



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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February 23, 2026

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**Re: Brownfield Cleanup Application and Draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan
for NYCHA Fulton and Elliot Chelsea Houses Redevelopment**

On the recommendation of the Chelsea Land Use Committee (CLU) at its February 17, 2026, meeting, Manhattan Community Board 4 Executive Committee (MCB4) is writing to formally request¹:

¹ This Letter was sent so to comply with the February 23rd 2026 deadline to comment and will be ratified at the March 4th Full Board Meeting.

- 1) A 90-day extension of the public commenting period for the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) application and Draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan (RIWP) for two NYCHA properties: the Fulton property (RBF1) located at 401 W. 19th Street and the Chelsea Elliott site (RBEC1) located at 441 W. 26th Street; and**
- 2) A presentation of the draft RIWP by Essence Development and Related Companies and Langan², along with representatives from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), to MCB4.**

Request for 90-Day Extension of Public Comment Period

Given the scope, complexity, and potential public health implications of this project—particularly its proximity to schools, residents, and other sensitive receptors—MCB4 requests a 90-day extension for both sites. A 90-day extension is necessary to allow sufficient time for technical review of the draft Remedial Investigation Work Plan (RIWP), consultation with independent experts, informed participation by MCB4, and meaningful engagement with residents, school communities, and other sensitive receptors located in close proximity to the project sites. Against this backdrop, the current public comment timelines do not provide adequate time to meet that standard.

- While an initial extension of the public comment period was granted for the Fulton property (RBF1) at 401 W. 19th Street, the request for an additional extension was denied, leaving insufficient time for meaningful public review and engagement.
- We appreciate that DEC has granted an extension of the public comment period for the Chelsea Elliott site (RBEC1) located at 441 W. 26th Street to March 29, 2026. However, MCB4 respectfully requests that DEC re-evaluate this extension and provide a full 90-day continuance to ensure sufficient time for meaningful community review.

As of this day, the development team has not communicated the potential impacts to surrounding schools, FEC residents, and the public, and has declined to make a presentation to the CLU committee or MCB4 Full Board. We cannot fulfill our public responsibility and make informed recommendations without understanding the potential health hazards, and the applicant has not been forthcoming.

² Langan Engineering, Environmental, Surveying, Landscaping Architecture, and Geology Services serves as the applicant's environmental engineering consultant.

Request for Presentation of Draft RIWP to MCB4

MCB4 is very concerned that Essence Development and Related Companies (the development team) has denied our request for a presentation on the draft RIWP, particularly as initial environmental investigations have identified soil contamination requiring further characterization and remediation planning through the Brownfield Cleanup Program process at both Fulton Houses and Chelsea Elliott Houses (FEC). This lack of direct engagement is particularly troubling given the technical complexity and public health implications of the proposed remediation.

- The Essence/Related development team informed MCB4 that they would respond to questions in writing but would not participate in a public presentation. While written responses are helpful, they do not provide the same opportunities for technical clarification and real-time dialogue as are necessary for MCB4, residents, and nearby school communities to fully understand the proposed remediation and its potential impacts.

Need for Transparency and Protection of Sensitive Populations

While we understand that the draft RIWP is being prepared for an investigation to define the nature and extent of contamination, the NYCHA redevelopment plan has a significant impact on current FEC tenants, warranting transparency and public communication. Throughout this project, MCB4 has repeatedly enlisted the help of our elected officials to bring critical information to FEC residents and the community from the development team and NYCHA—including but not limited to the initial survey methodology and results, the interim repairs plan, and the project financing. Now, we urgently do so again to protect the health of those in our community.

In addition to FEC residents, there are a number of immediate sensitive receptors in close proximity to both sites, including toddlers attending San Jose Day Nursery located at 432 W. 20th Street, and children attending P.S. 33 Chelsea Prep (an elementary school serving Pre-K to fifth grade) and P.S. 226, a District 75 school serving students with significant challenges (including severe autism, emotional disturbances, and multiple disabilities) co-located at 281 9th Avenue. Many seniors and residents with health issues also reside in other NYCHA buildings on both campuses. MCB4 needs sufficient time to meet with the developers and the engineer to review the documents and consult with a third-party engineer if deemed necessary.

Conclusion

We are requesting that the following actions be taken immediately:

- Extend the DEC public review comment period by 90 days for both the Fulton Houses site and the Elliott Chelsea Houses site
- Require Essence Development, Related Companies, and Langan to present the draft RIWP to MCB4 and take questions and comments from the public

- Create a working group of agreed-upon stakeholders to convene regularly, ensuring protocols are followed, and the health of residents and school communities remains a priority

We urge swift action on these requests to protect public health and maintain community trust in this process.

Sincerely,



Leslie Boghosian Murphy

Chair

Manhattan Community Board 4



Gregg Morris

Chair

Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, U.S. Congress Member
Hon. Julie Menin, Speaker, City Council
Hon. Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Tony Simone, State Assembly Member
Hon. Erik Bottcher, State Senate