

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

424 West 33rd Street, Suite 580 New York, NY 10001

tel: 212-736-4536
www.mcb4.nyc

JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

March 15, 2023

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

Re: New Dog Run in Chelsea Park

Dear Borough Commissioner Perez,

At its March 1st Full Board meeting, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4), by a vote of 36 in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions and 0 present but not eligible, recommended approval of the NYC Parks proposal to create a new dog run in Chelsea Park, located at West 27th Street and Ninth Avenue.

In January of 2023, MCB4 voted to recommend closure of a temporary dog run at the Penn South Playground, consistent with its original plans for usage. Much due to the temporary nature of this dog run, it failed to meet NYC Parks siting guidelines and caused a noise disruption to the neighboring buildings. However, the temporary dog run was heavily utilized and showed a need for such a space in this part of Chelsea.

At the February 9th meeting of the Waterfront, Parks, and Environment Committee of MCB4, NYC Parks presented a plan to create a new dog run in Chelsea Park. The plan would install fencing to separate and convert the eastern half of the existing handball court into a space where dogs can safely be off-leash while still preserving the western half as handball courts. NYC Parks also showed plans to incorporate benches and fresh paint to make the space more inviting and comfortable for dog owners while socializing their pets. This conversion would only utilize

in-house NYC Parks funds and resources which would allow it to be implemented quickly with little disruption to the park.

MCB4 commends NYC Parks for their swift action to identify an alternative dog run space that is more appropriate for long term use. However, MCB4 recommends the following actions to ensure this new dog run fits comfortably within the fabric of our community:

- **Community Engagement:** NYC Parks should make every effort to inform the surrounding stakeholders of their plans to alter Chelsea Park which includes but is not limited to: NYCHA Chelsea-Elliot Tenant Association, P.S. 33 and Hudson Guild.
- **Noise Mitigation:** To avoid further concerns about noise disruption, NYC Parks should proactively install additional features to absorb noise such as planters and fence wind mesh.
- **Dog Space:** This dog run should be safe and welcoming to dogs of all sizes. Therefore, we ask that Parks incorporate a separate space for small dogs to safely utilize.
- **Tree Protection:** With the influx of dogs that would naturally accompany the introduction of a new dog run at Chelsea Park, NYC Parks should take action to protect trees around the proposed site through the installation of tree guards, mulching or some type of alternative protective method. We also expect NYC Parks to monitor the area for any pet-related damage of trees and to help educate dog owners on ways they can help to preserve existing trees.

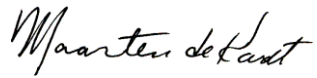
MCB4 believes these actions will make for a better dog run that can be widely enjoyed by the Chelsea community. We also would like to reserve the right to suggest improvements as the process moves ahead and include comments from neighboring stakeholders.

Finally, MCB4 would like to thank NYC Parks for their help in solving this dog run dilemma. We understand and appreciate the amount of thought and work that was put into this relocation in a short period of time. We hope to continue this type of responsive partnership as we work together on other community issues.

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