

Myrtle Minutes

Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project LDC (MARP)
Myrtle Avenue Merchants Association (MAMA)
Business & Community News in Fort Greene & Clinton Hill

October/November 2004 Printing by OBE (476 Myrtle)

Finishing Touches on the Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn BID

The Myrtle Avenue Brooklyn Business Improvement District, encompassing properties on Myrtle Avenue between Flatbush and Classon, was approved by City Council on October 27th, and was signed into law by Mayor Bloomberg on Tuesday, November 9th. The BID must now be incorporated with the state of New York. We anticipate BID operations to begin early next year.

Small Business Networking on Myrtle

Join us this **Friday, November 12th at 3:00 pm** for a ribbon cutting at the gift shop **Frosted Moon Emporium** (154 Vanderbilt at Myrtle), followed by the grand opening of and small business networking event held at restaurant **Maggie Brown** (455 Myrtle). City officials and small business lenders will be in attendance. Come meet your fellow small business owners, talk to small business lenders about your financing needs, and help to recruit new entrepreneurs to Myrtle.

Myrtle Avenue Merchants Association Meeting

The next meeting of MAMA will be on **Wednesday, December 1 at 7:00pm** at Peaches and Cream Café, 436 Myrtle Avenue. Topics of discussion will include the active participation of merchants in the BID, marketing the avenue, and security issues (with guests from the 88th Precinct). Please **call MARP at 718-230-1689 for more information and to confirm your attendance.**

New Businesses on the Avenue

Maggie Brown, located at 455 Myrtle between Washington and Waverly, serves "international home cooking," for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Owner Chelsea Altman, who also owns the popular bar Moe's and La Pequeña restaurant in Fort Greene, serves up an extensive menu featuring such specialties as Roasted Beet Salad, Spicy Mexican Vegetarian Lasagna, Red Wine Braised Short Ribs and Cornmeal Fried Chicken.

Liv-I-Culture, located at 347 Myrtle is a "holistic living arts collective," providing a place for local artists, musicians and other creative people to gather. They are also developing an organic, fair-trade café and juice bar and an artisans market with local art, crafts, clothing and jewelry.

Opening this December is the latest venture by 13-year Myrtle merchant, Lurita LB Brown, owner of Clinton Hill Simply Art & Framing Gallery at 583 Myrtle. Her new store, **Clinton Hill Simply Art**, will be located at 154A Vanderbilt Avenue, just off Myrtle, and will concentrate on original art for urban spaces. The gallery will also be available to small groups for private bookings. Clinton Hill Simply Art & Framing will continue to offer prints and custom framing services.

Brooklyn Eats on Myrtle Avenue

The 8th annual Brooklyn Eats, sponsored by the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, was held on October 18th at the New York Marriot Brooklyn. Attendees were treated to samples of food both exotic and homey from 62 Brooklyn chefs and eateries. Among the participants were Aricka Westbrooks of Jive Turkey and Robert Morris of Peaches and Cream Café, who served up succulent deep fried turkey and homemade ice cream.

Karen's Body Beautiful and Jive Turkey in the News

On October 24, local merchant Karen Tappin was the focus of a story on CBS 2 News Sunday Morning. The weekly feature, "Success Stories with Mario Bosquez," filmed Karen working in her store and interviewed her about the work involved in opening a new business. You can see the story on the WCBS web site, www.cbsnewyork.com, in the "Featured Video" section. Karen's bath salts are also highlighted in the December issue of *Vibe* Magazine in their Christmas buying guide. Aricka Westbrooks, owner of Jive Turkey, will also be featured on CBS' "Success Stories", this coming Sunday, November 14, and is the focus of an article in November's *Gourmet* magazine.

Myrtlemania!

The changes and growth on the avenue were the focus of an article in the New York Post on October 16 entitled, "Myrtlemania!" A photo of Peaches and Cream Café was featured along with a mention of Karrot natural foods store. The full article is at www.nypost.com/realestate/31855.htm.

Steiner Studio News

The new Steiner Studios production facility, located in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, gave a tour to Brooklyn Chamber members in late October. They have announced their first project, a movie version of the hit Broadway musical *The Producers*. Creator and producer Mel Brooks was enticed to the studio with tax credits from the State and a new labor agreement. These benefits convinced him to make the movie in New York, where the story takes place. MARP is compiling a procurement guide for Myrtle Avenue merchants to encourage the studio to purchase locally where possible.

No Shelter on Clermont Avenue

MARP hosted a meeting on September 6 to discuss the development at 60-64 Clermont Avenue. City Councilperson Letitia James, Shirley McRae and Rob Perris from Community Board 2, Ken Lazar from the Dept. of Buildings, the Presidents of Pratt Institute and St. Joseph's College, the building's developer, and concerned community residents were in attendance. Residents were concerned that the building was to be a temporary homeless shelter like the one which opened directly across the street. At the meeting the developer gave assurances that the building would consist of one and two-bedroom, market-rate apartments, with community space on the ground floor.

"Branding Brooklyn" at Pratt

The next President's Symposium at Pratt Institute will be held on November 17 from 6-8PM. The panel discussion at Memorial Hall will focus on the marketing of Brooklyn as a major cultural and entertainment attraction. Panelists will include Karen Brooks-Hopkins, president, Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM); Pamela Greene, director, The Weeksville Society; City Councilperson Letitia James; Arnold Lehman, director, The Brooklyn Museum of Art; Harvey Lichtenstein, past president BAM; current chairman, BAM LDC; Thomas F. Schutte, president, Pratt Institute, and Board Chair of the Myrtle Avenue Revitalization Project and the Brooklyn Arts Council. Admission is free, but seating is limited. For more information, call 718-636-3657 or email events@pratt.edu.

Myrtle Online

MARP is in the process of re-launching our web site to be more useful for merchants and residents. Our new and improved site is scheduled to launch in conjunction with the BID in early 2005. We will be visiting all the stores to verify information for our shopping guide, which will be included on the site. The site will have a section for all of our restaurants' menus, so please be sure to give us your latest version. You can drop one off at MARP's office at 472 Myrtle. We will also be collecting email addresses for newsletter distribution and quick updates on local events.

MARP support from: New York City Department of Small Business Services, JP Morgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, Independence Community Foundation, Park Avenue Building & Roofing Supplies, Citigroup, Greenpoint Bank, Con Edison, Assemblyman Joseph Lentol, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Councilwoman Letitia James, New York Community Trust, Saint Joseph's College, Long Island University, New York Foundation, US Dept. of Health & Human Services, Pratt Institute