

STATEMENT FROM CB 2 CHAIR TOBI BERGMAN

We were gratified to learn this morning that the City withdrew its request for funding from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for affordable housing development at Elizabeth Street Garden.

Community Board 2 deeply appreciates the tremendous efforts of all the Elizabeth Street Garden volunteers and friends and the support they have earned from many of our elected officials and from numerous community groups.

This decision reflects the the strength of community support for the garden. This same support will eventually lead to failure of any ongoing effort to develop housing there. If HPD decides to pursue a Request for Proposals for the Elizabeth Street site, it will waste its own resources and those of developers who may respond to the RFP without understanding the costs of the fight they will be investing in.

We commend Council Member Chin for her long and passionate commitment to building affordable housing and to the needs of our senior citizens, but we urge her to embrace the importance of this garden to her constituents and to work with the whole community to find better solutions.

We remain committed to working with HPD and our elected officials to assure development of affordable housing at better sites in our district starting with the city-owned site at Hudson and Clarkson Streets.

This is a moment of opportunity to direct the energy and unity of our community to improving our network of parks and open space while we shoulder our responsibility to contribute to the Mayor's bold plan to build affordable housing. It's a moment we should not waste. We all need to pull together now.