



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JOHN WEIS**  
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District Manager

November 3, 2010

Commissioner Amanda Burden  
New York City Department of City Planning  
22 Reade Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Commissioner Burden:

Re: Vision 2020 – Reach 3 Comments & Recommendations

Manhattan Community Board No 4 (CB4) welcomes this opportunity to comment on the Reach 3 Recommendations as part of the Draft Vision 2020 Recommendations being prepared by NYC Planning. We applaud this effort to create a Comprehensive Waterfront Plan and appreciate the time, resources and openness provided by City Planning, along with EDC and other agencies, toward this important goal.

These remarks constitute Manhattan Community Board No 4 specific comments and suggested changes or corrections to the portion of Reach 3 that extends from 14<sup>th</sup> Street to 59<sup>th</sup> Street on the Hudson River. This area includes 6 of the 8 specific locations mentioned (plus some others that were not mentioned). It should be stated that all of Reach 3 falls within Hudson River Park as defined and created by the Hudson River Park Act in the NYS Legislature over 10 years ago and the development of the entire 4+ mile stretch has been extensively studied and planned with the involvement of CB4 as well as CBs 1 & 2, for over 20 years. Much of the planning is specifically spelled out in the aforementioned Hudson River Park Act, which defines allowable uses for virtually every pier and upland area in what is now Hudson River Park, currently about 80% complete. The Park is being built and managed by a city-state agency, the Hudson River Park Trust.

The comments will be presented in the order provided, beginning with location 3 (as locations 1 and 2 fall within neighboring CBs).

First, we suggest that the Heading for Reach 3 be modified to include “Hudson River Park” as 100% of Reach 3 is, in fact, Hudson River Park.

#3 – Pier 52

- a. Should be renamed “Gansevoort Peninsula” which includes Pier 52 and 53 as well as the large peninsula itself which will provide the largest expanse of parkland within Hudson River Park.
- b. Although technically in CB2, CB4 has a shared interest in Gansevoort Peninsula as per previous agreement.
- c. In addition to providing “perimeter access”, the Hudson River Park Act defines this entire area as parkland and, indeed, to permit the waste transfer station, requires an amendment to the Act. Add “Develop entire peninsula as parkland”
- d. CB4 (as well as CB3) have opposed a waste transfer facility at this location
- e. Given that a waste transfer station may exist here despite CB4’s (and CB3’s objection) it will be important that any truck access be designed as park friendly as possible and that the facility itself have a public educational component as has been suggested in preliminary city plans.
- f. We have no issue with the use of Pier 53 for FDNY fireboat use.
- g. We support the small boat facility planned for the northern side of Gansevoort Peninsula

#3a – Pier 54 (should be added)

We support the park use of Pier 54 including its planned use as a docking location for historic vessels.

#4 – Pier 57

- a. We agree with the bullets listed
- b. Add “Preserve the historic character of Pier 57” (Currently on the National Register of Historic Places.)
- c. Add “Study a pedestrian bridge between Pier 57 and the High Line in the area of 14<sup>th</sup> Street”

In what would be #4a and #4b, Chelsea Piers (Piers 59 – 61) and the park piers north (Piers 62 – 64) were not listed and are basically complete. However the intersection of pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles at about 22<sup>nd</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets creates a dangerous situation, especially as Hudson River Park becomes more & more popular and crowded. This situation is growing at other locations as well and possibly there should be a Reach-wide recommendation that says “As Hudson River Park facilities increase in usage and popularity, the issue of traffic safety will need to be addressed carefully”

#5 – West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Heliport

The bullet states “Explore opportunities for redevelopment after vacated” Unfortunately there are no plans for it to be vacated and its current use (sans tourist flights) is permitted by the Hudson River Park Act. However it should be relocated further away from the park esplanade and a proposal to locate it at the end of the currently non-existent Pier 72 has been mentioned.

Assuming that happens, the area occupied by the current heliport should be developed (as per the Hudson River Park Act) as 100% park land and esplanade. The word “redevelopment” is misleading unless clarified.

Also the idea of providing a pedestrian bridge between the new Hudson Yards development and the Park in the vicinity of 33<sup>rd</sup> Street has been supported by CB4.

#5a – Pier 76 (not mentioned)

As per the Hudson River Park Act, the city is required to apply its “best efforts” to relocate the current tow pound so that this pier can be developed as 50% commercial and 50% parkland as required by the same law. To date, no action has been taken by the city. A bullet that says “Aggressively seek a new home for the current tow pound so that this pier can be developed for mixed park/commercial use as required by the Hudson River Park Act” should be added

#5b – Pier 81 & 83 (not mentioned)

These are the Circle Line / World Yacht Piers and will remain here as per a new 30-year lease. As part of that lease, a public park/esplanade will replace the current parking lots and snack bar building. A bullet supporting this plan (yet to be implemented) should be added.

#5c – Pier 84 (not mentioned)

Pier 84 is a very popular park pier within Hudson River Park with a large variety of uses including water dependent uses. The only comment is that a floating element is needed to accommodate visits and programming by many educational/historic vessels with low freeboards (heights of deck above the water) such as *Clearwater*, *Pioneer*, *Lettie G Howard*, *Urger*, *W. O. Decker* and others.

#5d – Pier 86 - Intrepid Sea\*Air\*Space Museum (not mentioned)

This pier was recently rebuilt and provides required public access as well as a home for the museum. Unfortunately all visitors are subject to search, including the public wishing to take advantage of the public access. A way to provide a separate entrance for public access visitors not entering the museum ship itself, but simply the open pier, should be explored.

#6 – West 49<sup>th</sup> Street to West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street  
(Better: Piers 88 and 90 – Manhattan Cruise Ship Terminal)

These are the cruise ship terminals. In addition to the bullets listed, we would like to add “Explore ways to make the entire facility more people friendly as is done in many other similar terminals world-wide.” In addition, add “and widen” (the bike/walkway) to the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet.

## #7 – Piers 92 and 94

CB4 recently approved, with conditions, the development of this facility by The Merchandise Mart. In addition to additional public access, a dedicated public classroom and multiuse space, shared public use of the larger “atrium”, signage restrictions, and the preservation of the south side of Pier 92 for overflow passenger ship use, a modified and much improved traffic plan was presented and approved, including a reduction of truck round trips by providing on site storage of empties as well traffic rerouting and pedestrian safety features. Thus, we support the bullet listed. Two addition bullets should be added:

- a. A pedestrian bridge between DeWitt Clinton Park and Pier 94/Clinton Cove Park should be constructed.\*
- b. One or more MTA bus lines should be re-routed to land on the west side of Route 9A (vs the east side) providing better public transportation for both the facility and the park.\*

(\* The subject of improving connections between the waterfront and the upland regions is one that should be studied at nearly all waterfront locations. Note that pedestrian bridges were mentioned in #4 and #5 above as well as #7). Better public transportation, especially at water taxi locations and other nodes is desirable throughout Reach 3. Such transportation is already provided at certain locations (i.e. Pier 84) but not uniformly. In addition, in Reach 3, a north/south public transportation system connecting this long narrow Park should be explored, in addition to improving water taxi usage.)

## #8 – Pier 97

The bullet is not needed – the relocation of DOS to an upland facility seems to be nearly complete as required by the Hudson River Park Act (and some 8 years late). Simply saying “Support the development of Pier 97 for recreational park use and berthing of historic vessels” might be better.

## #8a – Con Ed Power Plant (not mentioned)

Add “Support historic preservation of this facility for new public uses.”

## #8b – Piers 98 – 99 (not mentioned)

If plans to convert steam generation to natural gas become reality in the future, a plan for the reuse of Pier 98 (a fuel oil terminal) as a public park facility should be studied.

If plans to reactivate Pier 99 as a waste transfer facility become reality, the truck handling capability of this pier will need to be improved considerably as backs-ups of garbage trucks into the upland neighborhood (which is becoming increasingly residential) occurred frequently when previously operated.

Reach wide, but particularly in Chelsea.

The issues of sea level rise and storm surge damage caused by climate change is a city wide topic. CB4 has supported a study of a gate/barrier system at the Verrazano Bridge and/or other waterways to control water levels throughout the region.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment. CB4 is looking forward to the completion, not only of its own stretch of waterfront, but of a New York City with a revitalized waterfront for all residents & visitors throughout all 5 boroughs – as well as the “sixth borough”, the waterways themselves.

Sincerely,



John Weis  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



John Doswell  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront & Parks Committee

Carmen Matias  
Co-Chair  
Waterfront & Parks Committee