



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4**

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**J. LEE COMPTON**  
Chair

**MICHELLE SOLOMON**  
Acting District Manager

February 13, 2006

Lori Fierstein  
NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services  
1 Centre Street  
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Raymond Kelly  
Commissioner of Police  
New York City  
1 Police Plaza  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: Relocating Mounted Unit Troop B**

Dear Ms. Fierstein and Commissioner Kelly,

We write to you concerning the temporary tenancy of Mounted Unit Troop B and the Mounted Unit Headquarters of NYPD at Pier 63, at the west end of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and the Hudson River, in Hudson River Park.

Approximately 3 years ago, NYPD appeared before Manhattan Community Board No 4's Waterfront and Parks Committee to discuss an arrangement whereby these NYPD activities would locate temporarily at Pier 63 in the space previously occupied by the Chelsea Equestrian Center. One of the reasons cited was the need to be near midtown for the upcoming Republican National Convention in the fall of 2004 for crowd control and security purposes. At that time we made it very clear to the NYPD Mounted Unit that Pier 63 was planned to become parkland within Hudson River Park, and that the building would be demolished when the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT) was ready to construct the park in that area. The Commanding Officer of the Mounted Unit assured us that, when the time came to vacate, the unit could easily move to other quarters, including in an adjacent borough whereby the horses would be trucked in as needed until a permanent home was found. It was on the basis of those assurances that Manhattan Community Board No 4 did not object to this temporary use.

As you know, that time has now arrived. The HRPT has the financing in place to proceed with park construction, the eviction of the master tenant of Pier 63, Basketball City, is nearly complete, and the demolition of the building in order to begin park construction is imminent. It is imperative that the mounted unit move immediately to another temporary home, as was promised. Further, it should be noted that even the current temporary occupancy of NYPD's mounted unit at Pier 63 was not permitted under the Hudson River Park Act. It was only

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because funding to proceed with park construction was not in place at that time, coupled with NYPD's strong preference to be near the GOP convention site, that we did not object to this temporary use. Now that construction is nearly ready to begin, and the convention is far behind us, it is unacceptable that NYPD continue to occupy Pier 63 in violation of the Hudson River Park Act.

It is not our role to identify possibilities, but we feel certain that interim sites do exist. The underutilized NYPD parking lot on 11<sup>th</sup> Ave just north of Javits comes to mind. For the long term, we do hope that a permanent home for the Mounted Unit can be found within CD4, as near as possible to Times Square for the convenience of the Mounted Unit. Residents of Hell's Kitchen have made it clear to the Board on several occasions that they would welcome the unit into their midst, in part because the additional police presence is a deterrent to undesirable street activity. We believe that there may be several development opportunities in the area that could accommodate a stable, and we would be pleased to work with you and a developer to find a workable site for a new, permanent home for the unit.

However, for the near term, it is up to NYPD and the City to find an interim site. The Mounted Unit has known this day would come for at least three years. And, as previously mentioned, the NYPD has stated to us that trucking the horses in from a neighboring borough is a viable temporary alternative if no local site can be identified. It is our position that the NYPD should take immediate steps to vacate Pier 63, even if a temporary solution is less than perfect. Under no circumstances can the continued illegal occupancy of Pier 63 be permitted to delay the construction of this long awaited segment of Hudson River Park.

Sincerely,



J. Lee Compton  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



John Doswell  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront & Parks Committee

Kristin Dionne  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront & Parks Committee

cc: Elected Officials  
Hudson River Park Trust  
Capt. Harold Kohlmann  
Chelsea Waterside Park Association  
Friends of Hudson River Park  
Deputy Mayor Patricia Harris