



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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COREY JOHNSON
Chair

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

July 27, 2011

Mr. Christopher Ward
Executive Director
Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
225 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003

Re: Use of Vacant Parking Lot as Play Area for School Kids

Dear Mr. Ward:

Manhattan Community Board 4 supports the request of the Clinton School for Writers & Artists (Middle School 260) to use the currently vacant parking lot at the Northeast corner of West 33rd Street and Dyer Avenue, for a play area during school hours. The parking lot is adjacent to the school, which is located at 425 West 33rd Street. We request that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey permit the school to use the parking lot as a play area until 2015 (when the school's lease runs out) and request the Department of Education provide funding for the play equipment and play area maintenance. We also request that the Port Authority, Department of Education, and Parks Department seek to enable this area to be used during daytime non-school hours and weekends as a community park area.

At the request of CB4, the Clinton School has used West 33rd Street from Ninth to Dyer Avenues from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. as a school play area since it moved to this building in 2010. This has not been an ideal situation for several reasons. Two parking lots, one of which exits directly into the play area, are on the street. The parking lot that exits onto the play area requires temporary stopping of the play area to permit cars to exit. The busy traffic on that street, as an entry into the Lincoln Tunnel, means the play area for this 300 student school is restricted to one hour. Finally, because of construction occurring on that street, the street will not be able to accommodate a play area for the next school year.

We are encouraged by the support the school and its Parent Association has gathered for this project during the last two months, including from State Senator Duane and Council Member Quinn, the 34th Street Partnership and surrounding businesses. We are also pleased that the 34th Street Partnership is providing pro-bono design services to the school for this effort.

We encourage the school and Parent Association to also reach out to the three schools and service centers for the disabled that within a block of the parking lot and to the residential buildings on West 34th Street for support and involvement. We also encourage them to work with the 34th Street Partnership to develop a plan and budget for the temporary play area.

First and foremost, we ask the PANYNJ to meet with the school and Parent Association to arrange for this use and for the Department of Education to provide the funding for temporary play area.

CB4 looks forward to assisting the school and parent association in moving forward with this important project and see this request to the Port Authority as an important first step.

Sincerely,



Corey Johnson
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

cc: William Young, Julian Malloy – PANYNJ
Principal, Clinton School for Writers & Artists (Middle School 260)
PTS, Clinton School for Writers & Artists (Middle School 260)
Electeds