

July 8, 2004

Hon. Amanda M. Burden, AICP  
Chair  
City Planning Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: ULURP 040250 ZMM – Verizon – West 47<sup>th</sup>/48<sup>th</sup> Street Rezoning**

Dear Chair Burden:

At the recommendation of its Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee, Manhattan Community Board No. 4, having held a duly noticed public hearing on ULURP application number 040250 ZMM, adopted the following resolution by roll call vote (33 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions and 0 present but not eligible to vote).

Verizon New York Inc. has applied to amend the Zoning Map by rezoning Block 1095, bounded by West 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> Streets and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues from an M2-3 manufacturing district to an M1-5 manufacturing district. This amendment, which would make the zoning for this block consistent with the zoning for the block to the north, will permit sufficient density to allow Verizon to build a new seven story (plus basement) garage and support facility for consolidation and growth of its Midtown West Side operations.

Block 1095 is located in the "Other Area" of the Special Clinton District, which includes a mix of manufacturing and commercial uses, as well as residential uses east of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This Board is in the process of developing its own planning goals for the area and has worked with a Columbia University Planning Studio to assess and analyze existing physical and social conditions. This Board generally favors the retention of manufacturing uses when possible, especially when those uses provide goods and services to local consumers. We also recognize that the remaining manufacturing districts in western Clinton are a logical location for service facilities such as the one proposed by Verizon.

Block 1095 is also located across Route 9A from the Hudson River waterfront and the Passenger Ship Terminal. This is an area in which the Board wishes to encourage low-scale development and an environment attractive to pedestrian traffic moving west through the neighborhood to the Hudson River Park.

Truck and bus traffic is already a significant problem in this area. The UPS facility three blocks south (between West 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Streets and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues) houses approximately 570 delivery trucks and the Federal Express facility immediately to the north houses approximately 150 delivery trucks. In addition, the area is often overwhelmed by idling commuter vehicles and charter buses bringing tourists to Times Square and Midtown Manhattan. The proposed Verizon facility would bring 163 additional Verizon vehicles to the area; a total of 288 Verizon vehicles would operate from the facility.

During its consideration of this application, the Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee heard impassioned complaints from area residents, including the West 47<sup>th</sup>/48<sup>th</sup> Streets Block Association, about existing traffic conditions. They are "angry because the city has failed to listen to our traffic problems despite years of meetings with DOT to solve these traffic problems" and "angry because the city has failed to develop a comprehensive plan to deal with the west midtown traffic problems." We share these residents' concerns and will continue to work with appropriate city agencies to find solutions, though we note that the city's Hudson Yards plan will exacerbate these same neglected traffic and congestion problems.

With respect to the proposed Verizon facility in particular, the block association raised concerns about increased cross-town truck traffic on West 47<sup>th</sup> and West 48<sup>th</sup> Streets, the effect that traffic will have on area air quality, and the safety of the area's children and pedestrians with so much commercial traffic. They requested that Verizon be required to develop internal policy requiring Verizon trucks to use designated truck routes and avoid residential streets.

During its consideration of this application, the Clinton/Hell's Land Use Committee also heard numerous complaints from neighborhood residents about cleanliness of the sidewalks adjacent to Verizon's property. Since that time, Verizon has cleaned the exterior areas of its facility and has confirmed to us in writing that it will continue to maintain this facility including removal of litter and debris.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved** that Manhattan Community Board No. 4 recommends denial of this application for a zoning change from M2-3 to M1-5 unless Verizon agrees as follows:

1. Verizon management will adopt and maintain a policy for Verizon trucks and vans to use designated truck routes and avoid residential neighborhoods to the extent possible, except when needed to respond to service requirements within such residential areas.
2. The new building will have an activated façade on both the West 47<sup>th</sup> and West 48<sup>th</sup> Street frontages. The building will include exterior street level illumination; exterior lighting will be white light with a metal halide (or equivalent) source and will not be high-pressure sodium vapor lighting.
3. Verizon vehicles will be parked within the garage rather than on the surrounding streets (other than when parked at a service area site away from the garage). Verizon will not use the sidewalks around the garage for storage of Verizon equipment. In particular, gang boxes will be stored within the new garage structure.

**A. Burden**  
**July 8, 2004**  
**Page 3 of 3**

4. Verizon will continue to maintain the exterior of its existing facility and its new facility, including removal of litter and debris.
5. Verizon will maintain a community board and local block association liason who can be contacted by the community in the event operational or traffic issues arise. Once the new facility is completed, this representative will be stationed at the facility.
6. Verizon will comply with the mandatory tree planting provisions of Section 96-51 of the Zoning Resolution (the Special Clinton District regulations).
7. In developing the new facility, Verizon will use only the development rights associated with its own property and will not use development rights transferred from adjacent zoning lots.

A copy of Verizon's letter to Mahattan Community Board No. 4 containing Verizons agreements to these conditions is attached.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Anna Hayes Levin  
Co-Chair  
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee



Simone Sindin  
Co-Chair  
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee

Attachment

cc: City Planning Commission, Calendar Information Office  
Lee Chong, Manhattan Borough President's Office  
Local elected officials  
Melanie Meyers, Esq.  
The West 47<sup>th</sup>/48<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association