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Greenwich Village • Little Italy • SoHo • NoHo • Hudson Square • Chinatown • Gansevoort Market

STATEMENT OF DISTRICT NEEDS Fiscal Year 2012

PREFACE

Community Board 2 Manhattan (“CB2”) continues to be greatly concerned that the City has minimized the impact of the district’s rapid changes and have neglected to consider the need to increase the ancillary services that such changes require. During these years of conspicuous residential growth in NoHo, SoHo, Chinatown and our Hudson River waterfront, planners have not provided for the necessary amenities that make for a healthy and growing residential community, e.g., public schools, open space and parks, and consumer product and service retail space.

We are looking forward to receiving the results of the 2010 Census, which we think will substantiate our anecdotal observations. All of the figures in the District Overview, below, are in serious need of updating. We know that each year, until this past year, our office received more and more applications for residential conversions and re-zonings. The complaints and requests that come to CB2 reflect the concerns of this new population. Our budget priorities for the past few years have focused on servicing these new arrivals to the district, as well as our long-time residents. More specific assessments of services will be set forth throughout this Statement.

I. DISTRICT OVERVIEW

A. Geography

Community Board 2 is a diverse district, bounded on the north by 14th Street, the south by Canal Street, the east by the Bowery/Fourth Avenue, and the west by the Hudson River. It is a unique and rapidly expanding community that includes the neighborhoods of Little Italy, part of Chinatown, SoHo, NoHo, Greenwich Village, the West Village, Gansevoort Market, the South Village and Hudson Square.

B. Population

The population in Community Board 2 increased by seven percent (7.0%) between 1980 and 2000. However, between 2000 and 2006, CB 2’s population has increased another 15.4%. The Department of City Planning lists CB2 among the eleven highest areas of growth in the entire City through 2010.

According to a City Planning Commission report on the percentage change in 0-17 year old population, between 1980 and 2000, this district saw an increase approaching fifteen percent (15%). From 2000 to 2006, number of households with children 0-17 has increased an additional thirty-eight percent (38%).

In addition, we have five major universities that add thousands of non-permanent residents to our neighborhoods - New York University, the New School, the Cooper Union, Hebrew Union College, and Cardozo Law School. Several of these institutions are currently in the midst of expansion, with proposals to add more than two thousand undergraduate residents to our district, along with additional full time faculty and classrooms that will increase the number of day visitors. While the students that join us every year are welcome, it is clear that the city needs to consider their numbers when looking to allocate services to District 2.

C. Income structure

Much of the architecture and history of our district has been maintained by residents who are determined to preserve the middle class, live-work, merchant and artisan atmosphere of our neighborhoods, past and future, but socioeconomic patterns are changing drastically.

Median income in 2004 was \$75,000. In 2006, it increased to \$94,871. At the same time, CB2's income diversity ratio went from 4.8 to 6.7. Incomes in the bottom two quintiles accounted for nineteen percent (19%) of the population in 2004, but by 2006 those quintiles represented twenty-three percent (23%). The third quintile (\$35,752 to \$60,839) dropped from eighteen percent (18%) to twelve percent (12%). The fifth quintile, \$100,000+ increased three percent (3%). The poverty rate is 11.9%.

D. Housing

During this same period, the median monthly rent Community Board 2 ascended to the highest in the City to \$1,691. Rental units that are rent-regulated are 54.6%, and more than 1,300 buildings are registered with rent-stabilized units. Community District 2's rank in severe overcrowding rate in rental unit conditions has been elevated from twenty-eight in the City to nineteen. We think that we are losing affordable housing stock, and fear that this will depress our middle class population, that is essential to a healthy, diverse community.

E. Tourism/Visitors

Within the boundaries of Community District 2 are some of the most popular tourist attractions in New York City, with millions of tourists visiting the restaurants and cafes of Little Italy and Chinatown, the galleries and boutiques of SoHo, the jazz clubs and Off-Broadway theaters of Greenwich Village, as well as burgeoning nightlife, night club and cabaret spots of the entire area. A weekend evening stroll through the Meatpacking and waterfront districts in the west, along West 4th Street and Bleecker St. toward the east, through SoHo, Chinatown and Cleveland Circle in the south and on the western edge of the Bowery from Houston to 14th St reveals the nightlife that is attracting record numbers of tourists.

A walk through our landmark districts is an historic delight with many well-preserved buildings dating back to the early part of the nineteenth century. We see many groups conducting walking tours in our neighborhoods, telling stories about our immigrant, arts, and bohemian history. Tour buses travel through our small streets, obstructing pedestrian and bicycle passage as well as emergency access and deliveries, damaging our vulnerable infrastructure, idling and spewing dangerous emissions.

Our street trash baskets are often overflowing, especially on the weekends, and it is up to our citi-

zens and merchant associations to supplement the Department of Sanitation pick-ups. We require more police presence to manage the crowds. The parks in our district require more maintenance because they are not just the outdoor space for our residents, but also appeal to visitors who are looking for a pleasant stop on their way through our district. The High Line Park alone has attracted 3.5 million visitors since its opening one and a half years ago.

Tourists are extremely welcome in our neighborhoods. They provide a significant clientele for our small businesses and cultural institutions. However, the influx of thousands of people on a daily basis puts a severe strain on our infrastructure and resources, and these additional needs are not adequately addressed in the budget allocations.

II. LAND USE, HOUSING, and BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

In assessing local needs it is necessary to recognize the development boom that Community District 2 has experienced over the last ten years. The number of change of use applications is among the highest in the city, and the rapid influx of new development along the eastern, western and southern borders of the district have added to density of both people and built environment disrupting both neighborhood character and density.

Two recent re-zonings in the Far West Village are guaranteed to increase our resident population. And we anticipate another re-zoning in Hudson Square that will similarly transform a manufacturing/commercial district to mixed-use. We are looking forward to working with the city to affect this change, but we must be careful to that newcomers are provided with levels of service appropriate to the development of a new ‘neighborhood.’

In NoHo, SoHo, and parts of Little Italy a continuing growing population is evident as existing residents living in converted buildings see new neighbors moving into newly constructed buildings that were built on former parking lots. Since 2005, seventeen previously vacant lots now house residential buildings, adding hundreds of new residents to this area. Community Board 2 will continue to work with the Department of City Planning to ensure that these buildings fit into the character of the neighborhood. Hundreds of loft dwellers residing in NoHo and SoHo continue to bring their loft space into compliance with legal residential requirements and their numbers are also inflating the population figures. Major new apartment projects along the south side of East Houston Street, in the northern portion of SoHo have added hundreds of new residents there, as well, transforming what was once a commercial traffic corridor to the Holland Tunnel into a highly dense pedestrian traffic area simultaneously. The community board is working with our elected officials to examine what zoning changes are necessary in the adjacent M1-6 District that will help preserve the neighborhood’s unique character and address increased pressure on local infrastructure and the need for affordable housing. The Board is now preparing for a major land use application in Greenwich Village by New York University. This represents a major institutional expansion that will shift the demographic of the Village area.

These changes impact many of the day-to-day issues that come before our board. It is frustrating to us that the one venue where we are asked that to participate by mandate of the City Charter, the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (“ULURP”), is too often driven by the interests of developers. Community boards are supposed to be at the table during the scoping process of ULURP, but we are not included in the pre-process conversations. Consequently, our voice is not heard when the Department of City Planning is asking the hard questions about the impact on the community of a development project, and developers are allowed to assume what is, and is not, important to

us. It is especially problematic that ULURPs seldom consider the cumulative impact of individual projects - including traffic concerns, the increased pressure on infrastructure, safety during construction, the need for more park space, school seats, libraries, and social services.

We could go a long way toward ameliorating this problem, if we could become true partners with the Department of City Planning in considering the valuable input of the community at the start of every proposed land-use project. Most of the discussion that follows, and the needs that we are defining, is driven by this unfortunate shortcoming in the current ULURP process.

Another issue of great concern to the members of all our neighborhoods is the alarming rate of loss of the local businesses that are the backbone of our community. There are too many empty storefronts along our commercial corridors. Some of this can, of course, be explained by the current economic climate. But this is only part of the problem in our district.

As our downtown communities have become more desirable, there is a disturbing trend by landlords to end the leases of long term tenants in favor of newcomers who are willing and able to pay much larger rents – usually trendy restaurants and bars, chain stores and upscale retail.

We added business development to the Land Use Committee, to focus on this issue. We support and work well with our local Business Improvement Districts (BIDs): Village Alliance, Hudson Square, and NoHo. This year we expect to review applications for two new BIDs in SoHo and Chinatown. The services that a BID can provide help to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. They are also usually willing and effective partners in helping to advocate for important capital projects and general enforcement of City rules and regulations.

This year we would like to engage all of our BIDs, and the Small Business Administration, in an effort to come up with real solutions to the problem of maintaining a healthy mix of businesses to provide the real services that our neighborhoods need.

III. SOCIAL SERVICES

A. Education

Not only has the district overall gained population, there is an explosion of children in our public schools, all of which are over capacity and all of which have more kindergartners than 5th graders. In addition, middle school space is non-existent: our only middle school was moved downtown to the Financial District this year.

We implore the city to provide accurate statistics and rational planning for our school children. Official statistics suggest a child increase of thirty-four percent (34%). Unofficial observation (overcrowded playgrounds, new maternity and child stores – including one for children’s haircuts and one for medicines – and traffic jams of strollers) suggests an even greater increase. There are many reasons to believe this baby boom will continue, including that many gay and lesbian couples are now having children, and that families are choosing to stay in the city (especially with both parents working). Nationwide, the only age group increasing births are women over age of thirty-five, and CB2 has many residents in this demographic.

This child population boom has not been met, or even recognized, by the Department of Education. We have had no new schools in our district for 50 years (and lost our only middle school in

the past year). CB2 has recognized this need in the past few years, and repeatedly called for more school space. We fear another crisis such as the one a year ago, when parents of kindergartners on a public school waiting list organized protests, publicized in the media, to finally find a place for their children. Those children will need places for years to come, and we ask how they will be served?

One potential solution to this on-going problem is the purchase (or leasing), and subsequent renovation and conversion, of 75 Morton Street, for use as a public school. We have secured strong support from all our locally elected representatives (city, state, and national). This was our number one budget priority last year, and continues to be so. This solution is relatively cheap and ADA compliant.

Another consideration is that we have several empty parochial school sites, as the Catholic Church re-thinks its ability to financially support education. We are committed to finding space for our elementary and middle school children to attend school in the immediate neighborhood.

Also, two years ago, the City entered into an agreement with the Foundling Hospital on Sixth Avenue to convert the facility into a 540 seat, zoned elementary school. Construction has been delayed and we are still waiting to hear from the Department of Education as to when we can expect its opening.

Finally, New York University has also offered space for a new school. It is disappointing that the Department of Education is not moving forward with the pre-planning process necessary to ensure that this important facility is built now, in preparation for our burgeoning need. To delay means that our children will have to suffer needlessly in overcrowded classrooms that diminish the quality of education they should receive.

All three of our primary schools (P.S. 3, 41, and 130) are overcrowded and in serious need of renovation. Among the specifics is that the P.S. 3 cafeteria and gym are too small to safely accommodate the children, and P.S. 130, in Chinatown/Little Italy, has stated that they need an addition, perhaps in their schoolyard. We would like to explore both possibilities.

One of the frustrations we have, is that the Department of Education continually underestimates the number of school age children in our district, and around the city. Fudging the numbers downward is unworthy of a first class city that will depend on a well prepared population to see us through this century.

B. Youth

We need much more outdoor play space for children of various ages, especially those under five and over twelve. Safe walking, bicycle, and mass travel are a priority; we support measures in this direction. We won our fight for continued subsidies for MTA fares for students, but lost our M 8 bus, which served many youth and seniors.

Cutbacks in after-school resources deny many children in our community essential recreational, educational and vocational activities. This is particularly true of the southeastern section of the district, where a full service youth center is overdue. We do support the City's efforts to open school playgrounds during non-school hours. P.S. 41 has a large outdoor area that could be safe space for our children to play. We will continue to work with the school and the City to make sure these areas are available as soon as possible.

C. Seniors

Many elders in our district have decided to "age in place", but services for our older residents have

been cut drastically. The meal program at one of our centers (First Presbyterian) has been eliminated, and our other centers are overcrowded, with multiple seatings. An important part of the meal program, social contact, seems to be ignored completely. We would like to understand the goals of the Department for the Aging because they do not seem to be in accord with our understanding of the needs.

We note that several cost-effective programs for seniors – Visiting Neighbors is the most obvious – have lost funding. Again, we are joining our elected officials to work to solve this problem, but we need the City to support Visiting Neighbors and other adult day care facilities, in order to allow seniors to live independently in their own homes.

Our elderly are vulnerable to the rampant building boom in our community, when landlords seek to push seniors out. New building permits must accommodate the elderly. Many of our seniors continue to live in rent-regulated walk-up apartments. Renovation, not removal, is needed.

D. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Community

Our district welcomes our Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Questioning (“LGBTQ”) community. They are integral to our healthy growth and community strength.

We are strong supporters of our three strong social service organizations, the LGBT Center, the Door, and Housing Works, attending to the special needs of this community, including many not from community district 2. All three also support those who are not LGBTQ. The LGBT Center operates 300 citywide programs that draw thousands of participants each year. Housing Works provides services for hundreds of people living with HIV/AIDS. The Door helps adolescents and emerging adults find jobs, education, and health services.

The Hudson River Park pier at Christopher Street has become a safe gathering place for LGBTQ youth, who still experience discrimination in other parts of the city. This large population in our neighborhood raises concerns among local residents, especially when drug-dealing, prostitution, and petty vandalism occurs. We are especially concerned about the increase in anti-gay hate crimes in our neighborhood, and in other parts of the city. This violence does not come from our residents, but from people coming into the district who have specific agendas against alternate life styles. CB 2 is working with the 6th Precinct, The Door, neighbors, and our elected officials, and asks that the City work address this hateful behavior, and to find safe havens for these youth. Our board strives to balance our concern for the youth and the residents.

E. Homeless

Proportionally, there are fewer homeless people in CB2 than elsewhere in the city, but our concerns extend beyond our borders. We deplore the closing of homeless shelters (particularly those friendly to LGBTQ youth and to seniors) and we question many policies that the city has regarding homeless people in shelters and in streets. The Doe Fund provides workers at our pier and we welcome more such efforts.

IV. ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH and PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Public Safety

Counterfeit vending and illegal peddling remain serious problems in parts of our district. We appreciate the specialized task forces within various city agencies, including the Mayor’s Office

of Special Enforcement, the District Attorney's office and its new special prosecutions unit, the NYPD, and the Lower Manhattan Task Force, for the energy and resources they have been directing at these problems in response to our complaints (including the Canal Street Initiative, instituted March 2010). We hope these efforts will continue with additional personnel and resources. We have begun to see progress toward mitigating the sales of counterfeit goods and unlicensed vending which is rampant below Houston Street. We urge the City to provide these agencies with greater resources.

Aside from the counterfeit goods industry/illegal vending problems discussed above, our district faces very high rates of recidivism in prostitution and sales of narcotics. We receive continuous complaints from both the residential and business communities, regarding the need for additional police coverage, which has been reduced in recent years. Law enforcement problems reach not only into our homes and busy streets, but also into the many sites where tourists, residents and theater-goers gather for enjoyment. Drug dealing in our parks and streets hurts our residents and seriously damages our neighborhoods. It is important that the 1st and 6th Precincts are equipped with adequate staff and resources to deal with these problems.

B. Environment

We are concerned about the amount of truck trips by the Department of Sanitation that are required to pass through our district to tip at the Gansevoort Marine Transfer Station. With the new recycling laws enacted by City Council, this amount will increase dramatically as more recyclables are collected. We feel it is imperative that other marine transfer stations are used for materials collected beyond district 1 and 2, in order to service this increased demand more effectively.

Community District 2 is about to undergo three major construction projects simultaneously: 1) the DSNY Spring St Salt Shed & Garage; 2) continuing work at various sites where shafts are being connected to the water tunnel; 3) a Fan Plant facility to be constructed by New York City Transit at Mulry Square. It is vital that these agencies take every action to minimize problems caused by pollution, noise, and traffic congestion.

Community Board 2 remains concerned about the possibility of 'hydro-fracking' in the City's watershed areas. We support the City's position on this issue and will continue to work closely with our elected officials to prevent hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus Shale.

We also continue to list as a budget priority a request to convert MTA buses, school buses, and the city's transportation fleet to hybrid electric technology.

New residents, replacing the manufacturers who previously hired private carters, must now rely on City sanitation collection. The local sanitation forces must keep pace with the increasing twenty-four-hour population. Sanitation District 2's limited staff is increasingly hard pressed to meet the community's growing needs. Additionally, the growth of tourism throughout our district, particularly on weekends, has not been met with an increase in street garbage pick-up or police coverage. Both are sorely needed.

C. Public Health

Our number one public health concern is the closing of St. Vincent's Hospital. We address this issue in a special section below.

Our community board is working diligently with the World Trade Center Environmental Health

Center's Community Advisory Council to pass federal legislation that would provide permanent funding for this center along with the other centers dedicated to those affected by 9/11. In the interim, it is important that the City continue its funding and support of these centers.

We are very interested in ensuring that the number of new HIV infections in the City decreases. It is essential that the City fund new methods to help prevent new infections and continue to fund more research into how to effectively reach the populations which are seeing higher infection rates.

We are pleased the City has dedicated significant resources and is now taking a pro-active approach in combating the rat population in our City. In particular, we applaud the Rat Indexing Initiative. We urge the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and other relevant agencies to continue these aggressive efforts.

V. TRAFFIC and TRANSPORTATION

When looking at any issue that comes up regarding traffic in this district, our board considers the importance of balancing all the modes of transportation important in New York City – pedestrian, public transportation, bicycles, cars, taxis and trucking.

We have a tremendous problem with vehicular congestion around the entrance and exit to the Holland Tunnel. The tunnel brings in great volumes of private vehicles visiting the city from out of state. In addition, trucks make many local commercial deliveries, and use our narrow streets to travel from the Hudson River to the F.D.R. Drive, south to the Financial District and to the outer boroughs. Our fragile network of narrow streets is also clogged with trucks skirting the one-way toll on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge in order to use the toll-free Manhattan Bridge to access the Holland Tunnel.

Every year in our budget requests, we ask that the City work with the Port Authority to consider new approaches to dealing with the traffic back-ups that are caused by the Holland Tunnel. We also ask for enforcement strategies to help keep traffic from “blocking the box” at intersections, honking, and driving recklessly to circumvent congestion. The newly formed Hudson Square Business Improvement District has begun to address these problems. We are working with them, look forward to further work with them and the relevant agencies, to find a long lasting solution.

Community District 2 has several internationally known tourist destinations that encourage heavy night-time and weekend usage of the district's streets, by both cars and pedestrians. New York City Transit should be initiating a major effort to increase the use of public transportation by making it more comfortable, convenient, accessible, frequent, and making transit access points more user friendly for both visitors and residents, but instead is making major cuts to the system. These cuts in both subway and bus service are having a severe impact in our District, where every segment of our population relies on these facilities to get from here to there and is hard pressed to find feasible alternatives. For example, the senseless elimination of evening and weekend service on the much-used, much-needed M-8 bus route deprives access for the many seniors, children, business people, parents with babies, local residents, workers and others who have traveled it daily to reach doctors appointments, school, work, night-time meetings, recreation, subway connections and other essential activities. The removal of our subway station agents compromises our safety and takes away our source for vital information and orientation. We vehemently oppose these cuts that are completely counter to the sustainability goals of PlaNYC. Public transportation makes more efficient use of space and energy, significantly reduces air and noise pollution, and minimizes pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. Therefore, instead of imposing these destructive cuts on a population that already depends so strongly on transit and its benefits, opportunities must

be explored and followed through in providing new transit access and routes in areas of need.

As part of this endeavor, every effort needs to be made to repair and rehabilitate our deteriorating subway stations for users' comfort and safety. In particular, the West 4th Street station has been severely deteriorating over many years of neglect to the point that current conditions are not only off-putting, but also a threat to people's health and safety. All of the platforms and surrounding areas are plagued with moldy, leaky and peeling walls and ceilings, and a full rehabilitation is long overdue.

In a walking community like Community Board 2, with a populace that spends much of its time out and about on the streets, the City must continue to encourage improvements for pedestrian and alternative transportation modes with emphasis on design and regulation of streets, including traffic calming approaches and more pedestrian-oriented redesign of complex intersections, lighting and directional information for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, improved safety, enforcement, added bicycle parking both on sidewalks and in selected street spaces, as well as aesthetic improvements. Facilitating pedestrian and bicycle movements and access between the six major subway lines, bus routes, hospitals, commercial districts, open space, schools, universities, historic districts and residential communities, also needs implementation.

Opportunities must be sought and identified to reclaim streets for public space that both supports pedestrian activities and builds community life. The Department of Transportation ("DOT") is beginning to achieve this through its Plaza program in such areas as Gansevoort Plaza and Astor Place, and other initiatives would be welcome, including a permanent reconstruction of pedestrian friendly improvements on 9th Avenue between Gansevoort Plaza and 14th Streets.

An opportunity to add significant open space is being lost at Mulry Square, where the MTA intends to build an above-ground subway fan plant, whereas an underground facility, although more costly, would allow for substantial public/green space at the site that would benefit the community in perpetuity. Should the above-ground option continue to be pursued, at the least the housing for such a facility must have a more appropriate community- and pedestrian-friendly design that both respects the area's historic importance and recognizes the utilitarian nature of the facility, while providing an appropriate context for displaying the September 11th Tiles for America.

Individuals using wheelchairs have a basic right, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, to use our city streets. In May 2007, the Community Planning Fellow assigned to our Board by the Borough President, presented a pedestrian ramp study to our Traffic & Transportation Committee. The study found that twenty-three percent (23%) of all street corners in our district do not have pedestrian ramps. In addition, another fifteen percent (15%) of all corners have pedestrian ramps that are uneven with the adjacent roadbed, or degraded, making them unusable or a safety hazard. Although the City has been taking necessary action to remedy this injustice, it still has a long way to go, especially in repairing broken, degraded areas.

The degraded condition of our district's streets, particularly those paved with historic Belgian blocks, is an ongoing concern and, at times, presents a hazardous condition. Some of our many requests for capital repaving projects, street reconstruction, improved traffic conditions and other needed improvements have been heeded, but there is still much to be done. Maintenance will always be an urgent item on the community's agenda.

The proliferation of tour buses on our small, historic streets has produced a host of negative impacts, including hazardous conditions for pedestrians, air and noise pollution, traffic congestion, and broken street beds. CB 2 calls for increased regulation, enforcement, and relocation of tour bus

routes to larger, more accommodating thoroughfares.

Recently, we have focused on working with DOT to create a safe environment for increasing bicycling as a mode of transportation. We have embraced the need to build protected bicycle lanes along many of our uptown/downtown and cross-town commuting arteries. However, there has been controversy. The majority of people who testify at our hearings are supportive of the bicycle lanes, but there are others who come with legitimate concerns about the impact on pedestrian safety. We have a number of resolutions that ask the DOT to increase general education to the public about the protocols of the new bicycle lanes, and to look for ways to adjust the markings on the lanes to clearly announce how space is allocated to bicycles, pedestrians and cars.

We have also been working closely with the DOT to look at our parking regulations in a new way. We have consistently supported pilot programs with muni-meters to test how variable pricing can work in our neighborhoods. Because we have so many destination areas, and know that many people insist in coming by car, over our bridges and tunnels, instead of using public transportation, we encourage the use of appropriate priced street parking to help reduce unnecessary circulation of cars looking for parking and eventually encourage visitors to consider mass transportation (which hopefully will be restored and enhanced).

VI. PARKS, RECREATION and OPEN SPACE

For years our parks, from the world-famous Washington Square, to our other twenty-six sitting areas and vest-pocket parks, have been extremely well-used by local citizens and visitors. However, there is a dearth of open space in the district. In fact, our total provision of open space is only .40 acres per 1,000 people, far below the required minimum of 2.5 acres per 1,000.

This past year has brought some improvements to our open space issues. We have seen the opening of the southern section of the High Line Park. This elevated walkway has been an immediate success, and although most of the users in the first months have been visitors, local residents are very proud to have this great amenity in our district. Community Board 2 is grateful to Friends of the High Line for their commitment to this project and for their hard work to maintain the beautiful plantings and accessibility. We are especially pleased to know that the City is now committed to saving the entirety of the structure, including the portion in the Hudson Railyards.

We continue to look forward to re-opening of the entire Washington Square with the completion of Phase II and the construction of the new park house and dog run.

Petrosino Park was reopened prior to completion of reconstruction and the project remains incomplete almost two years later. The original contractor is now in default, and the lack of a fence has caused problems affecting quality of life in the area. We look forward to long overdue completion of this project.

We are gratified that the Department of Environmental Protection has removed its construction activities from Seravalli Park. The disruption for work on a water tunnel shaft lasted much longer than DEP had suggested when seeking permission to take over part of the park. Completion of renovations at Seravalli and Minetta playgrounds this year will complete the rebuilding of every playground in the district over a period of about 20 years. Community Board 2 appreciates the long term focus on this priority by our council members.

There are three other Water Tunnel project sites in our district: Hudson Street between Houston

and Clarkson, Grand and Lafayette, and East 4th Street between Bowery and Lafayette Street. For a third year, we have included the conversion of these sites to public open space among our highest priorities. We believe that the best way to secure the future for these important sites is that DEP turn over the sites to the Parks Department to be developed as new open space.

There are three other Water Tunnel project sites in our district: Houston and Clarkson, Grand and Lafayette, and East 4th Street between Bowery and Lafayette Street. We have included these sites high in our budget priorities again to ask that DEP honor their initial promise to turn over the acquired construction staging sites to the Parks Department to be developed as new open space. We want to continue to encourage this kind of creative thinking in the effort to develop more open space in CD2.

We have also worked with the DOT under its new plaza program. Many of our streets were created hundreds of years ago along historic rural paths that through the years were forced to conform to New York's historic grid system. This has created underutilized streets with unusual geometries that now lend themselves to opportunities to reclaim public open space. In Gansevoort Market and along Lafayette at Astor Place, CB 2 is actively working with DOT to develop these sites as usable public space. This year we are supporting a plaza application by the new Hudson Square BID.

One great concern is what have been referred to as the "DOT strips," bands of open space on LaGuardia Place and Mercer Street between West 3rd and Houston Streets. These strips, which provide a sizable amount of publicly accessibly green space (including a recently funded new toddler's playground, community garden, dog run, and Mercer Playground), are rare oases in our harshly deprived-of-open-space community. We urge, as we have urged for many years, that these spaces be transferred posthaste from the NYC Department of Transportation to the NYC Department of Parks, so that they may be preserved in perpetuity as parkland for our community.

VII. LANDMARKS and PUBLIC AESTHETICS

Ours is a historically rich community, graced by well over two thousand century-old dwellings. Indeed, District 2 Manhattan has the oldest housing stock in the entire City with the median age of residential buildings at 94 years. Row houses constructed in the early 1800's, on what was then farmland, still stand in the Greenwich Village and Charlton/King/VanDam Historic Districts. Cast-iron buildings that were bolted together in SoHo during the last half of the nineteenth century still line the streets today.

This year we had two extensions designated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, SoHo and Greenwich Village II. Within Community District 2 are now nine designated historic districts: Charlton-King-VanDam; Gansevoort Market; Greenwich Village, with two extensions; SoHo Cast Iron, with one extension, MacDougal-Sullivan Gardens; NoHo, with one extension; NoHo East; and numerous individual landmarks.

Our board has joined with other preservation organizations and our neighbors to continue to advocate for the creation of a South Village District that represents an important chapter in the immigrant and bohemian history of New York City.

The strength of the Landmarks Preservation Commission is essential to the unique quality of this district and remains evident in the value of properties here and the vigor of tourism. Our board is unique in the city, in that over 70% of our building stock falls under the jurisdiction of the Commission. Unfortunately, too many illegal renovations and additions slip through each year. Landmarks enforcement must be expanded, and the Commission must have the necessary funds to perform their duties. We will

continue to advocate for a stronger LPC, because the integrity of our neighborhoods depend on them.

VIII. SIDEWALKS, PUBLIC FACILITIES and PUBLIC ACCESS

Community Board 2 Manhattan has more sidewalk cafes than any district in the city. Accordingly, we are also one of the first districts to see the benefits and drawbacks of the cafes. The primary benefits are increased street presence and the economic boost additional seats can provide these local businesses, particularly in the summer months.

But we see more of the drawbacks, as well. The foremost of these is increased noise. This is especially problematic in Community District 2 due to the mixed-use nature and relatively small size of many of the buildings that house restaurants and bars in the district. The economic downturn has exacerbated the problem as more establishments operate unlicensed cafes or outside the hours allowed for cafes. An additional complicating factor is the popularity of many CD 2 neighborhoods with tourists and other visitors from outside the area. While they are a welcome economic boon to our local businesses, a small, but troublesome, minority of visitors, care little that their party may be taking place only a precious few feet from numerous residences. Additionally, more establishments are designing their facades with large expanses of windows or doors that are left open far past when sidewalk cafes are closed, carrying the noise of crowds and amplified music out into the neighborhoods.

The greatest difficulty is the lack of consistent and meaningful enforcement of sidewalk café regulations by the Department of Consumer Affairs (“DCA”). Although the agency is generally responsive when the CB 2 office requests an investigation, the agency-initiated enforcement is so limited, that it seems to have virtually no deterrent affect on restaurants that violate the sidewalk café rules. One on-going problem is that DCA has no inspectors working regular shifts in the evenings or on weekends when sidewalk café activity is at its peak. As a result, we consistently encounter a minority of establishments which:

- operate outside allowed hours, particularly before noon on Sunday;
- operate the café outside the approved footprint and/or with more tables/seats than approved;
- maintain illegal outside service stations;
- do not remove café furniture when allowed café hours are over; and
- permanently block the sidewalk with planters, furniture or other barriers

These situations often create unsanitary conditions, limit or make treacherous pedestrian access in what is public right-of-way and create an uneven playing field that encourages responsible establishments to break the rules as well, if only to compete with their opportunistic neighbors.

For several years, Community Board 2 has been troubled by DCA’s refusal to enforce the Zoning Resolution’s ban on sidewalk cafes in certain parts of our district. Specifically, the agency has continued to turn a blind eye to a handful of restaurants operating illegal sidewalk cafes on West 4th Street, which is designated an R6 zone in which all sidewalk café activity is prohibited. Although violations for unlicensed sidewalk activity were issued to restaurants on these blocks in 2007 and 2008, DCA has refused to allow the violations to come before an administrative tribunal to be judged. In addition, despite repeated requests by the community board and the Borough President’s office to explain its refusal to enforce the law, the agency has continually stonewalled

and refused to provide any answer or to even discuss the matter. The agency's continued abdication of its legal responsibility is shameful. Furthermore, it is an ongoing injustice to individuals and families who must continue to endure the nightly racket on an otherwise quiet street and to restaurants in the surrounding area who obey the law and, in cases where they are operating legal sidewalk cafes, are paying significant amounts of money for sidewalk café consents and licenses.

We also would like DCA to clarify the rules and regulations that govern small sidewalk cafes, which are allowed in some portions of our district. In years past, they only approved the cafes if room for a service aisle was maintained. (The law states that servers may not use the public right of way.) Recently applications are being approved that actually force the servers to compete with the public to access the tables.

The other major issue on which little progress is being made is illegal sidewalk ATMs. After finally getting confirmation from city agencies that these were indeed illegal, we have received assurances that enforcement would occur. Although there was an initial round of enforcement in response to locations designated by various community boards, it does not appear that DOT has sustained the effort. Community Board 2 would like to see regular enforcement, particularly along heavily trafficked streets, such as Bleecker and Christopher, and on streets that have minimal sidewalk width.

IX. STREET ACTIVITIES and FILM PERMITS

Community District 2 hosts more street fairs than any other board in Manhattan. Street fairs are a longstanding tradition in our neighborhoods, but increasingly they are no longer about block associations and community groups getting together to celebrate a special event, plant flowers, or raise money with a tag sale. There are too many generic, promoter based multi-block events that have no relationship or nexus to our neighborhoods, take business away from the merchants who pay rent and taxes, and generally detract from the quality of life of our residents.

We appreciate that there is a citywide moratorium on new multi-block fairs, but there are still too many of them for our liking. Motorcycle clubs from New Jersey should not be allowed to block our streets as they ride en-masse through a tunnel, with engines revving, to the small streets of Little Italy for an afternoon and evening of partying, under the guise of sharing a police and Italian heritage from years ago.

We carefully review every application to make sure that there is some benefit to the community before giving over our streets to outside groups. Unfortunately, the Mayor's Street Activities Permitting Office (SAPO) often approves the same fairs year after year, and leaves us with no other option than to try to negotiate for restrictions in order to minimize the unwanted, negative impact.

There is also a new development by SAPO: approving commercial events and art installations in the public plazas that have been newly created by the Department of Transportation. We supported the plaza program wholeheartedly with the idea that our district needs more public open space, but now we find ourselves in the position of having absolutely no say in how the plazas are being used.

In addition to the street fairs, we have an ongoing problem with the issuance of film permits. Our historic streets are some of the most desirable film and photo-shoot locations. Unfortunately, we again have no input regarding the number, location, or date and time of the permits being issued. There is simply no process to allow for community feedback and input regarding the issuance of film permits. Some of our streets are repeatedly closed, which causes a great inconvenience to residents and businesses. There are location vehicles parked throughout their neighborhood

(often illegally running their engines), cables and equipment everywhere, catering stations on the sidewalks, large crews standing around hour after hour, lights shining into bedroom windows at night, and even security that denies access to their buildings when the cameras are rolling. It takes many phone calls, angry letters, and the intervention of the board and elected officials to get an area deemed a hot spot, giving that area at least a few months of relief.

All of these factors have created an extremely heavy burden on district services, an antiquated city infrastructure, and City services. Each month our office receives numerous complaints about all of these street-renting practices.

The Mayor's Citywide Events Coordination Management office needs to create a new process that will take into account residents' concerns, business interests and allow for community and board input before issuing any permits that restrict access to our streets.

X. ARTS and INSTITUTIONS

A. Universities

There are five major higher education institutions located in Community Board 2: New York University, Cooper Union, Benjamin Cardozo Law School, Hebrew Union College, and The New School (which includes the Parsons branch). They draw tens of thousands of students, professors and other staff who commute to or live in the Village.

Our biggest concern at this time is New York University's Plan 2031 campus expansion into the core of Greenwich Village. Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer's NYU Task Force has been temporarily suspended as we enter into the ULURP process in which both the Borough President's office and the community board have New York Charter-mandated responsibilities to review the project.

Community Board 2 will now assume the role of the main liaison with the community and NYU. Over the past 20 years, NYU has been buying buildings and either demolishing or renovating them for their own purposes. The historic neighborhoods around Washington Square Park are hardly recognizable with the number of large, modern buildings that have replaced the low scale and intimate streetscapes that Henry James and Edith Wharton wrote about over 100 years ago. The residents in the remaining buildings are afraid that their homes will also disappear.

Community Board 2 will be in the forefront, with support from the Borough President's office and others, in reviewing of all the complex zoning, mapping, transportation, deed restrictions, land use, environmental and other agenda items and issues. There will be a series of meetings with each relevant committee jointly with the Arts & Institutions Committee as we move through the pre-ULURP process with NYU.

Many of the projects that NYU is proposing as part of its plans will require City approvals and community board input. We would ask that the appropriate agencies consider the needs of our residents and the history of our neighborhoods before issuing approvals. This is the time for NYU to look to expand into other locations, outside of the core area. Otherwise, we fear that Greenwich Village, known throughout the world and attracting thousands of visitors each year to New York City, will be swallowed up by a well-funded and rapacious institution that perhaps, has outgrown its roots.

Cooper Union and The New School are in the middle of expansions that will stretch our District's

historical references – economically and socially. The New School has conducted two forums in conjunction with CB2's Arts & Institutions Committee. They have made many changes to their original proposals including reducing the height of the building and even modifying the facade from metal to masonry, and the new design is more fitting for the historic character of the neighborhood.

We need to be vigilant in monitoring and communicating with the New School as demolition and foundation work begins on this new building. We are particularly anxious that the New School adhere to Community Board 2's construction protocols that address issues of noise related to construction, scheduling, street closings, etc.

B. Libraries

We are increasingly concerned that budget cuts have resulted in a reduction in staff and in the hours of operation at the libraries in our district. These reductions impact young children and the elderly most of all. We continue to request that additional funds be allocated to keep the large community room at the Hudson Park branch open during all library hours in order to increase the activities for toddler-aged children. We also ask that the New York Public Library provide a dedicated youth staff to create special youth programming.

We are pleased that the historic Jefferson Market Library has been funded for restoration of the exterior and that the interior will be updated to accommodate better handicap accessibility.

C. The Arts

Community Board 2 would like to thank the City for helping to fund the new Museum of Chinese in America, which opened last year to celebrate the important history of Chinese-American immigrants. The museum will be a great asset to the Chinatown community and the entire district.

We are also very excited that the Whitney Museum of American Art has formally announced in May that the Board of Trustees of the museum gave its final approval for a new facility in the Gansevoort Market district. This important institution, which was originally founded in our district, will be a great asset to the Far West Village and could help to re-focus the neighborhood as an art and design district.

Community Board 2 has hosted two information forums and plans to hold others as various stages of design and construction progress. It is anticipated that ground breaking will be May 2011. The Museum will be an exciting center of art, with exterior exhibition spaces as well the traditional interior spaces. It will be integrated with the High Line park that run along the eastern face of the building. Restaurants, gathering places, and other public areas will be part of the overall design.

The other major issue this year was the alarming closure of so many of the districts off-Broadway and small theaters. The causes are many but, the very high cost of rents in our area plus the very drastic cut back of funds to non profits, especially to the arts, are the main reasons. The closing of the Ohio Theater after over 30 years of continuous operation has had a major impact on the downtown theater community.

To try to find innovative ways to compensate for this situation, Community Board 2 has taken a leadership position, along with Community Board's 4 and 5, in having all twelve community boards sign on to a resolution calling for enactment of a plan to offer tax incentives to landlords to donate or provide discounted theater spaces to non-profit companies. In general, the Borough President office has been supportive of this idea.

The plan is still being vetted by legal staff and tax experts in Speakers Quinn's office, but the general consensus is that it will be difficult to get it passed in Albany and the emphasis is now to seek some kind of already existing NYC programs that could provide some incentives to landlords to help the arts theater community.

XI. SLA LICENSING

Almost every application that comes before the board requires a 500' hearing at the State Liquor Authority ("SLA") because there are more than three existing on-premise liquor licenses nearby. In fact, many have as many as twenty licenses. Several areas in our district, in particular the Bowery area and the Meatpacking District, are experiencing a dramatic increase in late night (and early morning) visitors who patronize new bars, clubs and restaurants. This trend has severely strained the quality of life for residents. Community Board 2 has noted that there is quite a difference between retail daytime use and retail nighttime use, and has gone on record to call upon the City to amend Use Group 6 to require special permits for bars, restaurants and clubs.

Community Board 2 reviewed and passed resolutions regarding 147 applications for liquor licenses in 2009, an increase of fourteen percent (14%) over the 127 applications reviewed in 2008. Most of these establishments are in manufacturing/artist live-work areas, driving up the cost of small manufacturing/repair spaces, increasing Board of Standard and Appeals variances for other uses, and effectively driving out small businesses that have been the mainstay of economics within the district.

In addition to reviewing license applications, our staff and board members spend extensive time and resources asking the police and city agencies, along with the SLA, to enforce the legal 'methods of operation.' Far too often, establishments that have been approved as restaurants with background music, transform themselves illegally into late night venues. Our office receives the complaints, but it is very difficult for us to get the appropriate agencies to do an inspection.

It is important that the City commit to working with the SLA to coordinate the timely enforcement of laws that are written in order to protect our residential and mixed-use neighborhoods from being overwhelmed by the negative impact of the concentration of nightlife.

XII. WATERFRONT

The development of the Hudson River Park has been a great benefit to the residents in our park-starved district. The access to the waterfront, the bikeway and walkway, the playgrounds and seating areas are used year round. The ball fields on Pier 40, at Houston Street, have created the opportunity for children and adults to participate in organized sports leagues. Many residents take advantage of the relatively affordable vehicle parking on Pier 40, as well.

We have had two failed attempts to develop Pier 40 according to the parameters outlined in the Hudson River Park Trust Act. This is of increased concern because the pier is in very bad shape structurally. It is in desperate need of work on both its roof and pilings. We think these failures are due to the lack of public input into a planning process before the issuance of the RFP's.

CB 2 will continue to work with the Community Advisory Committee of the Trust to try to re-start the process to develop Pier 40. In order to succeed, it is imperative that the community be involved in the planning stages. Our board is committed to seeing that the athletic fields and parking re-

main, and that the necessary commercial development is appropriate to the park and additive to the community. While this project is clearly under the jurisdiction of the Trust, we would ask that the city's representatives on the Trust Board join us in advocating for a process and an RFP that responds to the needs of our district.

This year, as part of the Department of City Planning's review of their Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, CB2 identified two other important issues. First, we are concerned about the potential danger posed by rising sea levels. Many parts of our district lie in potential flood plains, and would be devastated in a storm surge. It is imperative that the City begin planning now to institute preventative measures that will protect our community from the impacts of climate change or a natural disaster.

Also, we are advocating to improve safe access to our waterfront. Our highest priority is to institute a new pedestrian crossing, over Route 9A, at Spring Street. The Hudson Square neighborhood is becoming increasingly a residential area, and yet it has the worst open space ratio per person in our district. Currently the only crossing to the park is on the south side of Canal Street, which is actually in Community Board 1. This effectively renders the entire neighborhood cut off from the Hudson River Park. Creating a new crossing will require the cooperation of many city agencies, New York State Department of Transportation, and the Hudson River Park Trust. We ask that the City commit to working with us to advocate for this change, as partial mitigation for the decision to locate a three-district sanitation garage and salt shed at Spring and West Streets.

In Section III of this report (Social Services), we listed our concerns about the needs of the LG-BTQ youth who flock to the Christopher Street pier on weekend evenings.

XIII. OTHER ISSUES

A. Chinatown

The work of CB2 is organized by areas of service, and not by geographic areas. The one exception is Chinatown. This community is covered by three community boards, and has historically been underserved.

As one of the oldest neighborhoods in New York City and the country, Chinatown has been a traditional gateway for immigrants, particularly from East Asia. While Chinatown's population and boundaries have grown dramatically over the past three decades due to reforms in national immigration quotas, it continues to struggle as a densely populated, low-income neighborhood with limited language access to mainstream services and programs. Chinatown's economy suffered greatly in the period after September 11th due to restricted flow of commerce under the security zone, and more recently gentrification pressures from neighboring areas have contributed to a loss of affordable housing and dislocation of low income residents and small businesses.

In late 2008, a planning body called the Chinatown Working Group was formed to identify major issues of concern in Chinatown and to come up with ways to allow Chinatown to grow while protecting and retaining its historical character. The Chinatown Working Group is made up of more than fifty full voting members comprised of important stakeholders representing residents, small businesses, workers, social service institutions, arts, and advocacy groups, as well as Manhattan's Community Boards 1, 2, and 3. Other institutions and elected officials also participate in a non-voting capacity during the Working Group's monthly full sessions and Working Team meetings – designed for open, democratic, consensus-building planning in the hopes of creating a compre-

hensive community-based 197a Plan. In accordance with the City Charter, Community Boards 1, 2 & 3 would be co-sponsors along with the Chinatown Working Group of its proposed 197a Plan.

The preliminary planning needs of Chinatown have focused around a few core issues, namely re-zoning for preservation and creation of housing that is affordable to existing Chinatown residents, combating tenant harassment and illegal eviction, support for small businesses and job creation for locals, developing more parks and usable open spaces, improving traffic flow and pedestrian safety, bolstering immigrant social services, creating spaces for local arts and culture, enhancing educational opportunities for youth and adults, and preservation of Chinatown's unique immigrant culture and history. In articulating its goals for Chinatown's future, the Working Group is carefully considering the impact of its proposals on adjacent New York City communities.

Community Board 2 will continue to work along these broad guidelines of neighborhood planning in Chinatown in coordination with local stakeholders and other community boards, and, if approved, ask the City adopt this 197a as an action agenda.

B. St. Vincent's Hospital

Our community has lost its single most important health care resource with the recent closing of St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Center. St. Vincent's, which operated in our district for over 100 years, was one of only two Level One Trauma Centers south of 59th Street and provided invaluable services to our residents and to all of lower Manhattan, including in-patient hospitalization, emergency room care, a large variety of out-patient clinics and a commitment to serving anyone who walks through their doors without regard for ability to pay.

Over the last three years, we held many public hearings on St. Vincent's plan to build a new, state of the art facility, which we supported. Now that these plans are defunct with the dissolution of St. Vincent's, it is imperative that the hospital be replaced with a new facility that adequately meets the community's health care needs, preferably a new full-service hospital at the St. Vincent's location. We are working with local public officials, health care groups, social service organizations, community representatives and other stakeholders throughout the former St. Vincent's service area in preparing a community health care needs assessment that will help determine the level and extent of services that will be offered by this new facility.

We urge the City and State Departments of Health to lend us their support to this project and the larger goal of establishing a new health care facility, which is crucial to the health and well-being of our community.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Within the next few months, the Office of Management and Budget will receive our specific Capital and Expense Budget requests and priorities. We cannot stress enough – as we have done so often before - the particular needs we have enumerated that deserve special consideration.

Ours is a community of families and preservationists: our block and community associations plant and care for trees; friends' groups care for our parks; merchants' associations help local park and City groups; civic organizations clean their streets, and residents get involved and help. We also have BIDs, that are committed to supporting our businesses, and provide security, extra sanitation services and street beautification projects to ensure that their areas remain attractive destinations. The fact that the historic beauty and integrity of our many neighborhoods has survived is clearly due to these efforts.

It is time that the City makes the same commitment to our district, as have our residents and businesses. Increasingly, City agencies are asking for input from the community board regarding the issuance of licenses, changes to regulations and feedback for large development projects. However, we notice that building owners, restaurateurs and cafe entrepreneurs have found it too easy to build in complete disregard of local laws. New businesses are opened and profits are reaped while complaints sit on agency desks. Illegal and unlicensed operations continue without inspections and penalties, and residents continue to complain to the Board office. More careful attention must be paid to the zoning regulations regarding building plan examiners and sidewalk cafe application certifiers. Illegal construction continues in Community District 2. And too often, we are asked to retroactively approve illegal renovations in our historic districts. We need City agencies to establish procedures that will help us to protect our neighborhoods in line with existing laws, and then follow up with inspections to ensure that violations are cured in a timely manner.

Finally, we ask that in FY 2012, the City does not again propose cuts to the community board budgets. Any reduction would essentially eliminate the money expended on basic operating expenses. To compensate, our only alternative would be to lay off staff, thereby making it impossible to perform some of our City Charter-mandated responsibilities. Community boards have not received increases to their operating budgets in twenty years. It is difficult to perform our duties under the current funding. Any further cuts would basically undermine our role in helping to deliver the appropriate level of city services in our community and prevent us from participating as a full partner in reviewing land use changes, monitoring city services and reviewing agency applications. We understand that there are fiscal challenges that New York City must address. However, it would be short sighted to not take advantage of the thousands of volunteer hours that community board members devote to ensuring that the City stays connected to its local populations.

Jo Hamilton

Jo Hamilton
Chair

Bob Gormley

Bob Gormley
District Manager