



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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DELORES RUBIN
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

February 5, 2016

Adam Ganser
Vice President of Planning and Design
Friends of the High Line
The Diller – von Furstenberg Building
820 Washington Street
New York, NY 10014

Re: The High Line Spur

Dear Mr. Ganser,

Friends of the High Line presented its much changed plan for the High Line Spur and Passage (High Line Section 3, Phase 2) to the Waterfront, Parks and Environment Committee meeting on January 14, 2016. The letter was voted on at the Community Board's regularly scheduled Full Board meeting on Wednesday, February 3rd, 2016. The plan is a simplified design in comparison to the previous versions, which contained a hanging locomotive or a central cupcake amphitheater, while still maintaining a sense of grandiosity. The committee positively received this version of the plan, while still expressing several concerns. The committee unanimously voted to support the new design.

The High Line Spur crosses 10th Avenue at 30th Street and is the final section of the High Line to be developed. The designers want to integrate the transition between the existing Section 3 of the High Line with the Spur, one of the largest spaces on the High Line. The designers are conscious that the space can be used to display public art, contain public programming, provide views in all directions over 10th Avenue and westward towards the Hudson River, become a major entrance to the High Line from the east, and provide space for needed High Line storage as well as new restroom facilities. The designers have included a central platform (a "plinth") to support art installations that can be raised and lowered. The lighting design, whether from a 70 foot pole or from the top of a nearby building, is intended to focus downward and illuminate only the spur itself. On one side of the open space a series of amphitheater-like seating steps are to be installed, providing space for relaxation or as the foundation of a theater in the round. Flexible seating is to be located throughout the major part of the Spur platform. The design has been intended to maintain and highlight the unique rail track configuration of this section of the High Line. The connecting rail bed, moving east from the existing section 3 of the High Line, passes

under the 70 foot high archway of Tower C, now under construction at 10th Avenue and 31st Street. This section is to have seating, overlooks, and at least one concession to be licensed by the Department of Parks and Recreation. The entire area will be planted with trees and shrubs appropriate for the available limited light as a result of neighboring buildings. Construction of this phase of the High Line is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2016 and be completed around the end of 2017.

CB4 Concerns

While the committee saw the wonderful potential for this new space of the High Line, it still had several concerns and suggestions.

- Concern was expressed that the edge of the platform be sufficiently secure and that no objects can be dropped that might impact traffic flow on 10th Avenue.
- The first entrance point on the Eastern side of the platform is merely a stairway with the closest elevator being several hundred feet away. Thus access will be restricted for people with limited mobility. In addition, concern was expressed that there may not be space for adequate circulation of pedestrians through this site and there may not be adequate emergency evacuation facilities or plans.
- Since the space was presented to the committee as a location for rotating art installations, the hope was expressed that a significant number of artists from Community District 4 be represented.
- Concern was expressed that the space never be closed in its entirety for private events.
- Not only should rainwater be retained by adequate plantings, but excess rainwater should be retained in holding tanks and used for the cleaning and watering needs of this part of the High Line. In addition, holding tanks for the collection of rainwater and its beneficial use should be considered for other parts of the High Line as well.
- It was clear to the committee that because of the restricted available sunlight, solar voltaic collectors in this part of the High Line are impractical. A suggestion was made that the designers consider the installation of small wind turbines in this relatively windy location. Dismay was expressed that solar collectors have not been installed on other parts of the High Line.
- Finally, the committee was intrigued by the suggestion that a Manhattan Community Board 4 meeting be held on one of the High Line's protected spaces sometime in the future.

We appreciate The Friends of the High Line presentation of this new phase of construction along the rail bed. We look forward to this project's successful completion and to continuing our interaction with friends of the High Line as we have over the years.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin
Chair



Maarten de Kadt Co-Chair
Waterfront, Parks &
Environment Committee

[Signed February 5, 2016]

Lowell Kern, Co-Chair
Waterfront, Parks &
Environment Committee