



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Kavanagh Joins Mayor, Elected Colleagues, Organizations Displaced by 70 Mulberry Street Fire in Announcing Assistance

BRIAN KAVANAGH January 27, 2020



**On January 27, 2020, Senator Kavanagh joined Mayor Bill de Blasio, other elected officials, and organizations that were displaced by the catastrophic fire at 70 Mulberry Street in Chinatown in announcing assistance for the organizations.**

**Senator Kavanagh said: "The fire has been devastating for the many, many people in Chinatown and beyond who know and love this building and the essential organizations it has housed. I am glad the City has moved quickly to find alternative space so these organizations can continue to serve the public. I join the Mayor and all my colleagues in government, and the entire community, in committing to do everything we can to meet people's needs in the short term, to mitigate whatever losses we can, and to rebuild better and stronger in the long term."**

The full text of the press release is below; the original is available at:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/042-20/de-blasio-administration-helps-organizations-displaced-chinatown-fire>

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## **De Blasio Administration Helps Organizations Displaced by Chinatown Fire**

*Temporary space secured as agencies work with organizations on long-term solutions*

January 27, 2020

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced that the City has helped secure temporary locations for tenants displaced by the fire at 70 Mulberry Street in Chinatown last week. City agencies are continuing to work with the organizations on long-term options until the building can be rebuilt or restored.

“70 Mulberry Street is a pillar of Chinatown, and I stand with the entire community as recovery efforts continue,” said Mayor Bill de Blasio. “We will do everything in our power to help these incredible organizations rebuild and bring this historic building back to life.”

70 Mulberry Street housed a diverse array of organizations central to the community, from cultural groups to athletics to social services and support. Organizations will be using a mix of city-owned space and space from other organizations to continue operations and for storage. Accommodations include:

CPC Chinatown Senior Center – The City has identified four nearby senior centers that will temporarily accommodate CPC Chinatown Senior Center members. Open Door Senior Center, located at 168 Grand Street, will be the primary alternate site while the Department for the Aging works to secure a permanent space. In addition, signage with the addresses and contact information of alternate centers will be distributed and posted around the area.

Chinatown Manpower Project Inc. (CMP) – CMP will be using space provided by the Chung Pak Daycare Center and P.S. 130.

H.T. Dance Company – The dance center will be moving administrative offices to a partner organization in the immediate and the City is assisting with finding another suitable location. The City has also made space available for performances at 125 Worth Street.

Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) – 70 Mulberry Street houses the research center and museum archives. 215 Centre Street, the location of the museum, will continue operations. The City has offered to store recovered artifacts in city-owned space as needed once recovery is completed. In addition, the Department of Records and Department of Cultural Affairs are coordinating with cultural institutions and archivists to provide assistance.

United East Athletic Association (UEAA) – The City has secured city-owned space in the municipal building located at 1 Centre Street that is available for use.

The City will continue to work with the organizations to address their needs as recovery efforts continue.

“The Chinatown fire is a tragedy for the entire community, but the City of New York will help all who were impacted recover and rebuild,” said Lisette Camilo, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). “We are pleased that all building tenants now have temporary locations to continue their operations, but the work continues.”

“In the wake of the devastating Chinatown fire that occurred at 70 Mulberry Street, every effort will be made to support both the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC) Chinatown Senior Center and the hundreds of older adults who visit daily and rely on the

center as a home-away-from-home. As committed by Mayor de Blasio, we will continue to work in partnership with local groups to ensure that CPC members will have services beginning today as we find a new permanent home for the center," said New York City Department for the Aging Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez. "Starting today, volunteers and staff members will be outside of 70 Mulberry Street to direct older adults to Open Door Senior Center, located nearby at 168 Grand Street."

"The Museum of Chinese in America and HT Chen and Dancers are vital, indispensable and beloved cultural institutions that collect and preserve the history and experiences of Americans of Chinese descent and pass that history and its traditions along to present and future generations," said Acting Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kathleen Hughes. "They are important not just for Chinatown but New York City and beyond. While these are resilient groups and the outpouring of support has been extraordinary, this fire is a devastating blow. Along with our colleagues in City government, we will be here every step of the way to help these groups grapple with the loss and chart their path forward."

"The historical records documenting Chinese immigration and the many contributions of Chinese Americans are invaluable. The DORIS team of archivists and conservators are poised to assist if and when the records can be recovered," said Department of Records Commissioner Pauline Toole.

"The administration is to be commended for acting quickly in assisting these displaced organizations," said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.

"The fire has been devastating for the many, many people in Chinatown and beyond who know and love this building and the essential organizations it has housed, said State Senator Brian Kavanagh. "I am glad the City has moved quickly to find alternative space so these organizations can continue to serve the public. I join the Mayor and all my colleagues in

government, and the entire community, in committing to do everything we can to meet people's needs in the short term, to mitigate whatever losses we can, and to rebuild better and stronger in the long term."

"It's difficult to describe the pain and loss the Chinatown community is feeling, but we will not be broken. I thank Mayor de Blasio for coming to Chinatown's aid after the fire and coordinating robust agency support to identify alternative space for the displaced community groups," said Council Member Margaret S. Chin. "I am also deeply moved by the nonprofits and community leaders who have offered assistance. We will continue to work together to provide relief to those affected, restore what was lost from the fire, and begin the process of rebuilding."

"CPC is deeply saddened by the devastating fire at 70 Mulberry Street that impacted our Chinatown Senior Center as well as CMP, MOCA, Chen Dance Center, and UEAA. Our top priority is restoring services for our seniors as soon as possible. Every day, 300 seniors come to the CPC Chinatown Senior Center for a hot meal and social services. Thank you to the firefighters and first responders, to the Mayor, elected officials, DFTA and DCAS, and to our community partners for your outpouring of support," said Wayne Ho, President & CEO of the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC).

"CMP has been grateful for the support the Mayor, elected and City officials, and the community have offered us since the 5-alarm fire broke out on Thursday night. The Mayor's commitment to restore or re-build 70 Mulberry Street is confidence building, and we trust that DCAS will help us to find interim solutions for our facility needs very soon. We are also thankful to the swift responses of the emergency personnel, and wish a speedy recovery of those injured in their line of duty. At this moment, CMP's first and foremost priority is to continue our commitment to the community we serve, minimize service interruption, and resume our program activities as soon as possible. We target to recommence our

employment and entrepreneurial assistance programs by Wednesday, January 29th, and our Chinese School and community service programs by mid-February,” said Hong Shing Lee, Executive Director, Chinatown Manpower Project.

“The history of Chinese immigration to the United States is an American narrative. The Museum of Chinese in America has preserved that history for 40 years. The fire at 70 Mulberry jeopardizes a vital collection of American history. Thank you for the outpouring of support from near and far. MOCA is strengthened and determined to recover, repair, and rebuild,” said Nancy Yao Maasbach, President of the Museum of Chinese in America.