



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JOHN WEIS**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

March 25, 2011

John J. Doherty  
Commissioner  
Department of Sanitation  
346 Broadway, 10th Floor  
New York, NY 10013

Rafael Cestero  
Commissioner  
Department of Housing Preservation and  
Development  
100 Gold Street  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Department of Sanitation Garage at  
Transfer of Jurisdiction to HPD**

Dear Commissioners Doherty and Cestero:

The future of the publicly owned site at 136-140 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street (“136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street”), currently used by the NYC Department of Sanitation (DOS) as a garage and parking lot, has been the subject of community discussions since 2004. Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) requests jurisdiction of the site be transferred from DOS to the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

CB4 has consistently advocated for 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street to be an affordable housing site since the Hudson Yards and West Chelsea rezonings began in 2004. At the conclusion of the West Chelsea Rezoning in May 2005, the West Chelsea Points of Agreement (“WC-POA”), copy attached, was executed between the Mayor and the City Council. The WC-POA states “In the event that in the future the Department of Sanitation should determine that its lot located on 20<sup>th</sup> Street between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenues is no longer needed for operational purposes, the Administration will pursue the development of affordable housing on the site.”

The commitment to ensure 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street would be an affordable housing site was again raised by the community during the Western Rail Yards (“WRY”) Rezoning in 2009. The community sought a firmer commitment from the Mayor to develop affordable housing at 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street. At the conclusion of the WRY rezoning action, on December 10, 2009, the Mayor and the City Council executed the Western Rail Yards Points of Agreement (“WRY-POA”), copy attached, in which the City committed to develop 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street as permanently affordable housing with DOS agreeing to vacate the site by December 31, 2011. The WRY Rezoning was then approved by City

Council on December 14, 2009. The WRY-POA states “If DSNY is relocated from its West 20<sup>th</sup> Street facilities, HPD commits to develop the site for affordable housing at a range of incomes up to 165% AMI”.

Since November 2010 the Board has had presentations and heard testimony from Chelsea community residents regarding 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street requesting the site be redesignated for use as a public park. At its meeting on December 8, 2010, CB4 reaffirmed its positions from 2004 and 2009 for the use of 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street as affordable housing site (letter dated January 19, 2011 attached).

The Board remains committed to developing 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street as permanently affordable housing consistent with the WC POA negotiations and WRY-POA. Moderate and middle income housing is much needed in our community and will have great public benefit. 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street will produce 70-80 units of affordable housing for households earning between 80% and 165% of Area Median Income (AMI) and 100% of the units on the site will be permanently affordable. A private developer will be selected by HPD through a publicly administered Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The site then goes through full public review and comment under the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP).

136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street has been recently vacated by DOS; well in advance of the promised 2011 vacate date. Pursuant to the WC-POA and the WRY-POA, CB4 requests jurisdiction of the Site be transferred from DOS to HPD. This transfer of jurisdiction will be the next step in moving forward with the longstanding plan to build permanently affordable housing at 136 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street.

Sincerely,



John Weis, Chair  
Manhattan Community Board 4



Joe Restuccia, Co-Chair  
Housing, Health & Human Services Committee

[signed 3/25/11]  
Barbara Davis, Co- Chair  
Housing, Health & Human Services Committee

cc: S. Goldsmith, Deputy Mayor  
R. Visnauskas, Acting Deputy Commissioner for Development, HPD  
NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn  
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer  
Congressman Jerrold Nadler  
NYS Senator Thomas Duane  
NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried  
Chelsea Block Associations