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COMMUNITY BOARD No. 2, MANHATTAN

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Community Board 2 Manhattan Social Services and Education Committee

Date of Meeting: July 20, 2010
Location: Judson Memorial Church,
239 Thompson Street

Board Members present: Steve Ashkinazy (Vice Chair), Denise Collins, Doris Diether, Robin Rothstein, Chenault Spence

Board Members Absent: Lisa Cannistraci,

Board Members excused: Keen Berger (Chair), Sasha Greene

Public Members present: Vern Fry, Sharad Khemani,

Public Members Excused: Rhea Sohn Vadher,

A representative from the Department of Homeless Services was scheduled to address the committee this evening, but due to a lapse in communication the date was not confirmed in time, and it had to be cancelled. It has been rescheduled for September, and will be on the agenda then. At last month's meeting we passed a resolution supporting The Senior Program at First Presbyterian Church. It was reported to us that while The Caring Community is willing to restore its funding to this program, the First Presbyterian Church has decided not to continue leasing the space at a discounted rate.

The committee discussed and passed a resolution that was circulated by the Borough President, in support of Same Sex Marriage, and expressed its congratulations to the Borough President for his decision to show his own personal support for this issue, by scheduling his own nuptials in Connecticut, which allows Same Sex Marriage, and not in New York, which does not. The Committee had some issues and questions about the exact wording of the resolution, but agreed to pass it, as is, with the agreement that The Chair would relate our suggestions to the Borough President's office. The Resolution appears below.

A concern about the City's plan to create a shelter for homeless men on 25th Street was raised and briefly discussed. Although it is not in our community, it is within our neighboring Community Board. It was decided that we should seek more information about the project. We will inform the Department of Homeless Services that we expect to hear more about this issue, when they visit us in September. Also we will seek input from members of Community Board 4, who are directly involved in this issue.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Whereas the "freedom to marry" is, in the words of the United States Supreme Court, "one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free people,"

And Whereas civil marriage grants special rights and privileges in such areas as: property ownership, inheritance, health care, hospital visitation, taxation, insurance coverage, child custody, pension benefits and testimonial privileges, and insures important safeguards against the loss or injury of a spouse, and crucial assurances against legal intrusion into a couple's marital privacy,

And Whereas civil marriage is the means by which the State defines a couple's place in society,

And Whereas same gender couples are denied access to the institution of civil marriage in New York State,

And Whereas those who are denied the legal right to marry are, in essence, being told by the institutions of the State, that their solemn commitment to one another has no legal weight,

And Whereas Bill S440 will provide same-sex couples the same opportunity to enter into civil marriages as opposite-sex couples, and also provides that no member of the clergy may be compelled to perform any marriage ceremony,

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2 Manhattan urges the Governor and the New York State Legislature to immediately amend the domestic relations law, in regard to the ability to marry, to read as follows:

" A MARRIAGE THAT IS OTHERWISE VALID SHALL BE VALID REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE PARTIES TO THE MARRIAGE ARE OF THE SAME OR DIFFERENT SEX (S440)"

Passed Unanimously.