

David Gruber, *Chair*
Bo Riccobono, *First Vice Chair*
Jo Hamilton, *Second Vice Chair*
Bob Gormley, *District Manager*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Susan Kent, *Secretary*
Keen Berger, *Assistant Secretary*

COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE

NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

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Greenwich Village ♦ Little Italy ♦ SoHo ♦ NoHo ♦ Hudson Square ♦ Chinatown ♦ Gansevoort Market

February 25, 2013

Hon. Christine C. Quinn, Council Speaker
224 West 30th Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

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

Dear Council Speaker Quinn and Chair Burden,

At's Full Board meeting February 21, 2013, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution.

A resolution to Reject Open Space Mitigation Outside the Hudson Square Special Zoning District At The Expense of Open Space Mitigation Within the District

Whereas:

1. Hudson Square is part of Community Board 2, the second most parks-starved community in the city, with already-overcrowded parks and limited opportunities for indoor recreation.
2. The Hudson Square area itself has no open space nor has it had any substantive infrastructure improvements in over 80 years.
3. Trinity Real Estate has been one of the largest landowners in Manhattan for more than 300 years. Its holdings in the Hudson Square Special Zoning District (the District) area alone total 6 million square feet of property in 18 buildings—40% of the built space in the proposed District.
4. As they have stated repeatedly at meetings, on their website and in their literature, “Trinity thinks about the future of Hudson Square in decades and centuries, not quarterly earnings.”
5. Proposed development of 3.8 million square feet in the District includes more than 3,300+ residential units and will bring approximately 7000+ new residents and workers to the District.
6. The Hudson Square Rezoning DEIS found that Rezoning “ would result in a significant adverse impact to open space....” (Page 5-1).

7. CB2 recognizes that adequate space for a park in the District does not currently exist, and in its October 25, 2013 response to the Hudson Square Rezoning ULURP Application, CB2 asked that a new recreation center be built in the District with gymnasium, pool, exercise space, community rooms, after-school programming, and a small theater, to be operated by a non-profit provider. It recommended that this community center include amenities necessary to a well-functioning mixed-use area, such as childcare facilities, arts programs, a public library, a senior center offering lunch programs, activities and classes for seniors, as well as evening programs for youth and toddlers.
8. On January 23, 2013, the NYC Department of City Planning (DCP) proposed that Trinity contribute \$5.6 million for the refurbishment of the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center, which is located outside the District.
9. CB2 asked for renovations to the Dapolito Center only if further mitigation was required *after* the creation of a new recreation center *within* the District.
10. The Dapolito Center is too small to meet the additional active recreation needs of the new Hudson Square residents.
11. A recreation center serving the needs of Hudson Square is logistically, operationally, and financially feasible, based on detailed discussions with recreation and community center operators, architects and real estate investors.
12. Nearby recreation facilities at the Dapolito Center, J.J. Walker and Pier 40 are already heavily used by local schools, youth and adult leagues, with local schools—including Hudson Square-based NYC iSchool—traveling as far as West 134th Street for home basketball games. Likewise, Trinity’s proposal to build an elementary school with neither a standalone gym nor a standalone auditorium will result in compromised indoor recreational space.
13. A new recreation center housed in in the District will set a vibrant tone for the neighborhood; it will be a magnet for new residents and employers; and it will demonstrate indisputably the developers’ commitment to playing a vital role in the health of the city in the coming decades.

Therefore be it resolved, that CB 2 requests that:

1. City Council reject the proposed \$5.6 million contribution to the Dapolito Center; and
2. City Council reject any attempt to predominantly mitigate for open space outside the proposed Special Zoning District; and
3. Since there are no horizontal mitigation opportunities in the District, CB2 strongly urges that the applicant fund a “vertical solution,” namely, CB 2’s first priority: a new recreation center in the District, close to where the majority of new residents will reside.

Vote: unanimous, with 40 Board members in favor.

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Richard Caccappolo, Chair
Parks, Recreation /Waterfront Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

DG/gh

c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Sheldon Silver, Assembly Speaker
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Scott Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hannah Friedman, Community Liaison, Man. Boro. Pres. Office
Pauline Yu, Community Assistance Unit
William T. Castro, Manhattan Boro. Commissioner, NYC Dept. of Parks

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February 22, 2013

Robert Walsh, Commissioner
NYC Dept. of Small Business Services
110 William Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10038

A. J. Pietrantone, Executive Director
Friends of Hudson River Park
311 W. 43rd Street, Suite 300
New York, NY 10036

Dear Commissioner Walsh and Executive Director Pietrantone:

At its Full Board Committee meeting on February 21, 2013, Community Board #2, Manhattan adopted the following resolution:

A resolution in Support of Application by The Friends of The Hudson River Park to the NYC Department of Small Business Services for the Authorization and Establishment of the Hudson River Park Neighborhood Improvement District

Whereas:

1. The Hudson River Park (hereinafter "The Park") was established by New York State legislation whereby Hudson River Park Trust does not receive any public funding for its regular maintenance and operations;
2. The Park currently experiences an operations deficit of \$7,000,000.00 annually which is expected to increase over time;
3. Friends of the Hudson River Park (hereinafter "Friends") was founded in 1999 to advocate for and secure resources to complete and sustain The Park through government funds and private fundraising;

THE APPLICATION

4. Friends has made an application to the New York City Department of Small Business Services for the authorization of the Hudson River Park Neighborhood Improvement District (hereinafter "NID"), a public/private partnership that will assess residential and commercial property owners within a designated area adjacent to the Park (see proposed NID District in attached map) and fund supplemental services (see proposed NID budget attached hereto);

THE ASSESSMENT

5. The proposed NID will assess commercial property owners 15 cents per square foot per year, and residential property owners 7.5 cents per square foot per year;
6. Public housing units and non-profit organizations will be exempt; tenants of rent stabilized and rent controlled apartments will be exempt, but underlying property owners will be assessed; cooperative associations will divide their assessment among their shareholders; residential condos will be assessed individually according to their tax lots;
7. An increase in assessment will not be possible without new authorization by City Council pursuant to the mandated public process;

BUDGET

8. The NID will provide for Park conservation; safety initiatives (signage and pedestrian safety across 9A); additional Park police; improved and additional lighting; median and bike lane landscaping and beautification; community/Park partnerships; and studies and design analyses;

GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

9. The NID shall be governed by a Board of Directors of no fewer than 13 members, the majority of which must be property owners, in proportion to the commercial and residential property owners in the District; as well as commercial and residential tenants who are not property owners, government representatives from the Offices of the Mayor, Comptroller, Borough President and City Council; and Community Board 1,2 and 4 Representatives (non-voting).
10. No funds will be used to construct, maintain, or operate the Park's commercial areas; the NID budget will be allocated by its staff and board and audited by the City of New York;

OUTREACH

11. Friends has sent more than 40,000 letters in two mailings to tax lot owners of record; held seven public meetings (only two are required by law); purchased ads in six print and online community publications; and met with property owners, community groups and other district stakeholders through over 100 meetings;

CONCERNS

12. The Parks and Waterfront Committee of Community Board 2 expressed the following concerns:
 - a. The regular maintenance and landscaping of the highway medians adjacent to the Park should not be the responsibility of the NID but rather of New York City DOT, New York State, and/or the federal government;
 - b. The NID is only planning to allocate 60% of its proposed revenue, as described in its proposal, on conservation and stewardship of the Park itself;
 - c. The current proposed NID map carves out the Hudson Square BID area. This BID currently assesses business owners, but not residential property owners. There are few residents in the area at this time, but an application is currently being considered by the City which, if approved, will rezone Hudson Square as a mixed-use, special district allowing high FAR residential use, the result of which will be a substantial influx of new residents into an area with a dearth of active open space. Hudson River Park will become especially important to the quality of residential life and to the value of anticipated residential developments if this area is rezoned.

Therefore be it resolved that:

1. Community Board 2 approves the establishment of the Hudson River Park Neighborhood Improvement District;

2. While recognizing that inclusion in the NID presents an additional financial burden on property owners, Community Board 2 feels the benefit of stabilizing and securing proper maintenance of this valuable asset outweighs the cost of this modest assessment;
3. Community Board 2 calls upon its elected officials at the City, State and Federal levels to work with DOT to secure funding for the maintenance and landscaping of the highway median adjacent to the Park. NID revenues should not be spent on highway maintenance or other such expenses for which government agencies should be held responsible;
4. Community Board 2 strongly urges continuing discussion with respect to including current and future residential properties within Hudson Square in the Hudson River Park NID and assessing them accordingly.

Vote: Passed with 36 Board members in favor and 4 against-(Ely, Dwyer, Siegal and Rakoff)

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

Sincerely,



David Gruber, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Richard Caccappolo, Chair
Parks, Recreation & Open Space Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

DG/gh

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