

May 13, 2002

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

Re: Segment 5 Concept Design Comments

Dear Mr. Balachandran:

Manhattan Community Board No 4's Waterfront and Parks Committee has reviewed the initial concepts for Segment 5 of Hudson River Park on two recent occasions, and would like to take this opportunity to offer our initial comments and ideas. To begin, we are pleased to say that the concepts presented so far have been generally well received by the community, and we are pleased with the creativity and sensitivity of the designers. Following are several observations and suggestions that have emerged from our reviews.

1. Of the two options shown for the pedestrian path/esplanade in what the designers have called "Chelsea Cove", the option that shows a path closer to the water's edge was much preferred.
2. The water inlet and/or canal in Chelsea Cove is a feature that was liked by many. However, we appreciate the problems that may be associated with keeping this water feature free from trash and residue. We urge the Trust to seek a solution that keeps this concept in an environmentally clean manner.
3. Regarding Pier 62, we have two comments. First, the active recreation options shown on this pier are vague and need to be refined before we can comment further. Second, many believe that the "off-leash" dog area at the end of Pier 62 should be incorporated into the design as a permanent feature.
4. As you know, Community Board No 4 has long held the opinion that the shed on Pier 64 should be removed, and this sentiment was again stated by large numbers the last Segment 5 public review, although others have stated an opposite view. We generally agree, however, that Pier 64 needs a shade structure of some kind, whether its design uses or reflects the original pier shed or not. We are also in agreement that the overall design of

Pier 64 should tend toward flatness and flexibility, although many liked the idea of viewing platforms at the ends of piers in general.

5. In general, we prefer fewer trees on piers, and we have consistently stated in the past that trees in Hudson River Park should not block the view corridors of adjacent streets.
6. The concept of extending the esplanade within Chelsea Piers is excellent
7. However, the plans to reduce the platforming south of Chelsea Piers in favor of the artificial over-water pathways from Chelsea Piers need to be rethought in our opinion. First of all, Assembly Member Gottfried, one of the authors of the Hudson River Park Act, has stated that the concepts proposed would not be legal. In addition, given the limited amount of open space available in Chelsea, emphasis should be placed on providing the maximum amount of platforming that is permissible under the law, regardless of cost.
8. The replica of the versa-boom should be eliminated. While legitimate restorations of historic artifacts on Pier 54, as well as other locations within the park, should be encouraged, Disney-style replications of historic features should be discouraged.
9. All piers in Segment 5, as well as elsewhere in the park, should be equipped with real cleats and/or bollards. Regardless of the concept for the surface or the intended uses alongside, any pier should be capable of vessel tie-up, both for future flexibility as well as for potential emergency use.
10. On Gansevoort Peninsula, an open, un-programmed lawn, as indicated by scheme A, is much preferred over a dedicated ball field.
11. A farmer's market along Bloomfield Street is a great idea. In addition, emphasis should be placed on recognition of the historic original 13th Avenue in the design.
12. We understand that the current garbage transfer pier must be rebuilt or replaced for technical reasons. We encourage the designers to create a structure that recreates both the simple beauty and utility of the existing structure, with one additional feature: a viewing area on the upper level.
13. Both the "beach" as indicated on the southern shore of Gansevoort and the small boating center along the northern shore are excellent as indicated in the concept plan.
14. Quite a few have indicated that they did not like the idea of a carousel in the park.
15. There is very strong sentiment that Pier 63 Maritime is a great facility and a means should be found for it to continue within Segment 5 or nearby in the park.

We look forward to working with the Trust and the designers of Segment 5 on a concept that, overall, was very favorably received. If it were possible to sum up our comments in nine words or less, we would say “keep it simple – keep it flexible – keep it real”

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