The City of New York

Community Board 12 - Manhattan
Washington Heights & Inwood
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George Fernández, Jr., Chairman
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

October 8, 2015

Mr. James Ferrara
Interim President
New York City Transit
2 Broadway, 30th floor
New York, NY 10004

Dear Mr. Ferrara:

Please be advised that at its General Meeting on Sept. 29, 2015, Community Board 12-Manhattan passed the following resolution by a vote of 34-0-0 in support of New York City Transit's plan to provide wetland mitigation in the North Cove in connection with the floodwall project at the 207th Street Railyard:

WHEREAS: New York City Transit (NYCT), in response to Superstorm Sandy, is planning to build a protective, more resilient seawall approximately 11 feet above the existing wall along the eastern edge of the 207th Street Railyard in the Harlem River, and this plan has been endorsed by Community Board 12-Manhattan; and

WHEREAS: NYCT will be required by the N.Y. State Department of Environmental Conservation to provide wetland mitigation elsewhere to offset the loss of water and habitat by the construction of the floodwall in the river; and

WHEREAS: NYCT is proposing to undertake this mitigation in the North Cove on the south side of the railyard by removing .4 acre of wood debris from three areas in this tidal wetland; and

WHEREAS: Timber piles and floating wood outside the debris fields would remain so they could continue to serve as habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds; and

WHEREAS: The benefits of this restoration include the following: floatable hazards to boaters and habitat would be removed; restored mudflat and tidal water areas would provide habitat for mollusks and other aquatic life as well as fish habitat and increased waterfowl forage; the overall appearance and beauty of the North Cove would be improved; and

WHEREAS: Construction would not start until the third quarter of 2016, which would not disrupt migratory bird patterns; and

WHEREAS: James Cataldi, of the Manhattan Wetland and Wildlife Assn., who has been largely responsible for cleaning up the North Cove in recent years, endorses this plan; and

WHEREAS: Community Board 12-Manhattan looks upon this project as part of an ongoing partnership with NYC Transit to maintain and enhance the cove and to work on other mutually beneficial community improvement projects; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: Community Board 12-Manhattan supports New York City Transit's plan to provide wetland mitigation in the North Cove in connection with its floodwall project at the 207th Street Railyard as a significant benefit to the community; and be it further

RESOLVED: Community Board 12-Manhattan recommends that NYC Transit work closely with the Manhattan Wetland and Wildlife Assn. as the plan is implemented, and also urges NYCT to review the design of the floodwall with the aim of making it more attractive.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of this resolution. Please keep us informed as this project progresses.

We look forward to continuing to work with NYCT to improve the Washington Heights-Inwood community.

Sincerely,

George Fernandez
Chair

c: Hon. Venetia Lannon, Regional Director, N.Y. State Dept. of Environmental Conservation
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Letitia James, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Charles B. Rangel, Congressman
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, State Senator
Hon. Bill Perkins, State Senator
Hon. Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member
Hon. Guillermo Linares, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member
Deirdre Parker, NYCT Government & Community Relations