

April 12, 2004

Jay L. Kriegel
Executive Director
NYC2012
1 Liberty Plaza, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10006

Re: West Side stadium proposal

Dear Mr. Kriegel:

We were disappointed by NYC2012's original bid book which states misleadingly that care has been taken to ensure that "proposed venues are typically located in communities that view them favorably." This has certainly not been the case in our community. Our board, neighborhood and civic organizations and all of the area's local elected officials have been unwaveringly opposed to a stadium on the West Side of Manhattan. Many of those opposed to the stadium have joined us in signing this letter.

We support bringing the Olympic Games to New York in 2012 and we would be willing to host appropriate venues in our community, but we cannot support any plan that contemplates a sports stadium over Manhattan's western rail yards.

A West Side Stadium would frustrate our community's long-term planning goals of balanced and sustainable growth and affordable housing. It would rob us of an opportunity to make productive use of a prime waterfront development site that could help support the City's financial needs. It would obstruct the natural southern expansion of the Javits Convention Center. It would wall off three blocks of the Hudson River waterfront from the public forever. And because it would be located in one of the most congested parts of the City, it would cause traffic nightmares. That is why a growing chorus of voices from throughout the City – including New York City's Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum, the *New York Times*, *Newsday* and the *Observer* – has expressed opposition to a West Side stadium. More recently the public at large is joining the opinion leaders in opposing the stadium. Witness the Quinnipiac poll results released last week that showed 60 percent of registered voters opposed to a West Side stadium if tax dollars are used and 53 percent opposed even if tax dollars are not involved.

The financing plan for the development – which the administration says is "integrally linked" to the stadium – is fuzzy at best. With an untried combination of commercial credit and bonds lent

J. Kriegel
April 12, 2004
Page 2 of 3

against future real estate tax revenues on development that may not take place in the time envisioned, the stadium is part of a risky financial scheme that would provide an enormous taxpayer subsidy for a sports franchise.

NYC2012's most recent submission to the International Olympic Committee claims that "NYC2012 has encountered no organized opposition to bringing the Olympic Games to New York." While the 2012 Olympics have not faced organized opposition, the West Side Stadium has.

The West Side Stadium is the Achilles' heel of our City's Olympic bid. Its enormous cost makes New York's Olympic budget the most expensive in world history – a certain concern for International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge, who has made controlling "the Games' cost and complexity" one of his highest priorities. And, perhaps most importantly, it is likely to prompt litigation from many quarters that will cause a fatal delay and negative publicity for the City's bid.

It is not too late. The IOC will not make its final decision until next summer. There are other potential locations for the stadium, which we know you have studied. Your bid book states that "should any localized opposition become problematic in the coming years, NYC2012 will be able to alter its Olympic plan by making recourse to an extensive array of alternative sites." But a thorough, community-friendly planning process takes time and forethought. Please act soon, for the good of our community, our city, and the success of our city's Olympic bid.

This letter was approved at the meeting of Manhattan Community Board No. 4 on April 7, 2004 by a vote of 29 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstaining and 1 present, but not eligible to vote, and is supported by the local elected officials and community organizations whose signatures appear below.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

Richard Gottfried
Assemblymember
75th Assembly District

Gale Brewer
Council Member
6th Council District

Sarah Desmond
Executive Director
Housing Conservation Coordinators

Joseph Restuccia
Executive Director
Clinton Housing Development Company

J. Kriegel
April 12, 2004
Page 3 of 3

Kathleen Treat
President
Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association

Chuck Spence
West 44th Street Better Block Association
President

Marilyn Rockefeller
West 45th Street Block Association
Representative

Elke Fears
West 47th/48th Streets Block Association
President

Doris Corrigan
President
Chelsea West 200 Block Association
(19th, 20th, 21st and 22nd Streets)

Marisa Redanty
President
Manhattan Plaza Tenants Association

William Borock
President
Council of Chelsea Block Associations
(400 W. 20th St. B.A.; 300 W. 20th St. B.A.; 400
W. 24/25 St. B.A.; 200 W. 15th St. B.A.; 200 W.
16th St. B.A.; and 300 W. 21/22/23 St. B.A.)

cc: Governor George Pataki
Mayor Michael Bloomberg
New York City Councilmembers
C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President
Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President
Other elected officials
Manhattan Community Boards
Queen Community Board Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8
Deputy Mayor Dan Doctoroff
Mark Ricks, Mayor's Office
Brenda Levin, NYC2012
NYC Dept. of City Planning
Brian McLaughlin, NYC Central Labor Council
International Olympic Committee
United States Olympic Committee