



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4**

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**J. LEE COMPTON**  
Chair

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District Manager

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Erik Botsford, DCP, Danielle Decerbo, City Council Land Use Division, Anthony Borelli, MBPO, Steve Benjamin, The Dermot Company

**DATE:** November 9, 2006

**FROM:** Anna Levin, Co-Chair, CB4 Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee

**SUBJECT: Hudson Mews, 37<sup>th</sup> Street west of Ninth Avenue**

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The Dermot Company team presented the latest version of their plans to CB4's Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee last night. There were 15-20 neighborhood residents in the audience, and the presentation provoked a lively conversation about the development as a whole and, most particularly, about the plan for the park/public open areas.

Dermot hopes to have its proposal certified in the coming weeks, so it's important that we present the community's reactions to DCP without further delay. The main points from the discussion last night are:

- **The park looks too much like an urban plaza and not enough like a neighborhood park.** A good neighborhood park has trees, plantings and seating around the edges and lots of open space in the middle. Hell's Kitchen Park, Balsley Park and the Clinton Community Garden were cited as successful examples of neighborhood parks. The present plan has moved in the right direction, but needs more. The requirements for urban plazas in **ZR 37-04 should not apply here** – they were intentionally omitted from the zoning rules for this site (ZR 93-543), except for the requirements about signs, maintenance and penalties.
- 15 foot walkways make the park a passageway, and diminish usable green space. **Walkways should be reduced** to half that size. This would allow **more lawn** and a **softer eastern edge**.
- Lawns should be **real grass, not field turf**. After listening to the pros and cons, we took a show of hands and everyone preferred grass – better to lie on and read a book, and better for air quality.
- The park must be **closed at night** and **well lit**, to address existing public safety conditions in the neighborhood.
- The buildings should include **more 2BR units, to accommodate families**.
- **Street trees are required** on 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> Streets, per ZR 93-62.
- **Retail uses should be good for a residential area:** no bars, clubs, cabarets, adult uses or banks (the latter because they're dead zones at night).

- If there's a restaurant or café adjacent to the park, it should not expand into the park: **no café creep.**
- The area's heavy traffic makes the air heavy with soot. The Hudson Crossing building is only 3 years old but already showing grime. **Cleanable building surfaces should be required.**
- We're pleased that the project will be built to LEED's standards. Using **recycled water in the south park's fountain** will help.
- There was a request for **drinking fountains in the park.**
- The park must be a **well-maintained public open area in perpetuity.** The legal mechanism for ensuring this must be in place before Hudson Mews is completed.