



December 8, 2021

Hon. Margaret Chin  
NYC Council Member

Hon. Carlina Rivera  
NYC Council Member

Hon. Corey Johnson  
NYC Council Speaker

Hon. Justin Brannan  
NYC Council Member

Hon. James Gennaro  
NYC Council Member

Hon. Ben Kallos  
NYC Council Member

Christopher Marte  
NYC Council Member-elect

Hon. Mark Levine  
Manhattan Borough  
President-elect

Hon. Gale Brewer  
Manhattan Borough President

To Council Members Chin and Rivera, CM-elect Marte, Borough President Brewer, BP-elect Levine, Speaker Johnson, Resiliency & Waterfronts Committee Chair CM Justin Brannan, Environmental Protection Committee Chair CM James Gennaro, and Contracts Committee Chair CM Ben Kallos:

We are writing to amplify this message from our Lower East Side constituents and communities:

**Lower East Side residents need our City Council representatives to hold a public hearing on the East Side Coastal Resiliency project.** The City must address urgent project-related issues, and ensure that this project meets the environmental, resiliency, health, safety, contractual and other standards and requirements essential for a project of such impact.

In a letter dated September 2021, MBP Gale Brewer summarized outstanding issues around this project. Residents want a hearing to address the questions she raised regarding:

- **Phasing** including projected schedule for Project Area 1, clarity on whether trees will be removed in phases and how area residents are to avoid construction areas while other areas of the park remain open;
- **Fill** including data on fill settling, toxicity of current fill and testing plan on areas where toxicity exceeds limits, as, without publicly released and reviewed fill parameters, the "difficulty to source" could result in the City settling for fill containing harmful toxins;
- **Pier 42**, including completion of the bulwark so as not to further delay the process of refurbishing Pier 42 as parkland mitigation, and, concerns that the design for Pier 42 prioritizes sports fields but does not include community-identified needs such as appropriate shade, bathrooms, and a riverside walkway to Pier 35;
- **Parkland mitigation**, including the need for free ferry service from Corlears Hook to Governor's Island, and the need for natural parkland, not concrete parkland and turf;
- **Lower East Side Ecology Center (LESEC) Compost Yard** including the need for more sufficient temporary space for the Compost Yard and improved communication and information sharing with LESEC;
- **Interim Flood Protection Measures (IFPM)** including studies showing IFPM are not feasible in the Project Areas, and more evidence to support claims that IFPM in the Project Areas would not prevent flooding, and an inventory of flood-resilient buildings within Project Areas;



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- **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** including the updated climate-change models, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and transportation changes resulting from the pending Manhattan Congestion Pricing Plan;
- **Broader health issues** including expected impact on asthma and other respiratory issues from loss of trees and fumes from trucks and barges, lack of real-time air quality data, and need for public health and safety information, such as recommending the closure of windows during construction and emergency preparedness training for those living in flood zones;
- **Broader hiring and contract issues** including Comptroller Stringer's reasons for not registering the City's contract with the construction company for the project: failure to meet Minority- or Woman-owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) goals and undisclosed details for its joint venture companies; and local hiring goals in the Project Area 2 above East River Park.
- **Con Edison** including the details and timeline of the work that is being planned, the community never received any information on this major aspect of the project.

In light of the Citywide Resiliency Plan that City Council passed in October 2021, we would like to know whether the East Side Coastal Resiliency project meets the latest criteria. Further, **Interim flood relief is needed, especially to protect our NYCHA residents.**

**Please call a hearing now.** These outstanding issues are significant and there should be full transparency and community involvement in all environmental policy making. The devastating economic, ecological and health consequences of this project will not only affect the Lower East Side and East Village areas, but will affect New York City as a whole.

Once the work in East River Park begins, all these issues become even more critical, as the process will be irreversible. The new City Council and Administration must ensure these issues are addressed, so that they may effectively oversee and manage this massive generational impact.

Sincerely,

Richard Corman  
President, Downtown Independent Democrats

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, NYC Mayor  
Hon. Kathy Hochul, NYS Governor  
Hon. Eric Adams, Dem. Nominee for NYC Mayor  
Hon. Jumaane Williams, NYC Public Advocate  
Hon. Scott Stringer, NYC Comptroller  
Tammy Meltzer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 1  
Jeannine Kiely, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 2  
Alysha Lewis-Coleman, Chair, Manhattan Community 3  
Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Sen. Leader  
Hon. Carl Heastie, NYS Assembly Speaker

Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator  
Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NY State Senator  
Hon. Harvey Epstein, NY State Assembly  
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, NY State Assembly  
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, NY State Assembly  
Hon. Chuck Schumer, U.S. Senator  
Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senator  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, U.S. Representative  
Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, U.S. Representative  
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, U.S. Representative



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