



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

COREY JOHNSON
Chair

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

October 4, 2013

Kristen Edwards
Director, Homeless Outreach
Goddard Riverside Community Center
40 Exchange Place, Suite 777
New York, NY 10005

Re: West 46th Street at Tenth Avenue

Dear Ms. Edwards:

Manhattan Community Board #4 appreciates the work of the Homeless Outreach workers of Goddard Riverside Community Center in our community. We request your assistance in working with a homeless woman who has frequently occupied the public bench on the northeast corner of Tenth Avenue and West 46th Street. We make this request based on the reports of residents of a nearby building who have indicated that her belongings often block the sidewalk and occasionally is rude. Reports to the police have not proven helpful as they will only remove belongings if no one is there to attend them.

We appreciate that the homeless outreach team has responded to both neighbor and resident calls to 311. Workers have reported that they have interacted with her on occasion and she has not accepted offer of services. She has not also been there several times they arrived after a phone call (response times can take up to an hour in periods of high volume).

We understand that the Outreach team takes an approach of seeking to build trust with homeless people who live on the street to encourage them to take advantage of services and/or enter shelter. We encourage you to make such an effort in this case.

While a resident requested that we remove the bench, we are concerned about setting a precedent of removing a bench for the purpose of displacing (likely to a nearby location) a homeless resident without first ensuring that services to mitigate any negative behavior and potentially encourage them to enter shelter. In addition, bench locations were decided based on resident request and after Community Board review and approval.

If problems remain, we might feel it necessary to remove the bench, but ask for your assistance in addressing this situation in, hopefully, a more appropriate way.

Sincerely,



Corey Johnson
Chair



Christine Berthet, Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus, Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee