



Lowell D. Kern
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR
330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

August 5, 2020

Kevin Quinn, AIA
Senior Vice President, Design and Construction
Hudson River Park Trust
353 West Street
Pier 40, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10014

Jonathan Dryfus, AIA/LEED AP
CDR Studio Architects, PC
120 Walker Street, Suite 6E
New York, NY 10013

Terri-Lee Burger, RLA
Abel Bainnson Butz, LLP
80 8th Avenue, Suite 1105
New York, NY 10011

Re: Chelsea Waterside Park Redesign

Dear Mr. Quinn, Mr. Dryfus, and Ms. Burger:

Thank you for your participation in Manhattan Community Board 4's (MCB4) Waterfront, Parks and Environment Committee's Zoom meeting on Thursday, July 7, at which you presented your current thinking regarding the redesign of Chelsea Waterside Park (CWP). The Committee was delighted with the progress you have made in the park's design. Almost every committee speaker stated their comments with praise for the redesign. Public attendees also praised the project, including members of the Chelsea Waterside Park Association. As a group, the committee thinks the design looks great. At its July 22nd Full Board meeting, the Full Board voted with 47 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to approve this letter.

With that said, the committee would like to offer the following comments, concerns and suggestions:

- The committee particularly liked the overall layout of the design. The central straight line walkway rendering the park a throughway to another park has been replaced by a more meandering path encouraging passersby to enjoy this park for its own sake. Yet the central green lawn offers a tempting shortcut that would ultimately lead to creating an unwanted destroyed path of grass right through its middle. We suggest strategic plantings to encourage visitors to walk around the central green spot.
- The design as we saw it does not provide for bike parking. We hope in your next go around you will add such an amenity.
- The design also suggested family style long tables and benches. The committee felt this element did not fit well in the relatively small picnic area. Further, we request you consider dividing benches to render lying down on them more difficult. Finally, please consider the feasibility of including configurations that encourage conversations among and between park users.
- Seating everywhere in the design is a complex issue (see the final point below). Seating in the dog run area presents unique design issues. The committee suggests there only be two tiers of bleacher-style seating – no higher. Dog run seating, especially in a divided large/small dog run may require additional consideration and thought.
- Clearly the design team paid attention to the planting and location of trees. MCB4 has a long history of expressing concern for the preservation of and planting of trees in our district. Your attention to trees is well taken. However, you mentioned the “necessity” of removing healthy mature trees. The committee requests you reconsider that option with a design that saves those trees. Mature trees are an asset to our community and are not replaceable in the short run.
- MCB4 has long requested there be a public restroom on this site. Your proposal not only offers such a facility, but it offers one that is well designed and esthetically pleasing. There was some initial opposition to the restroom serving as an entrance to the soccer field but that opposition faded when members realized there would be a 17-foot wide passageway, expanding to 22-feet at its widest point – ample room to serve as an entrance to the field. In the context of our delight to see this proposed restroom in your design we offer two suggestions:
 - MCB4 has consistently expressed concern for environmentally appropriate energy use. Only recently have developers in our district started to come to the Board with proposals that already include solar collectors. We are delighted to see that your design contains such an element. Without sufficient data we cannot determine if your design maximizes solar energy output for the park’s LED motion sensitive lights, bathroom and other CWP energy needs. We do note that part of the restroom facility’s roof is devoted to a green roof that might be better purposed to additional solar collectors. Green structures might be added to the side of the building to provide additional thermal advantage. Geothermal energy

should be considered as well. An overall energy efficient design should be part of our next conversation about this park.

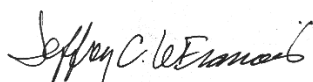
- It was noted that the rest facility will mostly consist of touch free appliances. Yet the design promoted the use of doors to enter. We suggest you use entrances without doors that are designed to block direct vision into the interior of the restrooms (sight locks).
- Finally, in this new world with COVID-19, we request you review your design to include opportunities for social distancing. We see three areas that require attention (there may be more). Arrangement of furniture in the picnic area should facilitate social distancing. The dog run seating and entrances should be designed to facilitate social distancing. And the design of the rest facility has a good start in the realm of virus protection with its touchless appliances and consideration of door-free entrances.

This is going to be a wonderful park. Thank you for having a conversation with us about the park's design. We look forward to continued conversations as this project progresses.

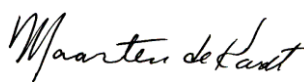
Sincerely



Lowell D. Kern
Chair
Manhattan Community Board



Jeffrey LeFrancois
Co-chair
Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee



Maarten deKadt
Co-chair
Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee

Cc: Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senator
Hon. Richard Gottfried, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Linda B. Rosenthal, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker, NYC Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Madelyn Wils, President, Hudson River Park Trust
Noreen Doyle, Hudson River Park Trust
Zazel Loven, Chelsea Waterside Park Association