



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

October 10, 2007

Paul Januszewski  
NYC Economic Development Corporation  
110 William Street  
New York, NY 10038

Captain Robert R. O'Brien Jr.  
Captain of the Port  
USCG Sector New York  
212 Coast Guard Drive  
Staten Island, NY 10305

**Re: Security and public access, Manhattan Passenger Ship Terminal (PST),  
Piers 88 & 90, North River**

Dear Mr. Januszewski and Captain O'Brien,

Manhattan Community Board No 4 (CB4) has been following the progress of the refurbishment of the Passenger Ship terminal (PST) on the West Side of Manhattan with great interest, as it occupies a significant portion of our waterfront and lies within the overall boundaries of the newly emerging Hudson River Park which surrounds it. Recently, Paul Januszewski, from NYC EDC, provided a brief update to the Waterfront & Parks Committee on the recent progress of changes to the PST which include widening the apron of pier 88, refitting the sheds to handle passengers on two levels, changes to improve traffic flow and other changes including cosmetic changes to make the PST look better. CB4, despite ongoing concerns about traffic, is generally supportive of this effort and looks forward to an improved presence of this important facility in our neighborhood. The plan to limit the new facility to a maximum of three ships, given the much increased passenger capacity of the new generation cruise ships, makes sense from a traffic point of view, and the changes proposed to the parking access will, in our view, make the traffic situation much better.

We also applaud the news that the southern circular bulkhead area will once again be open to the public, something that we have long missed since post 9/11 security measure had it closed off. It is this good news that leads us to write again about our desire to see a PST that has a friendly and accessible "front door" to the community. For this reason we are addressing this letter both to EDC as well as the USCG/Department of Homeland Security.

Prior to 9/11 the entire front end of the facility, including the bulkheads between the piers, were publicly accessible. Post 9/11, for security reasons, the large area in front of the piers and the bulkheads between piers has been closed off with chain link barriers, creating a prison-like appearance. This was and is perfectly understandable, as like most citizens, we understand the need for heightened security in this troubled world. However, the refurbishment of the PST now taking place can provide an opportunity to design a solution that can be both safe as well as aesthetically pleasing, and one that preserves a feeling of openness as well as a way for park users and neighbors to be able to view these majestic cruise ships as they visit our port.

Toward that goal, the first thing we would like to understand is exactly what requirements the Department of Homeland Security will impose on the design of the front end of the facility. Is there a minimum distance that must be maintained between the public and the ships? Are there specifications regarding barriers? Can glass be used to provide transparent divisions between secure and unsecure areas? Given that ships are not present for a good portion of a typical week, can access be improved during those periods when no ships are present?

Once these parameters are known, how can EDC respond with a design that can provide a maximum feeling of openness and friendliness without compromising security? In our view, such a design would likely be welcomed by the passengers and owners of these ships as well as the general public. And how can a sense of continuity be created that will connect this new facility with the new Hudson River Park that surrounds it? Each day thousands of cyclists, joggers and strollers pass by this terminal on their way up and down the park. How can we insure that their experience is enhanced, not diminished, as they pass by the terminal. Can we work together to create a beautiful and welcoming facade with the least obtrusive barriers possible? This is, after all, a historically significant area, once visited by transatlantic passenger ships from many nations. How can we celebrate the rich tradition of "passenger ship row" to new generations of park users and NYC visitors and residents alike, rather than hiding it behind unpleasant barriers?

It is our hope that these goals can be achieved. Such a solution was nicely accomplished in one of the terminals in Tampa, FL with the use of glass. In Sydney's PST, a public upper-level viewing area was provided at a safe distance from a visiting ship. Both were post 9/11 and yet preserved openness and accessibility. Other cities have met this challenge in innovative ways. It is hoped that we can do as well or better in New York.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair



John Doswell  
Chair, Waterfronts and Parks

C.c.

Connie Fishman, Hudson River Park Trust  
Friends of Hudson River Park  
Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer  
Senator Thomas Duane  
Assembly member Richard Gottfried  
Councilmember Christine Quinn  
Member of Congress Jerrold Nadler  
Councilmember Gale Brewer