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COMMUNITY BOARD No. 2, MANHATTAN

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March 5, 2012

Amanda Burden, *Chair*
City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chair Burden:

At its Full Board meeting February 23, 2012, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution for Reforming the City Environment Quality Review (NEW VERSION)

Whereas all residential construction results in an increased number of families in our community,

And Whereas Community Board 2 Manhattan welcomes new families, but appreciates that an increase in the number of families requires a corresponding increase in community facilities and social services, such as: schools, parks, police, and medical care,

And Whereas good public schools add value to our community, ease the burden on employed parents, and benefit children for decades,

And Whereas CB2 Manhattan is concerned about the continuing problem of overcrowding in our local public schools, and unanimously passed a resolution in February 2008 that stressed the need to consider “school capacity and overcrowding as part of our evaluation process for each and every new residential project”,

And Whereas the City Environmental Quality Review formulas, which are used by The Department of Education and City Planning, to calculate the impact on school seats caused by new residential development are based on long outdated assumptions that describe a time when families generally chose not to live in Manhattan, and when Greenwich Village, in particular, was known as a neighborhood primarily for singles, who moved away when they married and had children,

And Whereas the CEQR Technical Manual, according to these assumptions, calculates new residential units in the Bronx to yield .55 K-8 public school children, but for Manhattan reduces that number to .16 children, leading to inadequate planning for school capacity in our community,

And Whereas, in accordance with the CEQR Technical Manual, the city only requires that a detailed school impact analysis be conducted on residential projects which will add at least 310 units or more, even though it is clear that all new residential construction and conversions (including those of only a few units) have the potential to add children to our schools, especially units with more than one bedroom. More than one bedroom increases the likelihood of more children, occupying an apartment, but the CEQR policy only counts the number of units and does not calculate the number of bedrooms,

And Whereas multiple projects that individually do not trigger a detailed analysis will certainly have a collective impact on the school age population and therefore increase the demand for public school seats,

Therefore Be It Resolved that Community Board 2 Manhattan calls upon the Department of City Planning to develop new and better formulas, based upon current demographics, that more accurately represent the percentage of families with school age children that comprise our local population, and considers the number of families who can be expected to move into new residential development,

And Therefore Be It Further Resolved that CB2 Manhattan calls upon the Department of City Planning to institute a policy that would require a school impact study on all new residential construction and conversion, regardless of size,

And Therefore Be It Further Resolved that CB2 Manhattan urges our elected officials to develop a mechanism that would require developers of all new residential buildings to contribute to a capital fund for public schools, and/or include new school seats within their projects.

Vote: Unanimous, with 40 Board members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Brad Hoylman, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Lois Rakoff, Chair
Social Services and Education
Community Board #2, Manhattan

BH/gh

- c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Thomas K. Duane, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Sheldon Silver, Assembly Speaker
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Christine C. Quinn, Council Speaker
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Council Member
Jessica Silver, Manhattan Borough President's office
Pauline Yu, Community Assistance Unit