

March 9, 2004

Hon. Iris Weinshall
Commissioner, New York City Department of Transportation
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Re: News Box Regulations and Enforcement

Dear Commissioner Weinshall:

On February 18, 2004, the Transportation Planning Committee of Manhattan Community Board No. 4 discussed the rules that went into effect in April, 2003 regarding the placement and maintenance of news boxes on City streets.

The Committee was pleased to read in the New York Times of January 4, 2004, that 2,940 warning notices and 2,340 violations had been issued citywide between April and December 2003 under the new rules.

For many years news boxes in our district have blocked safe pedestrian movement at intersections and have been maintained in an unsatisfactory manner. We have long hoped that some method of policing the placement and maintenance of these boxes could be found that did not unreasonably infringe upon the First Amendment rights of the press.

We are pleased that the City has found a way to better regulate the placement and maintenance of news boxes. Though members of the Committee still encounter boxes illegally and unsafely placed and/or maintained at sub-standard levels, we are encouraged by DOT's eagerness to enforce the new rules, and we encourage continued enforcement of these rules at the highest level possible.

On March 3, 2004, the full board met and approved the recommendation of the Transportation Planning Committee.

Thank you for your consideration,



Walter Mankoff
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Joshua David
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee



John Rust
Co-Chair
Transportation Planning Committee

