

1 **Executive Committee**

**Item #: 2**

2  
3 September --, 2008

4  
5 Ms. Margaret Forgione  
6 Borough Commissioner  
7 Department of Transportation  
8 40 Worth Street  
9 New York, NY 100028

10  
11 Dear Commissioner Forgione

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13 Manhattan Community Board 4 supports the streetscape improvements proposed  
14 by the Chelsea Improvement Company (CIC), based on their agreement to incorporate  
15 some suggested modifications. The streetscape is proposed for an area roughly from 15th  
16 to 16th Street west of Eighth Avenue and along 9th Avenue to 14th Street.

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18 Their proposal, as presented to the CB 4 Transportation Committee on July 16th 2008, is  
19 to install 3 news boxes, 19 bike racks, 6 benches, and 28 new curb corners. Much of this  
20 proposed street furniture upgrades existing furniture, especially the bike racks and curb  
21 cuts. The news boxes, too, should largely replace the hodgepodge of plastic boxes  
22 currently cluttering many corners of this area, the subject of many neighborhood  
23 complaints. We find that the design has been thoughtfully done, with a steel and black  
24 motif that complements trash cans already placed in the area. The CIC intends to install  
25 two curb cuts wherever there is enough space at the street corners. We expect that all  
26 curb ramps will be equipped as required with detectible warning strips compliant with  
27 federal standards, and that furniture will be compliant with the latest ADA guidelines for  
28 vision-impaired pedestrians including reflective stripes.

29  
30 We recommend the following modifications:

- 31 • No benches or furniture should be installed in front of service doors (to preserve  
32 convenience of deliveries and fire department access).
- 33 • The proposed news box on 15th Street at the North West corner of 8th Avenue  
34 leaves only a 5.9 foot walk lane. This is insufficient, especially since it is near a subway  
35 exit. We request that it be located on the Avenue around the corner.
- 36 • On 9th Avenue at the North West corner with 14th Street, the Apple store attracts  
37 large volumes of pedestrian and taxi drop-off traffic. Adding a news box there does not  
38 seem advisable. One option is to locate the news box on 14th Street, where the sidewalk  
39 is wider. The plaza is another possible location, particularly since it has substantial  
40 seating.
- 41 • To conform with DOT guidelines bike racks should be installed so that the bikes  
42 are parked parallel to the curb. Only 10th Avenue and 14th Street sidewalks are wide  
43 enough to accommodate perpendicular parking.
- 44 • To dedicate most of the sidewalk space to pedestrians, rather than bike parking,  
45 and to discourage biking on sidewalks, we strongly recommend that, where feasible, bike  
46 racks be installed on median islands rather than on sidewalks. A good example is the

47 South East corner of 9th Avenue and 16th Street where an island is in place for the bike  
48 lane. Another example is the North West corner of 8th Avenue at 15th Street, if a bike  
49 lane is ever implemented there. Converting a car parking space to bike parking might also  
50 be preferable to bike parking on the sidewalk of Avenues.

51  
52 Community Board 4 appreciates the CIC efforts to outreach to the local block  
53 associations and gain their support and to work closely with the Community Board. We  
54 support the proposed streetscape improvements with the modifications above.

55  
56 Sincerely

57  
58 Cc Josh Benson  
59 Etc.. elected  
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DRAFT