Co-Chair, Anne Dennin

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NO LONGER

EMPTY

City Council Testimony on Comprehensive Cultural Plan (Int No 1136)

September 28, 2014

Thank you to all the Council Members and your teams for inviting No Longer Empty (NLE) to share testimony and support for a comprehensive cultural plan. I'm Naomi Hersson-Ringskog, Executive Director of No Longer Empty -- a five-year-old not-for-profit organization.

No Longer Empty activates public engagement through community-responsive exhibitions and educational programs in underutilized properties. Our non-traditional model leverages a neighborhood's infrastructure to provide **artists** to create new works, gain visibility, and advance their careers. We work with **local schools and organizations**, both arts and non-arts organizations, to create programs that widen and deepen the cultural participation in that neighborhood. Our last major exhibitions were in the Bronx, Long Island City, and most recently, Sugar Hill, Harlem.

In support of New York City's first cultural plan, I reiterate that the plan should:

1. **Be comprehensive** so it is a powerful legal, political, and logistical instrument for the arts sector to gain a greater voice and role in how our city develops.
2. **Have a common vision** so to unite the art community, its funders, and its supporters to pave the road for greater inclusivity, and civic engagement.
3. **Be transparent** so to allow citizens to access data and maps, so to inform ourselves and deliver better services.
4. **Have a coordinated investment and process** so to build interdisciplinary initiatives within the field, and with other sectors and agencies that help grow support for the arts.

Of these objectives, I encourage the City Council to:

1. **Establish baselines** so we can measure and evaluate our collective impact and goals on both a local and city-wide level.
2. **Reinforce cultural infrastructure** such as the local cultural council and community board that already have deep networks and influence in the community.
3. **Develop a bottom up and reiterative process** for understanding what the people of New York City want. It is extremely helpful in terms of focusing funding, institutions, and cultural producers on the same goals.

The benefits of alternative models like No Longer Empty, that are able to work across different geographic boundaries and with different organizations and circumstances, can be very helpful in the planning and research process. No Longer Empty's model can support new ways of thinking and meet new needs. We are happy to support the initiative in any way we can.



FRACTURED ATLAS

Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations

Monday, September 29, 2014

By Marie-Louise Silva Stegall, Director of Development

Adam Huttler
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Alanna Weifenbach
Chairman

Alexandra Farkas
Vice Chairman

Rodney Christopher
Treasurer

Adam Huttler
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brian d foy

Christopher Mackie

Holly Sidford

Andrew Taylor

Amy Wrzesniewski

Lisa Yancey

Good morning. My name is Marie-Louise Stegall, and I am here with my colleagues Selena Juneau-Vogel and Jean Ann Douglass to represent Fractured Atlas. Thank you to the Committee for inviting Fractured Atlas to testify today. We are deeply grateful to Council Members Levin and Van Bramer as well as all the members of this Committee for their steadfast support of the arts and culture in our great City.

While Fractured Atlas has members in every congressional district throughout the United States, New York City is our home town. Nearly one third of our membership of nearly 34,000 creative individuals live and work here in New York. This is not a coincidence! This City continues to be the most vibrant and exciting place in the world to make and experience art. Our mission at Fractured Atlas is to remove any practical barriers to creative expression and to ensure that artists have the business tools they need to succeed. We help them raise money, insure their work, sell tickets, track their patrons, and find space to rehearse, perform, and exhibit their art. A comprehensive, data-driven, thoughtful, and nuanced Cultural Plan would be a tremendous boon to the artists we serve in New York.

Cultural policy can and should go well beyond the funding strategy implemented by the Department of Cultural Affairs. DCA's work is terrific and the extent to which New York City subsidizes its cultural institutions through DCA is admirable. And kudos to the Council for ensuring that the budget for Cultural Development Fund awards remains strong. Thank you! Of course, this funding is vital, but it cannot reach the full spectrum of grassroots arts and cultural activities that are so important to all our neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs.

A well-executed and comprehensive cultural planning process could explore some important but challenging questions about how the cultural sector can thrive and benefit our City:

- What are the underlying social and economic contexts in which art is made and consumed?
- What frameworks do we have for understanding the process of artist-driven gentrification?
- How does this kind of gentrification impact the character and economic sustainability of these neighborhoods?
- And most importantly, what kind of infrastructure do we need to ensure a robust, productive, and sustainable creative economy?

We know that 21st century business and industry requires creative capital. People who work in finance, technology, and hospitality want to live in a community that offers imaginative, innovative, exciting, stimulating cultural pursuits. Artists and arts organizations are essential to fostering the kind of City that will continue to attract the best and the brightest, as well as the millions of visitors who are drawn primarily by cultural activities.

So how can we ensure that artists and arts workers can find affordable places to live, work, and create in our community? An effective and comprehensive cultural plan will consider levels of funding, and will also look at housing, production facilities, consumption facilities, zoning, public education, permitting rules, audience development, interagency cooperation, and all of the many elements that combine to form the context in which the arts happen in New York.

The Fractured Atlas Board and Staff enthusiastically support the proposed legislation to create a cultural plan for New York City. However, we must point out that worse than having no cultural plan would be having one that is poorly researched, under-resourced, and rushed to publication. It is absolutely vital that no dollars are siphoned off from the DCA grant budget and it is equally important that the budget and time allotted for creating this plan be sufficient to the enormity of the task.

Thank you so much for your time and attention, and thank you for everything you do to support the arts in New York City – the cultural capital of the world!



Ellen Kodadek
Executive & Artistic Director

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New York City Council
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
Testimony on **Int 0419-2014** "Comprehensive Cultural Plan"- 9/29/14
Sami Abu Shumays, Deputy Director, Flushing Town Hall

Every two weeks a unique human language disappears, and linguists estimate that by the end of the century about half of the 7,000 languages currently spoken on Earth will be gone, a crisis parallel to, and related to, the unprecedented loss of biodiversity on the planet. While linguists, NGOs, and Universities work to address this problem (and some, like Terralingua – www.terralingua.org – address simultaneously the loss of linguistic diversity and biodiversity), very little has been done to address systematically the parallel loss of artistic and cultural traditions, which, like spoken language, depend for their survival on an active community of practitioners, and which, when they disappear, also represent the loss of unique, irreplaceable human knowledge.

New York City presents a unique opportunity in this regard. As an artistic and cultural "hotspot," with residents bringing artistic and cultural traditions from all over the world, a focused effort on the part of the city to identify, support, and celebrate immigrant artistic traditions could have a real impact on the future of world cultural forms. Just a few examples among thousands: The Garifuna Music, Dance, and Language, recognized by UNESCO as a "Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity," has a significant number of musicians and dancers residing in the city, and Flushing Town Hall has been proud to present this unique art form to our audiences. And the recognized world masters of the music tradition known as ShashMaqam, practiced by Bukharian Jews, live in Kew Gardens, in Queens, where more central Asian Jews live than in Uzbekistan.

In addition to this specific opportunity, as we seek to make culture more inclusive in NYC, it is important to support not only immigrant artists, but to support immigrant artistic traditions, because celebrating these offers validation to the many cultures and identities present in the city, a way to appreciate the positive side of each others' differences, and hence a way to foster greater community integration and harmony, something Cultural Institutions in Queens understand very well.



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A citywide cultural plan is, I believe, the best vehicle within which to address these and other significant cultural opportunities and challenges facing the city. The proposed “Comprehensive Cultural Plan” legislation is a great start, although there is still some work to be done to insure that it is as effective and inclusive as possible. I’ve listed below, in my written testimony, some of the concerns we share with our fellow cultural institutions.

Flushing Town Hall, which has a demonstrated track record of presenting “**Global Arts for a Global Community**,” looks forward to participating in the planning process, and in fact our Executive Director, Ellen Kodadek, has developed partnerships with the Quebec Cultural Attaché, based here in NYC, who is eager to share the experience Montreal had in developing that city’s cultural plan in 2003-4 – we’re happy to facilitate that exchange of information.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

~*~*~

Concerns and questions with Int 0419-2014:

- Funding for the Plan
 - Intro 419 does not discuss how the plan itself will be funded. New funding must be provided for the planning process to ensure the creation of a cultural plan does not have a negative impact on the cultural sector due to a redirection of much needed funds. We recognize, that this is addressed in section 2.6, but this language could be strengthened.
 - One of the goals of the plans should be to assess the funding needs of the sector and identify funding solutions that would create a sustainable funding model for culture that ensures the long-term vitality of the sector.
- Timeline
 - The deadline of July 1, 2015 for the submission of the cultural plan does not provide enough time for a robust planning process. A rushed process will not yield results that maximize the benefits of the plan for all New Yorkers.
 - The plan should be reviewed more frequently than every 10 years.



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- **Goals of plan (section 1)**
 - Goal needs clearer articulation
 - Is DCA well-funded enough of an agency to answer these questions?
 - Not sure it is understood where/how to find "individual and emerging artists"
 - Independent Assessment: suggestion that the first step should be an independent assessment process with an outside consultant to conduct the "analysis" portion and provide initial recommendations
- **Working Group & Citizen Advisory Committee / Inclusivity**
 - It is critical to ensure that both the Working Group and Advisory Committee fully represent all of the stakeholders and include members from all five boroughs of New York City.
 - We also suggest that nominations for the committees positions should be taken from the cultural community including the borough arts councils and New York City's cultural advocacy organizations whose members include artists, cultural organizations, and Cultural Institutions Group
 - Education is missing as a sector in the list of members of the "Citizen Advisory Committee" (section 2.2)
 - There is concern that people who should be included may be left out of all stages of the process
 - Concern that not enough people know about this introduction to get appropriate public feedback
 - All five boroughs of NYC must be included in the planning process and outcomes
 - Immigrant groups should be included in the process
- **Culture is Not Just "the Arts"**
 - In order for Intro 419 to be fully inclusive of the cultural community, there are several instances where the word arts should be changed to culture, which includes our art, education and science based organizations
- **Addendum to current bill:**
 - Chapter 67, Section 2506(3)(h) - "an outline of non-traditional cultural programming in the city, including but not limited to, arts education in schools and senior arts programming;"
 - Other examples: HHC programming, DOC (ex. NeON programming through Carnegie), science (through WCS), etc.
- **Involvement of other city agencies (section 1.1)**
 - Interest in seeing other city agencies would incorporate culture into their services - DOP, DOC, ACS, MOIA, etc.
 - How can the plan guide other agencies to support culture within their mission?



**Testimony of Guy Yedwab, Director of Operations
League of Independent Theater**

Before the New York City Council

Public Hearing on Int. No. 419

September 29, 2014

My name is Guy Yedwab, Director of Operations for the League of Independent Theater. The League is a 501 (c) 6 Political Advocacy Organization, and is testifying today on behalf of the city's 50,000 independent theatre artists, 86% of whom vote. Our membership includes individual theatre-makers and performance venues from across all five boroughs who self-produce work outside of established institutions, in venues 99 seats or less. Our members also work in non-traditional spaces that can be found in each of your districts.

I want to thank each of the City Council members who have co-sponsored this bill for the opportunity to testify here today.

Over the last year, the League of Independent Theater engaged our membership to develop productive solutions to keep artists in their communities, and keep them working. Out of these meetings, we crafted a concrete set of proposals, including expanding affordable live and work space, and commissioning an economic impact study for the arts economy. At a packed event last March we presented those proposals to elected officials and candidates for city council.

The response from our membership was overwhelming: there is a pressing need for action to prevent the loss of our local small arts businesses. The independent artists and venues we represent, and the small businesses and communities they support, expect us to take action.

We thank the City Council members who have co-sponsored this bill for recognizing the need for a plan of action.

We are encouraged by this bill, as it addresses some of the areas that we feel are necessary to sustain our vibrant independent arts, including affordable live and

work spaces for theatre artists, as well as increased access to public spaces and city resources. We are also encouraged to see that the plan addresses organizations of every budget of institution.

We owe these working artists and their communities a true cultural plan.

To us, a true cultural plan is one that has input from independent theatre artists groups, representing all five boroughs. Independent theatre artists create 3,000 productions a year, compared to Broadway's 70 productions a year, and these independent theatre artists – whose work is most accessible to their communities – are the most vulnerable artists in the city's ecosystem.

To us, a true cultural plan must be a constant, active process – not one which is revisited once every ten years, but one which meets on a regular basis to improve the plan and build on past successes.

And most importantly, to us, a true cultural plan must make a firm commitment to implement the plan's findings, not to simply consider actions "if feasible." This will require assurance that recommendations of the cultural plan have the funding they need to be implemented.

The needs of independent theatre artists and the communities they work in are pressing, they expect action. We believe that a true cultural plan is the first step in taking action, to keeping artists living and working in their communities, and ensure that every New Yorker has access to affordable arts in their neighborhood.

Thank you for your work in drafting this bill. We at the League of Independent Theater are excited to work with City Council, both with regards to the issues in this bill as well as with other solutions to keep our culture vibrant and accessible in every community.

Additional Information League of Independent Theater Proposals

The following is the set of proposals which the League of Independent Theater drafted with its membership as part of the endorsement process in the 2013 City Council Elections.

The League of Independent Theater ("LIT") is the only 501(c) 6 advocacy organization for the independent theater and performing arts population of New York City. As such, the League and its coalition partners, which comprise cultural and performance institutions that serve over 50,000 independent performing artists, 86% of whom vote, far exceeding the general population, entreat our city's elected officials to acknowledge the independent theater sector's historical significance and cultural, civic and economic importance to New York City, and to demonstrate tangible support of independent theater in order to allow it to continue its positive impact. LIT will endorse candidates in every city race and work to form alliances with other cultural advocacy organizations in the city. Our endorsement will be based on the candidate's willingness to adopt the following performing arts platform:

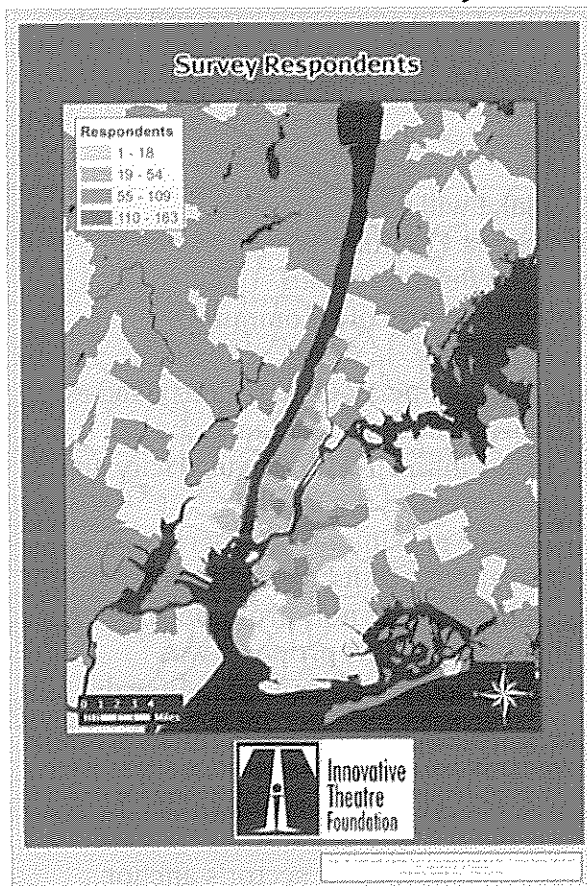
As a pro-performing arts elected official, I will work to:

1. Create access to low-cost and/or no-cost Community Facilities Spaces that are currently available and remain unused throughout the City through the creation of a Community Facilities Space Database.
2. Create access to empty and unused City property to be re-purposed as temporary rehearsal, office, and (if appropriate) performance space.
3. Include non-profit performance venues in the favorable electricity and utility rates enjoyed by religious institutions and the VFW.
4. Implement a proposal that would reduce or eliminate property tax assessments for those non-profit organizations that have an artistic mission and/or rent performance space to similar non-profit performing arts groups with artistic missions of their own. This proposal was unanimously ratified by all twelve (12) Manhattan Community Boards.
5. Secure affordable and permanent low-cost housing for working artists.
6. Support the commission of an economic impact study for the independent theater territory.
7. Work with the Department of Cultural Affairs to expand the Cultural Institutions Group to include the independent theater sector's anchor venues.
8. Install plaques at sites of historical import and rename streets after the founders of the independent and Off-Off Broadway community.

Additional Information

Some additional points of information to provide context for these remarks:

- According to a 2008 study from the New York Innovative Theatre Foundation¹, the total annual expenditure from the Off-Off Broadway (independent theater) sector was estimated to be \$31,025,000.
- Of this cost, an average of 36% of the cost of production goes to performance and rehearsal space, meaning that independent artists are particularly vulnerable to rising rents.
- The following map is from a 2010 study from the New York Innovative Theatre Foundation² showing the distribution of Off-Off-Broadway theatermakers surveyed throughout the city. This is an incomplete study based on audience survey responses, but speaks to the wide distribution of theatermakers throughout the city. We hope the proposed Cultural Plan will include an updated and thorough impact study of independent theater to the culture and economy of New York City, and will address the needs of the entire theatre artist community.



¹ *Statistical Analysis of Off-Off-Broadway Budgets*. New York Innovative Theatre Foundation, 2008. <http://www.nyitawards.com/survey/OOBBudgetStudy.pdf>

² *Demographic Study of Off-Off-Broadway Practitioners*. New York Innovative Theatre Foundation, 2010

- Despite the cultural community having a strong presence in New York City, many schools do not have arts programs, as is documented in the map below taken from the New York City Comptroller's office report *State of the Arts*³.

The League of Independent Theater has begun to work with local schools to pair independent arts organizations with local schools, exchanging arts workshops for rehearsal space. The arts organizations greatly reduce their cost of operating, and in return, help serve the local community.



Source: NYC Department of Education, U.S. Census Bureau

³ *State of the Arts*. Office of the New York City Comptroller. <http://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/state-of-the-arts/>
 League of Independent Theater Written Testimony
 Public Hearing on Int. No. 419
 September 29, 2014

September 25, 2014

Jennifer Wright Cook
Executive Director, The Field

TESTIMONY - CITY COUNCIL OF NEW YORK CITY

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the proposed Local Law.

My name is Jennifer Wright Cook, I am the Executive Director of The Field, a 28 year old arts service organization dedicated to helping individual artists and companies thrive. Every year our programs help nearly 1,200 NYC artists (and their 13,000 collaborators) create more than 9,000 productions for more than 2 million people worldwide. Most of our constituents are the independent and emerging artists that this Law references. I am also a member of the Steering Committee of the New York City Arts Coalition and the New York State Task Force for the CDP. I speak to you today as the Executive Director of The Field.

I am thrilled that this Local Law has been put forward. And I'm deeply excited about how a Cultural Plan could shape New York City's vibrant cultural economy for years. I am particularly grateful to Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer, Council Member Stephen Levin and to the sponsors of the Local Law for their energetic efforts to move it forward. There were many changes made to this version of the Law – I am heartened to see the efforts made by this group to work with the arts and culture community and to incorporate our needs.

Without being too touchy feely, a Cultural Plan is an opportunity to dive deep into our citizens' beliefs, hopes and dreams. It's an opportunity to engage New Yorkers in a vibrant and robust

dialogue in what's working, what's not and how each of us play a direct and active role in the cultural economy. It's an opportunity to build a thriving, well resourced, nimble and resilient cultural sector that serves all New Yorkers. It's an opportunity to pull people in.

With the Local Law as written, however, I believe that we are missing these potent opportunities. And that by missing these opportunities we will invariably concoct a Cultural Plan that is disconnected from its people and that has no real impact except to spend precious time, money and human resources. Rather than pull people in, we will push them out.

Thus, I can't support the Law as it is currently written. I echo many of my colleagues concerns, praises and recommendations. The following are mine.

PRAISES

- The focus on neighborhoods in a community decision-making process
- An analysis of potential disparities in service provision and actions to remedy such disparities
- The strong inclusion of arts education
- The recognition of individual and emerging artists (albeit in a confusing manner)
- An analysis of the needs of artists and how they can remain in the city

CONCERNS

My four primary concerns are:

1. The stated Goal of the Plan: it makes assumptions and uses undefined language of "individual and emerging artist"
2. The timing: too rapid
3. The process: too insider-y
4. Funding: undefined

In preparation for today I researched Chicago's 2012 Cultural Plan. I got very very excited reading this and thinking about how New York could be even bolder. Now I'm a competitive person and I love Chicago, so I believe New York can do better!

I won't go into the details here (but my written testimony will include more about Chicago). I will say this: Chicago took two years to do their original Cultural Plan in 1986. Subsequent plans in 1995 and 2012 took 9-15 months because they built on a strong foundation from 1986.

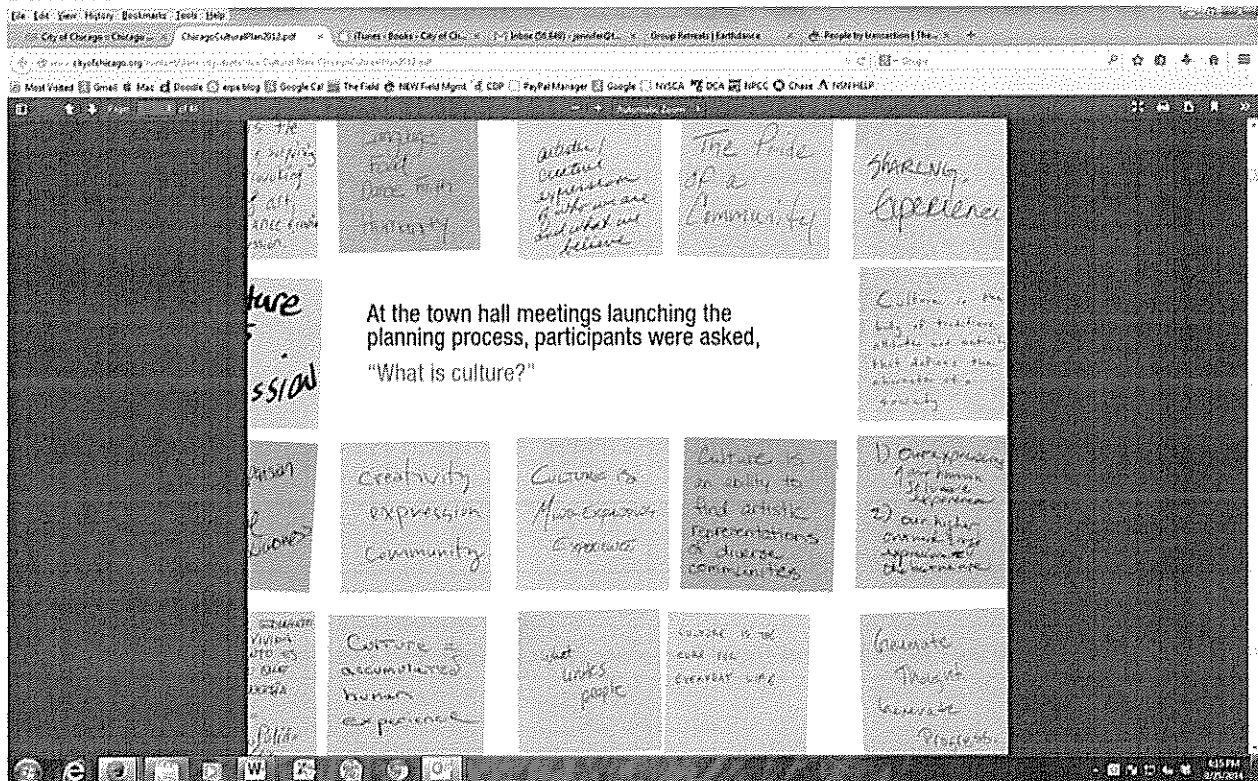
Chicago engaged nearly 5,000 of its citizens in their Planning process. They had 8 Town Halls in addition to dozens of neighborhood conversations, one-on-ones and sector specific meetings. They pulled people in. This reminded me of the Talking Transition Tent last fall after Mayor De Blasio was elected. Thousands of New Yorkers spoke their minds. The conversations were vibrant. They were robust. People were pulled in.

THINGS I LEARNED FROM CHICAGO and that I hope we can emulate and expand on:

- if we are going to do it, do it right;
- allocate enough resources, get multiple funders involved (Chicago had state, local, corporate and private support);
- allocate enough time, don't rush it;
- use independent assessment;
- the process is as important as the product – if not more so;
- use the assessment process as a way to engage all of our citizens – not just those appointed by our elected officials;
- as a global city, our assessment should also include global stakeholders;
- use the word “culture” in addition to “the arts”. And know what you mean by that;
- have the assessment lead to concrete recommendations with timeline, budgets and funding ideas attached.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak today.

DETAILS OF CHICAGO'S CULTURAL PLAN



Chicago: In 1986 the city of Chicago began a Cultural Planning process. They took two years to do it. Why? It had a simple but powerful mandate: to analyze the City's cultural needs and opportunities and to formulate recommendations for action. They revisited their plan in 1995. In 2012 they revisited their Plan again – this time in approximately 9 months, so quickly I believe because they were building on a strong foundation from 1986.

Goals of the Chicago Plan: 3 broad statements

- Increase and communicate the impact of existing cultural assets...
- Realize the potential for broad civic impact
- Ensure that the needs and aspirations of the community are met now and into the future

How? Chicago's Plan was led by their Department of Cultural Affairs but the assessment was led by an independent firm. They had 3 distinct phases: Research and Analysis, Public Engagement and Visioning and Setting Direction

Who? Nearly 5,000 Chicagoans actively participated in the creation of this plan. Thousands more participated virtually. They had town halls, neighborhood conversations, social media, global forums, one-on-ones, sector meetings and more.

The result of the Chicago Planning Process? They landed on a set of 10 priorities with 36 recommendations that guide Chicago's cultural vision today. Over 200 initiatives were proposed as potential ways to achieve these recommendations. Each initiative was analyzed for timeline and budget possibilities. And ultimately they were grouped into actions for Years 1-3, Years 3-5 and Years 5-10-20.

Priorities include: Integrate culture into daily life and Strengthen capacity of the cultural sector.

Recommendations include: Advocate for high-quality arts education; and Grow and diversify sources and methods of support.

Initiatives include Tax incentives for creative industry start-ups and job creation activities; and Guidelines and incentive programs to convert underutilized spaces for cultural uses.

So, the big question is *how is it going in Chicago?* Are Chicagoans more engaged in their arts and culture sector? Is their DCA implementing the initiatives? Or is the Plan gathering dust on the bookcase? I spoke with ½ a dozen colleagues in Chicago who had mixed responses. Many felt engaged by the process but weren't sure what was happening since the Plan was completed. Some felt that the process skewed toward the big wigs, the city Museum and such.

DETAILS OF THE LOCAL LAW INT. #419

NYC Goals seem to be decided in advance, prior to research and assessment. Page 1 states our goals (e.g., increase activity, increase economic activity, support individual and emerging artists) prior to assessment and engagement. While for the most part I might agree with those three goals, particularly the support for emerging and individual artists, we do a great disservice to the Plan process if we decide in advance what the recommendations will be. I certainly hope that an outcome of the Plan might be more support for individual and emerging artists but let's let the people of NYC come to the conclusion on their own.

In addition, "**Individual and Emerging Artists**" are unclear terms that are defined differently by many people and organizations and thus create challenges for us to implement.

http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dca/supp_info/cultural_plan.html/

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Cultural Arts Policy Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert Lee

Address: 111 Nassau St

I represent: Asian American Arts Centre

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tom Finkelpaul

Address: 31 Chambers St.

I represent: NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Caron Atlas

Address: 88 Prospect Park West Brooklyn

I represent: Arts + Democracy + 11215

Address: Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts

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Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Tamara Greenfield

Address: 76 East 4th St NY NY 10003

I represent: Fourth Arts Block/NOC-D-NY

Address: 537 47th St Bklyn NY 11220

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(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: SARA Marinello

Address: ~~105 BRONX 700~~

I represent: Wildlife Conservation Society

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: MARTA MORENO VEGA

Address: COCADO 1825 PARK AVE

I represent: Creekside Cultural Ctr

Address: 1825 Park Ave 10035

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in favor in opposition

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SHEILA LEWANDOWSKI

Address: 5-48 49th Ave

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Katy Rubin

Address: 32 Lenox Rd, Brooklyn, NY

I represent: Theatre of the Oppressed NYC

Address: 155 Water St, 5th Fl., Brooklyn

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Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. -119 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ella Weiss

Address: 55 Washington St. CRN 11201

I represent: Brooklyn Arts Council

Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

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Name: PAUL PARKHILL

Address: 540 PRESIDENT ST. BROOKLYN 11215

I represent: SPACEWORKS

Address: 540 PRESIDENT ST.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Heather Woodfield

Address: 21-32 45th Ave, LIC

I represent: One Percent for Culture

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 419 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Laura Washington

Address: 170 Central Park West

I represent: New-York Historical Society

Address: NY, NY 10024

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 in favor in opposition

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(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SAMI ABU SHUMAYS

Address: 20 PHOENIX ST, HEMPSTEAD 11550

I represent: FLUSHING TOWN HALL

Address: 137-35 NORTHERN BOULEVARD
FLUSHING 11354

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessica Silverman

Address: 881 Sweet Ave

I represent: Carnegie Hall

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NAOMI HERZSON

Address: _____

I represent: NO LONGER HUMAN

Address: _____

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Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anne Dennis
Address: New York City Arts Coalition
I represent: 75 Broad Street
Address: NYC

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: Sept 29, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lane Harwell
Address: 218 East 18th St, 4th fl
I represent: Dance NYC
Address: 218 East 18th St

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Selena Leonardo Vogel
Address: _____
I represent: Fractured Atlas
Address: _____

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in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sean-Ann Douglas

Address: _____

I represent: Fractured Atlas

Address: _____

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Marie Louise Stegall

Address: 248 W 35 St NYC

I represent: Fractured Atlas

Address: 248 W 35 NYC

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in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aimee Tecloroff

Address: 2080 Frederick Douglass Blvd. #6B

I represent: League of Independent Theatre

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: JONATHAN SLAFF

Address: 55 Perry St #1M 10014

I represent: self

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Alec Duff

Address: 618 Deau St 2D

I represent: Jack Arts, Inc.

Address: 50 5 1/2 Waverly Ave, Brooklyn

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 09/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Michael D.D. White

Address: 62 Montague Street 3A

I represent: Citizen's Defending Libraries

Address: 62 Montague Street 3A

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 7 22-14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Jennifer Wright Cooke

Address: 64 Eastern Parkway

I represent: The Field Trust

Address: 75 Maiden Lane 10038

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Drane Frazer Thornton

Address: 635 E. 14th St. -

I represent: American Indian Arch Inc. (AMERINDIA)

Address: 288 East 10th Street

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Catherine Green

Address: _____

I represent: Arts East New York

Address: 851 Hegenars Ave Brooklyn, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dr. Marilu D GALVAN

Address: 619 W 145th St NY NY 10031

I represent: Centro Civico Cultural Dominicano

Address: 619 W 145th St Suite 201 N.Y. N.Y. 10031

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 419 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 9/29/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GUY YEDWAS

Address: 333 4th St Apt 60 Brooklyn, NY 11215

I represent: LEAGUE OF INDEPENDENT THEATER

Address: 715 5th Ave Manhattan, NY 10065

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms