



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**Delores Rubin**  
Chair

**Jesse Bodine**  
District Manager

February 16, 2016

Michael Evans  
President  
Moynihan Station Development Corporation  
421 Eighth Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10001

**Re: Expanded Moynihan/Penn Station Redevelopment Project**

Dear Mr. Evans:

On the recommendation of its Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) voted on February 3, 2016, by a vote of 39 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to present the Board's priorities and recommendations with regards to the redevelopment of Moynihan/Penn Station. MCB4 is pleased to learn that this plan, which will transform a landmark in the heart of Manhattan, is moving forward.

**The Project**

Located above the Penn Station Rail Yard between Eighth and Ninth Avenues from West 31<sup>st</sup> to West 33<sup>rd</sup> Streets, the project will entail the redevelopment of one of the busiest transportation hubs in the country. The project includes:

- Reconstruction of the existing Penn Station (referred to as Moynihan Station East)
- Construction of the previously approved Moynihan Station in the Farley Building on the west side of Eighth Avenue (referred to as Moynihan Station West)
- Use by private developers of up to 8 million square feet of existing development rights associated with the Farley Building and the Penn Station/Madison Square Garden site, only 1.1 million of which is proposed to be used onsite as "destination retail" space above Moynihan Station East, with the remainder to be made transferable into the area around Moynihan Station

### **MCB4 Comments on Proposed Plans**

MCB4 has considered the impacts of earlier plans; its recommendations are on record since 2007. While Penn Station is situated within the Manhattan Community Board 5 boundaries, the proposed Moynihan portion of the project falls under MCB4's boundaries. MCB4 would therefore like to make the following recommendations regarding the impacts of the proposed redevelopment of the site, as they relate to our Community District:

#### **Proposed Moynihan Station Development Rights Transfer Area**

The Board has concerns regarding the 8 million square feet of development rights that could be distributed in or around the Moynihan Station. Such a scale of development would threaten the strong neighborhood character that MCB4 has worked, for over three decades, to preserve. Most prominently, our efforts to carefully plan and successfully negotiate density limits during the Hudson Yards rezoning would be quickly undone with the transfer of development rights to our district.

#### ***Ninth Avenue Corridor***

***The Board recommends development rights be transferred only 100 feet east of Ninth Avenue.*** Development rights must not enter the Ninth Avenue Corridor. This will ensure that our community retains its neighborhood character, while also protecting the West Side from a wave of real estate development that would threaten to diminish affordability for our residents.

#### ***West 30<sup>th</sup> and West 31<sup>st</sup> Streets between Eighth and Ninth Avenues***

The Board also has concerns about the inclusion of the block south of the Farley Building, located between 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Streets and bounded by Eighth and Ninth Avenues, into the area around Moynihan Station. The original Pennsylvania Station was constructed in a low-density, middle class neighborhood. This block, which is the bastion of such scale of development in the area, was rezoned in 1999 in order to preserve that character on West 29<sup>th</sup> and West 30<sup>th</sup> Streets. The block has maintained its historic scale, in sharp contrast to the extensive development that has occurred around it. ***The introduction of high-density development on this block should not be taken lightly. The Board requests that the Moynihan Station Development Corporation consider limiting the transfer of development rights between West 30<sup>th</sup> and West 31<sup>st</sup> Street to 100 feet east of Ninth Avenue.***

#### **The relocation of the Theater at Madison Square Garden should take into consideration the impact of traffic in the area.**

While MCB4 is not opposed to the relocation of the theater, as part of any relocation, there must be adequate planning for anticipated increase in traffic. The Board is highly aware and concerned about the impact that an additional 8 million square feet of new development would have on traffic in the area. Adding to that congestion is the relocation of the Theater at Madison Square Garden to the Farley Building. This relocation will introduce vehicles that will be traveling one block further west, to a block that will be receiving significantly more pedestrian and vehicular traffic after the development of the new Moynihan Station. Moreover, livery vehicles, which idle as they wait for passengers, will present additional congestion to the area. ***The impacts of traffic congestion resulting from this redevelopment must be further studied, and strategies to mitigate these effects must be implemented by your development corporation.***

**The Moynihan/ Penn Station Design should accommodate the expected flow of travelers and pedestrians.**

Our concerns regarding traffic congestion also apply to projected pedestrian traffic. Penn Station is already the busiest transit hub in North America, handling 650,000 people each day. The development of the Moynihan Station will greatly increase this number. Similarly, the crowds attending events at the newly-relocated Theater at Madison Square Garden will present a logistical challenge. ***The Board requests that the Moynihan Station Development Corporation fully explore and implement pedestrian infrastructure that will help keep congestion at a minimum.*** This will ensure that neighborhood residents, as well as visitors, enjoy a pleasant and efficient pedestrian experience.

**Conclusion**

MCB4 is pleased to see that plans for the new Moynihan/Penn Station are once again taking shape and expects regular updates on the progress of those plans. The Board looks forward to continuing working with your office in order to advance the Moynihan/Penn Station redevelopment in a manner that will make this transportation hub more efficient and modern while also taking into consideration the community's concerns regarding neighborhood impacts.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin  
MCB4 Chair



Jean Daniel Noland, Chair  
Clinton Hell's Kitchen Land Use  
and Zoning Committee

cc: Governor A. Cuomo  
State Senator Brad Hoylman  
State Assembly Member Richard Gottfried  
Mayor Bill de Blasio  
Carl Weisbrod Department of City Planning  
E. Hsu-Chen, Department of City Planning  
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer  
Councilmember Cory Johnson  
Manhattan Community Board 5