

New Dorp BID Testimony, Maria Esposito

My name is Maria Esposito and I am the President of the New Dorp Merchants Group. I am also a proud property owner and owner of a small business, Norman Heil Insurance. For the past 15 years I have been actively organizing the merchants in New Dorp Town and through our partnership with Councilman Steven Matteo and the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation, we have finally achieved the level of organization necessary to secure the future of our neighborhood. The New Dorp Business Improvement District will further solidify the sustainability of our organization, and I am proud to present our proposed BID to you on behalf of our steering committee.

I was born and raised on Staten Island very close to New Dorp. In the 60's I can remember very clearly my Saturday outings to the "Lane". We would take a one stop train ride and shop for the day and sometimes take in a family feature film at the Lane Theatre. We would walk down the Lane to Hylan and back up again stopping in the many retail stores along the way. Looking back now it reminded me of something you would see on the Hallmark Channel today. In 1978 I started working on the Lane in the business I own today and have seen many changes through the years.

Due to the advent of big box store development and the opening of the Staten Island Mall in the 1970s, New Dorp and other main street areas on Staten Island have suffered. The decline has only increased over time and we had more and more vacancies, less foot traffic and little desire for anyone to open up new small businesses.

However, over the past 3 years since we have started this new merchant organizing effort we have seen significant change. A diverse array of businesses have opened up, the street are cleaner than ever, and people are talking about New Dorp all over Staten Island. This momentous shift in outlook has encouraged my fellow property owners and merchants to take measures to make sure this revitalization continues to occur. Some of our accomplishments have been the addition of private sanitation, beautification, holiday lighting and holiday events, street pole banners, and flower planters adorning our sidewalks. We created a state of the art website and merchant video series, and we have hosted 10 events drawing over a total of 10,000 attendants to the neighborhood. Our annual restaurant crawl has become a huge event that draws thousands in of itself.

Our steering committee has acted thoughtfully and decisively through this process and we have created a plan that is not only fair to our mom and pop store owners, but is in line with our long term goals. I encourage you to support this grassroots effort that property owners and merchants like myself have worked so hard to achieve.

We have brought a tremendous amount of increased activity and positive awareness to the Lane and we look forward to continuing our efforts. I can clearly say that we have put New Dorp back on the map!

New Dorp BID Testimony by Carmine DeSantis

My name is Carmine DeSantis and I am attorney with an office on New Dorp Lane since 1997. I am a native Staten Islander who has lived on the Island my entire life. New Dorp Lane and the connecting New Dorp Plaza have long been perceived as a center of small business on Staten Island.

When I was growing up in the 1960's I distinctly remember coming to the Lane with my family to shop and eat. Buster Brown, with its coin operated Mutoscope, and Bocci's Restaurant are involved in many of my early childhood memories. When I was a little older, the Lane Theater, Pizza Town and Daugherty's were some of the best places to gather with friends and family. Sadly, these iconic locations began to fade when the Staten Island Mall was built in the 1970s and New Dorp Lane lost its place as the Island's premier shopping destination.

I have personally witnessed the changes in New Dorp over the last several decades. When I first moved my office to New Dorp, I immediately became active in a loosely organized business group that called itself the New Dorp Merchant Association. The meetings were few and far between and rarely addressed the concerns of the local merchants. The only initiative of the group was to collect funds for the Christmas lights. Due to its ineffectiveness, the group disbanded within a few years.

Over the last 3 years, New Dorp business owners began meeting to address a number of issues that plagued the Lane. With the support of Councilman Matteo and the guidance of the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation, the group evolved into a formal organization with regularly scheduled meetings. This allowed merchants to get to know each other on both professional and personal levels. The new relationships led to the discussion and development of initiatives that were designed to market the businesses in the area. This led to street banners, window posters, a business directory, a social media presence, and an impressive website. Perhaps most importantly, the shared goal of bringing increased foot traffic to the area was realized through mutual support and a unified effort.

One of the most impressive accomplishments of our merchant's group has been the community events. This included a number of Christmas tree lighting events, Columbus Day Festival, Dog Day Afternoon, and Restaurant Crawls. I personally spoke with residents from New Dorp and other towns who were very impressed and excited about these events. With the partial closing of New Dorp Lane and a carnival like atmosphere, I noticed an energy that I have not experienced on Staten Island in decades.

Our New Dorp Merchant Association has made a significant impact on the New Dorp community. The fact that our Association had adequate funds to underwrite these projects cannot be underestimated because it allowed us to pay for the necessary components of a successful public event. The fact that we didn't have to solicit contributions from more than 180 merchants was a critical factor in enabling us to accomplish our goals. This clearly underscores the need for a reliable source of funding to build on the impressive efforts our merchants have put forth to date. I thank you for your time and consideration for the New Dorp BID and look forward to bringing the local merchants and surrounding community together for years to come.

SIEDC TESTIMONY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NEW DORP BID
February 15, 2017

Chairwoman Ferreras-Copeland, Councilman Matteo and members of the committee,

My name is Steven Grillo and I am the First Vice-President of the Staten Island Economic Development Corporation. In this capacity, I have overseen the general management of the New Dorp Merchants Group since its conception in 2014. The New Dorp BID is the third BID that the SIEDC has spearheaded since 2013 and once approved, we will have been responsible for the creation of 75% of the BIDs on Staten Island.

In cooperation with Councilman Steven Matteo and the New York City Department of Small Business Services, we have been working for the past three years to develop a valuable partnership between property owners, businesses and government along New Dope Lane and New Dorp Plaza – one of the great traditional retail districts in Staten Island.

The New Dorp BID consists of 127 tax lots in the Mid-Island section of Staten Island. The proposed district is comprised of roughly 180 unique businesses, along one of the densest and pedestrian oriented corridors on Staten Island.

The New Dorp Merchants Group was founded in 2010 to organize merchants and provide services such as collective marketing, private sanitation, beautification, holiday lighting, events, and public advocacy – all to enhance the economic vitality of the corridor

Some of the accomplishments of the group include attracting new businesses, hosting 10 events drawing over 10,000 attendees, the installation of street pole banners and welcoming signage, priv. The Group's annual restaurant crawl has become a Staten Island tradition and draws thousands to New Dorp Lane.

The stakeholders involved in the creation of the BID understand the immense role that New Dorp plays in the Mid-Island economy. However, new and expanded services are required to help keep this important "mom and pop" corridor thriving.

The steering committee of the proposed New Dorp BID has proposed a \$135,000 annual budget to provide for private sanitation and street sweeping, area beautification, marketing & events and general administrative expenses associated with hiring a dedicated BID manager.

SIEDC and the local community leaders look forward to advancing the New Dorp BID in the coming months and helping to expand business opportunities in historic New Dorp Town.

SBS Statement on Proposed New Dorp BID
Before City Council Finance Committee
February 15, 2017

Good morning Chair Ferreras-Copeland and members of the Finance Committee. I am Kris Goddard, Executive Director of Neighborhood Development at the Department of Small Business Services (SBS). I am joined by our BID Program Director, Jennifer Kitson and Senior Program Manager for BID Development, LeMel Lindsey. We are here to testify in support of the proposed New Dorp Business Improvement District (BID).

At SBS, we are working hard to open doors for New Yorkers across the five boroughs – focusing on creating stronger businesses, connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, and fostering thriving neighborhoods. We believe that the vitality of the City’s commercial corridors is a key part of achieving this goal, and BIDs have been valuable and proven partners in revitalization and economic development across all five boroughs.

In addition to our role overseeing and supporting the City’s existing network of 73 BIDs, SBS also supervises the BID formation and expansion process, serving as an advisor and resource for communities interested in developing or expanding BIDs. We are careful to ensure that each steering committee we work with adheres to our planning process and policies; solicits robust community input; and performs extensive outreach to collect and demonstrate broad-based support across all stakeholder groups.

Moreover, we are cognizant of the unique nature of each community we assist, and aim to empower local stakeholders to make determinations on proposed services, boundaries, and budget size that best suit their community’s needs, and appetite and ability to pay assessments. While we always impart strong planning principles and share our data and best practices from across the BID network when working with any BID formation effort, we recognize that the power and effectiveness of BIDs rests in their unmatched understanding of local needs and issues.

Like other recent BID formations that SBS has overseen, the New Dorp formation effort involved numerous meetings and consultations with local stakeholders throughout the planning and outreach phases. After an extensive outreach effort and close coordination with all key parties, SBS determined that the documented support among all stakeholder groups – including over 50% of the area’s commercial assessed value providing written support in favor – was sufficient to submit the application to City Council.

As required by law, the New Dorp Steering Committee mailed the summary of the City Council Resolution, no less than 10 days and no more than 30 days before today’s hearing, to the following parties:

- to each owner of real property within the proposed district at the address shown on the latest City assessment roll,
- to such other persons as are registered with the City to receive tax bills concerning real property within the district, and
- to tenants of each building within the proposed district.

Furthermore, SBS arranged for the publication of a copy of the summary of the Resolution at least once in the City Record.

It is also important to note that this BID formation proposal is supported by the Staten Island Community Board 2.

Additionally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Minority Leader Steven Matteo for his ongoing support of the New Dorp BID formation effort.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge that the BID formation effort is represented here today by the New Dorp Steering Committee, who will testify and be available to address any specific questions that I am unable to answer.

At this time, I am happy to take any questions. Thank you.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1454 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARIA ESPOSITO
Address: 219 NAUGHTON AVE SE 10307
I represent: MERCHANTS GROUP / NORMAN HEIL INS
Address: 147 NEW DOCP CANE 10306

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. 1454 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 2/15/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: STEVEN GRILLI
Address: 900 South Ave, SE NY
I represent: New Dorp Merchants Group / STEPC
Address: 900 South Ave, SE 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. 1454 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/15/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KRIS GUDDARD

Address: 110 WILLIAMS STREET

I represent: SMALL BUSINESS SERVICES

Address: _____

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. 1454 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/15/17

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carmine De Santis

Address: 10 Lyman Pl. ST. NY 10304

I represent: Carmine De Santis Esq

Address: 183 New York Lane ST NY 10306

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