



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**COREY JOHNSON**  
Chair

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

June 7, 2013

Chris Crowley  
Landscape Architect  
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation  
The Arsenal  
Central Park  
830 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10065

**Re: Proposed new design for Ramon Aponte Park**

Dear Chris Crowley:

On 9 May 2013, a revised design for Ramon Aponte Park was presented to the Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) Waterfront, Parks & Environment Committee (WPE) by NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR). This was in response to MCB4's request for a design that did not include basketball courts for numerous reasons presented by local block associations and neighborhood resident users. MCB4 is pleased to say that the new design has met with an enthusiastic approval by these same constituents and we are pleased to endorse it.

The general layout of the new park was well received, including moving the water feature to a sunnier location, moving the entry westward, and the pleasing curves and new seating that were introduced. The additional trees and new plantings are also welcome, as well as the two playground areas – a new children's play area and a swing set area – features specifically requested by the community.

Our only comment is a request for a new feature that comes from the fact that the Waterfront & Parks Committee has become the Waterfront, Parks and Environment Committee, and we now seek to make sure that all projects that come before the board adhere to best practices for the environment. In that regard, we noted that the pavers were not permeable, and thus direct rainwater toward drains that end up connecting to the over-taxed storm water & sewage system. A much better system, already being employed in new plazas in the city, is a system that collects rainwater for re-use later for plant irrigation. In such a system, the stored rainwater can be directed to spigots in the planting beds. While we understand that such a system adds to the costs, we believe the benefits warrant the expenditure. We request that DPR explore the feasibility and costs related to this request and report back to us, so that we may consider funding options. This could become an ideal test model and pilot project for future parks that include

plazas.

MCB4 greatly appreciates the willingness of DPR to listen to and respond to the desires of the neighborhood users of the park and recognizes the challenge of satisfying many needs in a small place. We thank DPR for this commitment to upgrade this much needed park and look forward to its completion.

Sincerely,



Corey Johnson  
Chair



John Doswell  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront, Parks and Environment

[signed 6/7/2013]

Marten de Kadt  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront, Parks and Environment

cc: William Castro, Manhattan Borough Commissioner