

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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LESLIE BOGHOSIAN MURPHY
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

March 17, 2026

Kelvin Zhou
Building Owner
343 W. 47th Street
New York, NY 10036

Re: Scaffolding Collapse at Ramon Aponte Playground

Dear Mr. Zhou,

Thank you for attending the Waterfront, Parks and Environment committee on Thursday, February 12 and for the robust conversation about the partial collapse of a sidewalk bridge that sits within Ramon Aponte Playground along 343 West 47th Street's eastern wall. We also acknowledge your February 14 statement and subsequent email update confirming the hazardous scaffold components have been removed as of February 16.

By a vote of 44 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 1 present but not eligible to vote, at its March 4th Full Board meeting, the Board approved the following comments and requests.

The collapse of this sidewalk bridge occurred just hours after the playground had been filled with children from P.S. 212 and neighborhood families. We are extremely fortunate that no one was injured. A structure designed to protect the public instead failed in a location used daily by young children. That reality cannot be minimized.

We appreciate your timely on-site response and your refusal to allow unsupervised alterations to the collapsed scaffolding until DOB completed their investigation and approved the means and methods for dismantling the remaining structure, and your engagement of a third-party engineer to review what happened here. We also very much appreciate your personal promise of completing all façade work and removing the scaffolding from the park in three months (the end of May 2026 at the latest).

However, several concerns remain.

Full Investigation and Public Reporting

The cause of the collapse must be clearly and comprehensively determined. Please provide a written report from your third-party engineer outlining:

- What failed and why
- Whether the original design and installation met applicable standards
- What inspections occurred and how the process functioned
- What changes will be implemented to prevent recurrence

This incident should serve as a learning opportunity, not only for this site, but for any scaffolding adjacent to public parks throughout the city.

Oversight of Replacement Scaffolding

Before any new sidewalk bridge or scaffolding is put up in the playground, we request:

- Review of plans by independent third-party engineer not affiliated with the scaffold installer
- Clear confirmation from DOB that enhanced oversight and inspection protocols will be put in place
- Prevent further alienation of park land to the greatest extent possible while also ensuring the structure is safe and secure.

Prioritizing the Reopening of Ramon Aponte Playground

From our perspective, the park's indefinite closure is the most serious result of this incident. Ramon Aponte Playground is a well-used facility, situated directly next to PS 212.

We urge all parties to prioritize the safe reopening of the playground and limiting the time it is closed for the new sidewalk bridge and scaffolding as much as possible.

- Prompt lifting of the vacate order once the site is deemed safe
- Clear communication regarding reopening timelines

Ongoing Communication

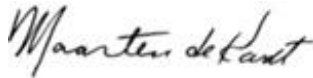
We appreciate your commitment to providing regular updates on progress and request your continued partnership in keeping us updated on the next steps and any changes in the timeline. Furthermore, we thank you for returning to our committee's March 12 meeting with progress updates and look forward to your presenting the results of the investigation when that material becomes available.

We recognize that corrective steps are currently underway and appreciate your prompt status updates. We look forward to continued cooperation, transparency and the safe and timely reopening of Ramon Aponte Playground.

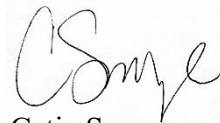
Sincerely,



Leslie Boghosian Murphy
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Maarten de Kadt
Co-Chair
Waterfront, Parks &
Environment Committee



Catie Savage
Co-Chair
Waterfront, Parks &
Environment Committee

cc: Tricia Shimamura, Commissioner, NYC Parks
Ahmed Tigani, Commissioner, NYC DOB