

# Atlantic Currents

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Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association Newsletter

www.atlanticavenuebkny.org

## BID Support Is High

So far support for a future Atlantic Avenue Business Improvement District (BID) stands at 90%. The second public meeting for the future BID, sponsored by the Atlantic Avenue BID Steering Committee, took place April 28 at Long Island College Hospital.

Ariana MacPherson, BID committee project manager, stated that 148 ballots had been received. Those who have voted—including business and property owners and residential condo and co-op owners—are strongly behind the initiative. Additionally support is high throughout the three neighborhoods (Boerum Hill, Cobble Hill and Brooklyn Heights) that make up the BID district.

### 5 to 1 Ratio

BID Steering Committee co-chair Elizabeth Crowell highlighted the district

plan and the many services and funding opportunities that the BID will provide. She pointed out that “for every \$1 contributed, about \$5 worth of services/value is delivered.”

Questions and answers arising from the first public meeting — as well as frequently asked questions — have been



An enthusiastic crowd (above) listened to committee members present the BID plan; at right, Irene LoRe, manager of the Fifth Avenue BID in Park Slope and owner of Aunt Suzie’s Restaurant, explained the benefits of a BID.



distributed to all merchants and property owners. For more information or to submit your vote, go to [atlanticavenuebid.wordpress.com](http://atlanticavenuebid.wordpress.com).

## ArtWalk! in June

The 7th annual Atlantic Avenue ArtWalk is just around the corner on the weekend of June 5 and 6. Over 200 local artists and Avenue merchants are working to make this year even better than previous years. Around the neighborhood, artists will open their studios and art will be on display in Avenue stores from Fourth Avenue to the waterfront. Look for maps and flyers, at information tables along the Avenue, to get specifics on the art as well as on free events and live music.

Helping to partially fund this year’s ArtWalk, an annual benefit and silent auction—hosted by Barbara Koz Paley and Atlantic Gardens—was held on April 22; Lisa Shimamura of Colab Projects, ArtWalk event producer, hailed the benefit as “a huge success.” ArtWalk programs receive public funding from the NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs and from Senator Velmanette Montgomery; additional grants from AABA, AALDC, and donations from community merchants keep ArtWalk free and open to the public.

Art Walk is produced by Colab, AABA and AALDC. For more information, visit [www.atlanticavenueartwalk.com](http://www.atlanticavenueartwalk.com).

## A Bid to Save Lights

The beloved historic lamps that line Atlantic Avenue are disappearing. When the lights are knocked over by cars and trucks, the City Dept. of Transportation (DOT) has started removing instead of replacing them. Initiated in 1989, the Atlantic Avenue Lighting Project placed over 100 period lamps to brighten the way for pedestrians—enhancing evening shopping and dining.

The lights, not provided by the City, must be paid for with a yearly fee by a community organization. However, this maintenance fee has not been paid in many years.

### Lights On

In an effort to save the lights, the Atlantic Avenue BID Steering Committee has included their yearly maintenance cost in the proposed BID budget. Steering committee members will meet with DOT to discuss policy going forward, including replacing the missing lampposts and non-matching poles and repair of any non-working lamps and fixtures.



## Park Changes Offer New Hope

AABA and several other civic organizations are calling for a full public review of the Brooklyn Bridge Park 2005 General Project Plan, citing several recent changes, including:

- the transfer of the park from Empire State Development Corp. (ESDC) to the newly created City-controlled Brooklyn Bridge Park Operating Entity;
- the collapsed housing bubble; and
- the new agreement signed by State Senator Daniel Squadron and Assemblywoman Joan Millman with the City to study alternatives to housing within the Park.

People in the communities surrounding the future Brooklyn Bridge Park (BBP) are for the most part extremely unhappy with the state’s plan—which calls for building private high-rise luxury housing inside the park’s footprint to pay for its upkeep. In response to the ESDC’s failure to involve the community in any park planning, AABA (and other civic organizations) initiated in 2008 the only community planning process for Pier 6 at the park’s Atlantic Avenue entrance. This effort has been ignored by ESDC. Go to AABA’s web site and click on Brooklyn Bridge Park to see the community plan with a view of how Pier 6 could work for its community.

### Economic Diversity Needed

The community plan with diverse uses would better serve the surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. It would connect the waterfront to Atlantic Avenue businesses and draw many more potential shoppers and visitors, as well as provide revenue for upkeep without privatizing the park. AABA supports changes in the park plan that will promote economic self-sufficiency, much-needed jobs, and broad-based public input and decision-making. Providing a variety of uses will reduce the need for residential development to pay for park maintenance.

### A Vibrant Model

AABA is in favor of promoting short-term experiments and demonstration projects, like last year’s pop-up park on BBP’s Pier 1 which was wildly popular. These can be a first step in creating a waterfront destination where the needs of local residents for open space are met while at the same time creating a vibrant model of what the Brooklyn waterfront can become in the future.

# Entrepreneurs Keep Our Avenue Moving!

**The Roebling Inn**, 97 Atlantic Ave., M-Th 4pm–4am, F 3pm–4am, Sa-Su 12pm–4am; 718/488.0040; theroeblinginn.com ❖ “It’s a comfortable neighborhood bar with very little pretense,” says manager Jason Fulani. The tavern’s commitment to local products, includes beer taps dispensing regional beers, including many from “Brooklyn’s high quality breweries.” Food, too, is regional, including Nathan’s hotdogs, spinach pies (from Damascus Bakery), dub meat pies (from Columbia Street’s Down Under Bakery) and NYS cheddar cheeses. Two dart boards and four TVs—primed for events, such as the upcoming World Cup—enhance the community atmosphere.

**Eventfull.nyc**, 178 Atlantic Ave., 718/624.5777; fax: 718/624.1603, eventfullnyc.com ❖ Owners Nigel Teare and Melody Ozdenak have some 40 years experience between them planning and executing all types of events. Their clientele is mostly corporations, with some weddings and Bar/Bat Mitzvahs—even private intimate dinner parties. Having them cater is “like ordering a four-star restaurant to your home,” says Nigel Teare, with “strictly old-fashioned service” including servers, who are tuxedo-clad with pale gray silk ties.

**Barking Cat Studio**, 65 Bond St., M-F 10am–6pm; weekends usually for special events, 718/855.8050, barkingcatstudio.net ❖ Step through a screen door into a world of childhood nostalgia—“the perfect environment for creativity, discovery and independent thinking.” Artist Karen Merbaum encourages children to engage in “make it! & take it! arts & crafts.” A toy-studded mosaic counter greets young artists. The wide range of workshops—“creative play for 18 to 36 months, arts and crafts for 3 to 6 year olds and 7 to 12 year olds—varies in length and fee. Currently the studio is enrolling summer workshops from July 12 to Sept. 3. A detailed schedule is online.



**de Castellane Gallery**, 525 Atlantic Ave., Tu-F 12-8pm, Sa-Su 10am-9pm, 347/599.2017, decastellanegallery.com ❖ There’s some new art on Atlantic; painter Hans de Castellane has a stunning exhibition space for “both emerging and established artists.” de Castellane, who works in acrylics



and creates “mixed media collaborative pieces,” has a studio in the back of the gallery—where he paints under a 15-foot-wide skylight. Reluctant to define the art in his gallery, de Castellane says there is “an emphasis on photography and painting, with some really great sculpture this fall.” Go to the web site for exhibitions and events, which so far have benefited ArtWalk 2010 and the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF).

## Making Waves Along the Avenue

“Like a trip to 1960s.” At **de Castellane Gallery** (525 Atlantic) “old pix [got] new life”: Apr. 6 *Daily News* about photographer Roland Scherman’s exhibit.

Keep up! New **spring/summer AABA 2010 shopping guides** in Avenue stores.

Donated goods & services for **ArtWalk 2010** fund raiser came from Avenue shops, including **A Cook’s Companion**, 197 Atlantic; **Annie’s Blue Ribbon General Store**, 365 State; **Better Carpet**, 443 Atlantic; **Bklyn Eye Boutique**, 572 Atlantic; **Building on Bond**, 108 Bond; **Circa Antiques**, 374 Atlantic; **City Foundry**, 365 Atlantic; **de Castellane Gallery**, 525 Atlantic; **Floral Heights**, 107 Atlantic; **Fusion Designs Gallery**, 140 Atlantic; **Go Green**, 485 Atlantic; **Evolution: The Green Room Salon**, 422 Atlantic; **Hip & Humble Home**, 387 Atlantic; **Home & Abroad**, 487 Atlantic; **Iris Lingerie**, 366 Atlantic; **Mile End**, 97A Hoyt; **NY Transit Museum**, Boerum & Schermerhorn; **NuNu Chocolates**, 529 Atlantic; **Sterling Place**, 363 Atlantic; **The Melting Pot**, 492 Atlantic; **The Moxie Spot**, 81 Atlantic; **The Sanctuary Salon**, 527 Atlantic; **Silk Road**

**Antiques**, 313 Atlantic; **Town & Country**, 352 Atlantic; and **Zoe Papers**, 315 Atlantic.

Yum-m. Shops giving free food for **ArtWalk fund raiser** included **Betty Bakery**, 448 Atlantic; **Brazen Head**, 228 Atlantic; **Damascus Breads & Bakery**, 195 Atlantic; **Downtown Atlantic Restaurant**, 364 Atlantic; **Flying Saucer Cafe**, 494 Atlantic; **Heights Chateau Wines**, 123 Atlantic; **Linger Cafe & Lounge**, 533 Atlantic; **Mai**, 497 Atlantic; **The Moxie Spot**, 81 Atlantic; **Sahadi’s**, 187 Atlantic; **Peter’s Waterfront Ale House**, 155 Atlantic.

She does! have sunprint kits (*New York Magazine* summer weddings) and stainless steel water bottles (*Better Homes & Gardens*, April-Favorite Gardening items): **Annie’s Blue Ribbon General Store**, 365 State.

We’re not “a sewer,” merchants say to Mayor’s characterization of **Atlantic Ave.** in *Daily News* (May 21). Bloomberg claimed “he’s cleaned up once-gritty Atlantic Ave.” Responding in the article, Tony Scarselli, **Brooklyn Heights Bike Shoppe** (278 Atlantic) said “[Bloomberg] doesn’t get any credit,” and Ghassan Matli, **Damascus Bakery** (195 Atlantic): “We keep it this way.”

## Making It Better

Protect your tree and plantings. AABA has a few matching grants for iron tree guards, available to members. Fifty guards have already been installed by AABA in the Avenue Business District; guards help keep trees healthy—ensuring a memorable, pleasant shopping and dining experience. Interested AABA members, please call Sandy Balboza, 718/ 852.7418.

### Fight Graffiti

Graffiti is starting to come back—on roll down gates and doorways. Don’t let it become an eyesore. Several merchants have called 311 to have it removed; it can also be eliminated—even faster—with paint or graffiti remover.

### Bollards Installed

After AABA requested that DOT make the pedestrian refuge—intersection of Atlantic and Boerum—more visible to turning traffic, these movable bollards were installed.

