



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

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

February 8, 2007

Borough Commissioner Margaret Forgione  
Department of Transportation, 35<sup>th</sup> floor  
59 Maiden Lane  
New York, NY 10038

Community Board #4 is pleased that several building owners in the Chelsea District are working with the 34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership to make improvements to their area. Six owners representing five properties have come together to make improvements in front of and around their buildings. These owners include Taconic Investment Partners, Jamestown, Belvedere Capital Management, The Related Companies, Somerset Partners, and Angelo Gordon and Company. The five buildings include:

- 111 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Chelsea Market (75 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue)
- 450 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street
- 85 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- 450 West 17<sup>th</sup>

These companies are in the process of setting up the Chelsea Improvement Company, as a nonprofit 501©3 with the mission to improve the ambiance of this neighborhood. Their initial Board of Directors will include representatives from the above companies. Their current focus area is West 15<sup>th</sup> and West 16<sup>th</sup> Street from 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and West 17<sup>th</sup> Street between 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

In advance of the creation of the non-profit company, the owners have joined together and contracted with staff from the 34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership to do Sanitation and graffiti removal from 8am to 6pm, 7 days a week and to provide security services Saturdays from 2pm to midnight.

The owners have also begun initial planning for capital improvements including street lights (both location and design), sidewalk and curb improvements, changes in signage, and installation of appropriate street furniture. They are also seeking improvement to the condition and lighting of the bridge overpasses on West 15<sup>th</sup> Street (between 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues) and on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue (between 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.Streets).

We are enthusiastic about the potential benefits of this effort and look forward to working closely with the Chelsea Improvement Company. We have several recommendations:

- Outreach to surrounding businesses, including other retail, office and residential buildings and manufacturing buildings to be involved in the process and potentially join the non-profit Board of Directors;
- Expand the Board of Directors of the Chelsea Improvement Company to include representatives of the Chelsea Coalition of Block Associations and Manhattan Community Board #4;
- Create a planning process that actively includes community input, similar to the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue Renaissance and Gansevoort Improvement Project community charettes and planning sessions;
- Outreach to the disability community to ensure the street furniture and sidewalk and street improvements are handicapped friendly;
- While we are pleased that the Chelsea Improvement Company is planning potential parkland at or on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, we reiterate our position opposed to commercialization of interior parkland and encourage active community involvement in any contemplated park improvements or changes;
- Coordinate any proposed street changes or overpass bridge improvements with the Landmarks Committee of the Community Board and the Landmarks Preservation Commission, where necessary.

Again, we greatly appreciate your efforts to improve the neighborhood and your outreach to the Transportation Committee in the early phases of your planning and programming. We look forward to continuing this effort toward creating a vibrant, mixed use, pedestrian friendly lower Western Chelsea area.

Sincerely,



J. Lee Compton  
Chair  
Manhattan Community  
Board No. 4



Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning  
Committee



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning  
Committee