



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**CHRISTINE BERTHET**  
Chair

**JESSE BODINE**  
District Manager

January 16, 2015

Hon. Brad Hoylman  
NY State Senator  
322 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1700  
New York, NY 10001

Hon. Jerrold Nadler  
NY State Congressman  
201 Varick Street, Suite 669  
New York, NY 10014

Hon. Richard Gottfried  
NY State Assemblymember  
242 West 27th Street  
New York, NY 10001

Hon. Gale Brewer  
Manhattan Borough President  
1 Centre Street, 19th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Linda B. Rosenthal  
NY State Assemblymember  
230 West 72nd Street Suite 2F  
New York, NY 10023

Hon. Corey Johnson  
NYC Councilmember  
224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206  
New York, NY 10001

**Re: Pier 54/ Pier 55**

Dear Community Representatives:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) has some concerns about the generous donation of over \$100 million from the Diller- von Furstenberg family to the Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT). MCB4 does recognize that Pier 54/55 is just south of our District in Manhattan Community Board 2 (MCB2), but certain aspects of the proposed plan have larger implications that are troublesome and MCB4 would like to go on record voicing these concerns.

As was stated in MCB4's letter to HRPT the current plans for the proposed new Pier 55 seem innovative and conceptually appealing, but there was no public involvement throughout the planning process. As private/public partnerships increase projects tend to be more about the vision of the donors than the needs of the residents. Since some public funds are necessary to make this proposal a reality the community needs must be taken into account. For our district this is critical as our diverse population continues to grow and our demographics are changing. Since we rank among the bottom of districts with open green space we need to ensure our available green spots satisfy the various segments of the population. We firmly reiterate what we expressed to HRPT that defining and meeting the needs of the community should be a priority when planning new public space.

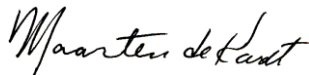
MCB4 is also concerned about the inequity among green spaces throughout our city. MCB4 was pleased with the Mayor's new Community Parks Initiative allocating \$130 million to rebuild 35 community parks and make needed improvements in 55 others. MCB4 also applauds the Department of Parks and Recreation initiating "Scoping Meetings" to make sure community voices are heard on the park improvement. In light of the Diller-von Furstenberg donation and other extremely generous donations to spaces like the High Line and Central Park, there is the danger many of our neighborhood spaces do not receive the attention they need simply because of their proximity to these other well-funded spaces. MCB4 is known for fighting for affordable housing within our district that includes a mix of income bands, equal fixtures and availability throughout a development. In that same spirit MCB4 believes less prominent parks deserve an equal opportunity for improvements. Far too many developers receive generous benefits when adding affordable housing. The pristine open spaces within their vicinity only add to their property values and sales profits. MCB4 envisions a process whereby donors and developers alike contribute to the improvement of open spaces nearest to them as well as a "Sister" Park, another open space within the District that could use updated amenities that would benefit the community.

While MCB4 understands that budgets for many agencies across our City may see reductions and private/public partnerships can help overcome shortfalls, ultimately public services like parks are for the residents. As residents as well as representatives of the community, MCB4 would like to work with our elected officials to address these concerns, which we are sure are shared by others across our great city.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet  
Chair



Maarten de Kadt Co-Chair  
Waterfront, Parks &  
Environment Committee



Delores Rubin Co-Chair  
Waterfront, Parks &  
Environment Committee

cc: Madelyn Wils, Hudson River Park Trust  
Elliott Sykes, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation  
NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio