



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**COREY JOHNSON**  
Chair

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

August 29, 2013

Kenneth Adams  
President & CEO  
Empire State Development  
633 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

**Re: Bayview Correctional Facility  
550 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Decommissioning and Future Use**

Dear Mr. Adams:

At the July 25, 2013 meeting of Manhattan Community Board 4's (MCB4) Housing, Health and Human Services (HH&HS) Committee, the Committee discussed the decommissioning and future reuse of Bayview Correctional Facility (Bayview) at 550 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street (southeast corner of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and West 20<sup>th</sup> Street). Bayview is a neighborhood institution and was highly regarded as a successful women's minimum security prison. Bayview was particularly effective with women offenders were placed on Manhattan's Westside with easy access for children, family, friends, and other social support systems. Bayview also had strong work and education programs that allowed women to gain skills and prepare for life after release.

CB4 is disappointed that Bayview was selected for closure but hopeful this New York State-owned site can continue to provide both social and neighborhood benefits as its reuse is determined by a broad range of community and government stakeholders.

As a beginning to reach that consensus, MCB4 participated in a meeting of elected officials and representatives from Empire State Development (ESD) on July 24, 2013 organized by State Senator Brad Hoylman and Assemblymember Dick Gottfried. ESD is the New York State public authority that will develop a plan for disposition of the former Bayview Facility. MCB4 then invited community stakeholders, community and social service organizations to its July 25, 2013 HH&HS Committee meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to develop parameters the community would like to see included in the proposed disposition plan and eventual Request for Proposals (RFP) to be issued by ESD. Below is a list of the community's initial concerns:

**Affordable Housing**

- 30% of the residential floor area of the building should be reserved for permanently affordable housing, with a range of apartment sizes and income bands.

### Historic Preservation

- The Bayview building is an historic resource and must be preserved. Designed by Shreve, Lamb & Harmon, the architects of the Empire State Building, Bayview housed the Seaman's YMCA from 1931 to 1966. The building is both historically and architecturally significant and was deemed State and National Register Eligible in 2005 in the Environmental Impact Statement for the West Chelsea Special District Rezoning. Late June 2013, CB4 submitted an application for landmarking to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC).

### Community Use and Benefit

- Bayview contains both a gym and swimming pool, two recreational resources scarce in the Chelsea community. These recreational resources, with adequate support space, must be preserved. They should be operated by a not-for-profit organization and provide recreational space for youth, teens, and adults. MCB4 ranks 57 out of 59 Community Boards in open and recreational space. Maintaining these resources at the Bayview site would provide a sorely needed recreational benefit.

### Social Service Use and Benefit for Women Ex-Offenders

- Bayview provided social services to women leaving prison to reenter both civil society and the workforce. This location must continue to provide space for such important work. MCB4 proposes that a portion of the reuse be set aside for social services for women ex-offenders (e.g. transitional or permanent housing, an outpatient clinic, job skill development and placement).

To further and refine these discussions, MCB4 and local elected officials intend to hold a series of public discussions in September to develop these concerns into concrete requests. As the disposition plan is developed, MCB4 requests input into drafting of the RFP by ESD. MCB4 worked successfully with ESD in a similar process on the disposition of the New York State Armory site on West 14<sup>th</sup> Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues in the 1990's. MCB4 appreciates ESD's willingness to work together again so disposition of the Bayview site will bring benefits to both New York State and the Chelsea community.

Sincerely,



Corey Johnson  
Chair

*[signed August 28, 2013]*  
Barbara Davis, Co-Chair  
Housing, Health &  
Human Services Committee



Joe Restuccia, Co-Chair  
Housing, Health &  
Human Services Committee

CC:

Scott Stringer – MBP  
Christine Quinn – NYC Council Speaker  
Richard Gottfried – Assembly Member  
Brad Hoylman – NYS Senator  
RuthAnne Visnauskas – HPD

Beatriz de la Torre – HPD  
Thehbia Walters – HPD  
Anne Elliott - Greenhope  
Ken Jockers – Hudson Guild