



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT NEEDS Fiscal Year 2011

INTRODUCTION

As we enter the 10th year of the 21st Century, we can see some signs of progress for the residents and workers of Community Board One (CB1). However, the district still faces obstacles and challenges.

Along with the surging population in Lower Manhattan, which we detailed in our demographic study of the district released in August 2008, comes the need to build the physical and social infrastructure necessary to support the area's residents. We also need to ensure that the major development projects in the area are managed such that their impact is mitigated and quality of life in the area does not suffer.

The past year has seen some welcome advances at World Trade Center (WTC) and surrounding reconstruction sites – most notably the allocation of funding needed for completion of the Fulton Street Transit Center and the completion of work at the South Ferry subway station – but the standoff at the WTC itself remains a source of tremendous frustration and disappointment in CB1. CB1 has called for elected leaders to make facilitating real progress at this site their top priority. It is also imperative we move forward with the Performing Arts Center and a plan to manage tour buses that will transport the estimated seven million annual visitors expected to arrive beginning with the opening of the 9/11 Memorial at the 10 year anniversary less than 2 years away.

It is important that plans to improve our East and Hudson River waterfronts are brought to full fruition so that they can provide our rapidly growing community with recreational space and other needed amenities. The East River esplanade should be completed in a timely manner, particularly in light of the rapid population growth of the east side of the district, and the Hudson River waterfront should be completed in Tribeca. This past summer saw a welcome increase in usage of Governor's Island and developing the waterfronts is one way to ensure this trend continues.

CB1 identified the remarkable extent of the area's population growth in our 2008 study of residential units and is working determinedly to address its accompanying effects. Problems may arise

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as increasing numbers of residents move into mixed-use neighborhoods. One such example is the increasing tension we have seen between residents and liquor licensed establishments in Tribeca and other growing neighborhoods. CB1 has been working with the New York State Liquor Authority to closely examine new license applications and recommend modifications of requested operating hours where needed so that new restaurants and bars can coexist more harmoniously with their neighbors.

CB1 is committed to maintaining a strong mixed use community where the quality of life is valued by residents and businesses thrive. We balance these sometimes competing interests at our committee and board meetings.

We also greatly value our relationships with elected officials and with key agencies such as the New York City Police Department and New York State Liquor Authority with whom we work on quality of life matters. CB1 worked closely this year with our local elected officials to increase cooperation between the State Liquor Authority and other agencies, elected officials, community boards, businesses owners and residents. One result of these discussions was the legislation introduced in Albany to clarify distances that liquor-licensed establishments must keep from each other and from schools or places of worship.

In cases where bar owners are insensitive to their residential neighbors, we have worked to develop tools to combat disturbances and facilitate enforcement. We achieved notable success this year when an establishment operating under the names Deco and Peppers, among others, closed in Tribeca after many years of complaints and joint efforts by CB1 and elected officials and government agencies. These sorts of efforts require close coordination, particularly in ensuring 311 complaints are acted upon. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has worked with CB1 to enforce New York City noise regulations. The Police Department has vigorously investigated issues that CB1 or others bring to their attention and done their best to resolve them.

At CB1 we are guided by a strong belief that new and remaining residents of our district need and deserve adequate services and facilities ranging from schools, parks and libraries to senior programs and cultural resources. In this respect, we are pleased by the decrease in the past year in the number of complaints to our office about noise from construction work, especially after-hours and weekend work. We are especially vigilant about these trends in light of the great number of major construction projects expected to continue in our district in the coming years, and we look forward to continuing our work with the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center, the Port Authority and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, among others, to ensure that concerns of Lower Manhattan residents and workers are promptly investigated and addressed.

Public works projects make needed improvements to infrastructure but can be disruptive to store owners and their patrons and to pedestrians in general. These projects can close off whole blocks and sometimes sidewalks for long periods of time to the frustration of drivers and pedestrians. While some disruptions are inevitable, CB1 works closely with the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center and other appropriate agencies to mitigate the impact of construction to the greatest extent possible.

Whether one lives, works or visits Lower Manhattan, the number and the scale of the redevelopment projects underway is enormous and includes the WTC towers, the WTC Memorial, the new WTC PATH Station, the Fulton Street Transit Center, reconstruction of Route 9A/West Street, the development of the East and Hudson River waterfronts, and the abatement and deconstruction of 130 Liberty Street (formerly known as the Deutsche Bank building) and Fiterman Hall buildings among others. There are also several reconstruction projects underway on major arteries such as Fulton and Chambers Streets as well as others on Liberty and Harrison Streets and elsewhere in CB1. In addition, some private projects have continued in spite of the economic slowdown, including the Forest City Ratner Beekman Tower.

Public works projects have the potential to improve the area's infrastructure, and they present unique opportunities for CB1 and other stakeholders to shape the community's future for the better. Each of them is an important part of the recovery and rebirth of our district, but given the quantity and size of the projects, they bring potential impacts that must be managed in the planning, developmental and implementation stages. CB1 is committed to monitoring these projects until they are completed so that they do not pose a threat to air quality, a particular concern to those who were in the area on and during the aftermath of September 11 and are already anxious about their health and wellbeing.

We are also deeply concerned about the impact from the projects on our local businesses. In this regard, CB1 successfully lobbied the LMDC to ease eligibility requirements for grants to small businesses affected by construction in Lower Manhattan. These advocacy efforts resulted in a significant expansion of the grant program, extending a lifeline to many hundreds of new businesses.

We are aware that the downturn in the economy remains a challenge for our businesses. Many jobs were lost in the financial sector as a result of the financial crisis of 2008, and the Lower Manhattan business community must adapt so that it can thrive in the future and support a strong retail sector. We also must restore the commercial and retail space lost at the WTC on 9/11. We have lived in a construction zone for eight years, and we want to see construction proceed towards completion. The WTC and other key projects must be kept on track.

Much work remains to be done to strengthen the future of Lower Manhattan and to make sure that government agencies make good on their promise to rebuild and revitalize this historic district, financial nexus, and growing residential community. CB1 will play a key role throughout this process by keeping residents and businesses informed and prepared for the continued years of disruptions ahead and by ensuring that there is community participation in the effort to plan for the future. We will also hold all government agencies accountable for keeping commitments and taking measures to defend quality of life in the area during this challenging time.

While the unprecedented construction and rebuilding activity poses special challenges and opportunities for our district, CB1 continues to work toward addressing other needs that in many cases existed prior to September 11. These include the need for vibrant and varied retail services; the need for a revitalized East River Waterfront and completion of the Hudson River Park; and the need for cultural performance and exhibit space.

Among our highest priorities is to make sure there are enough schools, community centers and facilities for seniors to accommodate the area's rapidly increasing population. We are pleased with the success we have had in this area and look forward to the opening in coming years of the Spruce Street School and PS 276 in Battery Park City, two schools created in response to advocacy by CB1. We are also engaged in planning a community center in the South Street Seaport area that will serve the east side of CB1 and we hope this effort will come to fruition as the economy improves. New facilities must be planned and developed as our population grows.

GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Community District 1 is made up of numerous distinct, mixed-use neighborhoods: Battery Park City, the Civic Center, Greenwich South, the Financial District, the Seaport and Tribeca. All are experiencing strong residential growth, most dramatically the Financial District. The nearby Governors, Ellis, and Liberty Islands also fall under the jurisdiction of CB1.

As discussed earlier in this document, the most dramatic change to Lower Manhattan in recent years has been the tremendous growth in our residential population. Until the mid-1970s, there were only a few thousand people living south of Canal Street here in CB 1. The population doubled between 1970 and 1980 bringing the total to over 15,000. That number jumped another 10,000 in the subsequent decade to a bit over 25,000 in 1990 and rose another 9,000 during the 1990s, reaching 34,420 in 2000. In total, therefore, CB1's residential population grew by 336% between 1970 and 1990.

It is the residential growth since 2000, however, that makes this phenomenon even more remarkable. According to our study, which compiled and assessed information about new residential buildings and conversions both in progress and pending, a total of 15,611 new housing units have been built or are scheduled to be built between 2000, when the last U.S. Census was taken, and 2013. The study projected that this would add over 31,000 additional residents to the district. The current economic crisis may affect these numbers, but the increase in the area's population is still likely to be extraordinary.

Obviously, this continued rapid growth presents unprecedented challenges to CB1 and it will be imperative that city agencies work with us to ensure that our physical infrastructure and network of services are improved and expanded to meet new needs.

REBUILDING LOWER MANHATTAN

As rebuilding plans evolve, CB1 will continue to play a very active role in representing the interests of local residents and workers and in making sure that the community has meaningful input and involvement in the redevelopment process. The Community Board works closely with our elected officials and the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Battery Park City Authority, New York City and State Departments of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Department of City Planning and Department of Buildings, the Economic Development Corporation, Mayor's Community Assistance Unit and many other government agencies and stakeholders, such as the Downtown Alliance. We strive to ensure that our input is considered throughout the planning, development and construction stages and that government agencies are responsive to the needs and best interests of our constituency.

Last year brought the good news that funding was allocated to build the Fulton Street Transit Center as originally presented by the MTA. We accepted the loss of nearly 150 small businesses because the structures that housed them were demolished to make way for the transit center as a necessary cost of re-energizing retail and other businesses in Lower Manhattan. We are pleased that this important project is on track but remain concerned that construction of this much anticipated symbol of Lower Manhattan rebirth be completed without additional delays. We also look forward to the completion of the deconstruction of the Fiterman Hall building of the Borough of Manhattan Community College projected for December 2009.

However, we are deeply concerned about the ongoing standoff between Silverstein Properties and the Port Authority which is delaying the WTC redevelopment. As construction costs continue to escalate, it is critically important to complete these building projects as quickly as possible or we will face even greater and more intractable cost increases and delays in the future.

A primary goal in rebuilding Lower Manhattan continues to be retaining a diverse community with sufficient amenities and resources. In this regard, we continue to strongly advocate for the

timely development of the promised Performing Arts Center at the WTC site so that it is not left as an afterthought. The PAC was conceived as a calming bridge between the bustle of commerce and the reflection and remembrance that will be inspired by the memorial and as a focal point to ignite the resurgence of arts in Lower Manhattan.

The PAC is vital to the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan; its planning should be expedited as much as possible and the funding process for it should commence immediately. We have requested a time table and a plan of implementation for each of the steps involved in the design and construction of the PAC, as well as specific information on funding the project, as soon as possible.

CB1 further requests that the planning and development of the PAC and other cultural enhancements for the WTC site be open and transparent in the future and recommends the formation of an advisory panel including representatives of CB1 to address issues relating to the PAC and other cultural enhancements for the WTC site.

Moreover, CB1 encourages all concerned government agencies and private parties to consider other possible cultural facilities and programming for the WTC site in addition to the PAC including, for example, the development of additional gallery or performance spaces in portions of the vast commercial developments already planned for the site along the model of Jazz at Lincoln Center in the Time Warner building.

It will also be of great importance to identify a location for the tour buses that will bring visitors to the WTC site. CB1 is advocating for a designation of an appropriate off-street parking facility with the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) and other involved entities to reduce the congestion and pollution caused by these vehicles. As the opening of the Memorial for the 10th anniversary of 9/11 approaches, it is imperative to expedite these plans so that we are not faced with a great number of additional tour buses circling our already congested streets in search of a place to park.

OTHER CB #1 PRIORITIES

Listed below are some of our highest priority projects - those that we believe are essential to the future of Lower Manhattan:

● Additional schools in Lower Manhattan

Lower Manhattan has the fastest growing residential population in New York City and our local schools have grown ever more overcrowded. These schools have rightly won widespread acclaim and score near the top of lists of City public schools in reading and math scores. We must make sure that new schools are built to keep pace with population trends so that all children in the area will continue to receive a quality education.

Development of new long-term and interim school seats is a priority for CB1, and we have had some important successes in this area, most recently when we identified the site and successfully advocated for PS 276, which is now under construction in Battery Park City. We also pressed successfully for the inclusion of a K-8 school in the Forest City Ratner Beekman Street tower, and that facility is also under construction. These two schools will help to relieve the long-term over-crowding problem in Lower Manhattan.

As we await the opening of these two large schools, we also have worked with New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver's School Overcrowding Task Force and other local elected officials and parents to secure and arrange for the interim use of classrooms in the Tweed Courthouse and the Downtown Community Center. We continue to focus on relieving the shorter-term problem until the two new schools are ready to open and other sites are still being actively explored.

● **Affordable Housing**

It is of paramount importance that Lower Manhattan remain the diverse, mixed-income community that residents have come to cherish. We must ensure that the people who teach our children, patrol our streets, or fight our fires can afford to live in the neighborhood they serve. Just as important as creating new affordable housing units is our ability to maintain those that we already have.

In response to concern about building owners attempting to leave programs that require rents in their buildings to remain subsidized and to ensure that Lower Manhattan remains a diverse community that is affordable to people from a mixed range of income levels and demographic groups, CB1 began another research project this year to identify and catalog affordable housing in the district. We are preparing a list of all subsidized units in CB1, which we will make available to people interested in residing in our community. The document will also include basic information regarding the rent stabilization law to ensure that apartment seekers and tenants are aware of the significant rights conferred by this protection.

New residential development must also be accompanied by adequate community infrastructure such as schools, libraries, parks, retail stores and grocery markets. After two decades, CB1 residents are still struggling to bring to the district amenities that are taken for granted elsewhere. Housing planning must take into consideration the full range of community infrastructure needs. This imperative is particularly urgent now that numerous new high-rise residences are being planned or are under construction in our district, including the Forest City Ratner Beekman tower and a number of large residential conversions and new towers in the Financial District.

These challenges will only increase as Lower Manhattan becomes increasingly residential. There is still discussion of creating a large-scale new residential neighborhood in Greenwich South around the entrance to the Battery Tunnel. Such an initiative would require CB1 and all planning agencies to be especially vigilant to ensure that this development is well-planned. It is also our hope that a substantial number of housing units developed on this site will be affordable and accompanied by the needed infrastructure and amenities.

● **Performing Arts Center at the World Trade Center**

CB1 has always regarded the proposed world-class Performing Arts Center as an essential and important part of the WTC redevelopment. There are currently no major cultural centers in Lower Manhattan, and the facility is needed to ensure that there is vibrant activity at the WTC site on evenings and weekends as well as business days.

We are concerned that fundraising activity and planning for this Center is lagging far behind other aspects of the development of the site. It is distressing that there has been so little progress toward completing such a vitally important project. Only the \$55 million allocated by the LMDC is now in place. CB1 strongly urges that the City and State work to ensure that the Performing Arts Center is developed along with other projects at the site and realized at the earliest possible date.

We welcomed a recent proposal by New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver to construct the Performing Arts Center on the site of 130 Liberty Street, and we were pleased by the willingness of the LMDC to consider this possibility. We look forward to participating in a full exploration of this promising possibility in the coming months.

- **Community Recreation and Cultural Centers**

CB1 has long sought community recreation and cultural centers to provide a cohesive force for our neighborhood—places where children can play, learn and grow; where our seniors can find opportunities for wellness, intellectual stimulation and socializing; and where adults can find personal enrichment through fitness and continuing education. The Manhattan Youth Downtown Community Center on Warren and West Streets ably serves people of all ages and has creatively developed programs in response to evolving community needs. In addition, a new community center is being built on Sites 23 and 24 in Battery Park City to serve the growing community there.

A need also exists for a facility to serve the fast-growing population east of Broadway. With the tremendous increase in the population of the Financial District and Seaport and Civic Centers, a community center is urgently needed to support a strong and stable community there. CB1 established a task force to plan an east side community center with General Growth Properties, the owner of the South Street Seaport. Significant progress was made in planning a center that would meet the expressed needs of the community, but unfortunately these plans faced a major setback when General Growth Properties shelved plans for redeveloping the site and declared bankruptcy during the financial crisis.

- **Mitigation of construction impacts**

Lower Manhattan faces a special challenge as we approach the peak construction phase of the rebuilding effort. At this time, multiple projects are under or set to undergo construction, including the new PATH station, the Fulton Street Transit Center, Route 9A, the dismantling of 130 Liberty Street (the Deutsche Bank building), WTC Tower One, the World Trade Center Memorial, Beekman Street Forest City Ratner Tower and the reconstruction of Fulton Street, among others.

Residents of CB1 therefore face constant noise and disruption, as well as exposure to dust and fumes from the construction sites, and traffic and pedestrian blockages. This will take place in a community in which many people continue to suffer health impacts from the events of 9/11 and their aftermath. In addition, local businesses relied on by residents and workers will be severely jeopardized by these impacts.

CB1 works with the LMCCC and other agencies to mitigate adverse impacts from construction. LMCCC and appropriate agency representatives attend the monthly CB1 Quality of Life Committee meetings to hear and respond to complaints and concerns from CB1 board and staff members and the public. CB1 board and staff members also attend bi-weekly LMCCC meetings and other community advisory committees for major projects. We look forward to continuing our close work with the LMCCC and City and State agencies to ensure that all development complies with prevailing city building and safety codes. Beyond what is required by law, we expect responsible developers to take all possible measures to promote safety and minimize adverse impacts from construction.

We reiterate that all construction vehicles and equipment should be retrofitted to use ultra low-sulfur diesel fuel, and we applaud Silverstein Properties for taking the lead in this area. We urge that all other construction projects in our district, including those sponsored by the MTA and Port

Authority, as well as large private projects, follow their lead and utilize low sulfur fuel. Concrete trucks in particular need to be retrofitted, since they tend to idle during security checks and lengthy concrete pours. Retrofitting can make a big difference in the potential impacts from these projects on the health of people in our district. Construction sites should also be hosed down regularly to limit airborne dust.

Environmentally responsible development should be a guiding principle in the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan to support a sustainable urban community. In addition, new buildings and renovations should be encouraged to take full advantage of new “green” technologies to create healthier habitats, limit consumption of fossil fuels, and reduce toxic emissions and particulates.

Plans should be put in place to mitigate the planned, four year renovation of the Brooklyn Bridge. There will be significant impacts from this project, which will involve renovation of the ramps and underlying infrastructure of the bridge.

We must also address problems associated with the many stalled construction sites in CB1. Some of these are blights on our community with plywood sheds that block sidewalks, sanitation problems and rodent infestations. We would like the City to address these empty lots creatively where possible, by converting them into community gardens or basketball courts for public high schools that have no gyms at all. We would also like the Department of Buildings to assess scaffolding within CB1 to ensure that it is needed for safety or in compliance with City regulations.

● **Keep Wall Street Strong**

As the third-largest central business district in America, Lower Manhattan is the global leader in capital markets and financial services and serves as the economic engine for the entire northeastern United States. The “Wall Street” brand is one of the strongest in the world and the financial services industry is one of New York City’s largest revenue sources. Leveraging and growing these historic strengths is essential to revitalizing Lower Manhattan.

With the Goldman Sachs headquarters close to completion, all indications are that the appeal of Lower Manhattan to major financial services corporations remains strong. However some businesses are relocating to New Jersey and Connecticut due to more favorable tax levels and corporate regulations, and others are downsizing due to the present economic climate.

With the near-constant construction that will be underway for the next ten years, it is especially important that government agencies put mechanisms in place to support and promote existing businesses and attract new ones. Particular attention should be paid to the retention, stabilization and attraction of small and medium-sized businesses integral part to our residential and business communities. Every effort should be made to ensure the economic vitality of a broad range of businesses throughout the rebuilding process. We appreciate the recent announcement by the LMDC about a grant program for businesses affected by construction activity and hope that it will bolster our valued small and retail businesses during this difficult phase so that they will be able to share in the benefits of redevelopment.

● **Revitalization of the East River Waterfront**

Lower Manhattan will never have a great open space like Central Park and, in fact, open space is in very short supply, particularly on the east side of our district. What we do have in Lower Manhattan is waterfront exposure along both the East River and the Hudson River. Plans are in place to

improve the Hudson River waterfront—and it is important that adequate funding be allocated to realize these plans— and we are working with the city on plans to convert into an attractive amenity the East River CB1 waterfront, which not long ago was viewed as largely inhospitable and dilapidated. We clearly need to tap into the great potential of this waterfront stretch and turn it into a stimulating and inviting series of varied experiences ranging from great open space to retail offerings and other attractions that will serve the needs of local residents, workers and visitors alike.

The Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) allocated \$150 million toward East River waterfront improvements, and the Economic Development Corporation has begun work on the long anticipated East River Esplanade and Piers Project. While the LMDC funds were sufficient to get this project started, CB1 believes that additional funds will be needed to fully implement the comprehensive waterfront restoration project as envisioned in the city’s well-received East River Waterfront concept plan put out in 2005. CB1 urges the Economic Development Corporation and Department of City Planning to work closely with CB1 to identify additional funds, arrive at a final design, and move forward expeditiously in implementing this project, which has strong community support.

It is crucial as well that plans for the Hudson River Park and the waterfronts at Battery Park and Governors Island be fully integrated with those for the East River Waterfront. With the wheels in motion and the community offering input and enthusiasm, it is more important than ever to make sure that funds are in place to turn the entire expanse of Lower Manhattan waterfront into a great community resource.

The city presented plans to develop the Battery Maritime Building for several uses, including a hotel, food market and waiting areas for some of the ferries that collect and disperse passengers at points adjacent to the building. CB1 has expressed support for this proposal and hopes that it will move forward despite the economic downturn. We were pleased that EDC and the developer welcomed our request for incorporation of a cultural component in the project. CB1 still has some concerns about access to the building, which we hope can be addressed.

A successful plan for the Battery Maritime Building would bring activity to a part of our waterfront that has been largely idle in recent years. In addition, there have been many positive developments in recent years in Battery Park and others to come such as the playground being designed by renowned architect Frank Gehry and the SeaGlass carousel being constructed by the Battery Park Conservancy. We also welcomed and supported the turning over of Pier A to the Battery Park City Authority by the City and look forward to reviewing plans to develop this new waterfront space.

During the past year, CB1 reviewed a proposal by General Growth Properties to redevelop the South Street Seaport, the former site of the Fulton Fish Market and other nearby properties. While the bankruptcy of General Growth Properties has put these plans on hold, CB1 looks forward to resuming the discussion about how to revitalize the Seaport area in a way that is in keeping with the area’s low-rise historic character and integrated with the rest of the district, and which provides the community with an opportunity to secure needed amenities in the area such as a school and water-related and community-friendly uses on nearby piers that have become dilapidated.

• **Completion of Segment 3 of the Hudson River Park**

The design of Segment 3 of the Hudson River Park, which includes two of the longest piers in the park, would create many public facilities, which would enhance the district and draw residents and visitors alike, including a lawn suitable for active recreation, volleyball courts, a mini golf course, refreshment stand, playground, boathouse and a river study and research center.

This project will take advantage of the natural amenity of our waterfront, finally allowing pedestrian accessibility from river to river and encouraging mixed use and public enjoyment. Interim projects set up by the Hudson River Park Trust, such as a trapeze school and free kayaking, have already proven to be popular and successful amenities.

The Hudson River Park Trust has presented its plans to CB1, and we have consistently stressed the importance of final plans for the design adhering to the needs and wishes of local residents. CB1 was pleased that the Governor and Legislature agreed to allocate funds for the Tribeca segment of the Park. However, funding is still needed for design and development of the estuarium and other aspects of the plan for Pier 26. CB1 considers this park necessary to the revitalization of Lower Manhattan and urges State, City and Federal officials to fully realize it on-schedule.

● **Fulton Street Reconstruction and Revitalization**

Fulton Street is among the most important east-west streets in the district, connecting the South Street Seaport to the WTC site and Battery Park City. A sewer and roadway reconstruction project by the City Department of Transportation is currently underway on Fulton Street and is linked with a storefront revitalization project. The Fulton St. Revitalization Project promises to enhance retail storefronts and the streetscape and to create better open spaces along this important roadway. We also hope they will upgrade the type of retail services available along this thoroughfare so that the needs of local workers and the rapidly growing residential population can be better met. It is also essential that the sewer and roadway reconstruction work proceed as rapidly as possible with minimal disruption to businesses and residents and that capital funds are in place to ensure that the revitalization project can address all of the stated goals. We will continue to work with DOT and other agencies to address any adverse impacts from the work.

As construction proceeds on Fulton Street, it is imperative that investments be made in lighting, retail, cultural facilities and open space for this street to ensure that its future is worthy of its important role connecting the east and west sides of the district.

● **Upgrading NY Downtown Hospital**

NY Downtown Hospital recently opened a major new emergency center. This important facility will better enable the only hospital in our district to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population that it serves. With the large Forest City Ratner building currently going up at the NY Downtown Hospital parking lot site, the hospital plans to add a new ambulatory care facility to be located there. These are positive improvements, and we look forward to others as the hospital expands to meet community needs. NY Downtown Hospital is the only full-service hospital in the area and we urge the city to do everything possible to assist it. As Lower Manhattan residents and workers continue to grapple with health problems caused by the events of 9/11 and their aftermath, it is all the more important that NY Downtown Hospital be capable of providing the affected population with the best possible care.

● **A New York Public Library branch in Battery Park City**

Battery Park City has an ever-growing residential population, yet the closest public library is the small New Amsterdam Library, which is located across West Street near City Hall and is not easily accessible to the families and senior citizens who live in Battery Park City. As a result of generous grants from Council Member Alan J. Gerson and Goldman Sachs, a new branch of the New York

Public Library is under construction in Battery Park City. CB1 welcomes this future amenity for Lower Manhattan, and we have established a task force to ensure that community input is provided as the library is planned and prepares to open.

- **Commuter and tour bus storage facility**

Lower Manhattan currently accommodates hundreds of commuter and tour buses every day. They lay over on local streets and create congestion, pollution, and safety issues. The Memorial at the WTC site is expected to attract upwards of five million tourists and other visitors, not to mention residents who already pass through the site on a daily basis and tens of thousands of people who will work at the new buildings. This will generate many new bus trips to and from Lower Manhattan every day.

These buses do not belong on our narrow, busy streets creating additional noxious fumes and snarled traffic in an already congested area. The health, accessibility and viability of our neighborhoods depend on having a dedicated place for these buses to go—and that means bus storage facilities to keep them from in front of our homes and workplaces.

It is absolutely essential that State and City officials identify appropriate locations for facilities to accommodate tour buses destined for the WTC and commuter buses. In recent months, a crisis arose when work on the East River waterfront displaced dozens of buses, and CB1 was presented with a misguided effort by the City DOT to situate them near the Tribeca waterfront. Ultimately, the Department of Transportation worked with CB1 and others to develop more reasonable interim solutions that seem to be working well. In coming months, another group of buses will be displaced as work on the East River esplanade expands and additional spaces will need to be identified elsewhere. DOT should step up efforts to find locations that can accommodate these and other commuter buses. CB1 looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with DOT and elected officials on this effort.

As we approach the tenth anniversary of September 11, with the promised opening of the Memorial at the WTC site, it is also imperative for the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation and other agencies to have viable interim and long-range plans in place to accommodate tour buses that will bring visitors to and from the site.

As we await the development and implementation of such plans for commuter and tour buses, we must vigorously enforce laws prohibiting idling by commuter and tourist buses.

- **Retail**

It is important to attract new retail and small service businesses to our growing community and retain those that are currently meeting the needs of area residents. New space for quality retailers is part of the plan for the World Trade Center site and must also be included in the Fulton Street Transit Center, especially because nearly 150 local businesses were evicted when buildings were demolished to make way for construction of the project.

It is hoped that the upgrading of Fulton Street will bring in additional retailers to meet the needs of Lower Manhattan residents and workers. The bankruptcy of General Growth Properties has complicated plans to revitalize the area around the South Street Seaport, but when a plan to develop that area is ready to move forward it should include space for encourage retail offerings that meet the needs of Downtown residents and workers as well as visitors. The recent farmers markets at the Seaport have been a positive step in this direction.

A diverse mix of retailers is essential to the vitality and economic life of the community. Retail development should meet community needs and create ground floor/street level spaces in a variety of sizes. We applaud the grant program established by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation to support businesses adversely affected by construction, and commend the LMDC for its willingness to expand the program as we requested. We encourage all government agencies such as the NYC Department of Small Business Services and the NYC Economic Development Corporation to do everything possible to support our struggling businesses and ease the way for needed new ones during this difficult economic time.

● **Safety and Security**

Safety and security considerations make it important that new construction meet or exceed NYC's fire, building and safety code regulations and incorporate adequate measures for emergency evacuation and security. Evacuation protocols, as well, should be incorporated into plans for new buildings. During this time of widespread construction and street blockages, it is more important than ever for emergency and service vehicles to be able to access and serve the safety needs of everyone without hindrance or obstruction.

The New York Police Department is developing a plan to restrict and regulate traffic in the vicinity of the World Trade Center site, as Police Commissioner Kelly discussed at a special CB1 meeting in November, 2008. CB1 looks forward to continuing to work with the NYPD and local leaders and stakeholders to find the right balance between safety considerations and livability so that the area around the WTC site will be a thriving and vibrant as well as secure area.

CB1 has been generally supportive of plans to secure the area around the New York Stock Exchange. The Department of City Planning has come before CB1 several times to present these plans, and we have commended them for making security in the area of the New York Stock Exchange less visible and intrusive. Plans must continue to take into account the needs of businesses which suffered greatly under emergency restrictions put in place after September 11. This collaborative process that included ongoing consultation with CB1 should be a model for future efforts elsewhere in Lower Manhattan.

Finally, we strongly recommend that to the greatest extent possible areas closed after 9/11 be re-opened to the public. We have worked with Friends of City Hall Park to encourage the City to increase public access to restricted parts of City Hall Park and were encouraged by the opening of the northern end of the park, which provided a welcome lift to area residents and workers without compromising security at City Hall. Comparable ways to safely re-open Park Row should be explored and implemented.

OPEN SPACE

● **Ball fields to serve CB 1**

As our population grows, pressure on the ball fields in Battery Park City increases. Our local little and soccer leagues already report that they can barely accommodate the children seeking to sign up due to the limited number of nearby fields. One partial solution that CB1 and the leagues support is to convert the Battery Park City fields from grass to artificial turf, which would make them available for many additional hours per week and many more months per year. CB1 has been working with the Battery Park City Authority and local leaders on a Ball Fields Task Force

to study this possibility, which we believe would increase field time for our leagues and other organized sporting groups. Local schools, for example, have expressed interest in utilizing the fields but are consistently turned away. Adult leagues, including those serving the many workers in the area, similarly have had little success in obtaining permits to use the fields.

The task force has issued a final report recommending conversion of the ball fields to artificial turf. We hope that the Battery Park City Authority will accept this recommendation in the near future. We know that many other entities such as the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation and the Hudson River Park Trust now utilize artificial turf fields and are satisfied with them.

CB1 also urges that steps be taken, where possible, to identify other potential playing field sites in the area. We were pleased when the LMDC allocated funds to create a new ball field on the east side of Lower Manhattan, and we look forward to the realization of that project. We have also reached out to the administration at Murray Bergtraum High School to explore the possibility of increased use by community groups of the playing fields there, and the Principal of the school has indicated that she will consider our request.

Despite limited options, we need to look for creative solutions to address the shortage of space. Additional space on piers, roofs of buildings, and at existing parks (Battery Park, Rockefeller Park, Wagner Park) might provide additional active recreation options for our growing population.

CB1 also supports the use of fields on Governors Island and Pier 40 for organized leagues. Although Pier 40 is located in CB2, CB1 has participated actively in discussions about its future and stressed how important it is for all Lower Manhattan youth to use the fields there for organized athletic activities. We would like any future plan for Pier 40 to address the growing youth population in Lower Manhattan and the increasing need for ball fields. Similarly, Governors Island is potentially a great resource for families from Lower Manhattan, and we look forward to working with the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation to ensure that active recreation space and access to it is included in plans for the Island.

● **Governors Island**

The transfer of Governor's Island from the federal government to the City of New York was one of the most exciting things to happen to the city's landscape in decades. The island's 172 acres contain numerous historic structures in good condition, well-kept playing fields, and some of the most spectacular views in New York. As indicated above, CB1 children and adults currently find themselves dramatically short of recreation fields to play on, and Governor's Island can perhaps go far toward rectifying the problem.

It is essential that as much of Governor's Island and its historic structures as possible remain open to the public and easily accessible. We have been encouraged by recent efforts by the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation to create amenities and programming that draws greater numbers of people to the Island for events and activities. We intend to continue working closely with the Governors Island Preservation and Education Corporation so that the needs of Lower Manhattan residents are fully considered as it develops the island.

● **Small parks in CB1**

Thanks to rebuilding funds provided by the LMDC, progress is ongoing on the construction and renovation of thirteen parks in Lower Manhattan. However, while we are very pleased with the cre-

ation of these new parks, we must be sure that the Parks Department will have sufficient resources at its behest to maintain them for public use. Furthermore, we must make sure that the parks we currently have remain available for public use. As such, we are pleased with the reopening of the north end of City Hall Park and the ongoing implementation of the plans reached in response to the lawsuit by Friends of City Hall Park. We also welcomed the recent groundbreaking for an innovative playground designed by David Rockwell at Burling Slip Park and development of a playground designed by Frank Gehry at Battery Park. The renovation of Peck Slip provides a welcome opportunity to create needed open space in the historic Seaport district, and we are pleased that our discussions with the Parks Department have resulted in a plan that strikes a balance between the need for landscaping and greenery in the area and respect for the historic surroundings of the site.

TRANSPORTATION

• West Street Crossings

In light of the tragic fatal accident that occurred on West Street in February 2009, when a young Battery Park City resident was struck by a speeding vehicle, more attention needs to be paid to creating safe crossings along West Street/Route 9A. West Street has six to ten lanes of moving traffic, often going 40 to 50 miles per hour, making it a difficult and dangerous street to cross. As Battery Park City nears completion, there are increasing numbers of residents, workers, students and visitors who need to cross this busy street at all times of the day and night. We receive many complaints from them that crossing at various intersections on West Street is very challenging, and there is particular concern for the many children and seniors who need to cross to access schools and senior facilities in the area. Our concern about this situation has led us to create a West Street Task Force that is working with both NYC and NYS Departments of Transportation on safety matters. Additional green time for pedestrians, restricting turns, more crossing guards and additional pedestrian bridges are some potential solutions that need to be explored and implemented to make these crossings safer. We have also called for countdown signals along West Street and are awaiting the results of DOT's trial study of these devices in other areas.

• Parking

We applaud the City's efforts to crack down on placard parking in our district and believe these should continue with involvement from all relevant agencies, especially NYPD and DOT. Owing to the presence here of numerous City, State and Federal buildings, our district has a major problem with government-authorized vehicles occupying space on our streets and sidewalks. We urge City, State and Federal agencies to continue to reduce the number of placards issued and regulate those that are issued. Vigorous efforts to enforce existing regulations should be made so that our streets are not filled with illegally parked "official" vehicles that prevent others from parking legally. Not only do these vehicles take up many of the limited number of legitimate parking spaces throughout our district, they also frequently park on sidewalks, in bus stops, atop traffic islands and in handicapped zones. Such abuses create great resentment among residents who have few on-street parking options, as well as with merchants and small businesses whose delivery trucks have no space to unload and often receive tickets when they are forced to double-park.

In addition, government agencies need to develop plans for parking by construction workers so that the neighborhood is not overwhelmed with vehicles from outside the district during the massive construction effort now underway throughout Lower Manhattan. The city should create more

on-street (alternate-side-of-the-street) parking in our district to accommodate the ever-growing residential population.

We also would like to see increased enforcement against vehicles that park all day long in non-parking spots in association with commercial activity.

- **2nd Ave. Subway**

Running from the Upper East Side into the Financial District, the long-desired 2nd Avenue Subway will relieve the greatly overcrowded Lexington Avenue line and make Lower Manhattan more accessible to uptown workers. This major project has been anticipated for decades and is important to the long-term vitality of Lower Manhattan.

- **LIRR/JFK Link**

CB1 supports creation of a rail link to the LIRR and JFK airport from Lower Manhattan. This transportation link would create a pathway for commuters and visitors who need quick access in and out of the area, encouraging business to remain and grow in the Financial District and throughout Lower Manhattan. Such a link is vital to the future of Wall Street and would also provide a much-needed passageway to commuters who work in other parts of the city. The needed funding to make this plan a reality should be allocated.

- **Ferry Service**

The disruption of PATH service after 9/11 highlighted the great potential of water transportation. Then, quick implementation of new ferry routes helped Lower Manhattan recover. Today, boats from New Jersey, Brooklyn, Manhattan's Upper West Side and La Guardia Airport bolster our linkages to the region. The expansion of ferry service should be encouraged, but requires sound planning. Flexible arrangements for docking, while essential during emergencies, can have unintended consequences for residents when not adequately planned. Ferry and water taxi facilities must be planned as part of a coordinated approach to waterfront protection and development.

ZONING AND HISTORIC DISTRICTS

The Community Board has been working with the Department of City Planning on a comprehensive rezoning of northern Tribeca, which is currently zoned for manufacturing uses. Our plan would rezone the area to permit residential development as-of-right, while preserving the size and scale of Tribeca as it exists today. It also encourages inclusionary housing zoning bonuses to bolster the stock of affordable housing in Tribeca so that the neighborhood continues to include people of various income levels. It will be important to implement this plan in order to hold off the pressure from developers to permit larger buildings in Tribeca.

We were very pleased when the Department of City Planning recently signaled its approval for our plan and we look forward to proceeding with an application to enact needed zoning changes in coming months.

The current economic downturn provides an opportunity to look at areas in our community where very large buildings are permitted as-of-right. The City should use this time to plan ways to en-

sure that City services and facilities such as schools, parks and libraries, and local amenities such as retail shopping facilities are able to keep pace with development. We need to rethink the use of zoning bonuses and how this process can be better tailored to provide communities with the services and facilities they need to grow and prosper.

Lower Manhattan is the birthplace of New York City, and preserving and respecting its heritage must be an utmost concern. Landmarks are not only a neighborhood amenity or a focus for school trips. They are integral to maintaining tourism, one of the principal economic motors of CB1, and they contribute immeasurably to the desirability of Lower Manhattan as a place to live and work.

Residents of Tribeca and the Seaport have expressed strong support for safeguarding the character and authenticity of these historic communities. An appealing characteristic of both areas is their old cobblestone roadways. CB1 strongly favors retaining these cobblestone streets, and the city should do a far better job of maintaining these important resources. CB1 successfully advocated for funds to be set aside to rebuild many of the cobblestone streets in the South St. Seaport Historic District, and we are working with the Department of Design and Construction to encourage as many Tribeca cobblestone roadways as possible as part of the Harrison Street Reconstruction project. These are in generally poor condition and need attention.

We have nine historic districts in Lower Manhattan, including four in Tribeca, the South Street Seaport and Governors Island. We also have many individual landmark structures throughout our Lower Manhattan district. Unfortunately, designating an historic district does not guarantee its integrity. Incursions frequently occur: signage is hung, windows modified out of code, and owners make significant unapproved additions. While individual violations sometimes seem small, their cumulative effect greatly degrades the character and property value of the historic districts. The Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) has power of enforcement, but with only one or two enforcement officers for the five boroughs, countless violations go uncorrected. As more buildings and districts gain landmark status in New York, LPC needs additional staff to safeguard our heritage. We urge the LPC and the Mayor to find funding for adequate enforcement, or landmark districts will eventually exist in name only.

Finally, consideration should be given to designating an historic district within the Financial District to protect significant buildings that are not already individually designated as landmarks.

HOMELESSNESS

CB1 has historically had a noticeable population of homeless individuals in the district, particularly in the Battery, where large numbers of homeless people once limited positive activities in the park. This situation has markedly improved in recent years, in no small part owing to the quality services and programs provided in Community District One (CD1) by the John Heuss House and the NY Rescue Mission and other agencies.

We were deeply distressed to learn earlier this year that the John Heuss House would no longer receive funding from the Department of Homeless Services. Despite our strong protests, John Heuss House has now been closed. The onus is on the Department of Homeless Services to make sure that effective outreach to homeless people on our streets continues and there is no reduction in the amount or quality of services.

CB1 urges the city to remain vigilant to ensure that outreach to homeless people does not suffer in

the absence of the John Heuss House. It is essential to continue to offer these vulnerable individuals the social services and counseling they often need to cope with and hopefully overcome mental illness, substance abuse, and alcohol abuse. It is in the interest of the City, the community and the homeless population to have safe and secure options so that homeless individuals have viable alternatives to sleeping in parks, doorways, subway stations and streets. There must be ongoing efforts to fund adequate shelter space and additional affordable housing units with needed services.

SANITATION

There is a noticeable rat problem in various parts of CB1, which is exacerbated by the construction that pervades our district. The Departments of Sanitation and Health have worked with us to address problem locations and these agencies must redouble their efforts to conduct more frequent pick-ups of litter and baiting of sites where rats are seen. CB1 will continue to work with these agencies to identify areas where these actions must be taken and we will step up these efforts as construction activity escalates in coming years.

Julie Menin
Chairperson

Noah Pfefferblit
District Manager