



## COMMUNITY BOARD 7 MANHATTAN DISTRICT NEEDS STATEMENT

Community Board 7/Manhattan covers the Upper West Side from West 59th to 110th Streets, Central Park to the Hudson River. This document provides highlights of our district's needs and interests. We anticipate that these and other emerging concerns will present new challenges as our community works together to shape the future of the Upper West Side. We welcome the opportunity to plan with government, the private sector, and our neighbors to address the needs of our community. You can find our capital and expense priorities for the NYC Budget for Fiscal Year 2007 and district demographics at [www.cb7.org](http://www.cb7.org).

### PLANNING AND LAND USE

The Upper West Side has been – and continues to be – a focus of interest for new development, for conversion of older buildings to new uses, and for restoration and adaptation of landmark structures. In light of this development, there is a growing need for comprehensive planning and realistic measures to guide development, to conserve our architectural heritage, and to mitigate potential strains on traffic, infrastructure, and municipal services.

#### **West 97th -110th Street Rezoning**

With the increase in residential prices in recent years, developers have become interested in sites along Broadway and in all locations north of West 96th Street.

In 2005, long-vacant brownstones on the north side of West 100th Street, together with a recently-closed supermarket in a low-rise building on the west side of Broadway between 99th and 100th Streets were all slated for demolition. A 350-foot high rise building was to be built on this combined site.

The demolition of a low-rise taxpayer and the transfer of air rights from St. Michael's Church, on Amsterdam Avenue and West 99th Street, allowed the construction of a 400 foot high-rise on the east side of Broadway. These two high-rise buildings were to be built by Extell Development Corporation, which was also moving forward with other new developments on West End Avenue and West 86th Street, and in Riverside South at the southern boundary of the district.

Both of these buildings are "as -of-right" projects, and therefore not subject to public review, under the City's ULURP process. The existing R-8 zoning's height and setback regulations permitted, and even encouraged, towers, with no height limits. These zoning regulations, however, are very different from the general physical characteristics of the avenue, with its large pre-war apartment buildings, featuring mostly 150' high streetwalls, its five to eight story New Law tenement buildings, and its intermittent commercial one- and two-story buildings.

CB7 initiated the West 97th to 110th Street Planning Task Force (the Task Force), composed of community board members and community residents to meet with the Department of City Planning (DCP) to seek ways to redress these disparities in the zoning of the Broadway corridor and surrounding mid-blocks.

In the next months, long-standing concerns mounted about the threats to the built fabric of the historically distinguished low-rise blocks of adjacent Manhattan Valley. This neighborhood, between West 100th and 110th Streets, east of Amsterdam have long been the home of working- and middle-class residents, including many African-Americans, as well as Latinos and Haitian groups.

In the last years, co-op and condo conversions have increased in Manhattan Valley. More affluent residents continue to move into the apartments in these historic buildings, and instances of harassment and evictions had been documented. Assemblages of sites and threats of demolition are feared, and efforts to gain landmark designation have moved slowly, if at all.

In addition, the new owners of the middle-income Park West Village (built in the pre-1961 "tower in the park" model), between West 97th and West 100th Streets and Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues, were ending leases of the stores on the Avenues. Plans are underway for large-scale buildings along Columbus Avenue that are viewed by the community and CB7 as being out of context and inappropriate. The same developers intend to build on now-existing parking lots, tennis courts and "taxpayer" sites, and these plans are going forward with little community participation.

After months of study and deliberation and unprecedented public involvement, CB7 voted approval of a series of zoning changes for Broadway, the mid-blocks, Manhattan Valley and other sub-districts above West 97th Street. These recommendations have the goal of encouraging development that respects the built character of the various neighborhoods, encourages a variety of housing types, and provides for a residential mix of affordable-, moderate- and middle-income housing as well as market-rate housing. These recommendations are comprehensive and balanced, and we look forward to their certification in a ULURP proposal that will reflect the community's needs and ensure responsible growth in the future.

### **Lincoln Square Area**

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' campus is now 40 years old. The Center is looking to upgrade a great deal of its infrastructure, public spaces, and backstage facilities, as well as to integrate its campus more successfully into the community. The Center has committed to keeping all public spaces public, including Josie Robertson Plaza and Damrosch Park, open up the Amsterdam Avenue frontage, and enhance West 65th Street to West End Avenue. Construction of the first development phase, a pedestrian-friendly 'Street of the Arts' out of the currently tunnel-like West 65th Street and the expansion of the Julliard School of Music, is underway. In conjunction with the project, the Department of Transportation (DOT) installed traffic-calming measures in the Lincoln Center 'bowtie' (intersection of Broadway, Columbus Avenue, and West 65th Street.)

The Center is creating an information and public performance space in the Harmony Atrium at Broadway and West 62nd Street, which will change the use of this public-bonus space. CB7 calls on the Center to increase public participation and consultation on this expansion and on the redevelopment plans for the south campus.

The need for broad-scale planning for this area is made even more urgent by Fordham University's plan to expand its Lincoln Center campus. Fordham controls almost the entire superblock bounded by West 62nd Street, Columbus Avenue, West 60th Street, and Amsterdam Avenue. Over a two-phase, multi-year period, Fordham proposes to build a 30+ story wall of university buildings along the Columbus Avenue block front and lower solid walls along the side streets. The University plans to fund its ambitious plans in part by selling parcels on the Amsterdam Avenue side of the campus to private entities for development of high-rise residential towers. CB7 is concerned about almost every aspect of this proposed project and urges Fordham, DCP, and all other inter-

ested agencies to work together to plan a reasonable expansion and intelligent design that balances Fordham's educational needs with those of the surrounding community.

### **Development activity west of Broadway**

An area of major development potential is the west side of Amsterdam Avenue. The American Red Cross property at West 66th Street was sold to a developer who plans to build rental housing. The rest of this strip (i.e. north to West 70th Street) is owned by a single developer, who is beginning constructing of a 21-story mixed-use building up to West 69th Street and a 70-story tower on the corner of West 70th Street. A third developer is building a 30-story tower on West End Avenue at West 70th Street.

The construction of the Abraham Joshua Heschel High School, at West End Avenue and West 60th Street, marked the beginning of major interest in the southwest corner of CD7. It was followed by the Lander Women's College of Tuoro College, a large mixed-use structure on West 60th Street between West End and Amsterdam Avenues. The privately developed project has market-rate housing above a condominium that contains the College's non-dormitory facilities. The mid-block area between West 50th and West 60th Streets, east of West End Avenue, has been rezoned to allow mixed-use, high-rise development. Public review of rezoning of the mid-block between West 60th and West 61st Streets for residential and commercial uses has begun.

Meanwhile, development of Riverside South continues apace, from West 72nd to West 59th Streets, with seven buildings completed and two more under construction. In 2005, the Extell Development Corporation and the Carlyle Group purchased the undeveloped land. CB7 is particularly interested in the contemplated uses for this area between West 63rd and West 59th Streets that would substantially increase the approved number of residential units and commercial development. These proposals will require major participation and consultation with the community.

### **Development Rights**

**Community Facilities.** Existing zoning was designed with the expectation that low-density community facilities would continue in place (similar to schools, firehouses, etc.), affording spacious relief to the concentrated residential and commercial development surrounding them, and providing important public meeting grounds for the community. It would be unfortunate to lose community services, as well as the low density, to high-density residential development. CB7 urges the Administration and City Council to address this issue.

**Air Rights.** Another source of unpredictable and out-of-scale development is the transfer of development rights, whether by direct sale/trade, merger of zoning lots, or other means. CB7 urges DCP to study the use of these mechanisms, and offers itself as an exemplary study subject.

## **HOUSING**

Over the past decade, the Upper West Side has emerged as one of the City's most active and desirable housing market and this change is altering the district's long-established character of social, cultural, racial and economic diversity. For the past decade, CB7 has been in the top five neighborhoods in the City in new housing units (7,000+), new mortgage loans, and refinance and rehab loans (major renovations). These have amounted to more than \$1 billion per year in recent years. In the past five years, median sale prices have doubled.

CB7 has 120,000 housing units, a net decline of more than 8% in the last decade that reflects the loss of about 13,000 small apartments and single-room-occupancy units. Those who have departed were older and had low- to moderate-incomes; those who arrived are significantly wealthier.

Similarly, ownership, at almost 30%, is rising steadily: 35,000 units are owner occupied, 28,000 of these are co-ops, 5,565 are condos, 840 are Mitchell-Lama Co-ops, and 875 are single-family brownstones, many previously subdivided as small apartments and now recombined.

As housing values have increased, so has the median income of the occupants. Median household income has risen to \$71,200—about 80 percent higher than the median for the City. These averages hide a difference between owners and renters. Median household income for home-owning families was \$105,096 in 2002, but \$56,000 for renters. Interestingly, a significant number of both renters and owners spend more than 50% of their income on rent or maintenance fees.

### **Preservation of affordable housing**

It is particularly important to CB7 that the 5,125 units of public housing and the 1,654 units of Section 8 housing be adequately maintained. In addition, enforcement of regulations can assure continuing availability of affordable private-sector apartments, including rent-regulated, Mitchell Lama, Tenant Interim Lease (TIL), 80/20, LISC, and inclusionary bonus apartments as well as single-room-occupancy (SRO) units. CB7 urges the State to pass legislation repealing the Urstadt Law, thereby allowing NYC to assume direct responsibility for managing its affordable housing crisis, rather than leaving the job to legislators in Albany.

### **NYCHA**

Three public housing developments in CD7 are managed by the New York City Housing Authority. NYCHA housing stock is increasingly troubled, with back-logs of repairs, continuous vandalism, and growing security issues. We are in the process of investigating the following issues: maintaining security of the buildings and the residents; quickly accessing funds available for repairs, security and maintenance; and expediting the time it takes for repairs to occur.

### **Rent-regulated apartments**

There are about 85,000 rental apartments in CD7, including 46,500 rent-stabilized and 6,300 rent-controlled units--the fourth highest proportion in the City, at 7.4%. (The City's average is 2.8%.) An additional 12,325 units are under other forms of regulation, including public housing (5,100+), Section 8 housing (1,500+), and other assisted housing.

The number of rent-regulated rental units is declining steadily due to natural movement and attrition and decontrol policies that effectively permit the decontrol of apartments upon vacancy, if the owners make modest investments. On average, rent-controlled rents double every 10 years, and can increase as much as 25% in any one year because of special "capital improvement" related assessments. Rents in stabilized apartments increase at a lower, but steady rate, doubling every 15 years on average, and have increased by as much as 12% in one year (in recent years.)

The changes that introduced "luxury" decontrol—the elimination of rent protections for current occupants when rents reach \$2,000 and a tenant's income reaches a threshold amount—make no allowance for the age of the tenants. As tenants approach 60 years of age, they are frequently at the height of their earning power, and may be removed from rent protections. But they are likely also on the verge of retirement or reduced income, and would be unable to sustain the market rents in the future, and unable to become first-time co-op or condo purchasers because lending policies take into account future earnings.

These new developments mean that 1) regulated rents are unavailable to most new renters, with insignificant exception; and 2) that lower- and moderate-income tenants in currently rent-regulated apartments face escalating rents that will make their apartments increasingly unaffordable in the near future.

### **Mitchell-Lama**

Twenty years ago, the Mitchell-Lama program was developed to expand affordable housing opportunities by encouraging private sector investment through a program of tax relief. Apartments were rent regulated during the term of the program, and that program is now expiring, or being terminated by the owners. The loss of all this affordable housing is of great concern to our community. CB7 urges the state to develop an orderly transition that would protect those currently under rent regulations, allow the owners to decontrol apartments on vacancy, and develop alternative affordable housing programs to replace what is lost. CB7 urges the state to pass legislation mandating that all buyouts be subject to rent stabilization, that Mitchell-Lama buildings remain in the program for the duration of their mortgage, and that tenants be given at least a one year notice of a buyout (currently the law is six months).

### **80/20 and Inclusionary Housing**

Various programs encourage construction of "affordable housing" units through tax benefits or zoning "bonuses." Some new affordable housing has been built in CD7 as developers utilize the provisions of the 80/20 program in which 20% of the rental units are affordable and a 20-year tax abatement is given to the building. CB7 is concerned that the 80/20 certificates awarded in this program run out in 20 years, and believes they should continue for a longer period. CB7 also urges the City to mandate that at least 30% of the low- and affordable- income residents of any one building come from that community district.

An inclusionary housing bonus (additional square footage) can be obtained when affordable units are built on-site, or "off-site" in a separate development within ½ mile of the development receiving the bonus. Monitoring of this program is inadequate and lacks a mechanism to enforce the "affordable housing" component in to the future. Additionally, CB7 requests a review by DCP of the Inclusionary Housing bonus in R10 areas, with a view to overhaul the program.

CB7 calls for an adequate compliance mechanism to ensure the off-site units are constructed, rented to the category of tenants intended, and are maintained as "affordable units" into the future based on the current economic profile of the community.

### **SRO Hotels**

The Upper West Side was, in the last decade, home to the greatest concentration of SRO hotels in the City. Long-term tenants received a form of rent stabilization. However, owners are converting the SROs, most often illegally, into transient hostel-like hotels. As they renovate rooms, they push permanent tenants out or move them to substandard units. CB7 supports the efforts of the Illegal Hotels Working group, co-chaired by City Council Member Gale Brewer and State Senator Liz Krueger, in particular the Working Group's request for a sufficient increase in funding for the Office of Midtown Enforcement to investigate and prosecute illegal conversion of residential space into transient hotel rooms throughout Manhattan. CB7 believes the SRO hotels are an important part of the housing stock, and that quality SRO housing should be maintained.

### **Code Compliance**

Inspectors at the Department of Buildings (building structures) and at HPD (building interiors) enforce the NYC Building Code. Inspections can curtail façade and structural failure, overcrowding, illegal usage, failing elevators, and illegal construction. Inspectors respond to complaints, but due to administrative court hearings at the Environmental Control Board (ECB), responses take six months or more and don't have much effect on property owners. CB7 supports

enhanced technology and training for DOB and HPD inspectors and a stream-lined, more effective ECB. CB7 also believes that the code standards applied to the private sector housing should be applied, equally, to housing owned, or supported by city agencies, such as NYCHA.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND EDUCATION**

### **Community Development**

In FY 2005 The Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) implemented a new allocation formula for federal "anti-poverty" funds that directs funds to neighborhoods with high concentrations of low-income people, and decreased the portion of CD7 eligible for funding to two Census tracts. Funding was decreased by nearly 60% for FY 2006, and not-for-profits in CD7 will receive approximately \$100,000 annually. Not-for-profits located outside of the new boundaries are not eligible for funding. CB7 places a high priority on these anti-poverty programs and requests additional funding and a reconsideration of the boundaries.

### **Day Care and Head Start**

Statistically, families in CD7 have adequate day care and Head Start programs. The data are deceptive because they are based on district-wide demographics. In our high-need census tracts, 30 to 40% of the population is eligible for public assistance, but does not have access to these programs. Children's Aid Society and Bloomingdale Head Start report that each has a Head Start wait list of one full class. CB7 urges a more targeted calculation of day care need, based on census tracts rather than community districts. The needs of working families should be taken into account as well as those of welfare and former welfare parents. Specifically, we urge an expansion of ACS vouchers in private nursery schools (such as West Side Montessori School in CD7) for low-income children.

### **After-School Programs**

After-school programming provides a range of educational, social and recreational services in a supervised community-based setting, and is essential for many working families. In FY 2005 DYCD consolidated after-school programs into the Out-of-School Time (NYC-OST) program. A new request for proposals (RFP) gave priority to the neediest youth populations. At least 13 programs in CD7 were not funded, leaving nearly 750 children without after school programs. CB7 requests an additional \$1.7 million for after school programs in our district. In addition to adequate funding, program space is not available. Most school facilities, which could provide public, appropriate space, are closed or rented to professional and corporate sports groups. CB7 encourages collaboration among agencies, schools, and civic associations to better utilize our school facilities after hours.

### **Youth Employment**

DYCD is now treating youth employment funding with the same allocation criteria as poverty funding and after-school-programs funding. DYCD funds are targeted to the "highest need" neighborhoods; for the most part CD7 does not meet the criteria. Manhattan Valley (97th to 110th streets) does meet the criteria for a "high need" neighborhood. However, none of the programs to place teens is located in our District. CB7 recommends that the public and private sectors address youth training and employment and develop programs to provide jobs in the local business sector.

### **Public School Data**

CD7 has more than 25,000 students in its: 24 public elementary and middle schools and 5 public high schools, which are part of the Department of Education's (DOE) Region 10/District #3; 34 private and parochial elementary and secondary schools; 4 colleges and post-secondary schools. In School District #3 :

- The elementary student population is approximately 10,923, and is 38% Black, 33% Latino, and 5 % Asian and other (5%). Are these numbers right? Total is 90%
- Over 50% of public school students are eligible for the free lunch program, the highest being 92% at PS 165 and 89% at PS 145.
- Most students do not meet State standards for English language or math. Just under 50% of grades 3-8 students read at or above grade level. In four schools, fewer than 20% meet State standards.
- The Federal NCLB provides Supplemental Education Services funds, primarily for tutoring services, to schools that are 'failing' or failing to improve over consecutive years. Parents report they are confused about registration and participation in the program and about the policy for transferring between schools when their child's school is considered 'failing'. CB7 requests that the DOE make this program more accessible to parents.
- The average class size of elementary and middle schools remains relatively high, with an average in CD7 of 25 students per class.
- With the exception of PS 166 and PS 199, where major renovations were completed in early 1999, all public school facilities meet only minimal standards of function and safety.

### **Public School Needs**

Public accountability on school construction projects and line-by-line and school-by-school budget allocations is currently inadequate. The School Construction Authority should hold regular public forums on the status of District 3 school projects included in the five-year Capital Plan and provide an opportunity for parent and community comments. Region 10 Operations Chief should present this information to parents and the community. In particular, we are concerned that class reduction funds for pedagogical lines are not used to fund administrative lines.

School libraries (not just in the classroom) are needed especially in the Middle Schools in District 3. In addition, CB7 is surveying the need for Science Labs in District 3 middle schools. The Beacon High School will have to be relocated by 2008 and PS 165 capital renovations need to be restored in the Capital Plan.

### **The New York Public Library (NYPL)**

CD7 residents consider public libraries an essential service. In FY 2006 more than 724,000 people used NYPL's Bloomingdale, St. Agnes, and Riverside Branches. 83,000 registered borrowers took out more than 775,000 books, above the citywide average and an increase since the previous year.

The Bloomingdale Regional Branch Library at 150 West 100th Street needs a complete renovation and computer system upgrade. Sufficient capital funds are included in the City's budget for the St. Agnes branch renovation; however, sufficient operating funds are required. CB7 recommends a seven-day per week schedule, with expanded evening hours, at branch and research libraries, and continued upgrading of materials.

## **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

In CD7, access to the services needed to live a healthy, productive life, are limited by two very different elements. One is the cut-back, or non-existence of services. The other is the lack of awareness of what services do exist. CB7 is addressing both aspects.

### **Health Care**

NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's data show CD7 youth to be healthier than most of the City, with the potential for lead poisoning at the citywide average. However, there have been fewer points of access to provide a youth health assessment, particularly for those who have no health coverage. Since last year, Metropolitan Hospital has opened a Child Health Clinic in the former DOHMH space at 160 West 100th Street. We are asking the hospital to provide information on the scope of services and utilization patterns to assess if it is meeting the needs we are concerned about, access to health care for those without health care coverage, either due to finances or to ineligibility to receive Medicaid.

School health clinics are spotty, and have been found not to include vital services, such as HIV/AIDS education. We will be following up the Department of Education's implementation of their Health Curriculum.

More toxic chemical pesticides are commercially applied in the City than elsewhere in the state. Children, families and municipal employees are regularly exposed to toxic pesticides in buildings and facilities owned and operated by the City. The City should fund a study of municipal pesticide application to assess health hazards associated with pesticides used by City agencies, and develop the least toxic alternatives to current policies, programs, and practices.

Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus provide assistance to some of those ineligible for Medicaid, but new regulations make it more difficult to access them. In addition, there are thousands in the community who, either because their employers provide no health coverage, their immigration status makes them ineligible for non-emergency service, or the health care providers do not have translators on staff, have very limited health care services. Seniors are being asked by the Federal government to choose among a multitude of changing prescription plans in order to get haphazard coverage. CB 7 will continue to monitor the availability of health services, and work towards the expansion of City services.

### **Senior Services**

The Department for the Aging has (DFTA) contracts with 21 agencies in CD7. Ten senior centers serve over 2,000 meals on-site daily. However, older people who attend senior centers also need social services and case management. With additional funding, the centers could provide more supportive and outreach services. DFTA has not increased OTPS (Other Than Personnel Services) budgets since 1999 while costs during that period have risen 19%. The non-profit agencies cannot continue to provide the same level of services with no help to pay the additional costs. CB7 calls on DFTA to increase the OTPS budget to keep up with rising costs.

WEME-Mainsteam Nutrition delivers hot meals and provides some personal contact to 500 homebound who have difficulty shopping and preparing meals. The current 5-days a week, warm meal program should be fully funded and continue to be offered to all seniors who need prepared meals.

Many seniors don't know about health, financial and social services that are available to them. DFTA a web site, [nyccaregiver.org](http://nyccaregiver.org), intended for caregivers, but which can be utilized by an individual, that provides information on services. CB 7 has monitored the site and the program and



will try to insure that the information is also available to those without computers.

Larger numbers of seniors are aging into naturally occurring retirement communities (NORCs). CD7 has three City-funded NORCs operating in different types of residential buildings. Each is developing a unique model of care, depending on the population it serves. CB7 will continue to explore new models of NORCs, including neighborhood-wide programs, with DFTA and the community as well as the feasibility of establishing a NORC in Frederick Douglas Houses.

We are also interested in the utilization of services such as the EPIC prescription program and in-home services for the elderly. We are seeking data from NYS on this.

### **Homelessness**

Homelessness and hunger continue to be problems in CD7. Goddard-Riverside Community Center's Project Reach Out reports contacts with approximately 8,000 homeless individuals each year and the delivery of 25,270 units of service on the Upper West Side, including Central Park. The Partnership for the Homeless Program provides outreach and services to street homeless, and its network of churches and synagogues provides 117 shelter beds in CD7. 15 food pantries and soup kitchens serve more than 4,000 meals to homeless people each month in the district.

The Department of Homeless Services (DHS) continues to house several hundred families via transitional housing in CD7. In July 2006, DHS returned to the use of commercial hotels for temporary housing from homeless adult families. CB7 has asked DHS to cease these inappropriate placements.

### **Persons Living with HIV and AIDS**

The Human Resources Administration (HRA) has reduced its use of commercial SROs in CD7 for temporary emergency housing for people with AIDS. CB7 continues to ask HRA to provide on-site social workers and to insure that the Memoranda of Understanding include space for these services.

### **Undocumented Immigrants**

CD7 has a large number of undocumented immigrants within its borders, particularly from the Mexican community. Often employers and landlords exploit them, and they are afraid the government will deport them. Several commercial SROs in CD7 house undocumented people in substandard conditions. CB7 sees the need for a comprehensive plan to address their needs.

### **Rat Problems**

The number of complaints about rodents in throughout CD7 has grown dramatically in the past year. The Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOH) has been responsive and has done hundreds of inspections and exterminations. The root cause of the problem is the inadequate storage of residential, school, and restaurant garbage. CB7 has asked the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) to work DOH to improve garbage storage, especially when it is stored outside buildings, and to require rodent-proof containers. We are also working with the Department of Education and DSNY to better coordinate garbage pick-ups at CD7 schools. The City's Rat Task Force systemically addresses infestations by bringing relevant agencies together in a plan of action. Its work should be expanded.

## **SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

### **3-1-1 Citizen Complaint Line**

311 provides round-the-clock access to City services. Over 70% of calls are for information; 30% are complaints or requests for City services, which are referred to the appropriate agency for reso-

lution. As required by Local Law, the Department of Information, Technology and Telecommunications (DoITT) publishes district-wide 311 data. While these data are informative, they do not provide community boards with problem locations needed for planning and follow-up. Without data that give problem locations, we can't take steps to address root causes. CB7 will continue to pursue a mutually beneficial plan with DoITT.

### **Department of Sanitation**

CB7 supports the goals of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP), including that Manhattan should assume as much responsibility as possible for its waste. CB7 believes Plan's reliance on the West 59th Street marine transfer station (MTS) for commercial waste is flawed on legal, logistical and public policy grounds. Manhattan's commercial waste could also be addressed through (1) expanded commercial waste source separation, (2) use of anaerobic digestors, (3) a targeted lifting of the ban on commercial waste food waste disposers, and (4) a rapid conversion of the commercial carting fleet to less polluting and quieter alternatives.

Residential garbage would continue to be transported to New Jersey by truck. CB7 continues to ask for a new environmental impact statement and ULURP for West 59th Street as well as participation in solicitations for its commercial use.

DSNY collects, on average, 258 tons of household garbage per day. MW7 trucks export garbage to New Jersey for disposal, which is costly, takes a toll on vehicles, and reduces hours personnel are in CD7. Annually, MW7 collects 17,700 tons of paper and 4,100 tons of paper, metal and glass for a diversion rate of 22% of the waste stream. Over 3,000 recycling summonses were issued, three times the Manhattan district average. More effective outreach and education could increase the diversion percentage and further reduce residential tonnage.

DSNY plays an important role in keeping sidewalks and streets clean. In FY06, 91% of the streets and 99% of the sidewalks were rated 'acceptably clean'. Enforcement agents issued over 4,760 health and administrative summonses, most for dirty sidewalks and failure to clean 18 inches from the curb. CB7 recommends funding for 7-day coverage. DSNY moved to 1½ hour street cleaning, completing 99.4% of its mechanical broom routes and serviced over 1,000 street litter baskets with two pick-ups per day. The business improvement districts and the Doe Fund help by removing and replacing bags while many local businesses and residents misuse baskets meant for litter by discarding their garbage in them. CB7 finds and enforcement of rules prohibiting household and business use of baskets and more frequent service, especially on weekends and holidays, are needed.

### **Police Department**

NYPD tracks major crimes as a primary indicator. Overall, major crime statistics in CD7's 20th and 24th precincts, and PSA6 (public housing division) show a continuing downward trend in 2006.

Six officers from PSA#6 have been assigned to the 20th Precinct and are dedicated to Amsterdam Houses and Addition. CB7 encourages NYPD to implement this approach at Frederick Douglass Houses.

Staffing - NYPD has moved to a data-based deployment and response system that utilizes specialized units and task forces. Consequently, the number of uniformed officers in precincts has declined over the past 5 years. In the 20th and 24th Precincts, the number of uniformed officers (120 and 124, respectively) and civilian personnel (12 and 20) have continued to decline. PSA6, whose officers are responsible for NYCHA developments in eight precincts, has 127 uniformed officers. However, actual staffing levels are lower, due to homeland security assignments, military service, and sick leave. Recruiting, retention and civilianization are essential.

Illegal drug dealing. The 24th Precinct, PSA6 and Manhattan North Narcotics continue their initiatives to reduce illegal drug sales on the streets and in buildings. Drug sales were reduced, but community complaints about drug dealing are increasing as several major dealers are coming out of prison. The Manhattan North Narcotics team assigned to CD7 arrested one such group of dealers in June on conspiracy to sell. One special narcotics unit (module) at the 24th is essential, a second is needed to root out dealers and the organizations that support them.

Precinct support. NYPD needs to replace police vehicles, marked and unmarked, more frequently. Internet access and email would increase productivity and communication, and are long overdue in our precincts.

### **Fire Department**

CD7 is located in the 9th and 11th Battalions and has 3 Engine and 2 Ladder Companies. In FY06, the Department responded to 2,250 medical emergencies and 1,940 non-medical emergencies; and 292 structural and 252 non-structural fires. The number and size of fires has decreased because of new construction and renovations of occupied and vacant buildings. It does take more time to get to a fire in the new high rise buildings. Average response time to structural fires was 4:17 minutes; ambulance response time to life-threatening emergencies was 6:54 minutes.

Engine Company 74 on West 83rd Street is slated for a much needed renovation. 145 West 110th Street, built in 1959 and home of Battalion 11, Engine Company 76 and Ladder Company 22, needs roof repairs and window and bathroom replacements. Several houses do not have emergency electric generators, which are needed to charge radios among other things. The houses that do have generators find they are often not maintained and may not function in a blackout.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) finds that only 7% of New Yorkers has taken any steps to prepare for an emergency and has made community outreach a primary goal in its new mission statement. OEM is developing Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT.) Training for CD7 residents is expected to begin in September. The Manhattan Borough President's office has formed a working group of the Manhattan CERTs to share best practices and team needs.

Empowerment Institute is expanding citywide its successful pilot project in CD7, All Together Now, which strengthen household and neighborhood preparedness by developing building and block leadership teams. ATN will link with CERT in each district.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Traffic**

Traffic Study. Increases in residential and commercial development, in population density and in vehicular traffic are resulting in congestion and safety concerns throughout CD7. The NYC Department of Transportation is conducting a comprehensive traffic study from West 57th to West 86th Streets. Results will be presented to the community in a series of charettes in the Fall of 2006. The study will analyze new residential and commercial buildings, the growth in the number of visitors, and competing needs for parking and curbside access. Three areas are of particular concern are:

- Bow Tie, Broadway/Columbus Avenue/West 63rd-66th Street – The traffic study is a first step in a redesign to increase pedestrian accessibility and safety, reduce traffic/pedestrian conflicts, improve traffic capacity, and enhance open space uses.
- Broadway/Amsterdam Avenue/West 70th -74th Street – The traffic study can identify

changes in regulations to increase pedestrian accessibility and safety and reduce traffic/pedestrian conflicts.

- West 59th Street Corridor, Columbus Circle to the Hudson River, West 57th-61st Street. The traffic study can lay the ground work for a public transportation system, including ferry and bus service, for this new community, and provide much needed data for the consideration of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan and future uses of the West 59th Street Marine Transfer Station.

Riverside South. The Extell Development Corporation has submitted plans to the Department of Transportation for the design and construction staging for the closure of the West 72nd Street exit ramp from the West Side Highway. DOT is reviewing these plans. In conjunction with the closure, CB7 has called for the full construction of Riverside Boulevard to West 59th Street, linking Riverside Drive and Route 9A and reducing traffic on West End Avenue.

West 96th Street. Congestion and safety along the West 96th-97th Street corridor from the Henry Hudson Parkway to Central Park West, especially at the Broadway and West End Avenue intersections, are long-standing concerns. DOT is beginning a study of the corridor that can lead to effective mitigations of these problems. CB7 looks forward to community input and to the study's recommendations.

### **Subways/Buses**

CD7 is served by two major subway lines with two different routes. Along Broadway, the #1 serves local stations and the #2/3 serve express stations. Along Central Park West, the B/C lines serve local stations and the A/D lines serve 59th St.-Columbus Circle station - a major junction where the two major lines intersect. On the IND Central Park West line, more local trains should be added to the "shoulder" periods - immediately after rush hour - as many riders are still traveling at these times. One way to achieve this could be to run extra C local trains between West 168th and the World Trade Center E train terminal.

There have been service/dispatching issues regarding the Broadway #1,2,3 trains. Often there are delays on the #1, yet the #2/3 are not routed to the local tracks to pick up the scores of passengers on the local stations. NYC Transit should inform CB7 of all service changes due to the South Ferry Terminal and Fulton Transit Center improvements.

### **Subway Stations**

CD7 has 14 subway stations along the IRT and IND subway lines. In addition to recent renovations of the West 66th Street and West 72nd Street IRT and West 81st Street IND stations, four stations on the IRT have been brought back to their 1904 splendor: 103rd, 110th, 116th and 125th Streets and Broadway. In addition, two stations are being or will soon be improved:

- The West 59th Street IND/IRT Station at Columbus Circle. The station is an important transfer point for five lines, as well as a destination for thousands of tourists and workers, is a gateway station to the West Side and an important station for the entire City. The station has taken on added importance with the addition of the Time Warner Center, the Museum of Art & Design at 2 Columbus Circle, and The Hearst Tower on 8th Avenue and West 57th Street. Renovations include handicapped access, improved rider circulation, and new arcades and retail.
- Complete renovation of the West 96th IRT Street Station. The station is in the MTA's 2005-09 Capital Budget. Scope and design for the renovation were shown in May 2006, with construction to commence in 2007. CB7 welcomes the station

renovation plans and urges DOT to work with us to address surface traffic concerns.

### **Bus Service**

There is much room for improvement in bus service throughout the district as well as several opportunities for new and improved routes.

- M104 service was reduced after the introduction of free intermodal transfers. Service needs to be restored.
- M7 and M11 service levels are also inadequate. It would be useful for there to be additional service when schools get out.
- The M60 bus, which connects the Upper West Side with LaGuardia Airport, should be extended to the West 96th and Broadway area.
- CB7 requests a decrease in headways on the M79 and M86 that have resulted from the move to articulated buses. There are fewer buses, and loading and unloading of articulated buses take considerably longer than with standard buses.
- NYC Transit needs to pay additional attention to bus service when construction affects subway service in off-peak periods.
- CB7 supports additional “on-street” supervision of bus service to improve NYC Transit’s response to actual operation conditions. More supervisory attention needs to be provided on weekends.

### **Streets, Signals and Signage**

**Streets.** In FY06, the DOT resurfaced approximately 13 of the 193.6 lane miles in CD7. Street cuts for utility work, including fiber optics and cable, has left CD7’s streets in dire shape. We request resurfacing of additional lane miles and enforcement of DOT’s protected streets. There were 620 pothole complaints and numerous reports of holes in the pavement that collect water and restaurant garbage run-off. CB7 recommends a significant increase in resurfacing of streets and is working with DOH and DOT on filling in holes as part of the West Nile Task Force.

**Sidewalks.** Sidewalks are maintained by the owners of property abutting them. DOT stopped issuing violations and replacing sidewalks in front of multiple-dwelling-unit buildings. This is creating hazards, especially in bus stops. CB7 is concerned about the lack of repairs and public safety and calls on DOT to reinstate inspections and violations.

Many sidewalks with violations in CD7 are over sidewalk vaults, especially on Amsterdam Avenue and on Broadway. The replacement of a sidewalk over a vault requires special engineering and can be costly. CB7 recommends that another method be sought to skim-coat existing sidewalk surfaces over vaulted areas, when sidewalk replacement isn’t feasible.

**Additional Signage.** CB7 urges the installation of “Stop Here on Red” signs for the Broadway Malls (similar to the Park Avenue Malls) to alert motorists that they may not turn from Broadway heading east or west without stopping to observe the E/W traffic lights; signage for West End Avenue to stop the speeding traffic; and “Don’t Honk” signs in areas where commercial and residential neighborhoods have conflicts.

**Walk Signals.** CB7 urges DOT to rethink its stated opposition to “countdown clocks” on pedestrian walk-don’t walk signals. More and more cities are installing these devices and we would welcome test installations in CB7. We believe countdown clocks give pedestrians more

information than flashing signals (which give no indication of the time remaining to cross).

### **Red Light Cameras**

Pedestrians who find they cannot safely cross the street because drivers do not follow traffic signals. To discourage traffic from jumping the red light, CB7 finds red light cameras are needed at Central Park West and West 63rd Street, adjacent to the Ethical Culture School; at West End Avenue and West 72nd, 79th, and 96th Streets; and at West End Avenue and West 66th Street near Lincoln Towers. In June 2006, NYS enabling legislation was passed allowing for additional red light cameras, and CB7 requests additional installations in the places identified above.

### **Competing Demands**

In our popular and congested neighborhood, pedestrians compete for sidewalk space, not only with standard street furniture such as postboxes, bus shelters, and lampposts, but also with newsstands, fruit stands, street vendors, unenclosed and enclosed sidewalk cafes, delivery bikes, and newsboxes. CB7 supports the Coordinated Street Furniture Franchise, and looks forward to its implementation and the reduction of some sidewalk clutter.

CB7 and the community at large have been frustrated by several cases of abandoned enclosed sidewalk cafés. Such cafes are “temporary” structures erected on the public sidewalk. When abandoned, these structures are difficult and expensive to remove; and over time, landlords view enclosed sidewalk cafes as part of the rentable restaurant floor area. CB7 favors some kind of bonding mechanism to guarantee the removal of such a structure and urges the City to come up with an appropriate regulatory approach. In addition, something needs to be done to prevent the removal of building walls when these structures are erected.

In these security-conscious times, an additional demand on sidewalk space comes from institutions requiring protection from terrorist attack. Planters, bollards, and jersey barriers are sprouting in front of properties. DOT and DCP should develop guidelines for size and configuration to allow for maximum pedestrian flow while protecting sensitive sites. Alternative obstructions, such as closely planted trees and reinforced lampposts, should be explored as well.

## **PARKS AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

### **Parks**

CD7 is fortunate in having immediate access to two of the City’s great parks: Central Park and a substantial portion of Riverside Park, including the new 23-acre Riverside Park South. In addition to the active recreation areas in these parks, the district has 11 playgrounds. The renovation of the Booker T. Washington playing field on West 108th Street will be completed in 2006, and Frederick Douglass Playground at West 100th Street is in design.

In addition, CD7 has 35.5 acres of parkland. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) maintains this parkland with 10 full-time workers, including a full-time horticulturist, seasonal workers and Job Training Participants. CB7 believes that full-time, skilled personnel, including supervisors, horticulturalists and gardeners, are essential to maintaining the parkland and to building the department’s future management structure.

With fewer workers, adequate equipment is essential. CD7 needs a crew-cab pick-up to transport personnel, materials.

Park Enforcement Personnel (PEP) address many quality of life concerns. Playground As-

sistants bring much needed organized activities and supervision to neighborhood playgrounds.

### **Riverside Park**

Areas in need of restoration include the following: The 72nd Street pedestrian ramp, the Carrere Staircase at 99th Street, and the Riverside Drive pedestrian zone from 91st Street to 95th Street, and the Soldiers and Sailors monument at West 90th Street. Design of the multi-million dollar restoration of the Rotunda, a centerpiece of the park at West 79th Street, is underway and will provide a scope and budget for the project. DOT plans to begin the restoration of the seventeen bridges that create the structure in 2012.

### **West 59th Street Recreation Center**

CB7 has identified a dearth of swimming and gym facilities for youth, seniors, schools, and employees in the rapidly growing southwestern corner of the district. Accordingly, CB7 has advocated for significant investment to redevelop the West 59th Street Recreation Center, located between 10th and 11th Avenues. Phase 1 of the recently completed Master Plan calls for demolition of the derelict 59th Street building, construction of a new building to the East of the 60th Street building, and the creation of an outdoor park for active and passive recreation. Work is expected to begin this year.

### **Historic Preservation**

More than 1100 buildings in CD7 have been designated, most as part of historic districts. Twenty-eight individual buildings and monuments and four parks have also been designated. Many distinguished buildings and blocks worthy of designation are located on or north of West 96th Street, but few have been designated. As development grows in the northern half of the district, CB7 is reviewing the neighborhood's landmark-eligible sites, and has been working with the community on the designation of a Manhattan Avenue district, West 104th-110th Streets.

## **BUSINESS AND COMMERCE**

CD7 is home to a wide range of private enterprises, ranging from boutique businesses to national chains to not-for-profits of all types. CB7 wants to better understand the needs of small business owners' health insurance coverage and utilization of health insurance programs with a focus on retail small businesses and self-employed small business owners. In these efforts, we seek other community business partners, including the West Side Chamber of Commerce, the New York State Federation of Hispanic Chambers of Commerce, the National Hispanic Chamber of Commerce on Health and the three Business Improvement Districts (B.I.D.s) in the community.

Community Board 7 welcomes your comments on this document and your recommendations of additional issues for consideration.

*Sheldon J. Fine*

Chairman

*Penny Ryan*

District Manager