

May 13, 2002

Robert Balachandran  
President & CEO  
Hudson River Park Trust  
Pier 40 @ West Houston & West St.  
2nd Floor  
New York City, NY 10014

**Re: Segment 7 Design Issues**

Dear Mr. Balachandran:

As the design for Segment 7 of Hudson River Park moves into the design development phase, leading toward the start of construction as soon as the fall of this year, we are writing now about an element of the design that has been the subject of three prior letters: the over-development of active recreational facilities on Pier 97.

It is quite clear to us that, in spite of a long, active and generally successful design consultation among the Trust, the designers and the members of the community design team, Community Board No 4's Waterfront & Parks Committee and the Friends of Clinton Cove (as well as other organizations), there remains a significant difference of opinion regarding the programmatic design of this pier. From the beginning, the community design group and the Community Board have been consistent in their view that this Pier should favor an open flexible design that emphasized un-programmed open space, and the Trust and its designers have continually generated a design that was, and still is, the antithesis of this vision - a design that "chops" up the pier with dedicated sports facilities that are both costly as well as difficult to change over time. In the most recent iteration of the design, the most significant response from the Trust was a reduction in size of one basketball court from full to half size.

While we understand that our role in this process is advisory, we are troubled that we cannot seem to find common ground on the uses of Pier 97, and that the Trust has not, at the least, presented to us a rationale for this cluttered design, other than to defer to the input of both NYC and NYS parks departments.

We also noted in a design review of Segment 7 in March that the bridge over the bow notch just south of Pier 97 had been eliminated and we assumed at the time that this was a budgetary constraint. Based on that assumption, in our subsequent letter we asked that the bow notch be constructed with foundations such that, if additional monies could be identified in the future, the

bridge could be added. We now understand that the decision may simply reflect a difference in opinion between our views and those of the Trust. While we believe that the bridge over the bow notch will provide a safer and better passage of traffic in a very constricted area of the park, what concerns us most is the lack of dialog between the Trust and Manhattan Community Board No. 4 (and the organizations represented on the Community Design Team) regarding this decision.

Accordingly, we now ask that as soon as possible and before there it becomes too expensive to reconsider this decision a meeting be set up that includes the Trust, its designers, this Board, Friends of Clinton Cove and, if possible, representatives of both NYC & NYS parks departments. This meeting should take place on site, including a walk-thru of the adjacent park facilities. The goal of this meeting will not only be the resolution of certain fundamental programmatic design issues cited above - it will also be to strengthen the positive relationship between the community and the Trust that has long been a hallmark of the Hudson River Park design process since the days of the Conservancy.

We look forward to your response to this letter.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Simone Sindin  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

John Doswell  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront & Parks Committee

Pam Frederick  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront & Parks Committee

This letter was passed at Manhattan Community Board No. 4's May 1, 2002 full board meeting.

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Jerrold Nadler, United States Representative  
Hon. Eric Schneiderman, State Senator  
Hon. Richard Gottfried, State Assemblymember  
Hon. Scott Stringer, State Assemblymember  
Hon. Gale Brewer, City Councilmember  
Hon. Christine Quinn, City Councilmember  
Hon. Bernadette Castro, NYS parks  
Hon. Adrian Benepe, NYC parks & Recreation  
James Ortensio, Chair, Hudson River Park Trust  
Brian Maxey, Friends of Hudson River Park  
Friends of Clinton Cove  
Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc.  
Segment 5 architects  
Richard Dattner / MKW