

May12, 2003

The Honorable Christine Quinn  
New York City Councilmember  
224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206  
New York, NY 10001

**Re: Damaged Sidewalk at 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street**

Dear Councilmember Quinn,

A panel of sidewalk on the northwest corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street has presented dangerous conditions for many months now. One of the cement slabs in this location has sunk to a level approximately six inches below surrounding slabs, creating serious trip conditions. A square, wooden frame wrapped in yellow police tape has been erected to keep pedestrians from stepping on this portion of the sidewalk. While this does prevent people from tripping, it effectively removes half the sidewalk from public use and is not a viable long-term solution.

The Transportation Planning Committee of Manhattan Community Board No. 4 has made every effort to engage the New York City Department of Transportation in the swift repair of this dangerous condition—to no avail. We have been told by NYC DOT's liaison to CB4 that a violation has existed at this location for 10 years. We have been told that when sidewalk violations are issued, property owners have 45 days to make the repair. After that, the repair goes on a list kept by DOT for repairs to be done by the City. When the City does such a repair, a lien is then placed on the affected property. But the list for these City repairs is very long. Decades can pass before a sidewalk violation on the DOT list is repaired by a City-employed crew.

In a situation like the one on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, where a serious trip condition exists, DOT can make a speedier repair called a "make safe," which essentially means that they shovel some asphalt into the depression to level out the trip condition. But even this paltry solution is not available to us, because this particular stretch of sidewalk is vaulted, and NYC DOT will not do a "make-safe" on vaulted sidewalks.

Given the information presented to us, we have no way whatsoever for driving forward the timely repair of this serious trip condition. This effectively removes from public use, for the unforeseeable future, one-half of the sidewalk on a heavily trafficked avenue.

**Christine Quinn**  
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We urge your office to take any and all possible actions to help us either compel the property owner responsible for this stretch of sidewalk to repair it, or spur NYC DOT to take a more active role in fixing the problem. In addition, we hope you will work with appropriate colleagues and committees within the Council, in partnership with NYC DOT and other relevant agencies, to develop an improved system for reporting, ticketing, and repairing violations on our City's most vital, public spaces: our sidewalks.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Simone Sindin

Chair

Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Joshua David

Co-Chair

Transportation Planning Committee

Walter Mankoff

Co-Chair

Transportation Planning Committee

cc: local elected officials