



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

December 11, 2015

Julie Menin
Commissioner
Department of Consumer Affairs
42 Broadway
Lobby Floor
New York, N.Y. 10004

Martin Rebholz
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Buildings
280 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Inspector Russell J. Green
Commanding Officer
Midtown South Precinct
357 West 35th Street, New York, NY, 10001

re: Illegal Pedicab Operations at 348-350 West 44 Street

Dear Commissioner Menin, Borough Commissioner Rebholz, and Inspector Green:

Manhattan Community Board 4 ("MCB4") is writing to express our deep concern regarding the operation of an illegal and unpermitted Pedicab garage company (The Company), a lessee at 348-350 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036, which is a building formerly occupied by Dykes Lumber Co. and owned by Mr. Charles Friedman.

Coordinated by block resident Mr. Tony Willging, the Company has been the subject of numerous complaints by neighbors and businesses. Infractions include parking illegally — up to 21 pedicabs — in a "NO PARKING ZONE", thus creating difficult passage for emergency vehicles; parking and riding on the sidewalk; impeding the safe passage of wheelchairs and baby carriages; creating hazards for elderly and seeing impaired; conducting late night construction without permits; dumping garbage; reckless behavior; harassment and intimidation. (In one instance, a 'driver' verbally threatened Mr. Willging)

In addition, per the request by MCB4's district office the New York City Department of Buildings inspected and found the pedicab operation in violation of the use group zoned for that block and issued the owners an ECB summons.

BACKGROUND

This unsafe situation continues despite the efforts made by area businesses and residents (see a list of efforts below) as well as several government agencies (i.e. NYPD, Department of Buildings, and Department of Consumer Affairs).

- Face-to-face conversations with Pedicab operators
- 311 calls and reports filed via website
- 911 calls
- Meetings with Traffic Enforcement and Community Affairs Officers
- Outreach to Department of Consumer Affairs through Council Member Corey Johnson's Office
- Outreach to Department of Buildings
- Outreach to Department of Transportation

Despite these efforts the problem appears intractable and the Company continues to demonstrate a blatant disregard for the rules and regulations of New York City. While Mr. Friedman admits to having enormous problems with the tenant and has agreed not to renew the Company's lease, it is MCB4's concern that eviction proceeding could become a protracted process.

Everyday that the Company operates in any manner it sees fit, it is a day that threatens the safety of citizens. MCB4, therefore, respectfully requests your immediate attention to this matter to ensure the safety of all.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



Tina DiFelicianantonio
Co-Chair
Quality of Life Committee



David Pincus
Co-Chair
Quality of Life Committee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson. City Council
John R Sore, Project Manager, Shalimar Management
Tony Willging