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## **The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8**

### **FISCAL YEAR 2013 DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

##### **1.1 GEOGRAPHY**

Roosevelt Island and the Upper East Side of Manhattan, from the north side of East 59th Street to the south side of East 96th Street between Fifth Avenue and the East River, comprise Manhattan Community District 8. In addition to our diverse population, we are home to dozens of diplomatic residences, world famous hospitals, medical research centers, and world-renowned museums.

According to the 2000 census, 229,063,688 people live on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, a 6.0% increase from 1990. Prosperous economic times and a major building boom that began during the 1990's have added thousands of new dwelling units to the district. Today, the district continues to grow at an amazing pace. The 1999 median household income for the District was \$74,134. Based on data from the 2000 census 6.5% of the individuals in the district live below the poverty level.

There is also a large segment of the population with special needs. More than 14% of CB8's residents are senior citizens, with a high number of frail elderly. There is also a number of working poor living in the district. With affordable housing becoming increasingly scarce, commercial rent escalating, and the prices of goods and services dramatically rising, our middle class residents are struggling to meet their budgets. The influx of new residents, shoppers, and tourists has strained the delivery of municipal service.

#### **II. AREAS OF PERFORMANCE**

##### **2.1 LAND USE**

Nearly every portion of CB8 has experienced major development. Where tenements and small commercial properties once stood, luxury apartment buildings now soar to thirty or forty floors (10 feet per floor). After a construction lull during the early to mid 1990's, residential and commercial development exploded on the Upper East Side. Currently, construction has decreased with the recession.

Zoning changes including R8-B enacted within the past fifteen years to protect the mid-

block, from massive structures and R10-A governing use of the plaza bonus and towers on a base for avenues and cross-town streets have only slightly moderated development. New 30-35 story buildings on some avenues, which currently are allowed, strain the infrastructure and municipal services.

CB8 and local civic groups have urged the Department of City Planning to review the Community Facility provisions of the Zoning Resolution. CB8 is the only district where community facilities are entitled to a 5.1 FAR in the R8B mid-blocks. CB8 has proposed modifications to the Department of City Planning to change the current community facility in R8B areas from a 5.1 to a 4.0 FAR.

CB8 seeks to preserve the Upper East Side's residential character. The C1 and C2 zoning (Local Retail Use) control commercial signage in the District. CB8 seeks to maintain a careful balance to prevent new buildings from detracting from CB8's historic districts. CB8 believes that new and more effective regulations, coupled with increased enforcement, would ease this problem.

Roosevelt Island is undergoing major residential development. In the long-planned area known as Southtown there will be four completed sixteen story buildings by year end with a fifth and sixth under construction. The restoration of the historic lobby of the nineteenth century New York City Pauper Lunatic Asylum known as the Octagon and the construction of two wings, each with 250 apartments has been completed and all 500 units are occupied. The Small Pox Hospital ruin is undergoing extensive stabilization, funded largely by a grant from the City Parks Department. Plans for construction of South Park are nearing completion.

The entire board serves as the Land Use Committee reviewing all applications for zoning variances and changes after extensive public hearings. Land Use Task Forces serve developers and residents to address the special problems or areas of need.

CB8 frequently serves as a mediator between the community, developers and government entities such as the MTA, RIOG and DDC.

## **2.2 LANDMARKS**

CB8 works closely with the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission and community organizations on all landmark issues. CB8 reviews Certificate of Appropriateness Applications, designations, and matters related to individual landmarks and buildings within the six historic districts with CB8 (the Upper Eastside Historic Districts the Carnegie Hill Historic District; the Metropolitan Museum Historic District; the Treadwell Farm Historic District; the Henderson Place Historic District and the Hardenburgh-Rhineland Historic District.)

CB8 works closely with community organizations investigating and reporting violations of landmark regulations. With the significant number of landmarked buildings in the district, CB8 is well aware that the Commission is under staffed to handle the hundreds of applications, inspections, and violations for these properties. CB8 continues to request funding for additional Landmarks staff.

## **2.3 STREET LIFE**

Community Board 8 is packed with bars, restaurants and sidewalk cafes. The number of inspectors to oversee this concentration of establishments is inadequate. CB8 has regularly requested additional inspectors to insure compliance with the sidewalk café and pedestrian obstruction regulations.

### **2.3.1 Liquor Licenses**

CB8 reviews and makes a recommendation to the New York State Liquor Authority on roughly 400 liquor applications each year. While the many bars on the Upper East Side make CB8 an entertainment center, several of these bars are the source of noise and quality of life complaints. CB8 receives complaints on hours of operation, music volume and hours, incidents of violence and general neighborliness. Like many Community Boards in the five boroughs, CB8 attempts to encourage good behavior by bar owners. CB8 finds communicating with the New York State Liquor Authority a struggle, although there has been some recent improvement. CB8 supports changes to the law that would make the Authority more responsive to the needs and desires of the community.

### **2.3.2 Sidewalk Cafes**

The Street Life Committee carefully reviews all plans for new enclosed and unenclosed sidewalk cafes and all applications for renewals of these consents. The Board office refers complaints to the Department of Consumer Affairs that may result in citations or fines and on occasion, the confiscation of illegal tables and chairs.

CB8 believes more inspectors are needed to monitor and enforce cafe guidelines. CB8 often receives complaints about restaurants operating without a valid cafe license, with more tables and/or chairs than allowed by their license, cafes extending beyond their authorized area and cafes operating beyond their allowed hours of operation. CB8 is pleased that the Department of Consumer Affairs requires the posting of the allowable number of tables and chairs in restaurants. However, this regulation needs stronger enforcement as it is rarely followed.

### **2.3.3 Newsracks**

The City Department of Transportation now regulates the placement, installation and maintenance of newsracks on City sidewalks. CB8 will continue to monitor the enforcement of the 2004 regulations. Unfortunately, there appears to be little effort made by the city to remove illegal or broken newsracks. The proliferation of newspaper vending machines and newsracks is a serious problem. On some corners as many as twenty newsracks clog the pedestrian walkways.

### **2.3.4 Public Pay Telephones**

The Board also remains very concerned about the installation of privately owned public pay telephones on our sidewalks. Public pay telephones (PPTs) are very important to the residents and businesses of our district. PPT issues that have yet to be resolved include the enforcement of maintenance requirements to insure working telephones in a well maintained enclosure, the numbers and siting of PPTs, community notification, the rights of property owners, PPTs in historic districts and abutting landmarked properties, and the definition of nuisance telephones, among others. Community Board 8 wishes to

foster a stronger working relationship with DoITT. DoITT has worked closely with CB8 on the issue of relocated PPTs removed from the Second Avenue construction zone.

### **2.3.5 Problem Nightclubs, Bars and Cabarets**

The 19th Precinct's special detail, "Operation Last Call", targets unruly establishments. We urge the Police Department to continue assigning officers to "Operation Last Call" especially on Wednesday-Sunday nights. This problem remains serious enough to merit additional enforcement personnel. Known problem establishments in CB8 are spread over a large geographic area, unlike the situation in other parts of Manhattan. With large numbers of individuals hitting the street simultaneously at closing time, this often results in difficulty for the police to engage in preventive enforcement while responding to specific incidents. The 19th Precinct works closely with CB8 to target known areas of concern, but could use additional personnel during the overnight hours, particularly on weekends. Cabaret licenses are especially sensitive in our area given the highly residential nature of the community.

## **2.4 TRANSPORTATION**

### **2.4.1 Highways and Streets**

Community Board 8 has consistently ranked funding for street repair and maintenance high on its list of priorities, and we applaud the NYC Department of Transportation's Manhattan Highway Maintenance Division on the job they do managing this substantial task, especially in light of its need for an additional pothole gang, that the Board strongly supports (FY10 #11, 3082008083E).

CB8 supported DOT's pilot bus pad project (FY04 #13, 3080107A). As these concrete areas at bus stops, which replace the standard asphalt, reduce the wear and tear on our streets, we hope to continue to work with DOT to find suitable locations for bus pads in our district.

Sidewalks remain a problem in our district. Many are no longer in safe condition. We ask the NYC Department of Transportation to make a top priority the enforcement of sidewalk repairs to ensure that all property owners maintain a safe sidewalk for all pedestrians and people with disabilities. We also asked the NYC Department of Finance and the City Council to look for ways to ease the burden on property owners whose sidewalks exist over vaults. The cost to repair these sidewalks, actually the vault roof, can be \$50,000, much more than standard sidewalk repair. In many cases, this imposes a burden on the property owner. Because many of these sidewalks go unrepaired, pedestrians must continue to navigate unsafe sidewalks.

Community Board 8 continues to support the installation of pedestrian ramps and the maintenance and repair of the existing ramps (FY10, #18, 308200605E). Ramps are important not only for wheelchair users and the disabled, but also for senior citizens with shopping carts and parents with baby carriages.

We have strongly urged the installation of pedestrian countdown timers at dangerous intersections (FY10 #18, 308201005C). While we are pleased that DOT is planning a pilot program at 24 intersections citywide, we are disappointed that none of these locations are in CB8.

On Roosevelt Island, residents have requested that Main Street be repaved. We will work with the appropriate City and State agencies, the Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation, and the Island residents to evaluate Main Street and develop a timetable for completion of this needed work. The Board also supports the reconstruction of the Roosevelt Island Bridge, currently underway, and funding for the full reconstruction of the Roosevelt Island Seawall (FY10 #5, 308200507C) which has been breached in several locations.

#### **2.4.2 Traffic**

We encourage the Department of Transportation to improve bike lanes throughout the city so that recreational bicyclists, messengers, delivery people and others riders may travel safely through the city streets.

Community Board 8 supports stronger enforcement of drivers running red lights and stop signs, reckless and unlicensed commercial and recreational bicyclists, bicyclists on sidewalks and bus lane violators. We urge the issuance of summonses for horn honking as this is one of the major noise complaints received by the Community Board 8 office. Traffic enforcement, especially at peak travel times, remains one of Community Board 8's highest priorities. In particular, we are concerned about the following conditions:

1) The Queensborough Bridge area. Over 179,125 cars and trucks exit the Bridge daily. than in 1998. They often travel at high speeds, creating a danger for pedestrians and other vehicles. Congestion, gridlock, and air pollution are all ongoing problems. Unnecessary horn honking creates intolerable noise for nearby residents. Community Board 8 continues to work with our elected officials, the Police and the DOT Commissioner regarding these concerns. We strongly urge the Mayor and the Police Commissioner to fund and permanently assign traffic enforcement agents to the area as well as the district's cross-town streets: 72nd, 79th, 86th and 96th.

2) Public safety. We are pleased that the Administration is directing more police attention to traffic-related violations -- i.e. running red lights, double-parking and blocking the crosswalk ("blocking the box"). However, more needs to be done. The Board supports strict enforcement of all traffic laws.

Community Board 8 supports the Red-Light Camera Program, which photographs drivers in the act of running red lights. There are currently three cameras in District 8. We have encouraged the Department of Transportation to install others, particularly at Lexington Avenue and E. 86th Street. We are pleased that the State has authorized a total of 100 cameras citywide. We urge City and State officials to expand this program even further and allow the installation of decoy cameras, as well.

3) Traffic control at intersections. Many intersections in our district are difficult for pedestrians to navigate safely. Intersections such as East 96th Street and First Avenue, East 96th Street at the FDR Drive, East 71st, 72nd and 73rd Streets at York Avenue, intersections around the Queensboro Bridge and Greater Bridgemarket Area, and intersections along the East 86th Street corridor all present safety problems. A particularly bad intersection in the Board 8 area is 79th Street and York Avenue where express buses, group taxi lines and illegal vans converge near the entrance to the FDR Drive. This intersection has an unusually high incidence of traffic accidents involving both property and human



loss. Hundreds of elementary school children from P.S. 158 and hundreds of elderly individuals use this intersection several times a day. Community Board 8 has recommended a four-way red light (Barnes Dance) at this intersection and increased enforcement.

Community Board 8 has requested traffic control agents at: East 79th Street and East End Avenue; near the entrances and exits to the FDR Drive on York Avenue at East 62nd and 63rd Street; and at the Queensboro Bridge exit ramps at East 61st Street and East 63rd Street between First and Second Avenues. We continue to oppose service cuts in traffic control and enforcement, and we urge the retention of traffic control agents along York Avenue in the vicinity of the entrances and exits to the Drive.

Furthermore, we have requested additional traffic engineering staff be hired by DOT to address problem intersections, and the agency has agreed additional staff is necessary. We look forward to working with agency staff to alleviate safety problems at difficult intersections.

The installation and maintenance of street and parking signs, lampposts (FY10 CS, 308199907C), traffic signals, and other traffic devices is of paramount importance to Community Board 8. Over the years we have supported increasing the amount of funding available for producing new signage, especially for the production of signs specific to the needs of certain blocks, and for the bucket trucks and personnel to install them (FY10 #12, 308200802C). Due to cuts to the NYC Department of Transportation's budget, the number of crews available to install or change signs has been drastically reduced, resulting in long waiting periods for the installation of signs, and occasional confusion regarding the rules in effect at a given location. Community Board 8's Transportation Committee regularly considers requests from local businesses and residents for changes in parking signage. Changes recommended by the Board often address traffic congestion and/or public safety concerns on particular blocks.

Community Board 8 is pleased that the New York City Council has begun to authorize licenses for commuter vans that had been operating illegally and without adequate insurance or inspections. Only when these vans are properly regulated to ensure safe operation should any consideration be given to their use as an alternative mode of transportation.

Community Board 8 has fully supported the plans to reconstruct the pedestrian bridge over the FDR Drive (FTY10 CS, #308201010C) and still await a revised design proposal from DDC for the 81st Street Bridge.

### **2.4.3 Public Transportation**

Large numbers of residents, daily workers and visitors contribute to traffic congestion, noise, pollution, and crowded streets and sidewalks. With only one subway line traveling the East Side, public transit continues to be overwhelmed. The MTA/NYC Transit must work with commuters and the Board to address service issues such as punctuality, bus bunching and dwell times.

We strongly support the MTA's intention to begin Select Bus Service (a/k/a Bus Rapid Transit) on the M15 Line. in Summer 2010. We look forward to working with the MTA on

developing the final plans for this enhanced service. As part of this service, we believe it essential that authorization for bus lane cameras be obtained from Albany to better enforce the SBS bus lane.

The implementation of articulated buses results in the de facto reduction in service due to the decreased number of buses from four to three during peak periods, from five to four during non-peak hours, the increased dwell time, and time between buses.

Community Board 8 continues to suffer from the inadequacy of having only one subway line and absolutely must have a full Second Avenue Subway built (FY10 CS, 308201011C). The Lexington Avenue IRT subway carries hundreds of thousands of commuters each day and is more than 110% over capacity at rush hour. With the completion of the East Side Access project an additional 19,000 riders are expected during rush hour on the Lexington Avenue IRT at the Grand Central Terminal. We are grateful to our elected officials who have lobbied for this desperately needed subway expansion, and we are pleased that work on Phase One has actually begun. This construction has created a new set of problems for the residents and businesses in the work zone. We have urged local government to provide funding in support of local businesses hurt by the construction work (FY10 #20, 308201002E) Our Second Avenue Subway Task Force works actively with the MTA and local officials to help mitigate these temporary situations.

We oppose any cuts to north-south service, which has faced continuing, severe cuts over the past several years. In particular, we call on NYC Transit to restore service on the M31, M79, M66, M30, M86, M15 and the X90-92. We urge the restoration of everyday service on the M30 and increased frequency on the M31 route.

The large number of express buses that travel daily through our city streets belching fumes and barreling through red lights on their way to and from midtown continues to be of great concern. The Board recommends no new or renewed franchises until the Department of City Planning completes its study of express bus policy.

The Board continues to urge the MTA/NYC Transit and the Department of Transportation to phase out diesel buses and replace both the private and public transit fleets with natural gas-powered vehicles and efficient, cleaner burning hybrids. We are pleased that natural gas buses will be eligible for funding under the State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act.

The Roosevelt Island Aerial Tramway is to undergo a \$25 million modernization program for 6-9 months starting in September 2009. The temporary cessation of tram operations will put further stress on the restricted traffic flow of the Roosevelt Island Bridge (undergoing reconstruction) as well as on the subway. Some method of increasing rush hour service on the F train to and from Roosevelt Island, as well as increased bus service to both Manhattan and Queens will be essential. Transportation for the elderly and disabled will be significantly affected when the tram is undergoing modernization as the Roosevelt Island F train stop is very deep. Its escalators are regularly under renovation or repair, with only one set currently operating. The elevator is frequently out of service.

We are pleased that the city has developed plans to institute ferry service to Roosevelt

Island. We have consistently supported increased ferry service on the East River and have requested the complete restoration of the East 90th Street pier for many years (FY10 CS, #30820703C)

## **2.5 HOUSING**

New York has often led the nation in responding to housing needs and concerns. In 1864 the New York Council of Hygiene of the Citizens Association mounted a campaign to raise housing standards, while in 1901 New York State passed the Tenement House Law, the legislative basis for addressing the lack of light, air and space in tenements. City and Suburban Housing was designed to accommodate more light and air. The Emergency Tenant Protection Act of 1974 states that an emergency exists if the rental vacancy rate is 5 percent or less. Today, with a citywide rental vacancy rate of 3 percent, the New York area housing market continues to be defined as a housing emergency.

Community District 8 is home to 121, 209161,142 households. Of those households 42,31042,487 are owner households and 79,622 are renter households . Over 98 percent of owner households live in housing types classified as either a cooperative or a condominium. The Upper East Side rental vacancy rate is 2.8 percent. Approximately 52 percent of renter households pay rent in excess of 30 percent of their income; another 23 percent of renter households pay more than 50 percent of their income toward rent. The median monthly gross rent in 2009 was \$1,620735. The district encompasses a wide range of housing forms including condominiums, cooperatives, market rate and rent regulated housing. Of renter households, 35 percent live in market rate. Regulated housing includes rent stabilization (54 percent of renter households), Mitchell-Lama, public housing, and rent control v.

In response to New York City's (NYC) and the district's lack of sufficient affordable housing units; the Committee has voiced its overall support of retaining and increasing affordable housing in the district. Additionally, the Committee recommends rescinding the NYC Administration Code §26-511, C, 9 of the NYC Rent Stabilization Law of 1969, a law that has increased institutional expansion within the district. More specifically, the law allows not-for-profit building owners to refuse to renew a tenant's lease if the not-for-profit will use the housing accommodations in furtherance of its mission; thereby eliminating affordable housing units forever.

The Housing Committee advises and assists residents with district-wide housing issues; proactively impacting city housing policy to better address housing concerns in the district as a whole; and raises the level of discourse to ensure that the housing needs of residents figure prominently in the planning of our community. Community Board 8's Housing committee focuses on educating district residents about housing issues ranging from rent control/rent stabilization, senior/elderly housing concerns/issues, Mitchell-Lama housing; and cooperatives and condominiums concerns.

The Housing Committee has held town hall forums examining a variety of housing subjects including: indoor air quality, emergency preparedness, the tax and legislative issues of cooperatives/condominiums shareholders/owners; women and housing discrimination, rent control/rent stabilization; and affordable housing.



## **2.6 PUBLIC SAFETY**

CB8 maintains a close working relationship with the 19th Precinct, Manhattan North, the Central Park Precinct, and the 114th Precinct, which serves Roosevelt Island from Queens. CB8 commends the NY Police Department for the amazing work it has done with reduced staff to reduce crime, catch criminals, and confiscates weapons and contraband. CB8 crime is down 30% from 2001 to 2007. CB8 looks forward to continued success in these areas. CB8 residents continue to volunteer to be civilian crime watchers.

CB8 remains concerned with the movement of uniformed personnel to specialized units resulting in a reduction in the number of uniformed personnel on the streets. The on-going development on Roosevelt Island has produced greater vehicular traffic and variety of public safety concerns. CB8 feels there is a need for an NYPD substation on Roosevelt Island. Additionally, CB8 supports the restoration of funding for police civilian employees to fill administrative and clerical positions lost due to City budget cuts. A full corps of uniformed personnel will continue the historic reductions in crime. We look forward to working with the Police Department towards restoring the precincts to their full complement of officers.

CB8 is also concerned about quality-of-life problems. Bicycling, rollerblading and scooters on the sidewalks and in our parks can be dangerous. Reckless cyclists and rollerbladers, endanger pedestrians, resulting in injuries especially to the elderly and children. CB8 applauds the 19th Precinct's efforts to decrease this problem through outreach and enforcement and encourages the Central Park Precinct to address this problem in Central Park. CB8 encourages the NYPD to pay special attention to all traffic violations, whether committed by bicyclists or drivers. CB8 commends the police for expanding the program to confiscate illegally used bicycles.

In 2007 CB8 was the home of approximately 345 bars and restaurants, which provide food and gathering to metropolitan NYC. The 19th Precinct has responded to the community's complaints about disruptive bars. A special detail - Operation Last Call - patrols the area. Operation MARCH (Multi-Agency Response to Community Hotspots) which involves the NY Police and Fire Departments, the NYC Departments of Buildings, Environmental Protection, and Health, and the NY State Liquor Authority targets underage drinking, health, building and fire code violations, and noise complaints. Most nightlife establishments are operated responsibly. CB8 supports the 19th Precinct's efforts to control community nuisances. We encourage the expansion of both Operation Last Call and Operation MARCH.

CB8 supports full funding for all fire and emergency medical services in our district and city-wide. CB8 is particularly concerned about the loss of fire marshals in recent years, and we have requested the restoration of funding for these personnel (FY10 #15, 308200603E).

## **2.7 PARKS AND RECREATION**

The population density of Community Board 8 makes our parks and greenery a precious commodity. Though our district is adjacent to Central Park, open space is scarce. Only 43 acres of parks and open space, (most of which are unusable by the public), are available to the District 8 residents living on Manhattan Island.

Community Board 8, Manhattan, has been working to protect and expand on the limited park facilities in our district. In light of the severely deteriorated conditions along the East River Esplanade, the CB8M Parks Committee has worked with a number of elected officials and the NYC Parks Dept. to address this urgent problem. In addition, the Parks Committee sponsored an October forum that pulled together public and private experts on the Waterfront, and resulted in the creation of a new community association dedicated to improving the East River Esplanade. Several members of the Parks Committee also joined a task force created by City Council Member Jessica Lappin and Rep. Carolyn Maloney to expedite repair and redesign of the Esplanade.

Over the past two years, Parks Committee has initiated and championed the creation of an Older Adults Recreation Center in John Jay Park. This innovative project, which has been enthusiastically supported by local community groups, would create the City's first outdoor exercise area targeted to older adults and seniors.

However, this otherwise popular project has not received adequate City funding. The Committee will continue to seek funding opportunities and hopes that this much needed project will proceed as soon as possible.

As for Central Park, the Committee has been pleased by an array of landscaping improvements and on-going maintenance that keep this landmarked area a treasure. At the same time, however, less desirable trends—ranging from food vending to inappropriate biking—have been raising concerns. Among CB8M's biggest issues: the use of trucks for food and liquor sales at the Tavern on the Green site; the advent of food vending from unattractive and noisy specialty carts throughout the park; the proposed conversion of narrow pedestrian-only paths to dual walking-biking usage; and the increasingly lax enforcement of biking rules in the park.

Overall, the CB8M community has been suffering from lack of parkland and recreational space in our area. The Board constantly fields requests for more such space—from the need for soccer and baseball playing areas to locales simply for quiet enjoyment of the outdoors. We also continue to lack sufficient plantings and greenery, even as many of our trees are being felled for creation of the Second Avenue Subway.

Given the harsh effects on our community from this Subway construction, it would seem imperative that the CB8M district would obtain relief in the form of more park funding. But regretfully, this is not occurring.

Nonetheless, we continue to work with our public officials and community groups, and we look forward to finding creative ways to address our community's pressing needs.

## **2.8 ANDREW HASWELL GREEN PARK**

Community Board 8 has developed a 197-a plan for the site. By creating a new waterfront park at the former heliport site, the city will bring much needed open space to our community. Phase I of the park has been completed. Planning for Phase II has started. The pavilion area has been designed and is being engineered. Construction work is expected to begin in 2012, inspection by Parks engineers have determined that the pilings under

the Waterfront level of the Park need reinforcement. It is estimated that the work will cost \$12 million dollars. Application has been made to the Federal Government for these funds. The work cannot continue on this portion of the Park until these funds are obtained. Planning for Phase III has not yet begun.

## **2.7 PARKS AND RECREATION**

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We continue to review and comment on renovations to Central Park, and we appreciate our working relationship with the Central Park Conservancy. Over the past three years, Community Board 8 has reviewed proposals for the redesign of Tramway Plaza, John Jay Park, the dog runs at Carl Schurz Park, and the renovation of Heckscher Playground in Central Park. There is an urgent need for the rehabilitation of the East Meadow. Former Commissioner Stern had verbally committed to this project. Community Board 8 strongly supports this rehabilitation and looks forward to working with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), the Conservancy, and the community on this plan (FY10, CS, 308200708C).

Another urgently needed project is the restoration of the Naumburg Bandshell in Central Park. That venerable structure has been the site of the free Naumburg Orchestral Concert Series, America's oldest continuous free outdoor classical music concert series. But increasing deterioration of the Bandshell threatens to make the site unusable for this purpose. Therefore, Community Board 8 strongly urges the city to find funding for restoration of the Bandshell.

Currently, the level of DPR personnel for parks maintenance and recreational programs is inadequate for serving the needs of this district. Agency officials have cited the need to at least double and preferably triple maintenance personnel. We therefore retain as a high priority our request for additional personnel for maintenance, recreation, and tree pruning in Manhattan (FY10 #12 308200604E).

Rodents continue to be an acute problem in Community Board 8 Parks. We would like the Parks Dept. to develop a plan to address the consistently infested parks. We continue our support for increased funding for the hiring of trained exterminators and increased rodent control in all our parks, including Central Park. (FY10 #3, 308199602E).

Rehabilitation work is urgently needed along the East River Esplanade and along John Finley Walk. The NYC DOT must address this work in a timely manner.

Community Board 8 continues to support the complete renovation of the bathhouse at John Jay Park (FY07 CS 308200609C).

The CB8M district will be losing a large number of street trees due to construction of the Second Avenue Subway. It is imperative that our district receives all of the 444 trees owed our community as replacement for trees removed for this reason.

The Board is on record as supporting strong, consistent enforcement of city leash and litter laws in all of our parks. While we recognize the need for dog owners to exercise their pets, we encourage people to do so in the designated dog runs. Unleashed dogs pose a risk to people, other animals, and the peaceful enjoyment of our parks. In addition, neighborhood groups have worked hard, at great expense, to beautify the parks for the surrounding community. Dogs running loose damage the landscape. Community Board 8 approves of the enforcement effort undertaken by the DPR since March 1999, and we urge continued enforcement by PEP and Police officers of all leash and litter laws in our parks and playgrounds.

We have consistently requested additional personnel for the enforcement of park rules and regulations (FY10 #21, 308199407E). At least two Park Enforcement Patrol officers are needed in Community Board 8. They are an essential component for safe parks. Though the DPR supports this request, no additional funds have been allocated.

## **2.8 The Former 60TH STREET HELIPORT**

Community Board 8 has developed a 197-a plan for the site. By creating a new waterfront park at the former heliport site, the city will bring much needed open space to our community. Phase I of the park has been completed and Phase II is expected to start by the end of this year.

## **2.9 HEATH, SENIORS AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

Goldwater and Coler Hospitals on Roosevelt Island, which are specialized long-term care facilities, are the only Health and Hospitals Corporation facilities in CB8. The district is also served by several world-renowned private hospitals: Lenox Hill; New York Presbyterian Weill-Cornell Medical Center; Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center; Manhattan Eye Ear and Throat; The Hospital for Special Surgery; and Rockefeller University Hospital. Goldwater and Coler Hospitals on Roosevelt Island are the only Health and Hospitals Corporation facilities in CB8 which specializes in long-term care.

The main senior programs are Lenox Hill Neighborhood Association (partially funded by NYCHA), Stanley Isaacs Neighborhood house (a NYCHA facility), Carter Burden Center and the Roosevelt Island Senior Center. A top expense priority is to maintain the Senior Centers that presently exist in our community and to provide their services to all seniors regardless of income. Seniors need to be able to attend local centers for social interaction and nutrition, the two key elements for maintaining their long-term health and well-being.

Since NYCHA has reported its inability to sustain its deficits any longer, With its increased operating deficit, NYCHA, it is contemplating a cutback of funds for social programs located in their buildings. CB8 recognizes the very important need for the city to retain these programs, which service the neediest of our population including the NYCHA Senior Centers at Lenox Hill and Stanley Isaacs, congregate meal programs and the NYCHA youth, family and after school programs.

CB8 supports both public and private sector efforts to assist the large and diverse homeless population in our community. In counting the homeless, CB8 supports the 2010 Cen-

sus to count, the many homeless families who are doubled up in public housing projects must be included. A top capital priority is increased funding for permanent housing for homeless individuals and families. We are strongly in favor of continued support for homeless services.

In the private non-profit sector, Lenox Hill Neighborhood House runs a mental health outreach team, which provides street outreach and social services to more than 1,500 homeless adults living on the streets on the East Side. In addition, Lenox Hill operates the Park Avenue Women's Shelter. CB8 continues to strongly support this contract. The Park Avenue Woman's Shelter is in desperate need of modernization. We urge the city to hold the parties responsible for the Armory building to their commitment to do so sooner rather latermodernize promptly.

On June 25, 2008, the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Inc. (NCS) had to close its center on EEast 77th Street because it is no longer receiving funding for 19 years. NCS served people who are chronically homeless, formerly homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless for 19 years. Our community still has many homeless, and our Board is concerned that their needs will be met. WeCB8 urge the city to meet the needs of the homeless in our community.

We are on record as supporting public education programs and seminars regarding AIDS, HIV prevention, and the prevention of teen pregnancy. CB8 supports both public and private sector efforts to assist the large and diverse population in our community.

## **2.10 LIBRARIES**

For more than a century, the New York Public Library has provided quality service to all New Yorkers. The branch libraries are an important public resource for local residents, especially senior citizens and students. CB8 supports the funding for the expansion of the Roosevelt Island Library branch of the New York Public Library (FY 10 #10 308200704C) and the renovation of the Carnegie Branch Library (FY 09 #7 308200601C). RIOC is discussing alternative spaces with the NY Library, which would be conducive to expansion and more centrally located as the island's population grows.

The library budget must be maintained. CB8 urges the Mayor and the City Council to maintain funding for the operating costs to allow the continuation of 6 day a week service at all branches. We also urge increased funding for infrastructure, technological improvements and library materials, particularly increased funding for books, periodicals, and other information resources in all our branch libraries. The system-wide replacement of Checkpoint Booktheft Detection System should be completed by 2011 in all branches and central units, costing \$1.2M. Funding should be found to allow libraries to operate at full hours (i.e. 10-5 Monday through Saturday) and expanded evening hours at least twice a week.

As sources of information have evolved, the Library has kept pace, offering one of the only free points of access to the internet in New York City. CB8 believes that all New Yorkers should have free opportunities to use electronic resources. Since the recession of 2008, the libraries have become a resource to assist person seeking employment.

CB8 advocates for barrier-free access at all our branch libraries. Senior citizens and disabled are entitled to use this public resource.



Too many librarians are leaving for other jobs. CB8 urges the Mayor, the City Council, and the New York Public Library to fund adequate, competitive salaries and benefits for city librarians and staff, including specialized children's librarians.

## **2.11 YOUTH AND EDUCATION**

Community Board 8 strongly supports the Department of Education's proposal to make Our Lady of Good Council the temporary school for the PS 151 Zone, which has had no school facility for over 10 years. We strongly urge the Department of Education to select and complete, as soon as possible, the new permanent location for PS 151 for September 2012 opening.

Community Board 8 is extremely concerned about the cut back in capital and expense funding which results in: overcrowding in our community district; lack of seats for incoming kindergartners; conversion of cluster rooms to regular class rooms and a lack of specialty teachers for art, music etc. for the schools in our district.

Community Board 8 is in full support of plans to build East Side Middle school at the former site of PS 151 at First Avenue & 91st Street. We look forward to working with the Department of Education and the developer to reach a speedy completion on this important project.

Community Board 8 is eager to engage in a dialog with the Department of Education about the future space that will be vacated by East Side Middle School at PS 158 and the temporary PS 59 and the needs of the community.

Community Board 8 is concerned that funding for youth programs in our community remains inadequate given the need (FY10, #2 308200518E). We are consistently dismayed by budget cuts that target youth services.

The need for these programs is very clear. While some children on the Upper East Side enjoy the benefits of private schools, many others rely on after-school programs and weekend sports activities run by non-profit agencies. A longstanding concern of Community Board 8 has been the lack of recognition on the part of the City and the State of the number of programs that serve large numbers of non-resident youth. This has resulted in a small allocation of community share funds particularly to our UES district.

Community Board 8 supports the funding for student tuition subsidies for the City University of New York, particularly in light of the current economic situation. As home to Hunter College, we recognize the importance of CUNY to both students and the city. The renovation of Jacqueline Grennan Wexler Library would only enhance Hunter College (FY10 # 16 308201002C).

The Board also recognizes the importance of providing adequate day care and after school facilities for our children. There are many Community Board 8 residents, especially single working parents, who need affordable day care and after school programs, but whose income slightly surpasses eligibility requirements. Additional programs, perhaps with a sliding scale fee, would be helpful. We continue to request increased funding for childcare and after-school programs, including infant care (FY10 #1, 308200801E).

An important issue yet to be adequately addressed is the need for programs to prevent abuse and neglect (FY10 #14, 308199707E).

## **2.13 ENVIRONMENT AND SANITATION**

Community Board 8 (CB8) is responsive to residents' concerns about sanitation and the environment. The cleanliness of our streets and neighborhoods is of great importance to our community and is related to successful business operations, to our well-being, and to the quality of life. In an integrated approach to a cleaner community, we support frequent sanitation inspections and efforts to consistently maintain presentable clean-swept sidewalks and streets.

CB8 is extremely concerned about the possibility of gas drilling via hydraulic fracturing in New York State, including within the watersheds that supply NYC's drinking water. We passed a resolution in September 2010 calling for a moratorium on gas drilling by means of hydraulic fracturing at least within the Catskill/Delaware watershed region, unless and until it may be determined by the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) and other decision makers that hydraulic fracturing is safe to practice within NYS, including posing no threat to NYC's water supply. We also requested that NYS DEC convene one or more public meetings in New York City, including in Manhattan CB8, to discuss environmental impacts of hydraulic fracturing. And, CB8 requested in its resolution that NYC DEP should report upon the possible risk of hydraulic fracturing on the NYC drinking water supply, including in context of the 1997 Watershed Agreement and Filtration Avoidance Determination.

Community Board 8 is actively involved and deeply concerned about the proposed expansion of the Marine Transfer Station (MTS) on 91st Street. Residents remember when the MTS was formerly in use and recall the odors, noise, vermin and sanitation trucks lined up from 91st Street to 86th Street. Since the time that the MTS was last in operation the population of the area has expanded; especially significant has been the increase in the number of children.

The current proposed site of the MTS bisects Asphalt Green, a New York City Park. Asphalt Green services thousands of residents per year, and is also a space for school children all over the city to participate in school athletics (many thousands of asthma afflicted children use this facility). In addition, there is also a day camp in the summer. When the MTS was previously in operation, it created

an offensive environment for the campers and many children were forced to leave the program because they were getting sick from the noxious odors.

The Marine Transfer Station is adjacent to four parks including Carl Schurz, Asphalt Green and DeKovats, Mill Rock Island and sits across from a NYC Landmark – Gracie Mansion. Community Board 8 seeks to preserve this valuable parkland. CB8 also is concerned that the proposed facility is located in a Hurricane Flood Zone A with a 1% annual chance of flooding according to FEMA, and is in close proximity to the 125th Street Fault Line where significant tremors occurred as recently as 2001. CB8 highlighted concerns about flooding and earthquake in its 2008 testimony to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. Mill Rock is officially designated a Park. CB8 most recently passed a resolution on June 15, 2001 in opposition to the MTS at E. 91st street or in any residential neighborhood.

The NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) constructed and placed into operation a vertical water supply shaft, Shaft 33B, to bring water from City Tunnel No. 3 to the local water distribution system in East Manhattan and the Upper East Side in Manhattan. Construction of City Tunnel No 3, Stage 2 – Manhattan leg is currently proceeding beneath Manhattan. The shaft would be an unmanned underground facility capable of conveying water from the new City Tunnel No. 3 to the surface distribution system that serves East Midtown and the Upper East Side. The site is located on the northwest corner of E. 59th Street and First Avenue in Community District 8. The Shaft 33B project would also involve water main construction required to connect the new shaft with the existing subsurface water distribution system that serves the East Midtown and Upper East Side areas. Two water main connections would extend from the Shaft 33B Site beneath the City streets, connecting the shaft to a truck-main at Third Avenue.

The Community Board will continue to meet with the DEP and DDC to monitor the construction of the East 59th Street water main. The Community Board is very concerned about the final determination of the route of the secondary water main. Community Board 8 urges DEP to thoroughly consider all options, to closely involve CB8 throughout the decision making process, and to carefully select the best, most economical and viable option.

The Department of Sanitation intends to build a replacement sanitation garage located near the FDR Drive and 73rd-74th Streets. The prior building, which was demolished, housed DSNY trucks, equipment and personnel in service of CD8 and CD5, including a mechanical broom operation. The demolished building will be replaced on the same footprint, expanding into the available FAR. The replacement building will be taller requiring DSNY to come back to CB8 for a variance.

Districts 8 and District 6 and the broom operations will be at the new site. No new activities will occur at this facility. All activities for sanitation in the District 8 area will occur here, including maintenance. Although this project was halted due to budget constraints, CB8 requests that DSNY continue to keep us informed of the progress of this building when funds are restored. CB8 passed a resolution in March 2010 calling upon the Department of Citywide Administrative Services to lease the unoccupied space including as a means to address community concerns regarding security, appearance and storm water run-off, which a temporary lessee would be anticipated to mitigate.

The increase in noise complaints is a major quality of life issue for Community Board 8. Noisy traffic (particularly unnecessary and illegal horn honking), and noisy nightlife establishments are a large problem. Technology to measure the frequency, decibel levels of noise and vibrations, as well as the cumulative effect of noise sources, should be employed. We support increased funding to restore personnel for enforcement of air and noise codes.

CB8 also is concerned about the continued operation of the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant and passed a resolution in May 2011 that calls on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to independently and objectively evaluate the safety, security, and environmental standards of the Indian Point nuclear power plant, as well as its evacuation plan, before it considers renewing its reactor licenses.

And, in seeking to raise public awareness of concerns about heating oil as a significant source of air pollution on the Upper East Side, CB8 convened a forum featuring panelists including from the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene on June 7, 2010 to provide information to building managers, co-ops, condos and concerned residents. Air pollution in CD8 and citywide from home heating oil remains an issue for City and NYS public officials to seek to address.

## 2.14 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### 2.14.1 Business Improvement Districts

CB8 works with the Madison Avenue Business Improvement District, the East Midtown Partnership and the DOE Fund on a range of issues. CB8 efforts on traffic and quality of life are critical to our local businesses.

### 2.14.2 Street Vendors

Illegal street vendors remain a problem throughout CB8. The Board receives daily complaints about unlicensed peddlers and vendors operating on the street – particularly 77th and 86th Streets from York Avenue to Park Avenue. Of particular concern is 86th Street where vendors' work and park their trucks and vans on the block 24hrs a day; block fire hydrants, services entrances and businesses selling similar merchandise and 77th Street, which is a restricted street and ambulance route.

CB8 is concerned about the sale of counterfeit merchandise and possible failure of illegal street vendors to pay taxes. Our small local businesses face a difficult enough time remaining viable due to increased rents and fuel costs. They should not be forced to compete against illegal and unfair competition.

CB8 urges the city to reinstate the Vendor Review Panel and establish a dedicated enforcement group specializing in vendor enforcement. CB8 believes that stronger enforcement is the solution. The NYPD and other appropriate agencies (DCA, DOS) should be provided funding specifically to focus on this problem.

*Jacqueline Ludorf*

Chair

*Latha Thompson*

District Manager

<sup>i</sup>NYC Department of City Planning Website: [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning)

<sup>ii</sup>NYC Department of City Planning Website: [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning)

<sup>iii</sup>NYC Department of City Planning Website: [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning)

<sup>iv</sup>NYC Department of City Planning Website: [www.nyc.gov/planning](http://www.nyc.gov/planning)

<sup>v</sup>2005--U.S. Bureau of the Census, New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey