



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

March 13, 2008

NYC Department of Transportation  
Division of Franchises, Concessions and Consents  
Irina Fridman, Revocable Consent Unit  
40 Worth Street, Room 940  
New York NY 10013

**Re: Request for Consent to construct, maintain and use snow melt conduits  
Terrapin industries, 123 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, New York  
Valhalla II condominiums, 121 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, New York**

Dear Ms. Fridman,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) wishes to thank the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT), for seeking community input in the installation of snow melt conduits in front of properties located at 121 and 123 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street. These conduits will be installed at shallow depth in the sidewalk to melt the snow.

Based on the developer's response to our February 28, 2008 letter CB4 grants consent provided DOT is also satisfied with the developer's assurances.

These are our concerns:

1. It is not clear what impact such an installation may have on the root system of the tree to be planted on the sidewalk. We request that the Parks Department comment on the safety of the installation for trees roots.
2. Such a system will preclude the installation of bike racks in the future. Considering the priority given to bike parking, setting up this precedent may not serve the city's or the community's long term transportation policies. Since the owners of the properties are also installing a curb cut for car parking, we suggest that the developer install a parking swap in front of the condominium to accommodate both bike parking and greenery.
3. We are concerned that the technology used may not be reliable, causing repeated opening of the sidewalk for repairs. It is not clear how the system will be turned

off. It behooves the Department of Transportation to evaluate the durability and operation of such a system.

4. While the ability to efficiently keep a sidewalk clear of snow and ice would represent a positive public benefit, we are concerned with the potential effect of snow melt conduits on the local urban heat island. If conduits are approved in many locations in the city, this would lead to an increase in local heat produced in the city with unknown environmental and ecologic effects. We believe that DOT should study this issue and develop a policy for the use of snow melt conduits consistent with objectives set out in PlaNYC 2030.

CB4 looks forward to receiving assurances from DOT that the developer addressed these concerns to the DOT's satisfaction.

Our February 28, 2008 letter was sent by the Executive Committee in order to meet the March 2, 2008 deadline. On March 5<sup>th</sup> this letter was ratified with amendments by the full board.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair  
Manhattan  
Community Board 4



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning  
Committee



Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning  
Committee

c.c.

Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer  
Council Speaker Christine Quinn  
Applicant