



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

Catherine McVay Hughes CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

June 6, 2013

Mayor Michael Bloomberg
City of New York
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

RE: South Street Seaport Museum

Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

We are writing to you out of extreme concern over the South Street Seaport Museum which is located on the East River in Lower Manhattan. The South Street Seaport Museum was founded in 1967 and has been newly revitalized under the management of the Museum of the City of New York, under the remarkable leadership of Susan Henshaw Jones. The South Street Seaport is characterized by cobblestone streets and sailing ships. It is comprised of historic buildings that have stood for more than a century, the Pier 17 pavilion shopping mall and the Seaport Museum.

The Seaport Museum and its iconic ships are a beloved resource to our community and define the historic Seaport neighborhood. However, it is currently threatened because of the devastating damage caused by Superstorm Sandy, as well as financial instability; the Seaport Museum was forced to close its Fulton Street galleries on April 7, 2013 and we fear that we may lose this unique, globally renowned institution forever.

The Museum of the City of New York has been managing the Seaport Museum since 2011. Its 18-month contract expired on April 5, 2013 but was renewed for three months, to expire July 5, 2013. Community Board 1 has been working with the Seaport Museum in urging the Museum for the City of New York to extend their contract an additional four months. We believe this extension is critical in order to provide time in which the Seaport Museum, the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the Howard Hughes Corporation can communicate in order to ensure the preservation of the South Street Seaport Museum.

Despite our efforts in attempting to facilitate this conversation among the parties listed above, we have experienced extreme difficulty in achieving any progress in this matter. Community Board 1 believes it is critical that the Mayor's office intervene in order to facilitate communication among the Seaport Museum, Howard Hughes Corporation and the New York City Economic Development Corporation in order to produce a solution that ensures the preservation of the South Street Seaport Museum and its historic vessels. Losing this iconic and historic institution would not only be a devastating loss for the Lower Manhattan community, but also for the City of New York.

Therefore, Community Board 1 urges you to intervene as soon as possible in order to guarantee the survival of the South Street Seaport Museum and its historic vessels.

Sincerely,

Catherine McVay Hughes

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DS: CMH

cc:

New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer

New York State Senator Daniel Squadron

New York City Council Member Margaret S. Chin

Patricia E. Harris, First Deputy Mayor

Robert K. Steel, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development

Seth W. Pinsky, President, Economic Development Corporation

Kate D. Levin, Commissioner of Cultural Affairs

Board of Directors, Museum of the City of New York

Susan Henshaw Jones, President, South Street Seaport Museum