



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

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J. LEE COMPTON
Chair

ANTHONY M. BORELLI
District Manager

October 11, 2005

David Gmach
Director of Manhattan Public Affairs
Con Edison
4 Irving Place, 16th Floor
New York NY 10003

Re: “Riverside Substation” Project at 700 11th Avenue (49th Street)

Dear Mr. Gmach:

The design for your new substation now under construction on Eleventh Avenue between 49th and 50th Streets was presented to this Board’s Clinton/Hell’s Kitchen Land Use Committee at its meeting on September 14, 2005 to unanimous and enthusiastic approval. Con Edison and its architect David Halpern are to be commended for the care taken to design this piece of urban infrastructure so that it will fit in with its surroundings, with a façade that will create an appearance of activity from the street.

We write with concern about the following items:

1. The buildings next door: 545 W. 49th St. and 554 W. 50th St. These are residential buildings in fragile condition with exposed air shaft windows. According to the presentation, some of these windows will overlook the driveway into the new substation. Care must be taken to ensure that the substation’s rear wall is designed to prevent light, noise or emissions from affecting residents, and that activity in the driveway is limited to normal daytime working hours. Care must also be taken during construction to avoid damage to the neighboring buildings.
2. Exterior perimeter lighting. We would request that the perimeter of the building be well lit with white light from quartz or halogen fixtures pointing at the sidewalk, at a height to minimize spillage into any residential apartments.
3. Street trees. Street trees must be planted as required by Section 96-51 of the Clinton Special District provisions of the Zoning Resolution.
4. “Riverside”. The neighborhood in which the substation is being constructed is Clinton/Hell’s Kitchen. The neighborhood it will serve is to the north, and includes the Riverside South area now being developed by Mr. Trump and his associates. The two neighborhoods have sharply different identities, a difference that is important to this community. We accept that the site, in one of the few remaining manufacturing zones in the area, is an appropriate location for a

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substation to serve communities beyond our own. But please do not give this substation a name that implies that it is in the same neighborhood as Riverside South. We understand that you now prefer names that suggest no particular geographic location. Calling this substation "Riverside" ignores that preference and offends the community that is otherwise willing to accept this facility. We suggest you consider "Bloomingdale," which is a name associated with the area in the 18th and 19th centuries. Other suggestions include "Astor," because of the Astor family's historic landholdings in the area, or "De Witt," from the names of nearby De Witt Clinton Park and the former De Witt Clinton high school (now John Jay College).

Sincerely,



J. Lee Compton
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Anna Hayes Levin
Co-Chair
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee



Simone Sindin
Co-Chair
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee

Cc: Pat Richardi, Con Edison