



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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Burt Lazarin

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November 20, 2018

Angela Cavaluzzi

President

Hudson Yards Development Corporation

c/o New York City Economic Development Corporation

110 William Street, Room 400

New York, New York 10038

William T. Castro

Manhattan Borough Commissioner

NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

24 West 61st Street, 5th Floor

New York, NY 10023

Re: Hudson Boulevard Park, Phase II Design

Dear Ms. Cavaluzzi and Commissioner Castro,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) is delighted that funding has been acquired, pursuant to Resolution #0469-2018, for the second phase of Hudson Boulevard Park ("Park") and that you are beginning the acquisition and design process. The Board is grateful to you and Vice President and Counsel, Lincoln Patel, for reaching out to the Board to solicit ideas about the design of Blocks 5 and 6 of the Park.

At the October 10th meeting of the Board's Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee and October 17th meeting of the Transportation Planning Committee, the following design suggestions were proposed. On November 8, 2018, Manhattan Community Board 4 at its monthly Full Board meeting, with 37 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible, voted to recommend approval of the committees' suggestions.

DESIGN SUGGESTIONS

The following are suggestions to consider for the design of Blocks 5 and 6 of the Park and the adjacent streets.

Playground

In a December 14, 2016 letter, the Board noted that while there is no play area for older children in the present Block 4 design, one was envisioned for this block in the original Park plan. A play area for older children in the Park is still an objective of the Board. Since Block 4 will front commercial buildings, the Board considers it reasonable to consider deferring the playground to Block 5 or Block 6, where residential buildings have been proposed.

- While a suggestion was made to keep the playground for younger children in Block 3 rather than move it to Block 6, it was pointed out that having different-aged play areas so far apart might ill serve parents with multi-aged children.
- Playground design should consider the utility of separating the play areas (older teens from tweens from toddlers).

Open Space

- A suggestion was made to keep one of the blocks open, uncluttered, and green (maybe grassy) — a rare amenity in the heart of midtown Manhattan.
- A consensus was reached to make the blocks as open as possible, while incorporating a variety of uses.

“Consider Topography”

- Construct a slope at the north end of Block 6 to serve as a buffer to the proposed bus garage at Galvin Plaza.
- Create height to allow for views south to the other Park blocks.

Visibility

- The interior of the Park should not be hidden from view, nor give a sense of exclusivity.
- The perimeter design should provide a sense of openness and welcome.

Environmental

- Make the space “more wild, less finished.” (Not wild wild; more like, “wild but usable.”)
- Create a nature trail.

Features

- Consider a water feature. Even a modest one could be effective.
- Bring the remaining Slaughterhouse cow head sculptures home.
- Allow for a performance space.
- Add trees when possible.

Shared Streets

A “shared street” treatment outside the Park would serve to slow traffic and make access to the Park safer.

- As the Boulevard dead ends at 34th and 38th Streets and does not serve to improve established traffic patterns, the Board recommends a "Shared Street" treatment for Hudson Boulevard (East and West) from 36th to 38th Streets. This will enhance the Park users' experience, and contribute to their safety. It should be noted that all buildings along Hudson Boulevard have frontage along side streets for entrances, deliveries, and FDNY access.
- The intersections of the Boulevard and the Park at 36th, 37th, and 38th Streets should also be treated as Shared Streets, to establish a greater continuity for park users, and slow down through-traffic at these intersections, which will be crossed by many parents and children. Surface treatment should be consistent with that of the Park.
- For the surface treatment of the Boulevard extensions and intersections, the Board recommends raised permeable pavers of a design consistent with that of the Park.
 - Motivate and the Department of Transportation (DOT) are looking for infill locations to expand the CitiBike network, and fill in current coverage gaps. The Board recommends a CitiBike station integrated into the shared street design, with the exact location determined by the HYHK Alliance (BID).
 - Some guidance on Shared Street designs from NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials), p 18: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/2012-nacto-urban-street-design-guide.pdf>
 - Illustration of Precedents on Broadway and elsewhere in New York City: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/pr2017/pr17-059.shtml>

PAST AND FUTURE

The Special Hudson Yards District was adopted in 2005 with the intention of fostering a mixed-use, medium to high density business district with an extensive open space network. The primary open space in this network is the Hudson Boulevard and Park, a linear north-south park bordered by a new tree-lined boulevard that, upon completion, will run from West 33rd Street to West 39th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. The Park was planned in two phases.

Phase 1 of the Park, West 33rd Street to West 36th Street (Blocks 1, 2, and 3) was acquired and built out by the City and opened to the public in 2015.

Phase 2, West 36th Street to West 39th Street (Blocks 4 to 6) remains in private ownership and is not yet under construction. Tishman/Speyer, the owner of the majority of the property around Block 4, will build Block 4 of the Park and pass ownership to the City.

The Board notes that when Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (MVV) presented their concept design for Block 4 (West 36th Street to West 37th Street), to the Clinton Land Use Committee in 2016, the Committee was unified in its praise of the design's abundance of plantings, ample open space for seating and event programming, and sinuous, flowing design for the planting beds and pathway network.

The Board is pleased that MVV will continue their extraordinary work in designing the final phase of the Park. We look forward to reviewing the proposed plans at our Waterfront, Parks and Environment Committee.

Sincerely,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community
Board 4



Jean-Daniel Noland
Chair
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen
Land Use Committee



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee



Dale Corvino
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning
Committee

cc Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, NYC Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Robert Benfatto, President, HYHK Alliance (BID)