



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

424 West West 33 Street, Suite #580  
New York, NY 10001  
tel: 212-736-4536  
[www.nyc.gov/mcb4](http://www.nyc.gov/mcb4)

**JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS**  
Chair

**JESSE R. BODINE**  
District Manager

February 24, 2023

Maria Torres-Springer  
Deputy Mayor  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Andrew Kimball  
President and CEO  
Economic Development Corporation  
One Liberty Plaza, New York NY, 10006

**RE: Pier 92 & 94 Special Permit Renewal**

Dear Deputy Mayor Torres-Springer and President Kimball:

Thank you for the recent notification regarding the extended negotiations for the Pier 94 permit renewal between the City of New York's Economic Development Corporation and Vornado Realty Trust (VNO). At its duly called monthly meeting of its Executive Committee for Manhattan Community Board 4 on February 22, 2023, this letter was unanimously adopted by the committee and will be ratified by the Full Board on March 1, 2023.

Manhattan Community Board 4 writes to remind you of our long-stated position as negotiations over Pier 94 continue. Vornado (VNO) has failed to meet its obligations to the city and the community for over a decade, even after re-commitments and new assurances. And now, it is relinquishing its rights to Pier 92, passing back to the city an uninhabitable pier that was supposed to have been improved, only to be left to rot so the taxpayers bear the burden of repair. Will the promise of film studios and jobs finally make changes to Pier 94 and the surrounding public realm? We hope so, but remain concerned by recent news reports regarding Vornado's portfolio as they tie their development to the market.<sup>1</sup>

In the last decade, there have been years of positive market conditions that facilitated new development in Manhattan, including considerable new development on the West Side. Yet VNO, with permit and as-of-right plans in hand, still failed to act on their commitment to redevelop the piers. Their inability to act in the future was made even more evident by VNO's recent investor call in which their chairman stated that all new development is now on hold.<sup>2</sup> Why in this third round of the permit should we expect a different result?

---

<sup>1</sup> Crain's New York, February 14, 2023: [Vornado Puts New Development on Hold](#)

<sup>2</sup> *New York Times*, February 14, 2023: [Developer Delays Penn Station Project, Citing Economic Conditions](#)

Beyond VNO's supposed commitment to redevelop the pier is a grave concern that the city will undervalue this waterfront asset, as has been demonstrated through past permit agreements, including this renewal.

Given VNO is using this opportunity to pass Pier 92 back to the city after a decade of disregard, MCB4 is gravely concerned that the city would remain on the hook for Pier 94's piles and bulkhead. MCB4 is very familiar with private lease or permit holders being responsible for pier piles and the bulkhead given our relationship and work with Hudson River Park Trust, whose leases for multiple tenants require bulkhead and pier pile capital maintenance. The city must pass capital costs onto VNO given their ability to capitalize the required investment while reaping tremendous profits from their private business venture on a municipal asset.

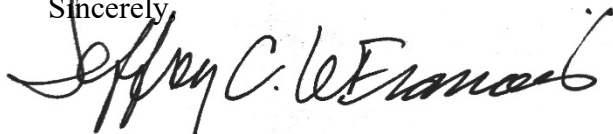
Pedestrian and cyclists safety, green energy, vehicle and bicycle parking, and promenade and public restroom access are all issues of significant import and expect to be incorporated into the permit.

Our previous correspondence on the topic is linked below for ease of access.<sup>3</sup> MCB4's concerns are steeped in experience, reality, and a decade of prior unfulfilled commitments from one of the city's wealthiest real estate trusts. It is incumbent on EDC to ensure the people's assets are appropriately monetized and do not burden the city's finances.

EDC must ensure the full potential of Pier 94 is realized. If the city decides to walk away from negotiations, MCB4 would support a new RFP process and welcomes the ability to engage in discussions on the topic. The city's waterfront, especially on the Hudson River, is an extraordinary asset both for its environmental benefit and economic potential. Let's not let another decade pass us by.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey LeFrancois

cc: Vornado Realty Trust  
Hon. Eric Adams, New York City Mayor  
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Eric Bottcher, City Council  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, New York State Senate  
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, New York State Assembly  
Hon. Tony Simone, New York State Assembly  
Hon. Brad Lander, New York City Comptroller

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2022/06/20a-Exec-WPE-and-TRANS-Letters-to-DCP-and-PDC-re-Pier-92-94-With-Enclosure-20b.pdf>  
<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/02/10-WPE-Letter-to-EDC-re-Piers-92-and-94-Renewal-Application.pdf>  
[https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/downloads/pdf/april\\_2017/23-WPE-Letter-to-DCP-re-Pier-92-94-Special-Permit-Recertification-RATIFICATION.pdf](https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/downloads/pdf/april_2017/23-WPE-Letter-to-DCP-re-Pier-92-94-Special-Permit-Recertification-RATIFICATION.pdf)