



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JESSICA CHAIT
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

March 13, 2024

Hon. Erik Bottcher
NYC Council Member
224 W. 30th Street, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

Ed Pincar
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Fl.
New York, NY 10038

**Re: Secondary Street Sign:
NWC 15th Street & 9th Avenue - “Irwin B. Cohen Way”**

Dear Council Member Bottcher & Commissioner Pincar,

Manhattan Community Board 4 at its March 6th Full Board meeting, voted by 34 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining, and 1 present but not eligible to support the proposal to add a secondary street sign, “Irwin B. Cohen Way”, to the northwest corner of West 15th Street and Ninth Avenue. We make this recommendation because of Mr. Cohen’s extraordinary impact on Chelsea, his contributions to charitable and community activities and the substantial community support for this name addition.

This Community Board seldom recommends secondary street signs; however, we feel that in this instance, it will illustrate the prominent role Mr. Cohen played in the preservation and transformation of the Meatpacking District in addition to celebrating Mr. Cohen as a much-loved community builder.

Starting in early 90's, Irwin Cohen was instrumental in transforming the abandoned Nabisco Factory into the culinary hub we know today as Chelsea Market. Cohen's vision and leadership turned a disregarded space into a destination that showcases the diverse tapestry of New York's culinary offerings. His creation of Chelsea Market and stewardship of 85 Tenth Avenue were among the early catalysts for the reinvention of the Meatpacking District, which has come to be one of the most visited and most invested in neighborhoods in New York.

Irwin Cohen was a generous and original spirit who saw his properties as buildings to be preserved and places to build communities. He rented them at a very low cost early on to attract local food manufacturers and retailers, like Amy Bread and Fat Witch, thus inventing the food hall model which is now ubiquitous. After 9/11 he offered space to NYPD and other Federal enforcement agencies who had been displaced from the World Trade Center – no strings attached.

In addition to stimulating economic and cultural growth in the area, - he was a strong supporter of the High Line helping with its creation – in the words of a Fulton houses tenants association “he also gave back to Fulton Houses in many different ways: donating turkeys for each resident every year and supporting our family day event and offering jobs to the youth of Fulton Houses...” Cohen also fostered a sense of community among the residents, businesses, and artisans who work and thrive in Chelsea Market and the surrounding area. His legacy to his children “Be kind and find ways to make life better for others” says it all. The Council of Chelsea Block Associations, the West 16th Street Block Association, the Village Preservation Society, and Friends of the High Line all support this action as well the 220 signatories of a petition for the secondary name.

Sincerely,



Jessica Chait
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jesse Greenwald
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

cc: Jonathan Zuckerbrod, Representative