



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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BURT LAZARIN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

December 10, 2019

Lorraine Grillo
Commissioner
Department of Design and Construction
30-30 Thomson Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101

Re: Inclusion of Community Board, Businesses, and Stakeholders in Planning Process for DDC Projects Community District 4

Dear Commissioner Grillo,

At its December 4, 2019 monthly Full Board meeting, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) voted by a vote of 40 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to request that the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) implement a process to both notify the Board, its relevant committees, and community stakeholders of ongoing and planned projects with impacts in our district, and solicit feedback towards limiting disruptions. Our resolution is offered in conjunction with a similar resolution from our neighbors in Community Board 3 and is intended to convey our endorsement of that resolution (see enclosed).

DDC projects can have disruptive impacts on local businesses, on the quiet enjoyment of residents, on pedestrian and cyclist safety, and on the daily operations of property owners. Recent examples we have seen of negative impacts on small businesses include a reduction of foot traffic, difficulty in receiving deliveries, and interruptions to garbage and recycling collections. Small business owners are especially vulnerable to these disruptions, particularly on weekends and holiday seasons. Others may be impacted by specific special events, such as street fairs, Fashion Week, and religious holidays.

In the recent past, the DDC held “kick off” meetings in order to inform MCB4 and other community stakeholders of upcoming projects, and to gather feedback towards implementing the projects. We found that by working with the Board in this manner, projects were able to

move forth efficiently and without delays, while having fewer negative impacts. Periodic follow-up meetings should be held as needed.

Without such a process in place, mitigation planning and changes fall on the project's contractors. The contractors are unlikely to have a full picture of the potential negative impacts of a given project.

We believe that the community will be better served by including the Community Board, businesses, residents, property owners, and other stakeholders in planning meetings before projects are started, and that contractors alone should not make decisions on construction issues impacting the community.

We recognize that there may well be many DDC projects in our district at any given time, and that DDC would best prioritize projects by their impacts. We look forward to working with DDC going forward.



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

Enclosure

Cc: Hon. Brad Hoylman, New York State Senate
Hon. Deborah Glick, New York State Assembly
Hon. Richard Gottfried, New York State Assembly
Hon. Helen Rosenthal, New York State Assembly
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, New York City Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Susan Stetzer, District Manager, Manhattan Community Board 3



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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Alysha Lewis-Coleman, Board Chair

Susan Stetzer, District Manager

September 25, 2019

Lorraine Grillo
Commissioner, Department of Design and Construction
30-30 Thomson Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Commissioner Grillo:

At its September 2019 monthly meeting, Manhattan Community Board 3 passed the following resolution:

TITLE: Department of Design and Construction Should include Community Board, Businesses, Stakeholders in Planning before City construction Projects impacting the community

WHEREAS, CB 3 has many City reconstruction projects, many of which are ongoing for years, and

WHEREAS, many of the city reconstruction projects have great impacts on local small businesses because they involve actions such as water shutdowns, tearing up the street and / or sidewalk for months or years, closing streets, receiving waivers from holiday embargos, and other actions that impact businesses as well as residents and property owners, and

WHEREAS, such reconstruction projects often make it difficult for small businesses to receive deliveries, get garbage collected or have customers pull up curbside, and

WHEREAS, CB 3 is home to many small businesses that cannot withstand losing business at peak times such as weekends, embargoed times such as Thanksgiving to New Years and special planned embargoes such as Fashion Week, and some religious holidays that serve specific populations, and

WHEREAS, years ago the community boards were invited to DDC "kick off" meetings as an opportunity to both learn about the project as well as to give input which proved to be very valuable in planning up front for the project, and

WHEREAS, for some projects in the past there have also been stakeholder meetings to both notify the community, answer questions, and get input for planning that proved very successful, and

WHEREAS, many construction projects could achieve the same goals of efficiency and timeliness by working with business and planning actions at times that would have less impact on businesses, and

WHEREAS, currently all requests for planning and changes appear to be within the jurisdiction of the contractor alone to decide, and

WHEREAS, the contractors have no vested interested in working with the community and have proven to need monitoring and supervision which have come to light when businesses and property owners and residents reach out to the community board for help, so

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that CB 3 believes that the community as a whole will be better served by including businesses as well as residents, property owners, community boards and other stakeholders in planning meetings before projects are started, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that contractors alone should not make decisions on construction issues impacting the community.

Please contact the community board office with any questions.

Sincerely,



Alysha Lewis-Coleman, Chair
Community Board 3



Meghan Joye, Chair
Economic Development Committee

cc: Ophelia Rivas, NYC Department of Design and Construction
Office of Councilmember Margaret Chin
Office of Councilmember Carlina Rivera
Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
Office of Assemblymember Yuh-Line Niou
Office of Assemblymember Harvey Epstein
Office of Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Office of Senator Brad Hoylman
Office of Senator Brian Kavanagh