

December 9, 2003

Hon. Connie Fishman
Hudson River Park Trust
Pier 40 at West Houston Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10014

Dear President Fishman:

Congratulations again on your new position as president of the Hudson River Park Trust. We look forward to working with you over the coming years as the park becomes more and more of a reality.

The board also wishes to engage with you in what we hope will be a fruitful dialogue on the future of Pier 57. We have already noted the issuance of the Request for Expressions of Interest in the pier and have placed on Board 4's website a document containing background information on the pier with an opportunity for the public to respond listing its desires and dreams for the future of the pier. The address is www.manhattancb4.org. We plan to review and summarize these ideas in January as a useful tool for our comments on the responses to the RFEI.

But during the ensuing months, as you review responses for the pier and ideally weigh choosing a developer, we urge that the roof, which was designed to bear significant loads, be opened to the public on an interim basis next summer. It will clearly be some time before a bidder is selected and can begin work, especially since responses to an RFEI are likely to be conceptual--schematic at best. In addition, this is an area where construction of the park on the upland is not foreseen to occur for some time. Pier 57 is the only part of any kind of river park that residents of southern Chelsea could enjoy for several years at best.

Such a temporary use in summer vacation time and special weekends would require almost no physical changes. The roof is strong and is surrounded by a considerable existing barrier. Chairs could provide true passive recreation. Part of the concrete of the roof could be marked for games, but organized sports would of course be inappropriate. An attendant could operate and make secure one of the huge freight elevators that serve the roof. The sun, the views, the games are things that Chelsea and the city should not be deprived of.

In this connection, to reiterate our previous letters, we ask once again that one of the criteria for evaluating the responses to the Pier 57 RFEI shall be the provision of open space. We note that the Fulton Houses, a large low-income project only a few blocks away, is so severely starved for open space that kids often are forced to play in the streets. The rezoning of West Chelsea to accommodate the High Line and produce more housing will bring greater demands for open space—and greater traffic to the nearby streets. Pier 57 is almost the only likely location to meet

C. Fishman
December 4, 2003
Page 2 of 2

this demand—any parkland on the Gansevoort peninsula is farther away in space and perhaps indefinitely farther off in time.

We look forward to a summer on the pier.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



John Doswell
Co-Chair
Waterfront & Parks Committee

Pam Frederick
Co-Chair
Waterfront & Parks Committee

This letter was passed by Manhattan Community Board No. 4 at its December 3, 2003 full board meeting.

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor
Hon. C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President
Local elected officials