



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JOHN WEIS
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

March 10, 2010

Jay Walder
Chairman
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
347 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

Robert C. Lieber
Deputy Mayor for Economic
Development
110 William Street
New York, NY 10038

Dear Chairman Walder and Deputy Mayor Lieber:

Manhattan Community Board 4 reiterates its February 8, 2008 request that the #7 subway train extension include a stop at West 41st Street and Tenth Avenue. We call upon the Mayor's office, the MTA, Hudson Yard area land owners and developers, and our city, state and Federal officials to work together to ensure this critical element to the Hudson Yards redevelopment be funded and realized.

Since the city first proposed rezoning in 2003, this Community Board has worked closely with the City on its ambitious plans to convert the Hudson Yards area (West 43rd to West 28th Streets from Eighth Avenue West to the Hudson River) into a vibrant "Transit Oriented Corridor" with an estimated 40 million square feet of residential and commercial development - among the highest anticipated densities in the city. We did this with the understanding that the city viewed the extension of the #7 subway, including the stop at West 41st and Tenth Avenue, as a key component to this vision. As stated in the City's 2004 EIS for the Hudson Yard's rezoning:

"The proposed Hudson Yard's redevelopment and the #7 Subway extension is the latest chapter in using transit to help create a new community and attract real estate development interest. Excellent rapid transit access is essential if the development potential of the Hudson Yards is to be successfully realized."

We have subsequently worked with the city on a substantial up-zoning on the PS51 site between West 44th and West 45th between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. We are also working with the Department of City Planning and are in the environmental review stage of rezoning along the 11th Avenue corridor from West 43rd to West 51st Streets – most of which would be vastly underserved by mass transit without a subway stop at West 41st Street and 10th Avenue.

As expressed in our July, 2009 comments on the Western Rail Yard rezonings, we are concerned that the basic infrastructure required for this new development and committed in the 2004 EIS for the Hudson Yards rezoning— including day care, health care, public schools, fire stations, and power transmission lines – have not been adequately developed or planned. In a city where over 54% of the residents commute using public transportation, there is no more crucial aspect to this infrastructure than subway service.

A recent survey completed by the Real Estate Board of New York estimates that the subway stop at West 41st Street and Tenth Avenue would serve an estimated 32,500 workers and 27,500 residents in current or planned developments. They also estimate that the subway construction would generate 6,800 jobs, \$1.542 billion in economic activity, and \$58 million in city and state revenue.

We are encouraged that many of the owners and developers in the area have been building support for the subway stop. We are also pleased that Senator Schumer remains active in this effort and in seeking Federal funding. However, these efforts will not be enough and, given the timeline on building the #7 train extension, immediate action is required.

- **The City and the MTA should create a revised budget for the West 41st Street and Tenth Avenue Subway stop:** There have not been any recent estimates for 1) building the station shell; and 2) completing the subway stop. Estimates range from \$600 to \$800 million. A more definite number based on current construction costs should be completed. We would also like to see the difference between the costs of doing the project now, while the #7 subway extension is in construction versus doing it in future years.
- **Local business owners, with the assistance of REBNY, should estimate what an additional “assessment,” consistent with BID and other coordinated business efforts, might provide toward project financing.** REBNY has recently indicated that it might be possible for local owners to come up with up to \$50 million in funding for the project. An on-going funding stream from local business, dedicated for its first several years to repay a loan (preferably from reduced rate Federal or bond sources) toward building the subway stop might be another avenue for REBNY and others to investigate that could lead to a larger amount.
- **The City should estimate the reduced revenue, specifically the estimates for Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) that leaving out the subway stop would cost.** We believe if the city did a realistic analysis the estimated cost in city revenue required to cover the lost PILOT revenue would far exceed the cost of building the station.
- **The City should honor its commitment from 2007/8 to provide matching funds toward the development of the subway stop.**
- **Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and Congressman Nadler should work together toward seeking Federal funding for the project**

Many local residents and businesses already located in the western part of this community board complain about the lack of transit options. They are participating in existing petition drives to remind the Mayor and the city of the commitment they made to this community to include the West 41st and Tenth Avenue subway stop on the #7 train extension and to insist our local elected officials take leadership.

The current budget climate makes this a difficult time to make requests for major projects. However, delaying such a critical element of the redevelopment of the Hudson Yards would add the substantial costs of service and property owner disruptions to a future installation date and puts at risk the development assumptions used for the overall project financing. We feel strongly that the time is now to create the West 41st Street and Tenth Avenue subway stop.

Sincerely,



John Weis
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

cc: NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn
HYDC, Ann Weisbrod
MTA, Adrienne Taub
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
Hon. Thomas Duane
Hon. Richard Gottfried
Hon. Gale Brewer
Hon. Jerrold Nadler