

CITY OF NEW YORK  
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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**JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS**  
Chair

**JESSE R. BODINE**  
District Manager

January 17, 2023

Anthony Perez  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation  
Arsenal West  
24 West 61<sup>st</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10023

**Re: Penn South Dog Run**

Dear Borough Commissioner Perez,

In May 2022 the NYC Parks Department installed a temporary dog park on the southeast grounds of Penn South Playground. This was implemented as a response to the simultaneous closure and construction of both Madison Square Park dog run and Chelsea Waterside Park dog run. Those aforementioned renovations left residents and nearby dog owners a dearth of space to run and socialize their pets.

The Waterfront, Parks, and Environment Committee (the "Committee") of Manhattan Community Board 4 ("MCB4") appreciates the prompt action taken by NYC Parks and Council Member Erik Bottcher to address the community's need for a temporary dog run due to the renovation and closure of these dog runs. Those renovations are now complete, and the dog runs are open.

MCB4, at its January 4, 2023 meeting, voted to approve this letter asking that the Penn South Playground Dog Park be closed by a vote of 40 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote.

The Committee recommends that while the trial-nature of the dog run at Penn South Playground has demonstrated the need for a dog run in the immediate vicinity, this location should be closed until a more formal planning process is undertaken to site and create a permanent dog run. MCB4 understands that due to the timing, a formal planning procedure could not be followed. Considering the outpouring of comments on this topic, it is clear why such procedures exist.

The Committee is encouraged by the robust participation by the community regarding this matter. MCB4 opened public comment on this issue multiple times and compiled many emails and letters listing both attributes and detriments of the dog park and its location.

We recognize the importance of convenience and community building which the temporary dog run provided, especially for the elderly and differently abled persons who cannot travel far. We also recognize the positive utilization of an underused space. The location is proving to be problematic to a number of nearby residents including the occupant nuns at St. Columba Convent at 329 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street. According to public testimony, the positioning of this dog run has resulted in regular noise complaints with those saying that their daily lives have been detrimentally affected. Complaints include waking residents up early or causing disturbances throughout the day while working from home. The noise echoes off the buildings due to the location of the dog run between two buildings.

MCB4 is pleased both Chelsea Waterside Park and Madison Square Park dog runs are now open and newly renovated, incorporating input from this Board. This solves the initial problem of lack of free-running dog space and returns us to expected pre-closure conditions.

MCB4's letter from May 17, 2022, written after the temporary dog run was installed, noted concerns, and requested discussions for the future and direction of the Penn South dog run and other permanent uses.

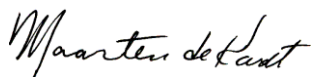
MCB4 supports NYC Parks & Council Member Bottcher's efforts seeking alternative, nearby locations for a dog run. This will allow dog run users continued access to a convenient location with limited interruption.

MCB4 welcomes the prospects of bringing new green spaces into our community. We look forward to playing a role in the discussion for a permanent and thoughtfully created nearby dog run.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey LeFrancois  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4



Maarten deKadt  
Co-chair  
Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee



Leslie Boghosian Murphy  
Co-chair  
Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee

CC: Hon. Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Member, District 3