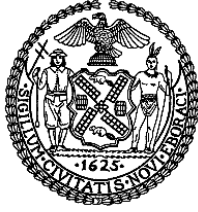


MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 4



Statement of District Needs

Fiscal Year 2013
(July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013)

COREY JOHNSON
Chair

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District Manager

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August 1, 2011

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Chair

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OVERVIEW

Manhattan Community District 4 (hereafter referred to as “CD4”) is comprised of two West Side neighborhoods: Chelsea to the south and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen to the north. CD4 spans the area from West 14th to 59th Streets (from west of Eighth Avenue to the Hudson River north of W. 26th Street, and west of Sixth Avenue to the Hudson River south of W. 26th Street). CD4 shares borders with Greenwich Village, the Flatiron, the Upper West Side and the Midtown central business district.

Portions of several other well-known areas exist within CD4's boundaries:

- Garment District,
- Flower District,
- Gansevoort Meat Packing District,
- Ladies' Mile Shopping District, and
- Theater District.

Other notable sites in CD4 include:

- Restaurant Row,
- The High Line,
- Columbus Circle,
- Maritime Piers 56 - 99,
- Farley Building/Moynihan Station,
- Lincoln Tunnel
- Port Authority Bus Terminal, and
- Northern half of Hudson River Park.

The total population of CD4 has grown from approximately 87,000 in 2000 to over 104,000 according to the 2010 Census. This represents a 19% growth overall, much of it concentrated in the rezoned areas.

A range of economic activities exists within CD4. Many reflect the area's early 20th Century development as an immigrant, working-class neighborhood once closely tied to an industrial waterfront and later serving as a "backstage" community for the theater industry. Local businesses and cultural organizations are vital to the community. Many provide essential services to the midtown central business district, the city's garment trades, or nearby entertainment and tourism industries. Technology and media firms have settled in the lower part

of the districts (with Google and Apple as magnets). A large performing arts community of artists and Off-Off, Off-Broadway and Broadway theaters as well as dance and rehearsal studios exists in our District. In fact, the greatest concentration of performing arts venues in the entire City finds their homes within CD4. In addition, the visual arts are strongly represented by a vibrant gallery scene throughout the confines of CD4. Neighborhood shops, restaurants and other enterprises serve area residents and workers, but also are widely known for high-quality goods and services and have become important destinations for art, culture and recreation.

As a result of recent rezonings, significant new commercial and residential development is now possible in formerly industrial districts in western Chelsea and southern Clinton/Hell's Kitchen. Local goals for growth have been developed with an eye toward balancing the redevelopment of these areas with the preservation and expansion of CD4's residential neighborhoods. Most important is ensuring that new development produces permanent affordable housing.

Development of large scale proposals for the corridor between 30th and 35th street – development above the MTA; West Side Yard; an additional trans-Hudson River rail tunnel; the conversion of the Farley Post Office into the new Moynihan Train Station; and the possible expansion of the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center - will similarly require an approach that balances local and regional needs.

PRIORITIES

CD4 is defined by its homegrown, unique characteristics, both physical and social; its symbiotic relationships with surrounding neighborhoods; and our communities' reaction to the unique characteristics, both physical and social, of those surrounding neighborhoods.

CB4's priorities (all of equal weight) are:

- Improving quality of life with the creation of additional green spaces; schools; educational, community and cultural facility spaces; and a better balance in street usage between pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles,
- Attracting development that makes available more affordable housing that is permanent and enhances diversity and positive neighborhood relations among disparate groups,
- Maintaining neighborhood character and stability, and
- Preventing displacement and eviction.

Concrete efforts to realize these priorities include advocacy for increased supply and access to permanently affordable housing, additional schools and parks, wider sidewalk space, more dedicated bus and bike lanes, improvement of the area's infrastructure, adequate delivery of social and public services, and the enhanced enforcement of various laws, especially traffic laws.

LAND USE PLANNING NEEDS

CD4 is continuing to experience intensive development activity as a result of the Hudson Yards and West Chelsea rezonings, the large amount of undeveloped property in the district, and a generally resilient real estate market. Keeping up with this activity and planning well for the future requires a significant commitment of City resources.

Our overarching need is for increased City subsidies for the inclusion of affordable housing in new developments.

Hell's Kitchen/Hudson Yards Follow-Up

A number of items that were agreed to by the Administration and the City Council in connection with the 2005 Hudson Yards Rezoning await completion, and need the commitment of staff and other resources from the Department of City Planning (DCP), Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and other relevant agencies to bring them to completion. For the most part, the need is for increased planning resources and capital commitments in future years. The most important items awaiting completion are:

- Development on "Site M" located on the west side of Tenth Avenue between 40th and 41st streets of 150 affordable housing units as detailed in the letter agreement between the Administration and the City Council. If development is not possible on Site M itself, then a comparable site in size and units developed must be identified.
- Development on the parking lot at the NYCHA Harborview Terrace site (56th Street between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues) as 155 units of affordable housing
- Development of a minimum of 16,000 sq. ft. of cultural facility spaces to be integrated throughout the Western Rail Yards (WRY) plan.

Several other matters still require attention in order to complete the Hudson Yards development process, including planning for a new consolidated bus parking facility with direct access to the ramp system of the Port Authority Bus Terminal and the Lincoln Tunnel. In addition, still pending is the Landmark Preservation Commission protection of the principal architectural historic resources that will be affected by the Hudson Yards rezoning.

Eastern and Western Rail Yards

Similarly, additional commitments were agreed to by the Administration, the developer, and the City Council in connection with the 2009 WRY. The most important items awaiting completion are:

- Development of affordable housing on publicly owned sites, namely, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) site of 151 units at Tenth Avenue between W. 48th-49th Streets; the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) site of 116 units at W. 54th Street and Ninth Avenue; and the Department of Sanitation (DOS) site of 75 units at 136-140 W. 20th Street.
- Extension of Section 8 subsidies at and at French Apartments (330 West 30th Street) for an

additional 40 years.

- Preservation of 150 units of endangered SRO housing.
- Extend affordability restrictions on projects developed with tax-exempt bond financing: Under the WRY rezoning, the City committed to develop a program to permanently extend affordability restrictions to two projects, the Westport at 500 West 56th Street (74 units) and the Tate at 535 West 23rd Street (63 units), that were constructed under the NYS Housing Finance Agency's 80/20 program.
- Development of 431 units of permanently affordable units of housing on-site in the Western and Eastern Rail Yards.

The following items are also awaiting resources from the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Parks Department to bring them to completion. For the most part, the need is for capital commitment in the up-coming Fiscal Year:

- Complete the enlargement and greening of the "Canoe" at W. 36th Street and Ninth Avenue,
- Install five pedestrian ramps missing on Dyer Avenue and W. 34th Street. This area is heavily travelled by visitors to the Javits convention center, but remains in non-compliance with Federal ADA requirements.

Clinton Urban Renewal Area

The Clinton Urban Renewal Area (CURA) has long been the focus of the Board's land use efforts in Clinton/Hell's Kitchen. The recent, substantial progress toward completion of redevelopment in the CURA reflects the cooperation that has developed between CD4 and HPD with the assistance of DCP. The Board also acknowledges the ongoing assistance of the Clinton CURA Coordinating Committee, a coalition of not-for-profits, in developing and sponsoring affordable housing in this area. The coalition includes Clinton Housing Association, Clinton Association for a Renewed Environment, Clinton Housing Development Company, Encore Community Services and Housing Conservation Coordinators.

A dwindling number of City-owned sites await redevelopment: Sites 7, the undeveloped portions of Site 9A (including Captain Post at 560 W. 52nd Street), and Site 9C (500-508 W. 52nd Street). Development plans are moving forward for each of these sites. We look forward to continued cooperation by the City, Community Board 4 (the Board) and the Coordinating Committee to redevelop these sites without delay.

Consistent with the Board's past positions, we maintain that all city-owned property developed in the CURA should maximize the number of units dedicated to affordable housing. Other CURA principles adopted by the Board include a new mixed-use zone to accommodate existing commercial, light manufacturing, cultural and non-profit institutions on site; urban design controls to reconcile the community's need for more housing with the preservation tradition and limits of the Special Clinton District; and the maintenance and development of only low-rise

buildings on the west side of Tenth Avenue to match the low-rise character of the District to the east. Any action by HPD to facilitate development in the CURA must reflect these principles.

Special Clinton District - Preservation Area

The development boom throughout Clinton has put considerable pressure on the Special Clinton District, which was established in 1973 to, among other things, preserve and strengthen the residential character of the community, and permit rehabilitation and new development in character with the existing scale of the community and at rental levels which would not substantially alter the mixture of income groups then residing in the area. Continued attention must be paid to enforcement of the protective provisions of the Preservation Area of the Special Clinton District, which is the neighborhood's residential core. Building permit applications should be reviewed by the Department of Building (DOB) plan examiners because self-certification has been abused in too many recent cases. The proper training and assignment of inspectors with detailed local knowledge is also a must. Without adequate and informed enforcement, the district goals will not be fulfilled.

Ninth Avenue is thriving as the main commercial corridor of the Special Clinton District and the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood extending south to W. 34th Street. We request streetscape improvements such as better lighting and more street trees to improve the pedestrian experience and create a stronger connection above and below the Port Authority Bus Terminal.

Hudson Yards & West Chelsea Special Districts

The Hudson Yards (HYSD) and West Chelsea Special Districts (WCSD) were amended in 2010 to prohibit the demolition of sound housing, similar to the provisions contained in the Special Clinton District. Particular attention must be paid to both HYSD and WCSD to ensure that eligible buildings are properly flagged and reviewed by both HPD and DOB. Building permit applications should be reviewed by DOB plan examiners and self-certification should not be permitted.

Special West Chelsea District Follow-up

Six years after its creation, the general purposes for which the Special West Chelsea District (SWCD) was created are being fulfilled. West Chelsea truly is a dynamic mixed use neighborhood. Residential development is vibrant, the arts community is flourishing and the second section of the High Line Park has opened to rave reviews and happy crowds.

It is time to follow through with discussions held and promises made during the creation of the SWCD, and to examine problems that have arisen afterwards.

- We again ask for completion of the study discussed at the time of SWCD's creation, "Study by the Department of City Planning (DCP) of areas west and south of the rezoning area (Special West Chelsea District - SWCD) with an eye to future actions appropriate for the neighborhood." As proposed, the study would examine areas between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues north of W. 22nd Street and other areas near the High Line farther south with the

goal of including them in the SWCD, and making other appropriate changes designed to preserve neighborhood character in this portion of West Chelsea, including the important area near the Gansevoort Market.

- We are especially concerned about W. 15th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues, where preliminary proposals for variances for four properties have been presented and discussed. As always, the Board would prefer to consider this area as a whole, rather than as a series of individual variances, and would like to see it incorporated into the SWCD with zoning appropriate for the block. Unfortunately, a proposal for the Chelsea Market building alone is proceeding towards certification. We are disappointed that this block may be considered in isolation from the neighboring blocks.
- During the environmental study required for the SWCD, we expressed our concerns that the traffic impacts would be significantly greater than those presented as part of the study. We were especially concerned that the traffic impacts of the SWCD and the Hudson Yards were considered separately even though they are adjacent and likely will have cumulative traffic impacts. We are pleased that the owners of a new 2,000 person school in the SWCD have agreed to conduct a traffic study even though it is not required. We request that DCP request or require traffic studies for all large developments, such as the one proposed for the Chelsea Market building.
- We are concerned that the residential uses in M zones permitted by the recently proposed M1-6D zoning for a site on West 28th Street will open the way for residential uses in Chelsea's two SWCD M1-5 zones. We reaffirm our position that these residence-free M zones are important components of the healthy, mixed neighborhood surrounding the high Line.
- The Board wishes to remind DCP again of its long-delayed commitment to study rezoning at an appropriate scale of the blocks of West 14th Street between Seventh and Ninth Avenues on the basis of the proposals in the original Chelsea 197-a Plan. The glorious old brownstones and the buildings once housing the center of the first Latino community in the city risk being lost. Loss of the historic character of this area would affect as well the character of the Gansevoort Market nearby. A rezoning at an appropriate scale to preserve the area would address this threat.

Several provisions contained within the Special West Chelsea District zoning, listed as "Points of Agreement" in a letter from the Office of the Mayor, support the creation and preservation of affordable housing. It is essential that these be carried through to completion:

- Extending the demolition restrictions developed for the Hudson Yards into appropriate areas of the rezoning;
- Implementation of the proposal for creating affordable housing on the Fulton Houses on West 18th Street between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. Residents and other affected community members must continue to be kept abreast of developments;

- Construction of affordable housing on the former Department of Sanitation lot on West 20th Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues;
- Permitting City, State, and Federal programs in the inclusionary programs in order to provide greater incentives and ensure permanent affordability of the housing produced;
- Tiering of inclusionary bonuses to include higher income levels;
- Creating a West Chelsea Affordable Housing Fund to produce more affordable housing in Community District 4. Provisions must be found to ensure this Fund is actually funded and produces affordable housing in the West Chelsea area;
- Ensuring a community preference of 50% for the affordable housing created;
- Introducing provisions for an Inclusionary Housing Bonus for conversions mirroring those for new construction.

The number and complexity of these provisions and the pressure for immediate development will require long-term monitoring, first to ensure they are promptly finalized and adopted, and then to ensure their effective use over time. The official position of the Community Board and the expertise of its membership and staff indicate that it is the appropriate body to take the leading role in this process.

The Board also is concerned that most of the proposals for development in West Chelsea, as in many other areas, are planned to produce luxury condominiums for sale rather than the rental units on which the provisions for affordable housing are based. This appears likely to reduce the number of affordable units actually produced. Future development in the area needs to be monitored to see if revisions will be required to produce the projected number of affordable units.

HOUSING NEEDS

Community Board 4 (the Board) is committed to the preservation and expansion of new affordable housing within our district. It is the Board's policy that 30% of all units in new residential developments be affordable to a range of low, moderate and middle income households. Those units developed must be affordable to a range of incomes. Specifically, 20% should be allocated to those earning up to 80% Area Median Income (AMI), 50% for up to 125% AMI and 30% for up to 165% AMI to meet the current needs of our diverse population.

Today, CD4 is a mixed-income community offering a range of services and resources to people of lower income that are not available elsewhere. Since its inception, the Board has worked to create a community open to people of all income levels. Unfortunately, the economic upswing of the past ten years has made tenants in Clinton/Hell's Kitchen and Chelsea vulnerable to rising rents and displacement. The Board requests that the City recognize the long-term benefits associated with mixed-income neighborhoods and mixed-income buildings when considering the best use for the remaining government-owned property within the district as well as when reviewing any zoning changes, variance requests or development plans.

Preservation of Existing Affordable Units

The District's diversity is in danger. CD4 is primarily a rental community that relies heavily on rent regulations, government subsidies and public housing to maintain its affordable housing stock. To date, rent regulations have played a large role in maintaining our economic diversity. However, changes over the years in the rent regulations enacted by the NYS legislature have led to widespread deregulation of previously affordable units and a significant loss of our affordable housing stock. In CD4, units that now become vacant are inevitably decontrolled and no longer are affordable. In addition, the Rent Guidelines Board recently approved increases for the rent stabilized.

CD4 also stands to lose a significant amount of affordable housing due to expiring uses in the immediate future. Section 8 contracts, if renewed, are only renewed for short periods of time. Furthermore, the 20% affordable component in many 80-20 (80% market-rate-20% affordable) developments will soon approach expiration, and those apartments will revert to market-rate. In the short term, the City must ensure that rental subsidies (Section 8 Certificates or other programs) are in place to meet the needs of those tenants faced with displacement by their inability to afford increased rent due to opt outs. The City must work to achieve a permanent solution to prevent expiring uses, adopt significant reforms to the 421-a program, and develop a long term strategy to prevent the displacement of these households.

The loss of rent-regulated units to illegal use persists as an escalating problem. For example, residential units are often leased to corporations; bed and breakfast operations are created in long-term residential units; residential apartments are used for commercial use; others are illegally subdivided for multiple occupancy; SRO units are now used for tourist occupancy and other short term rentals. Such uses are prevalent in rent regulated housing and in buildings receiving tax abatements through the 421-a and J-51 programs for residential use. Illegal hotel and bed/breakfast use of apartments has grown significantly over the past year. Such uses

violate a number of City codes, create security and quality of life problems for neighboring tenants, and removes from the market apartments that would otherwise be rent regulated. The City must continue to work with stakeholders to achieve a permanent solution to this growing problem.

The Board supports increasing the annual income limits for both the Senior and Disabled Rent Increase Exemption programs (SCRIE and DRIE). Recent annual adjustments, while appreciated, are not adequate to meet escalating costs. Seniors who receive both social security and pensions are often unable to afford their rents.

Creation of New Affordable Housing

The Board believes significant government attention and creative investment are required to ensure that new permanently affordable (low, moderate, and middle-income) housing is built in our community. We are encouraged by the City's commitment to develop affordable housing in the Hudson Yards and Chelsea districts and are hopeful this will lead to varied and creative new mechanisms to support this goal (see Planning Needs section above).

Little, if any, new affordable housing has been constructed in recent years outside of the 80-20 and Inclusionary Housing Programs. Those programs, as currently used, do not adequately address the needs of CD4. The 80-20 program, in which the affordable component is time-limited, offers no long term benefit to the community, and does not respond to the need for permanent housing affordable to a range of low, moderate and middle-income residents. We strongly believe that this program is not the best use of public funds.

While CD4 is supportive of special needs housing and encourages the placement of well-run programs in our district, the Inclusionary Housing program should be available to the general population and should not replace or supplant public programs that fund and operate special needs housing. The Inclusionary Housing Program should enhance our limited affordable housing stock for all residents with limited incomes.

In addition, under the 421-a program, the affordable component must mirror the market-rate units both in unit size and distribution. The current demand for studios and 1 bedroom in market-rate developments means that an equally disproportionate number of affordable units produced are smaller-sized units and not appropriate for family use. Changes are needed to the 421-a program to base the affordable component on square footage, with the distribution of the affordable units in unit-sizes that best meets the needs of each particular community. Finally, most units produced through the Inclusionary Housing Program are weighted to those earning less than 50% AMI and fail to balance our community's need for affordable housing for those earning between 60%-165% of AMI.

Since the long-ago demise of the Mitchell-Lama Program, most government funding opportunities have not addressed the needs of middle-income housing. In a community with a minimal supply of publicly-owned land its best use would be affordable housing. New means of creating and encouraging affordable housing on privately-owned property must also be

considered. Text and map modifications of the Zoning Resolution, new funding mechanisms, and innovations in housing type/construction must be explored.

Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD)

The Board continues to support HPD programs that fund the rehabilitation of buildings, prevent evictions and improve the living conditions of those who live there. However, few changes have been incorporated into these programs since their inception many years ago. The significant change that our district has seen requires new creative approaches. The current needs of our District, including the significant loss of privately-owned affordable housing and the increasing need for housing that is affordable to a range of incomes (low, middle and moderate) are not fully met by existing programs.

Over the last ten years, most city-owned residential property within CD4 has been transferred to non-profit and tenant-ownership programs that have provided opportunities for preserving and increasing the supply of decent, affordable housing. As the supply of city-owned housing diminishes, the City must work with the Board to develop creative approaches that meet CD4's desperate need for affordable housing. In addition to the specific sites identified for affordable housing in the Hudson Yards and West Chelsea re-zonings, flexible programs that provide for property acquisition and mixed-income housing are needed throughout the District.

Since not-for-profit rental buildings are a long-term stabilizing force in our neighborhood, the Board would like to see more of HPD's capital programs prioritize the selection of qualified not-for-profits as their development partners.

The Board also supports the continued use of the Supportive Housing Program to preserve and expand the supply of affordable SRO housing for homeless persons and community residents. This housing, with on-site supportive services for tenants, has been a successful model in housing very low-income persons. It is the only HPD program that provides funds for acquisition of privately-owned property for conversion to affordable housing, and provides a means to expand the supply beyond currently publicly owned land. Our community-based groups have utilized these programs to restore deteriorated buildings to excellent, long-term affordable housing and the rights of tenants have been protected.

The Board strongly supports the creation and expansion of service programs to help preserve our existing affordable housing. Programs, such as the Community Consultant program provide limited funds for housing preservation; however, the reimbursement rate per client served has not been increased in more than a decade and does not reflect the current cost of providing these services. Other programs, such as the Housing Preservation Initiative, Neighborhood Preservation Consultant Program, and Anti-Illegal Eviction Legal Services - which preserve affordable housing through eviction prevention and improvement of living conditions - currently do not serve our district. These programs should be expanded city-wide.

New legal services programs to provide eviction prevention services for low and moderate income households must be developed. Most legal service programs are targeted solely to families on public assistance, and low-income working households are not eligible. Eviction

prevention services are critical to several community groups in our district working to preserve and increase affordable housing. Programs which serve the vulnerable low income families – both those who work or receive public assistance-, must be thoughtfully developed.

General Code Enforcement

Residents of Chelsea and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen continue to experience the negative impact of insufficient government response to conditions that threaten life, health and safety. In the 1980s, there were 685 housing code inspectors citywide. There are many fewer today. The Board requests that HPD increase the number of its inspectors; fill the vacancies in its Litigation Bureau; and step up code enforcement as well as increase the number and timeliness of litigation against the most egregious violators of the housing codes. We also request that HPD, DOB, and Corporation Counsel pursue with due diligence the collection of outstanding fines owed by repeat violators, ensuring better enforcement and creating badly needed income for the City. An atmosphere of lawlessness now exists because shady landlords know there will be few consequences for disregarding relevant statutes and codes.

DOB and HPD inspectors and those assigned to the Mayor's Office of Midtown Enforcement (OME), do essential work in our area. Their work is particularly important within the Special Clinton District (SCD), where we depend on their skills to enforce arcane, but essential provisions of the SCD. The Board continues to see cases where owners have made renovations in SCD buildings without first applying for a required Certificate of No Harassment. The Board is concerned that the spread of self-certification by architects and engineers in applications to DOB and other agencies has led to a lowering and evasion of standards, particularly in areas like the SCD where special zoning regulations apply. Close monitoring of the effect of self-certification is essential.

Regulations are only as effective as the system in place to enforce them. We therefore request that DOB, HPD and the OME dedicate specific inspectors to concentrate on SCD enforcement and illegal use violations. These inspectors must receive rigorous and adequate training to ensure that they have the particular knowledge essential to preventing the flagrant disregard of SCD regulations that continue to occur much too frequently. We also commit to taking such actions as are appropriate and necessary to stop illegal conversions, and to ensure that tenants are not harassed. The Board also calls upon the DOB's Legal Department, Corporation Counsel and HPD to begin prosecuting the most flagrant violators of the regulations of the SCD and other housing codes and regulations. It is crucial that an on-going procedure be implemented by DOB to meet regularly with the Board and the community regarding these issues.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Housing

A large number of SROs (including rooming houses, SRO hotels, and converted tenements) exist in our District. However, SROs continue to disappear from the neighborhood at an alarming rate, due to either legal and illegal conversions to transient hotels or other uses. SROs have become the single most important source of affordable housing for single adults and an important resource for the prevention of homelessness. Affordable housing within our District is critical to house the diverse population of artists, students, minimum wage earners and those on fixed

incomes. This mixed population includes the backbone of the service and cultural economy of the city, as well as many of the most frail and isolated members of our community.

The largest concentration of SRO housing in our community lies between Eighth and Ninth avenues from W. 42nd Street to W. 57th Street. In that area, there are 62 buildings that contain nearly 2,200 SRO units. The majority of those units are found on W. 51st Street where twelve buildings contain 574 units. W. 46th Street is home to the largest concentration of SRO buildings, with 21 buildings housing 289 units.

CB4 supports the acquisition, renovation and new construction of sensitively-sited supportive housing developments to preserve and expand the SRO housing stock. The OME and HPD must strengthen the SRO anti-harassment laws and enforce them to protect this valuable and essential community resource. Continued funding of the efforts of the West Side SRO Law Project to protect tenants' rights and to preserve SRO housing is essential.

New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA): Fulton, Elliott-Chelsea, and Harborview Houses

Some capital needs are:

- Grounds: Outdoor lighting, black top, playgrounds, sprinkler systems, some fencing, and benches,
- Buildings: replacement tiles in the hallways, additional cameras in the stairways and roof landings, roof doors, new terrace doors, roof tank housing, pointing low rises, stair hall door low rises.

Finally, security and enforcement are issues facing all property owners in the city. In particular, the Board is concerned about security concerns at its three NYCHA buildings. We encourage NYCHA to work with CD4 to help coordinate solutions using a community-wide strategy instead of isolating developments and the people living within from the resources that surround them.

PARKLAND/OPEN SPACE NEEDS

CD4 is home to about 100,000 residents who share 700 acres of dense city blocks. The District has only three significant parks and eleven pocket parks or playgrounds, totaling less than 16 acres in all. We also have a long narrow strip of Hudson River Park, but it is still under development ten years after the Hudson River Park Act was signed. Delays in the development of key parts of Hudson River Park, including Pier 76 which is still being used as Manhattan's tow pound - not to mention Gansevoort Peninsula at the southern edge of CD4, mean that this imbalance will continue for at least a few more years.

Furthermore, expense and capital budget cuts and the dramatically low staffing levels of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) make it harder and harder for the DPR to maintain the few parks we have, threatening the quality of life. Over the past 30 years, the DPR budget has fallen sharply. As a result of reduced funding, DPR now has less than half of the full time staff that it did ten years earlier and parks are cleaned less frequently, fewer recreational programs are offered and less security is provided.

The Board strongly urges that the administration make a greater commitment to open space in our community by restoring the DPR budget. In particular, several areas need special attention:

- Each park in our district should have a full-time, on-site park keeper to address constituents' concerns, provide security and perform routine maintenance of that park alone;
- Funding must be directed towards full-time gardeners, maintenance workers, PEP officers, as well as seasonal aides and playground associates for the summer;
- Funding for requirements contracts should be increased so the Parks Department can maintain the parks in the best fashion;
- Funding must be dedicated to support Green Thumb Community Gardens and pruning for street trees;
- Hudson River Park must be completed as planned as soon as possible.

Clement Clark Moore Park

Maintenance is an issue at Clement Clark Moore Park. The park needs a horticultural master plan and the park's trees desperately need pruning. One corner of the park near a gate that is permanently padlocked should be reused. Finally, the community has requested that the W. 22nd Street gate be permanently locked so small children cannot get out that way.

Chelsea Park

The stone columns, which date back to Tammany days, should be moved to a more appropriate location than the current random spot. Long term solutions for homeless in this area are still needed.

Dewitt Clinton Park

Thanks to NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn the ball fields were renovated. They are heavily utilized by leagues, colleges, and the local community and were in grave need of repair. The Board believes, however, that the entire park is in need of major renovation including play areas, fully functioning restrooms, the steps at the western end of the park, and seating areas. The Board continues to make the restoration of this park a priority. Lighting and drainage remain serious health and safety concerns and need to be addressed immediately.

Hell's Kitchen Park

We are still disappointed that Hell's Kitchen Park lacks a comfort station; which was originally planned. And although DPR found a temporary solution, the children's water feature at the southwest corner of the park has poor drainage and needs repairs as soon as possible.

We continue to hope that the DEP site across the avenue can soon be developed into parkland as promised most recently by the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (dubbed "Hells' Kitchen Park West"), with the much needed comfort stations.

High Line

Now that the High Line Park is moving in a positive direction, the City must ensure that this important project is funded and completed. We also strongly hope that the portion of the High Line north of W. 30th Street, with its extraordinary vistas, can be included in the park as it provides the best views of the river and the opportunity for a real connection to Hudson River Park as well as the Javits Convention Center and the redevelopment planned for the rail yards.

New Parkland

A review of CD4 shows 84 lots of vacant land with nearly three times the acreage of current parks. Considering the lack of parkland, we urge the Parks Department to convert these lots into interim or permanent parks as feasible.

In particular in East Chelsea, in the 20s, there is strong demand for parks and playground. The conversion of schoolyards into playgrounds or a street closure would be a welcome accommodation to the growing need of families there, until an appropriate site for a park can be identified.

The Board continues to pursue potential sites for new parkland including W. 49th Street and Tenth Avenue. Furthermore, Hell's Kitchen Park South, shown in the City's Hudson Yards Plan, must be created with a combination of public and private funds for land acquisition and long-term development strategies.

Street Trees/Green Streets

More street trees, a major influence on the quality of life in Chelsea and Clinton, and more Green Streets, are needed in CD4.

We are pleased that the City completed the planting of street trees on Ninth Avenue from W. 34th to W. 42nd Streets and between Ninth and Tenth Avenues from W. 35th to W. 41st Streets. More trees are also needed on Ninth Avenue from W. 42nd up to W. 57th Street, as well as other locations. If DPR would share its tree census data with CD4, further locations of focus could be identified.

DPR's Green Streets program should be used on Port Authority marginal land adjacent to Dyer Avenue and the Lincoln Tunnel approaches (in particular 36th Street between Ninth and Dyer Avenues, as committed to by the City as part of the WRY rezoning).

WATERFRONT NEEDS

Hudson River Park remains the one bright star on the horizon - but for many parts of the park it has been far too long on the horizon. Significant portions of the park (Pier 76 and Gansevoort) are still being used for municipal purposes despite the terms of the Hudson River Park Act. And even as we wonder when these portions will eventually become parkland (or 50% parkland in the case of Pier 76), a plan to build a new transfer station for recycled trash at Gansevoort Peninsula plus the conversion of Pier 99 to commercial waste, was recently approved by the City Council and Mayor. We cannot lose sight of the vision of a complete Hudson River Park. Here are several areas of concern:

Pier 54

Pier 54 is planned for park use, including historic vessel berthing, but lacks funding. This is an important part of the Hudson River Park plan and monies to build this pier from a combination of City and State sources need to be identified as soon as possible.

Pier 57

Pier 57 is being developed by Young Woo with an innovative design using shipping containers for small shops & boutiques, food service & education, a home for the Tribeca Film Festival and a marina. However the traffic impact of this use must be carefully studied and traffic mitigation measures must be incorporated into the design and operational plan

Pier 76

The tow pound at Pier 76 must be relocated as soon as possible so that this pier can be developed with 50% allocated to new park space. The fact that the Mounted Unit has been relocated there on a temporary basis must not slow down this effort. A permanent home for the tow pound must be identified so that this pier can be developed as called for by the Hudson River Park Act.

Piers 81/83

The plaza and pedestrian walkway in front of these two piers should be funded as soon as possible now that an agreement has been reached with Circle Line & World yacht.

Pier 97

We are heartened that work has now begun on this pier, destined for recreational use as well as historic ship berthing. However work on the surface features still needs to be funded as current funds only cover piles and the deck.

Chelsea Waterside Park

The planned comfort station and café building in Chelsea Waterside Park has never been built. Funds to accomplish this should be allocated as soon as possible.

LANDMARKS NEEDS

The recent rezonings to promote development in large parts of CD4 as well as the heavy pressures for development throughout the District are threatening significant historic buildings even in places where the zoning was originally designed to be protective. The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) should carry out a full survey of historic resources in Chelsea and Hell's Kitchen promptly. The Board has already identified buildings and areas it believes deserving of more detailed study.

The Board has requested that LPC landmark several individual buildings that were identified during the Western Rail Yards re-zoning. We are still waiting for LPC to act.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING NEEDS

More and more vehicles crowd our streets and avenues each year. Trucks and buses are an increasing presence on residential streets, off-street facilities for all types of buses and commuter vans are inadequate, and environmental pollution is a constant quality of life complaint and threat to public health. This creates high levels of congestion, increases pollution, renders public transit ineffective, leads to dangerous situations for pedestrians at street crossings, impairs the ability for cyclists to safely travel, and raises competition for the limited curbside parking space on neighborhood blocks.

These problems are a condition of the overwhelming presence of the Lincoln Tunnel and Port Authority Bus Terminal in our midst, whose transient traffic disregards neighborhood needs in using our public space.

There are solutions but a real sense of partnership between the community and the DOT, NYPD and the Port Authority is required to make progress and enable a more livable community. We should devote increased resources and develop more creative strategies to encourage use of mass transit and car-pooling and create new pedestrian and bicycle friendly corridors. We applaud the sense of creativity and action emanating from the Department of Transportation during the last couple of years.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

From W. 14th Street to W. 59th Street, Ninth Avenue is the neighborhood-serving commercial center for residents and thus an important pedestrian corridor. However, increased development, traffic, and overall congestion are diminishing the neighborhood and pedestrian orientation of Ninth Avenue.

In May 2009, the DOT concluded a study of the 20 most dangerous intersections for pedestrians in New York City. The first two most dangerous are located in CD4. In 2007 three pedestrians were killed on Ninth Avenue and two were severely injured. In 2011 alone two more pedestrians were killed on Ninth Avenue at W. 53rd Street and at W. 47th Street. Over 800 pedestrians have been injured on Ninth Avenue between W. 14th Street and W. 57th Street during the last five years.

We appreciate the initiation of a federally funded comprehensive study of the Lincoln Tunnel entrances with a particular focus on pedestrian safety and Ninth Avenue. We expect that it will study the issues raised by the Board and the feasibility of proposals included in the CB study entitled the “9th Avenue Renaissance”. While the Department of Transportation is working closely with CB4, the final federally-funded report has been postponed by two years. CB4 requests that more resources and a heightened focus be put on this effort to generate a final report as soon as possible.

In the meantime, we believe the following enhancements in this dangerous corridor should be implemented immediately without further delays:

- W. 42nd Street and Eighth Avenue is arguably the most dangerous intersection for pedestrians in New York City. A comprehensive plan is urgently needed to calm the intersection which experiences large volumes of pedestrians
- W. 42nd Street and Ninth Avenue is arguably the next most dangerous intersection in New York City. It is urgent that the protected left signal be installed rapidly, and that trucks and buses be redirected to Eleventh Avenue. Now that W. 41st Street is reopened, buses and trucks should be directed to use it to access the tunnel, instead of making a left turn at W. 42nd Street and Ninth Avenue. Although two pedestrians were killed at the same locations on W. 45th Street, no corrective measures have been suggested. A prompt analysis of that intersection is warranted to prevent further fatalities.
- At W. 37th Street, where many pedestrians have been injured, CB 4 is on record for requesting the addition of a sign near the corner of Ninth Avenue indicating “NO LEFT TURN” into the Lincoln Tunnel entry lanes.
- At W. 34th Street and Ninth Avenue, senior pedestrians have requested more time to cross the south segment of the Avenue where they are in conflict with turning cars.

As the primary entry/exit route of the Lincoln Tunnel, Dyer Avenue receives heavy traffic and requires special attention to ensure pedestrian safety. These basic concerns must be addressed:

- We are pleased that DOT is studying the closing of Dyer Avenue going north between W. 34th and W. 35th Streets, as this configuration was successfully tested for a few months with excellent results for both commuters and residents.
- We are pleased that DOT is studying restoring the Ramp C crossing to prevent pedestrians from walking in the traffic.
- The study should determine if it is feasible to redirect Ramp C traffic away from residential buildings, as requested by the Board.
- The crosswalks at the intersection of Dyer Avenue and W. 40th Street should be realigned to avoid the columns of the ramp leading to the Port Authority Bus Terminal. In addition, improved signage is required to alert drivers that they have left the Tunnel and entered the New York City street grid.

We urge DOT to improve the pedestrian experience and environment in several parts of the district. The Board has made several recommendations to improve the situation, only a few of which have been acted upon to date. These are the most crucial recommendations, which we hope will be heeded:

- Safety along the Hudson River Park for both bicyclists and pedestrians: the past death of a bicyclist highlights our concern. We encourage DOT to install speed tables plus improved and additional electronic signage along the pedestrian/bicycle path of the Hudson River Park. Pedestrians do not have enough time to cross the West Side highway and thus cannot enjoy the park.

- Restore the 36th Street sidewalk between 9th and Dyer Avenue and install a green street as committed by the City in the Western Rail yard rezoning.
- Most of the pedestrian ramps are in very poor shape. We have submitted a very long list of intersections that need urgent attention in this regard.
- We reiterate our long standing request to widen the west side of the Eighth Avenue sidewalk between W. 30th and W. 38th Streets by six feet. Currently, the pedestrian level of service there is "F" (the lowest possible rating) during the morning and evening peak periods. It is often so crowded that hundreds of people end up walking in the street, creating very dangerous conditions.
- As DOT continues to install bike lanes, it is important that pedestrian safety features be installed at the same time, especially to protect pedestrians from turning cars -- one of the leading causes of pedestrian fatality according to DOT. Especially dangerous are the intersections at 25th Street and 29th Streets and Eighth Avenue. Residents of Penn South continue to complain about the dangerous conflicts with cars at these intersections.
- Moving all bicycle racks off the sidewalk and onto former car parking spaces that have been converted into bicycle parking spaces.
- During any future roadway work by any agency, DOT and DDC should widen sidewalks within CD4 as much as feasible, especially at corners to create "bulb-outs." As everybody knows, bulb-outs increase pedestrian safety by increasing the turning radius around corners, thus slowing motor vehicles. Bulb-outs also shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians. In fact, the many bulb-outs that were created at various intersections in Chelsea are welcomed by the pedestrians who have used them.

Enforcing all laws regarding the proper use of vehicles and bicycles contributes substantially to pedestrian safety. The growth of bicycle lanes in the city mandates an increase in education on proper bicycle usage and enforcement of violators. DOT must work in conjunction with the Board when installing protective bicycle lanes. In addition, the needs of small businesses must be adequately addressed before the installation of such lanes.

Trucks, Vans and Buses:

Parking

There is a pressing need for additional off-street parking sites for tourist and commuter buses and vans. The parking and standing of these vehicles on our residential streets from W. 50th to W. 55th Streets between Ninth and Eleventh Avenues, and around Port Authority and Penn Station, causes serious delays in MTA bus service. It also causes pollution problems. A comprehensive plan for off-street parking for buses, van services, and waiting "black cars" should be devised, but, in the short term, DOT should work with the Board to identify areas for on-street bus and van parking (with enforced no idling).

We support the Port Authority plan to build to a new bus garage in the area. However, to be effective this garage must be located at Gavin Plaza on Eleventh Avenue and be large enough to accommodate charter buses. A plan for commuter vans still must be designed, and we hope the DOT study under way will address this issue as well.

Low-cost long-distance buses have invaded the areas surrounding W. 34th Street, with significant passenger queuing, which obstructs pedestrian circulation. In addition, the idling buses cause significant noise and double parking. The waiting passengers litter and urinate around nearby residences. This untenable situation must be addressed by re-locating these impromptu and illegal bus stops away from residences.

Routes

Considering the large volume of buses and trucks in the neighborhood, DOT should consider funneling these vehicles on certain truck routes to give them priority in the Lincoln Tunnel and to limit the risks they pose to pedestrians. In addition, we urge DOT to:

1. Identify truck and bus routes in the larger DOT study underway.
2. Undertake a study of various measures (including neck downs signage enforcement) to redirect bus and truck traffic to their proper truck route. This is especially urgent at 15th Street between Fifth and Ninth Avenues, which is mostly residential. Yet it is routinely used by heavy trucks instead of W. 14th Street, as the most direct route to the West Side Highway. In addition, the 2010 capital budget should include the rebuilding of the street bed which houses a main gas pipe that has been rendered unstable by the heavy traffic.
3. Continue to enforce the ban of buses on W. 45th Street.

Mass Transit - Improving service

Much of CD4's population uses mass transit. Keeping the City's system operating at an optimal level is therefore a continuing basic need. In addition to efficient movement of surface traffic, the easy accessibility to bus stops and subway stations contribute materially to the usability of public transit. Subway stations must be designed to be as accessible and friendly as possible for all riders. Bus stops should have clear signage.

We applaud the 34th Street Transit Way Project and the transit and pedestrian improvements it will bring to the residents, as well as improvements in curbside access for residents who currently do not have any curb access.

The conflict between Lincoln Tunnel queuing and the M11 bus route down Ninth Avenue makes this line unreliable - if not completely unusable - during major parts of the day. The M42 bus lane on W. 42nd street is blocked daily by commuter vans. We would welcome the installation of bus corridors similar to the one recently installed on W. 34th Street to improve the service.

It is critical that parking enforcement restore priority to this vital mass transportation. We note that new development along the waterfront and in the far west reaches of the district has created new demands for bus service in those areas, especially on Eleventh Avenue. Each of the new buildings has now implemented some form of private shuttle that crowds residential streets. Even worse, these private shuttles are... private... and thus not available to all commuters. Implementation of a new bus route is required to avoid the privatization of transportation.

Consider Eleventh Avenue for the next round of Select Bus service, where more than 5,000 new residents and businesses now live and work on this route.

The Board continues to advocate the need for a second #7 Line train station and stop on Tenth Avenue and W. 40th Street.

The Board and the surrounding community must be kept apprised of temporary and emergency changes in bus routes, subway station closings, and schedules. Last year a number of bus stop relocations adversely affected transfers at Seventh Avenue and W. 42nd Street, making travel difficult especially for our disabled members. We urge the MTA to continue to reconsider those changes and consult with Community Boards before implementation of permanent changes in types of equipment used, schedule modifications, and bus stop relocations. During a time of severe budget constraints and service cuts at the MTA, we feel the above suggestions are mostly cost-free, and yet will help to maintain quality.

PUBLIC SAFETY NEEDS

NYPD: Midtown North, Midtown South, 10th Precinct, and 13th Precinct.

During the past year, the NYPD has achieved major reductions in many categories of crimes throughout New York City and in CD4. We commend the Department for this achievement.

Effective community policing strategies, close attention to the problems in CD4, and cooperation with this Board and our Precinct Councils have had a major impact on the decrease in these crimes.

With the reductions achieved in many categories of crimes, we feel that more attention and focus can now be applied to quality of life issues in our community and the enforcement of quality of life regulations.

Midtown South, Midtown North, and the 10th Precinct are responsible for a vital part of the City's residential, commercial, tourist and entertainment areas. It is critical that staffing levels at these commands be brought up to full strength. The 10th Precinct, in particular, must have sufficient capability to manage the thousands of patrons, both pedestrian and vehicular, that flock to the clubs that have proliferated in the West Chelsea section of CD4 and to deal with the violation of quality of life regulations that inevitably results from a large concentration of club patrons.

Additionally, while traffic enforcement would generally fall under the purview of the Board's Transportation Committee, violation of City traffic regulations is certainly a quality of life issue. Consequently, to help promote a high quality of life in CD4, enforcement by the NYPD of regulations prohibiting illegal parking, standing, and idling is essential. For example, as a result of the increase of tourist buses and inexpensive commuter buses, illegal parking of these buses, particularly in the West 30s, 40s, and 50s, has created serious congestion issues. Additionally, a major air quality problem has resulted from the illegal idling of these buses' engines.

Finally, while the City's efforts to get more people to use bicycles by, for example, increasing the number of bike lanes is highly admirable and has gotten more New Yorkers on bicycles, these efforts have created new quality of life issues that must be addressed. Regulations prohibiting bicycle riding on sidewalks, going the wrong way and running red lights must all be enforced. Additionally, with the recent increase use of electric bicycles and other motorized bicycles, particularly by food delivery workers, without required licensing as well as violation of regulations requiring these delivery workers to wear tags on their persons and on their bicycle identifying the businesses for whom they work, the NYPD needs to be more vigilant in the enforcement of these regulations. On the other hand, enforcement of regulations designed to protect cyclists, such as illegally parking or use of bike lanes, must be enforced.

Office of Special Enforcement

This Board has consistently requested support for OSE. It is the one agency that can best deal with a range of complex issues which arise particularly in our District, from the proliferation of

Adult DVD stores in Clinton/Hell's Kitchen to the storage in or next to residential building of the gas containers in food carts, to problem clubs in Chelsea.

For more than 25 years, the predecessor to OSE, Midtown Enforcement, was a multi-agency task force of attorneys, inspectors, investigators and police officers that addressed quality of life issues often harmful to both the District's businesses and residents.

However, OSE's budget has been cut severely and basically has been subsumed into the Criminal Justice Coordinator's Office. OSE is no longer a stand-alone agency and, because of drastic cuts in personnel, can no longer address all of the problems that it became famous for solving.

This unit of the Mayor's Office was an active partner with community groups and business groups in our District. It used to be able to quickly respond not only through its own enforcement efforts, but also by ensuring that other City agencies did what is necessary on behalf of this community. It responded the way a city agency should. The Board strongly urges that OSE be given more personnel and an increase in its budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

Air Quality

Air quality is directly and negatively affected by emissions from motor vehicles, especially from diesel engines in trucks and buses. As both the Lincoln Tunnel and the Port Authority Bus Terminal lie in our District, we are concerned about our air quality and the proven health risks associated with these emissions. We note with some alarm that according to the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, our community, compared to the City as a whole, suffers a 25% higher incidence of chronic lung disease. We are not reassured by assessments by the EPA that the City is in violation of new air quality health standards.

Enforcement of idling laws, which carry substantial penalties, must be given more resources and be a priority, considering the high volume of idling buses, the numerous schools and the negative effect the idling internal combustion engine has on air quality.

All our precincts, especially Midtown South and the Tenth, as well as Traffic Enforcement need to be aware of DOT's new truck routes, which mandate that long haul trucks keep to major cross-town arteries such as W. 57th, 34th, 23rd, and 14th Streets and keep off of residential side streets.

Another major cause of air pollution in CD4 (and citywide) is carbon emissions from buildings still using “dirty boilers” that burn heating oil #4 and #6. Some of these dirty buildings are located in CD4. In an effort to meet the City’s 2030 zero carbon goals, all buildings will be required to convert their #6 boilers by 2015 and #4 boilers by 2030. However, many of the buildings using these dirty boilers are rent-regulated and cannot (or will not) pay for the cost of converting to cleaner alternatives, such as heating oil #2, natural gas or renewable energy sources (such as solar). The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) should work with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Energy Efficiency Corporation to develop specialized financing solutions to this problem. This may include modifications to the J-51 and the Industrial and Commercial Abatement Program (ICAP) to include a temporary abatement of city, county and state property taxes to support the conversion of dirty boilers in rent-regulated buildings. In addition, state legislation should be passed to prohibit Major Capital Improvement rent increases to rent-regulated tenants if the building owner has received any government-backed, boiler conversion-related assistance.

As plants are a great resource for converting CO₂ to Oxygen, employing use of plant material in form of green roofs in the dense urban areas should be made mandatory for all new construction and phasing in the old structures. The added load may make it little hard and expensive to structurally upgrade the existing buildings to comply with this requirement.

With the new zoning in the West Chelsea section of CD4 which will allow for extremely dense urban conditions and loss of undeveloped open space, the Board will be stressing the inclusion of green roofs and making them available to public access, thereby offsetting the loss of visually open space at grade in the West Chelsea and Hudson Yard Development areas. This raised urban space can be developed to become urban farms.

To reduce energy use, another item under consideration could be energy conservation. The night time lighting makes for very interesting, hospitable, safe and secure use of cultural and communal spaces. Architectural elements lighted in the night landscape are attractive components of our urban experience. Encouraging the building owners to use more efficient lighting fixtures for façade lighting and finding alternate energy source such as solar power is a priority.

Noise

CD4 used to be essentially a manufacturing area and proximity to Westside Highway brought in heavy truck traffic into the district. This continues with some change as new uses such as clubs and bars that stay open in the late hours of night. The sources of noise are:

- Truck traffic
- Private sanitation trucks making pick-ups in the middle of night
- Honking during traffic snarls
- Emergency vehicles with their sirens
- Motorcycles in the middle of the night, this is a new phenomenon
- Noise from clubs and lounges from sound equipment
- Revelers in the wee hours typically on Saturday nights leaving clubs and lounges
- Noise generated by construction equipment
- Lastly roof mechanical/air handling equipment typically on the roof tops

Noise complaints from CD4 consistently rank among the highest registered by DEP and are rising in the Board area, especially at night. We are still hopeful the recently revised noise code can help in reducing sound from construction and offer a more flexible standard and enforcement schedule for bars, clubs, and cabarets. We also hope that a couple of critical components of the Revised Code which were left out, including the consideration of the human voice at full cry — shouting, yelling, and braying — will be considered for future inclusion.

We note, with appreciation, that DEP has been consistently responsive about inspecting HVAC systems, nightclubs, and other sources of commercial noise. It is critical that these resources be maintained, given the level of relevant business development in this area. We'd ask that consideration be given to supplementary funding for additional initiatives in the area of sound mitigation, perhaps through a study of best practices or an effort to develop strengthened regulations.

Sanitation

The Board is concerned about illegal household dumping, restaurant garbage on the sidewalks, and the accumulation of construction debris in the District. We feel that the Department of Sanitation (DOS) needs to do more to educate individuals and businesses about sanitation regulations. For example, signs can be placed on trash cans stating that it is a violation to place household trash in these trash cans. Additionally, business should be reminded about regulations affecting placement of garbage on the sidewalk.

The reduction in the number of sanitation police officers has had a direct and negative impact on our community. A community/sanitation district may have only one police officer and that officer may have to cover more than one district. With the current lack of a maintenance facility in our District, the sanitation police assigned to CD4 are headquartered outside of our neighborhoods; even, apparently, outside of Manhattan. Given the large number of restaurants in CD4 and the increasing commercial and residential development, we believe that, at the very least, one Sanitation Police Officer should be assigned solely to and stationed in, our District.

We urge DOS to undertake a survey of the number of trash cans currently placed at various locations, particularly corners, in the District. We feel that DOS will find that many of these cans have been removed. Consequently, it would be our hope that such a survey would result in the replacement of missing trash cans and in the increase of the number of cans placed in high use areas such as blocks with numerous night clubs. Additionally, we recommend that DOS work with Business Improvement Districts in conducting this survey and, perhaps, even replacing the cans.

CULTURAL NEEDS

Cultural Affairs

The Board applauds the fact that funds for the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) have been reasonably restored from proposed draconian budget cuts. However, there is still concern about funding for small to mid-sized theatrical and other non-profit performance and visual art organizations within our community. Regarding the performance arts groups, they develop and give voice to new talent in areas of writing, performing, dancing, choreography, and directing.

The majority of NYC small-to-mid-sized performing arts groups have their offices and creative spaces in CD4. According to a study conducted by Innovative Theater Foundation and Columbia University in the Fall of 2008, close to 30% of performance spaces have closed within CD in the last eight years due to development pressures we believe originate from the Hudson Yards and Chelsea rezoning -- as these changes have a direct impact on the value of real estate. We believe this performance venue closure rate has significantly increased since the completion of the study. The creation of a subsidy program, as part of the overall budget of the Department of Cultural Affairs, that could ensure permanent locations for existing and displaced nonprofit arts entities is an ongoing need for this community.

In addition, support services for theater and other artistic services within CD4 in the areas of rental storage space for art, costumes, scenery, lighting, and rehearsal studios have long been located throughout Chelsea and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen. These services are also losing viable space due to development and real estate costs. The money generated from these industries provides employment and maintains the artistic life of the city. The Board is also concerned with the loss of artists' studios in the District and the displacement of working artists.

Cultural Usage at Hudson Yards Development

Specifically, as it relates to the Hudson Yards Redevelopment project (and the Western Rail Yards site in particular), a minimum of 16,000 square feet of to-be-developed space in at least two locations has been dedicated to serve the cultural community of our District.

Integration of smaller cultural organizations in the WRY development will optimize overall planning for the entire site and presents a perfect opportunity to mitigate the ongoing displacement of neighborhood arts organizations. As noted in the restricted land deed, a minimum of 16,000 square feet of cultural facility space will provide permanent performance and gallery space for small to mid-size theater, music, dance, and visual art organizations in at least two locations. The Board's initial request was to have multiple cultural spaces placed throughout the WRY in publicly accessible areas. It is a priority for this Board that the planning, site finding and management of these dedicated Arts spaces are made with the direct and ongoing participation of the Board, the City and The Related Companies. It is also a priority for this Board that additional space above the 16,000 sq. ft. minimum be set aside for cultural usage.

Although these cultural and community based organizations are not formally considered to be community facilities, most of them receive significant public funding, have provided appreciable

benefit to the surrounding communities, and are an integral part of the fabric of the surrounding Chelsea/Clinton/Garment Center neighborhoods. We consider these non-profit organizations, theaters, and other arts organization that receive public funding, to be community facilities and they provide community services. Their interests need to be represented during the planning process of the WRY.

Visual Arts

Manhattan's West Side has been called "the epicenter of the New York art scene". With approximately 400 art galleries, the Rubin Museum of Art, the Chelsea Art Museum, and the planned expansion of the Whitney Museum of American Art, all in CD4, the importance of visual art to the community's vitality and viability cannot be overstated. At the same time, challenges continue to face art institutions, art businesses, art not-for-profits, and artists.

The Board recommends increased involvement of NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) in art affairs relating to art businesses and artists, as an acknowledgement that art-based businesses generate millions of dollars in tax revenue to the city, while simultaneously enhancing the cultural legacy of New York City as a global art capital. The Board further recommends continuing cooperation with the High Line for permanent and temporary public art projects, and exploring innovative cooperation between landlords and building owners in the district to promote pop-up galleries and outdoor artwork, rather than maintaining lifeless, vacant space; and advertising on exterior walls.

The Board also encourages NYEDC and the Parks Department to do more to advocate for artists and art businesses in the district. NYEDC initiatives could mirror those taken in the internet, film and fashion industries, promoting artist incubators with physical loft and/or studio space where artists are vetted by a panel of community leaders and leading arts organizations. NYEDC could also encourage the reservation of booth space for artists at street fairs and in parks within the district to encourage exposure to the district's cultural heritage at the highly trafficked and popular events, like the Ninth Avenue Street Fair and River to River Festival.

EDUCATION NEEDS

Schools

It is The Board's responsibility to protect and support quality public education for all students. Our Board's work includes engagement and information sharing to community members and education stakeholders when there are any significant proposed changes to schools. The Board will work with the Department of Education (DOE) to help alert the community in any way possible to ensure that decisions are made on behalf of our district's students with full community participation and involvement.

The Board welcomes diverse methods and structures of learning and knows that co-locations (placing multiple schools in individual buildings) can be successful when applying proper parental and community feedback into its assessments. When the Board considers co-locations, expansions or the re-location of schools, we will prioritize community needs and consider the affected institutions while maintaining high quality programming.

The Board is committed to working closely with the CEC's, Stakeholders and local elected officials, believing that all must be taken into account throughout the decision making process.

In recent years, there has been a tremendous amount of development of new residences within CD4; this inevitably leads to many new residents. Plus, there are plans for further development of residences; especially in the West Side Rail Yards. However, there have been no new schools built or opened in a district that already has a shortage of space. We need better planning to address this need.

P.S. 51 in Hell's Kitchen has been operating at over capacity for years now. Construction is underway to expand the school but by the time the school is built it will be operating at over capacity again. The area needs a new school and needs one built that will meet its future needs at the time it opens, not for what is the present need.

CD4 has many schools of all grades serving local children as well as children from other school districts and boroughs. We have always supported education and are committed to developing and maintaining high standards for teachers as well as students. We must also provide assurances to parents that their children are in safe and healthy environments, both during the school day and during after school programs; this means on the streets as well as indoors.

There exists a heavy concentration of high schools within CD4; therefore, we would like to be consulted when new schools (provided through either new construction or space rental) are planned. The reason for this provision can best be seen in the case of Park West High School and Graphic Communication Arts, which are within one block of each other. The 3,500 students attending these schools come from all five boroughs. This has led to clogged neighborhood streets at varying arrival and dismissal times, problems at subways and at other transportation points, and disruptive situations affecting our residents and businesses.

In addition, greater consideration should be given to community residents in terms of their needs, which include better sanitation around schools, cleaner and safer streets for pedestrians, etc. Joint planning between the Department of Education and CB4 can result in a more harmonious relationship, which will lead to a better educational environment.

In regard to the schools' challenge to recruit and retain qualified teachers, and the severe levels of turnover, this Board supports efforts to increase teachers' salaries to levels in parity with the surrounding suburban areas.

Department of Education (DOE) Transparency with the Community

[What:] CB4 wants the Department of Education (DOE) to be more communicative with District 2 (within CD4) as parents whose children's lives (and quality of education) will be affected by changes in policy. Changes in policy can range from (but is not limited to) the number of pupil in a classroom, resources availability for teachers and the principal to placing multiple schools in individual buildings (co-locations), as recently been made to P.S. 11.

[Why:] The Board thinks that access to a great free public education is every child's right. We support excellent quality education where children are challenged and love to learn. Parents' support and involvement betters the quality of education afforded to students.

[How:] The Board will work with DOE to alert the community to ensure that decisions made on behalf of our district's students are made with full community participation and involvement. The Board is committed to working closely with CECs, stakeholders and local elected officials. Our Board's work includes engagement and information sharing to community members and education stakeholders when there are significant proposed changes to schools.

Better Planning to Address the Increased Number of School Age Children and Public Schools

[What:] The Board wants better measures to assess the number of additional residents living in CD4 with particular emphasis on the number of school age children and the number of public schools that can accommodate this population.

[Why:] The needs of the community are growing faster than what the city planners can offer or have planned. The current number of schools in CD4 cannot meet the increasing number of school age children who will be living in new residential developments throughout the community.

[How:] Funding and institutional support for an education needs assessment, which should be a systematic process to acquire an accurate, thorough picture of the strengths and weaknesses of a school community that can be used in response to the academic needs of all students for improving student achievement and meeting challenging academic standards. Process that collects and examines information about school wide issues and then utilizes that data to determine priority goals, to develop a plan, and to allocate funds and resources. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and other community members should be included in gathering data.

We must revise Chapter 6 of the City Environmental Quality Review, which grossly and unfairly under counts needed school seats in our community. The problem is worst in Manhattan; as each residential “unit” is calculated to yield three times more 4-17 year olds in the Bronx [.74] as in Manhattan [.22].

Libraries

The Board is happy that six day funding for libraries has changed for the better: currently, the libraries are not at risk of losing their base funding. We hope this does not change.

We support increasing branch library funding to bridge the "digital divide" through free computer training and broad access to the Internet. Ninety-eight percent of all free public access computers in the City are in public libraries. We strongly urge the City to maintain funding so our libraries remain open on Saturdays for those residents who are unable to use them during the week.

The Board also believes that library funding for expanded hours and technology training and services should be increased. This Board seeks funding for building and technology infrastructure, which would serve to protect the investment that the City has made in computers and electronic information resources while ensuring well-maintained and secure libraries.

In regard to the libraries' challenge to recruit and retain qualified librarians, and the severe levels of turnover, this Board supports efforts to increase librarian salaries to levels in parity with the surrounding suburban areas. In addition, we hope funding stays at a level that assure there will be no personnel decreases.

HUMAN SERVICES NEEDS

Youth Services

The Chelsea and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen community is home to more than 8,400 children under 18 years of age, more than 17% of whom receive public assistance and more than 77% of whom receive emergency food assistance. Youth services in our district have been woefully underfunded for many years. While we appreciate the recent attention given to the issue of youth services citywide, the changes implemented through the Out of School Time (OST) process left us with serious concerns regarding the overall adequacy of available funds to create and sustain high quality programs and to reach all those in need of such services.

More specifically, we are extremely distressed by the dramatic reduction in general youth services funds for school-age children and teens that was allocated to our district through the OST process. The design of the Request-for-Proposal rendered organizations in our district virtually ineligible to receive funding. We feel that this is due to a misperception that the number of young people in CD4 is not substantial enough to warrant public support for youth services.

Despite what aggregate statistics might suggest, this is a district with a large low-income population - especially concentrated in several local public housing developments, quite a few severely underperforming schools, and significant social needs, as evidenced by measures such as substance abuse and child abuse and neglect. The planned elimination of ACS school-age classrooms in the district compounds this problem and leaves little, if any, safe, affordable, year-round child care for working parents. In neighborhoods such as ours, which include many low-income working families, quality, publicly-funded day care - including school-age child care - is a primary concern.

Four percent of our older youth, ages 16 to 19, are not enrolled in school and are not working. While there are a number of reputable community providers trying to address the needs of this population through alternative schools and the provision of employment training and other support services, these organizations are under-funded and have already exceeded their program capacity. The Board is concerned that the City's clear preference for funding school-based OST programs does not address the needs of this population.

While we are encouraged by the City's increased attention to workforce development and employment initiatives, we continue to be distressed by the decline in funding for the Youth Employment Program (YEP) overall. Across the City, an overwhelming number of older youth are not prepared to finish high school or to enter the workforce. Through YEP, these young people gain valuable vocational and soft skills, discipline and leadership. We feel strongly that funds should be restored to the level available as of four years ago.

We have experienced a decline in the availability of program slots for summer youth programs. In May of 2004, the Chelsea Recreation Center opened in our district. While this facility is available to all ages, over half of its summer members are under the age of 21. The Center is in need of additional staffing, specifically playground assistants and other youth workers, to coordinate youth activities. Recreation Center members also have voiced the desire for services

to be expanded to include Sundays, but have been informed that budgetary constraints do not permit this expansion.

With regard to other youth needs, we urge that housing for homeless and run-away youth be maintained and expanded, and that alternative to violence and creative justice programs, as well as job training and placement programs, be maintained and expanded.

In addition, we request funding for a CD4/Chelsea Clinton Youth Council, comprised of 12 High School students that are currently enrolled, or live in the CB4 area. The mission of the CD4 Youth Council is to grant students opportunities to be leaders in Clinton, Chelsea neighborhoods through project & experience-based community engagement.

[What:] The Board requests funding for a CD4/Chelsea Youth Council, comprised of 12 high school students that are currently enrolled in or live in CD4. The mission of the CD4 Youth Council is to grant student opportunities to be leaders in Clinton and Chelsea neighborhoods through project and experience-based experience.

[Why:] The Chelsea/Clinton/Hell's Kitchen community is home to more than 8,400 children under 18. More than 17% of whom receive public assistance and more than 77% of whom receive emergency food assistance. The changed implemented through the Out of School Time (OST) process left us with serious concerns regarding the overall adequacy of available funds to create and sustain high quality programs.

[How:] The Board will advocate for additional funding for OST programming, working with community partners to create leadership development programs for youth in the community.

Senior Services

For the elderly, a comprehensive range of services, including community centers, in-home supports, transportation, supportive housing, and preventive health and social services, are essential to assuring that they can live out their lives with dignity within their home communities.

According to the US Bureau of the Census, there are 16,972 individuals (12.1%) over 65 years of age living in the Chelsea/Clinton Neighborhoods. The majority of them, 52.3%, live alone, important because there is greater incidence of disability onset among the elderly who live alone. The vast majority live in rental apartments, a more precarious position than those who own their own homes; 21% of those living in public housing are elderly; 37.1% of the seniors have income below \$20,000 a year; 27.3% had incomes between \$20,000 – \$50,000; and 14% have mobility and self-care impairments.

Over the last 10 years, HIV rates in the Chelsea/Clinton area were 50% higher than NYC. People over 50 years old comprised 19% of all AIDS diagnosis, 29% of those of those living with AIDS and 35% of deaths of persons with AIDS.

The number of people over age 65 will increase substantially beginning in 2011 as the oldest members of the baby-boom generation reach the 65 year mark. The number of people age 65 or older will nearly double between 2000 and 2030.

To better understand the growing needs of our seniors, the Board is partnering with The Actors Fund (a human service organization for the performing arts with many constituents living in CD4), Visiting Nurse Service of New York and the Rodney Kirk Center of Manhattan Plaza (a 1700 unit Section 8 building for the performing arts with over 1000 seniors) to conduct a survey of seniors residing in CD4. An Advisory Committee of over 40 senior service, health care, affordable housing providers, local political representatives and entertainment unions have come together to focus on the needs, concerns and supports required for this community.

Homelessness

Tragically, homelessness continues to be a terrible problem citywide and a particularly visible one in the CD4 area. We continue to appreciate the City's various efforts over the past few years to address the root causes of homelessness and, especially, the new resources devoted to the production of additional units of critically needed affordable and supportive housing.

Nonetheless, street homelessness remains a very visible problem in our district - actually increasing over the past few years. Over the years, efforts to "clean up" Midtown and other "high visibility" areas have only driven a larger number of homeless people into other parts of our community. Large public facilities located within our district, such as the Port Authority Bus Terminal, are also a natural gathering place for people without homes. Many homeless people need social services, in particular drug treatment and/or mental health services. Inclusion of these services is essential to any effort to address New York's homelessness situation.

Community boards must be given an opportunity to assess any proposal for facilities in terms of the needs for specific facilities, the adequacy of the plan, and the quality of the provider. The City should work with the community - unlike what was done with the Bowery Resident Committee's building at 127 W. 25th Street - to determine the size, site and design of each facility. Any facility must provide adequate and essential social services as well as access to health services and other necessary support services.

Accessibility

We call upon the city Human Rights Commission to increase funding for more inspectors to investigate and enforce disabled accessibility building code compliance. We continue to receive complaints about deficiencies in various aspects of the paratransit system, including serious limitations in Access-a-Ride service.

HEALTH CARE NEEDS

HIV / AIDS

New York City continues to account for a major proportion of the nation's AIDS cases; CD4 is home to the nation's largest percentage of people with AIDS. In order to slow and hopefully stop the spread of this disease, we actively support educational programs, condom distribution and needle exchanges. For our neighbors who are stricken with this disease, we welcome community-based care facilities, supportive housing and other programs geared towards people with AIDS. HIV/AIDS infection rates have long been increasing especially within communities of color, and among women and youth. Yet, funding for prevention and services to these communities has not kept pace.

Hospitals

The closing of St. Vincent's Hospital (located on Seventh Avenue and 12th Street) has caused serious concerns, especially given the closure of the Emergency Room and other outpatient services. We continue to foresee major problems in overburdened ER rooms that will now service our residents, midtown workers & tourists. Alternative services, i.e., Roosevelt Hospital on Tenth Avenue between W. 58th and 59th Streets or Beth Israel, are inadequate given the enormous problem of being able to quickly access either due to the serious traffic problems in our neighborhood.

Our board is opposed to any cuts to health care service in the district and/or the imposition of increased co-pay requirements for these patients.

Substance Abuse

The Board is concerned about reports that the use of crystal methamphetamine is gaining a foothold in our community. In addition to other health and mental health dangers, use of this drug has been associated with increased use of other illicit drugs, as well as sexual practices that enhance the chances of contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. The Board feels strongly that the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene needs to increase funding for education, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programs to address the growing use of crystal meth.

Other Health Concerns

Residents of Clinton/Hell's Kitchen and Chelsea are faced with a variety of other health and environmental concerns. We continue to be concerned about the need for adequate pest control and urge maintenance of funding for this critical service. Similarly, we are concerned that sufficient resources be focused on addressing issues of maintaining, repairing, and upgrading the sewer and storm drainage system, especially west of Ninth Avenue. This has been the source of chronic problems in the past that are likely to be exacerbated by new construction and needs constant monitoring from the DEP and DOT.

August 2011



Corey Johnson
Chair
Manhattan Community Board Four



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