



**DELORES RUBIN**  
Chair

**Jesse R. Bodine**  
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

330 West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street, 26<sup>th</sup> floor New York, NY 10036  
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512  
[www.nyc.gov/mcb4](http://www.nyc.gov/mcb4)

August 16, 2016

William T. Castro  
Manhattan Borough Commissioner  
NYC Parks Department  
Arsenal West  
24 West 61<sup>st</sup> Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10023

**Re: West 20<sup>th</sup> Street Park Scoping Discussion**

Dear Mr. Castro:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4), would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the detailed presentation of the future West 20<sup>th</sup> Street Park. This site located at 136-140 West 20<sup>th</sup> Street between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenues has been envisioned as green space by many members of the community for some time. Learning that the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) took possession of the lot on May 1<sup>st</sup> of this year was welcome news to those in the community that had been advocating for this new park. Despite the area for the park being only approximately 100' x 100', we were delighted to see renderings of all the possibilities for this space including trees, a possible water feature, stage, public art, a small structure for storage of gardening tools, seating and play features. There are however a few areas of concern which we would like to highlight below.

- The proposed 4-foot fence consistent with the new Parks without Borders invites the potential for inappropriate nighttime use of the park and is not viewed favorably by this community.
- MCB4 would like to be assured that the fence be properly secured each night.
- Night lighting may be an issue so MCB4 requests that lighting be designed in such a way as not to penetrate the windows of apartments overlooking the space.
- MCB4 would like a well-defined program developed for maintaining the proposed plantings each season.
- Public Art including designs for the blank western wall is welcomed, but the community would appreciate a more robust process of informing the community and gaining input from the community about art works in addition to postings on the DPR website.

- The Waterfront, Parks and Environment committee was quoted \$500 per foot to build this Park. MCB4 would like the opportunity to understand how that compares with other DPR projects.
- MCB4 would like to see an appropriate design for infiltration of water in the hopes of reducing additional runoff into our combined sewer system. In addition, there is an opportunity for the installation of holding tanks in an already existing below ground containment space, in particular the basement of the existing building that is to be razed.
- MCB4 would like clarity as to whether dogs would be allowed in the park, understanding no dog without a leash will be allowed in any case.
- MCB4 has a long-standing policy requiring sidewalks have at least 8 feet of space to permit the unimpeded flow of pedestrian traffic. The proposed tree plantings and seating might impinge on this necessary space.

Thank you again for having this conversation with our committee. We look forward to seeing the further development of this park's design toward the end of the current year.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin  
Chair



Maarten de Kadt  
Co-chair  
Waterfront, Parks &  
Environment Committee



Lowell Kern,  
Co-chair  
Waterfront, Parks &  
Environment Committee

CC: Steve Simon, Department of Parks and Recreation  
George Bloomer, Department of Parks and Recreation