



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

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J. LEE COMPTON
Chair

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District Manager

**The West Side Rail Yards:
Principles for Development**

WHEREAS, during the Board's summer hiatus the MTA's Executive Director recommended that the MTA work with the local community to develop a master plan for the development of the MTA's West Side Rail Yards; and

WHEREAS, the Hell's Kitchen/Hudson Yards Alliance, with advice and assistance from the Board's leadership, responded to this recommendation on August 16, 2005 by endorsing the attached Principles for Development based on this Board's previously-stated positions concerning development in the area; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to encourage the MTA and the Department of City Planning to work with the local community, including this Board, to develop a master plan for the Rail Yards;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board No. 4 confirms that the Principles for Development reflect this Board's previously-stated positions concerning development in the area, and therefore endorses the Principles for Development; and

RESOLVED, that the Board calls on the MTA, the Department of City Planning, and all other parties interested in development of the Rail Yards to meet with the Board to discuss these Principles and development of the Rail Yards generally, and to work closely and actively with the Board throughout the planning process.

Adopted September 7, 2005.

The Hell's Kitchen/Hudson Yards Alliance

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The West Side Rail Yards: Principles for Development

The Hell's Kitchen/Hudson Yards Alliance welcomes the MTA's interest in working with the community to develop a master plan for the MTA's John T. Caemmerer West Side Rail Yards. We support the MTA realizing a significant return on its valuable real estate asset, consistent with a master plan that meets the community's planning goals. With proper planning, we can realize a tremendous opportunity to develop the Rail Yards as a valuable source of revenue for the region's transit system, a strong contributor to the State and City economy, and a welcome addition to the local community.

Consistent with the Alliance's past positions and the stated positions of Manhattan Community Board 4, the Alliance endorses these principles for a master plan for the Rail Yards:

- It should be **comprehensive and integrated, for the entire Rail Yards**, both "eastern" (30th to 33rd Street, east of Eleventh Avenue) and "western" (30th to 34th Street, west of Eleventh Avenue).
- The Rail Yards should be devoted to **mixed-use, primarily residential, development**, at a density not exceeding 10-12 FAR. This means a total of approximately 12.5 to 15 million square feet of development on the Rail Yards, provided that this does not increase the total square footage of development allowed in the Hudson Yards project area beyond the amount that is contemplated by the already approved zoning.
- A significant amount of **housing must be affordable** to a broad range of New Yorkers, from low- to middle-income.
- The development plan should accommodate a **southern expansion of the Javits Convention Center**, connected under 34th Street to the existing convention center. Expanding Javits to the south would provide even more convention space than the contemplated northern expansion, and would eliminate the need for closing 39th Street. 34th Street and 39th Street should both remain open to enhance access to the waterfront and to the municipal ferry terminal.

- The master plan should feature significant **public open space**, with an easily accessible connection to the Hudson River Park. It should be organized around a strong east-west axis, with 32nd Street as its basis. View and access corridors to the waterfront should be emphasized. In anticipation of its future conversion to a public park, the High Line should be preserved, as much as possible in its current form, and should be fully connected with the Hudson River Park and other public open spaces.
- Development should reflect **multiple visions**, featuring a diversity of architectural styles and forms, and should be developed over time rather than all at once. Building heights should scale down approaching the waterfront.
- The development plan should accommodate important **public amenities** necessary to support a new residential community, such as a public school and library.
- Transportation options should be explored that would connect the Rail Yards to Moynihan and Penn Stations, emphasizing the **30th-34th Street east-west corridor**.
- Construction should be subject to strong **labor provisions** (including prevailing wage requirements and apprenticeship training programs) and should maximize job opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses.
- Development should be subject to all **local zoning and environmental laws** and be subject to review through the City's uniform land use review procedure (ULURP).