

Statement of Position Regarding

Steven L. Newman Real Estate Institute Proposal For the Development of the Far-West-Side of Manhattan

At its regularly scheduled monthly full Board meeting held on December 1, 2004, Manhattan Community Board No. 4 adopted the following resolutions (30 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention and 1 present but not eligible to vote).

WHEREAS, the City and the MTA-New York City Transit are proposing a Rezoning and Development Program for Hell's Kitchen/Hudson Yards and the No. 7 Subway Extension (the "Proposed Action"); and

WHEREAS, this Board's positions concerning the Proposed Action have been set forth most completely in its letter to the City Planning Commission dated August 23, 2004, setting forth the Board's comments and recommendations on the ULURP Applications for portions of the Proposed Action (the "Board's Positions"); and

WHEREAS, the Steven L. Newman Real Estate Institute at Baruch College of the City of New York has developed an alternative proposal to the Proposed Action that, in contrast to the north-south orientation of the Proposed Action, orients development in an east-west direction, building a "LandBridge" over the MTA rail yards that will accommodate a state-of-the-art convention center – one that is substantially larger than that proposed by the City – and office buildings, and an automated rapid transit system linking new development with the Penn Station transit hub (the "Newman Plan"). If deemed appropriate, the plan could accommodate a stadium for both the Olympic and the Jets. After the new convention center is in place, the existing Javits Center would be razed to reopen the waterfront area for reintegration with the Clinton/Hell's Kitchen community through the development of 10,000-10,500 market-rate housing units and 4,000-4,500 "affordable" housing units. The plan's cost would be covered by financing secured by leases of development rights and payments-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOTs); and

WHEREAS, the Newman Plan was submitted to the City and the MTA during public review of the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Action, with the request that it be studied as an alternative to the Proposed Action; we are dismayed that this request was so summarily dismissed and that the plan was not studied as an alternative; and

WHEREAS, the Newman Plan was presented to the public on November 8, 2004 at a meeting sponsored by the Board at the Hudson Guild Auditorium at Fulton Center, and was presented and discussed at the meeting of the Board's Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee on November 10, 2004; and

WHEREAS, this Board considers that, by locating the convention center on the rail yards and orienting development in an east-west direction and linked to the Penn Station transit hub, the Newman Plan is a further realization of the Community Board's original proposal and the Community Alternate Plan developed by the Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association (the "HKNA Plan") and supported by this Board in December 2003; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this Board wishes to encourage further consideration of Schemes A or B of the Newman Plan (without a stadium) as a preferred arrangement of uses, densities and financing that meets the goals of the Proposed Action (with the exception of the stadium) and that could come closer to meeting the Board's own goals for the area than the Proposed Action; and further

RESOLVED, that this Board's support of the Newman Plan is subject to the following conditions and concerns:

- Bridging over of 10th and 11th Avenues must be minimized, to reduce the "tunnel effect" of the LandBridge and maintain active links between Chelsea to the south and Hell's Kitchen/Clinton to the north, and special care must be taken to activate building frontages through and around the LandBridge.
- Commercial development must not exceed 20 million square feet.
- The mid-block street shown in the Newman Plan between 10th and 11th Avenues must be eliminated.
- Any public authority that would finance or plan the development must include significant community (i.e., Community Board) input and be accountable to the State Legislature and City Council.
- While we are particularly pleased that 40% of the plan's residential units would be affordable to people with low, moderate and middle incomes, affordability must be maintained in perpetuity, and the range of incomes qualifying for below-market rents must be determined in consultation with this Board, and affordable and market-rate units must be geographically integrated.
- There must be no intrusion into Hudson River Park; and further

RESOLVED, that this Board commends the Newman Institute for the detailed planning underlying the Newman Plan, and for the quality of analysis and depth of information contained in the plan. By bringing together the resources of the academy, the community and expert advisers, the Institute has reinforced CUNY's role as a resource for the City of New York, and has demonstrated how responsible planning can be done if politics and private interests are not allowed to control the process.