



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

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J. LEE COMPTON
Chair

ANTHONY M. BORELLI
District Manager

July 28, 2005

Gino Menchini
Commissioner, DOITT
75 Park Place, Ninth Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Regulations for placement of Public Pay Telephones

Dear Mr. Menchini:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 would like to propose several changes to the regulations for the placement of new Public Pay Telephones. These proposed changes derive from our desire to ensure payphones are available and accessible to residents, but recognizes the decreased usage of payphones at the same time that intersections in several parts of the city are becoming increasingly cluttered and crowded.

In devising these suggested changes, we want to express our appreciation to your staff, particularly Patrick Fergus, for assisting the committee to understand the regulations and in addressing specific concerns of the committee.

Specifically, the Board would like to propose that the following standards be used for deciding whether to place a new payphone. Please note, consistent with the regulatory definition, an "installation" may include up to two payphones:

Maintain pedestrian safety and traffic flow

1 - An installation must not obstruct pedestrians' line of sight of the incoming traffic, or automobilists' line of sight of pedestrians in a crosswalk.

2- An installation cannot be located within 25 feet of where three pieces of fixed urban furniture are already in place (traffic pole, lighting pole, mailbox, mail reserve, phone booth, fire call box, fire hydrant, tree, sidewalk cafe, bench etc.)

3 - On blocks where there are three or more horizontal cellar doors, phones must be placed alongside the buildings instead of curbside. If an exception is granted, the distance measurements prescribed will be from the outer boundary line of the longest cellar door on that specific block (instead of measuring from the building itself).

Increase service where it is needed

1 - Fifty percent of public phones on any two contiguous blocks¹ on the same side of an avenue must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (accessible to wheelchair users and the sight, and hearing impaired)

2 – If a given installation is used less than once a day, a new installation cannot be installed on any of the adjacent corners

3 - At an intersection, limit the number of public phones to two installations maximum, one installation on each side of the avenue.

These rules are intended to be in addition to existing rules.

In addition, we wanted to reiterate our request for a survey and inspection of payphones along 9th Avenue. We understand that request had been delayed due to a shortage of inspectors. However, with the additional budgeted inspectors we hope the survey and inspection could occur within the next few months.

Thank you for your consideration and the time and assistance offered by your staff. We look forward to working with you to promote responsible payphone placement.

Sincerely yours,



J. Lee Compton
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Jay Marcus
Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

cc: Elected Officials

¹ A “block” is defined as the sidewalk between two streets on an avenue.