



## Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

530 West 166<sup>th</sup> St. 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10032

Phone: (212) 568-8500, Fax: (212) 740-8197

Website: [www.nyc.gov/mcb12](http://www.nyc.gov/mcb12)

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Shahabuddeen A. Ally, Esq., Chairperson  
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

April 29, 2016

Hon. Mitchell J. Silver  
Commissioner  
NYC Parks & Recreation  
The Arsenal  
830 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10065

Dear Commissioner Silver:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, April 26, 2016 Community Board 12, Manhattan unanimously passed the following resolution (37 votes in favor) with regard to the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation's proposed capital renovation of the High Bridge Water Tower.

**Whereas:** The High Bridge Water Tower is a 200' Romanesque revival structure of gray granite, copper and steel, designed by John B. Jervis and built in 1872 to equalize water pressure from the Croton Aqueduct and carried over the adjacent High Bridge to the Highbridge Reservoir (now Highbridge Pool) to help supply water to northern Manhattan, and while no longer in use was designated a New York City Landmark in 1967; and

**Whereas:** The High Bridge Water Tower was rehabilitated in 1958 and outfitted with a five-octave carillon in memory of Benjamin Altman, was heavily damaged by fire in 1984 and closed to the public, and received a new roof in 1990 which roof was designed to last for 20 years; and

**Whereas:** Representatives of the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) came before Community Board 12, Manhattan (CB12M)'s Parks & Cultural Affairs (PCA) Committee on April 5<sup>th</sup> to present a plan to renovate the High Bridge Water Tower at a cost of \$2.316 million (\$1.016 million allocated from Councilmember Ydanis Rodriguez and \$1.3 million in Mayoral funds remaining from the High Bridge project); and

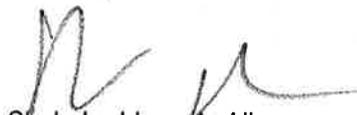
**Whereas:** The proposed Phase I renovation, currently in design, will include urgently needed repairs to the roof and exterior masonry, new lights, window guards, and other repairs so that the Tower might be reopened to the public following an 18-24 month construction period which project is expected to begin in the Spring of 2017; and

**Whereas:** The proposed Phase II renovation, which includes interior pointing and mortar work, painting the interior pipes, removing/repairing additional granite damaged in the fire, and replacing the bells, will cost an estimated additional \$2.5-3 million and is not yet funded; and

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- Whereas:** CB12M consistently has ranked highly the replacement of the carillon in the Tower belfry, and also had concerns regarding the height of the window guards and the style of the lighting fixtures as well as the color of the bulbs therein; now therefore be it
- Resolved:** That that CB12M endorses the DPR's proposed Phase I project to renovate the High Bridge Water Tower as presented, with suggestions about the window guards, light fixtures, and carillon enumerated below; and be it further
- Resolved:** That CB12M requests that the DPR lower the height of the window guards consistent with current safety standards and in keeping with other historic renovations, and also look at upgrading to a more attractive light fixture still in keeping with the utilitarian nature of the original fixtures, and uses a bulb that provides the most natural lighting color; and be it further
- Resolved:** That the DPR reach out to the manufacturer of the original carillon to see if they can provide additional bells, and to incorporate the cost of same into the current project should there be any flexibility in the Phase I budget; and be it further
- Resolved:** That CB12M calls upon our elected officials to provide the additional funding needed to incorporate the carillon into the current Phase I project; and be it further
- Resolved:** That CB12M calls upon our elected officials to provide the additional funding needed to complete the proposed Phase II renovation project.

Sincerely,



Shahabuddeen A. Ally  
Chair

cc: 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