



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

330 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, 26<sup>th</sup> floor New York, NY 10036  
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512  
www.ManhattanCB4.org

**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

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

Connie Fishman  
Hudson River Park Trust  
Pier 40 @ West Houston Street, Second Floor  
New York, NY 10014

July 26, 2007

**Re: Dog Run Issues in Chelsea Waterside Park**

Dear Ms. Fishman,

The Waterfront & Parks Committee of Manhattan Community Board No 4, at its regular monthly meeting on June 14, 2007, heard from a large contingent of dog owners organized under the Chelsea Dog Park Coalition (CDPC) about a range of issues regarding the dog run in Chelsea Waterside Park. The issues presented can be largely grouped into two categories: 1. Size, proposed expansion, and the need for more space for dogs as the population grows in the area and 2. Maintenance, safety and regulatory problems that need immediate attention.

This letter addresses the 2<sup>nd</sup> category only (maintenance, safety and regulatory problems), as the board currently has insufficient knowledge or ability to ascertain how much and what types of expansion(s) are desirable, where such expansion(s) might be located and how they might be financed and/or prioritized as population growth in the Chelsea community drives the need for increased services of all kinds while geographic resources are fixed and financial resources limited.

However, the board agrees that there are numerous improvements that could be made to the current dog run and we urge the Trust to investigate and implement as many as possible in a reasonable time frame. We understand that many of these have already been communicated to the Trust by the dog owners directly, and that, perhaps some of these may already be implemented or planned for implementation. But as of the writing of this letter, and based on testimony from the CDPC as well as direct observation, we believe that most, if not all, of the conditions listed below remain to be solved.

*Fence Height and Maintenance*

By far the strongest call by the CDPC was for the fence surrounding the dog run to be raised to a height sufficient to prevent dogs from being able to jump or climb over it. According to CDPC members, this is a common occurrence at this dog run, and it was stated that the height of the

fence around the run at Chelsea Waterside Park was lower than at other dog runs in the city. Dogs that manage to escape the dog run may easily end up in traffic, along with owners or others seeking to rescue these dogs, creating a dangerous situation. This seems to the board to be a situation that must be corrected as soon as possible. It should not be dependant on fundraising nor should it wait for a serious injury or death to occur. The board urges the Trust to place a high priority on solving this problem. At the same time, any holes or breaches in the existing fence should be repaired as soon as possible.

*Drainage and Other Repairs Needed*

The following conditions were cited by the CDPC

- A large and growing sinkhole should be repaired.
- Some locks on gates are broken.
- Some light bulbs are out and have yet to be replaced for several months.
- The run needs to be power washed regularly.
- Missing hose
- Water outlet runs (apparently) 24/7 which is wasteful and may be damaging

The board believes that these types of conditions are generally easy to deal with and should be addressed quickly and on an ongoing basis. To the extent that the Trust may already be in the process of dealing with some of these, we, on behalf of the users of the dog run, thank you.

*Signage and Rules*

The CDPC also felt that signage in the areas around the entry gates was inadequate to maintain a safe environment in the dog run, particularly in seeking to keep children under 12 from playing in the run. In particular, the dog owners have requested larger and better placed signs at each entry location. A request was also made for a bulletin board.

Obviously this dog park is, overall, a great success and well used. We hope our suggestions will help to make a good thing even better, and we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair  
Community Board 4



John Doswell  
Co-Chair  
Waterfronts and Parks

Kristin Dionne  
Co-Chair  
Waterfronts and Parks

CC: August Costa, President Chelsea Dog Park Coalition  
Bob Trentlyon, Chelsea Waterside Park Association