



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

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

December 11, 2007

Hon. Shaun Donovan  
Commissioner  
NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development  
100 Gold Street  
New York, NY 10038

**Re: 500-508 West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street (portion of Clinton Urban Renewal Area Site 9C)**

Dear Commissioner Donovan:

Manhattan Community Board 4 writes to express its preliminary, conceptual support for Clinton Housing Development Company's revised proposal for redevelopment of the buildings at 500-508 West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street for supportive housing and not-for-profit office space.

In January 2006, this Board wrote to you expressing its preliminary support for a proposal by CHDC and The Dermot Company, as co-developers, to gut and renovate the existing structures, add one story to the top of the 500 building and two stories to the 508 building, and use the City's New Housing Opportunities Program (New HOP) to develop approximately 49 units of middle and moderate income housing. At the same time, we wrote to you supporting CHDC's proposal to renovate the Captain Post Building and an adjacent lot at 556-560 West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street for supportive and family rental housing.

In developing architectural plans for each project, CHDC has found that the layout of the building at 500 West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street is more suitable for supportive housing while the layout of the Captain Post Building is more suitable for individual apartments. Therefore, CHDC now proposes to switch the proposals, and presented its revised proposals to the community at the November 27, 2007 meeting of the Board's Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee.

In the revised proposal for 500-508 W. 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, the existing structures would be gutted and renovated as previously proposed. CHDC now proposes to use HPD's Supportive Housing Program and private equity from the sale of Low Income Housing Tax Credits to construct 60 units of supportive housing at 500 W. 52<sup>nd</sup> Street (36 studios and 24 two-unit suites), to be occupied by referrals from the Department of Homeless Services. The project would include on-site social services, a community room, kitchen, laundry and roof deck, as well as two commercial units on the ground floor. The smaller building at 508 West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street would be used as office space for not-for-profit organizations.

The buildings were built in the early 1900s for industrial use, and were acquired by the City in 1969 for inclusion in the CURA. The site is designated for residential use in the Third Amended Urban Renewal Plan for the CURA, and the proposal to create additional affordable housing and

not-for-profit space and retain and rehabilitate existing buildings is consistent with the Plan and the community's vision for the CURA.

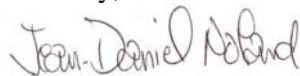
As noted in our January 2006 letter, vested tenants, those who have occupied the buildings since the condemnation, include LeNoble Lumber and Sonny's Grocery. Over the years, the buildings have come to house artist studios and theater companies and The 52<sup>nd</sup> Street Project, an after school program. The proposal includes the assurance that a relocation plan would be developed for permanent relocation of the current commercial tenants to affordable space within the CURA. Development of satisfactory plans for relocation of these tenants within the CURA is a high priority for this Board, and will be a condition to our approval of the project. CHDC, which assumed a lease and management responsibilities for the buildings in 2005, has been meeting with the existing tenants from time to time, and is in the process of developing relocation plans. We have asked CHDC to keep the tenants and this Board fully informed of relocation plans as they continue to develop.

CHDC is a non-profit housing organization with a proven record of undertaking similar projects in the CURA. It has developed a good working relationship with the Board, and has demonstrated a commitment to working with the community in developing its plans. We would be pleased to work with CHDC on this project.<sup>1</sup>

If the project moves forward, UDAAP and ULURP applications will be required, with ample opportunity for public consideration of the proposal in greater detail.

At this point, we are pleased to support the revised proposal in concept, and to encourage HPD to continue discussions with CHDC about this project. We further request that CHDC be immediately given site control of the buildings by HPD's Division of Special Needs Housing so that relocation expenses incurred by one of the tenants, LeNoble Lumber, can be reimbursed before the end of the year.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair



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

Cc: Electeds  
CHDC  
All tenants  
HCC

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<sup>1</sup> Joe Restuccia, Executive Director of CHDC, is also a member of the Board and of its Clinton/Hell's Kitchen land Use Committee. His interest has been disclosed, and he is not entitled to vote on any matter concerning this proposal that may come before the Board or the committee, including approval of this letter.