The City of New York

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COMMUNITY BOARD #9, MANHATTAN

July 16, 2007

The Honorable Michael A. Bloomberg
Mayor of the City of New York
City Hall
New York, N.Y. 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

Manhattan Community Board 9 urges your office to support a feasibility study for the re-development of the former Marine Transfer Station in West Harlem. The site could host a variety of uses that would economically benefit the community. For too long, the MTS site has remained abandoned, and with the city planning its future and accepting the challenges of global warming and climate change, CB9 wish to pro-active examine the possibilities of water related and environmental opportunities that would further advance our community's desire to be self-sustaining and sufficient. This would be a participatory process that will engage the community from all over our district. Some issues that we wish to explore are below:

II. Economic Opportunities

a. **Aqua farming**

The contribution of aquaculture to global fisheries increased from 5.3% in 1970 to 32.2% in 2000. By 2030, at least half of the globally consumed fish will likely come from aquaculture farming. Total global registered aquaculture production in 2000 was 45.7 million tons, of which 91.3% was farmed in Asia. Freshwater aquaculture production has increased at a particularly high rate; currently, it accounts for 45.1% of the total aquaculture production.

As the world's population continues to grow, efforts to increase annual fish production are essential to maintain food with a high protein value. To meet the projected demand, global production of aquatic products needs to double over the next 25 years. Because wild stocks are being increasingly over fished, 50% of marine

fisheries are being used at maximum capacity; the aquaculture sector must expand to meet future needs. Aquaculture production is expected to grow at an annual rate of 5% to 7% at least until 2015. Aquaculture development will provide employment and spur economic growth, both important factors for reducing poverty. However, this expansion and intensification of aquaculture should be monitored carefully.

b. **Hydroponics and mulching**

Hydro sprigging is the process of taking grass sprigs (pieces of grass with roots), mulch, fertilizer, tactifier and water. This mix is placed in a machine and spray under pressure to form a uniform application.

Hydromulch/Hydroseed consists of the mixing fiber mulch, grass seed, fertilizer and/or other agriculture approved additives (one is a tactifier or bonding agent) to water. This mix is placed in a machine to form homogeneous slurry. The slurry is sprayed under pressure to form a uniform application over the soil. Hydro mulching is, a term used by many contractors in the Southern parts of the U.S., when this slurry is 35 lbs. of mulch material or more per 1000 SF (1500 lbs. per acre). Anything less is called Hydro seeding in Southern U.S. Hydro seeding is use in the North for all thickness of Hydro planting. Hydro planting is a new term to represent all hydraulic planting.

Hydro mulch vs. Hydro sprigging vs. Hydro seeding vs. Seeding

Hydro sprigging is using actual piece of grass, therefore you have growth the same day it is applied. Hydro sprigging allows you to plant grasses that otherwise you would have to pay the high price of sod. It also allows for a faster establishment with less water.
Hydro seeding is better than just seeding. The mixture of fertilizer, tactifier, mulch and seed all soaked in water creates a process that germinates faster and is applied more evenly than seeding. Seeding can take several days of watering to reach the same stage of seed saturation as the other process is applied at.
Hydro mulching, because it is applied at heavier rates is superior Hydro seeding. Mulch will retain 10 times its weight in water. Therefore mulch applied at a heavy rate will result in large amounts of water retain age at the same time resist erosion due to bad weather. Hydro mulch with a tactifier can successfully provide erosion control to slopes and flat areas with the greatest success over seed or Hydro seeding. Hydro mulch and Hydro seeding forms an almost perfect environment for germination.

Our board believes that the Department of Sanitation would also love to develop a recycling education program. It can be a great draw for schools and community groups where small admissions could again be used to support the park. I believe that WEACT may also be interested in an ecology center that would work hand-in-hand.

Finally, because the lower level of the transfer station is open for boats to come in, we are proposing a Sailing Program. As an example of a successful program, we look to the NY

Harbor School which is involved with some programming in our area in partnership with the Police Athletic League.

III. Sailing Program in West Harlem

New York Harbor School (NYHS) is a small public high school that was founded in 2003 as part of the New Century High School Initiative (NCHSI) by The Urban Assembly, South Street Seaport Museum and Water keeper Alliance. NCSHI is a citywide movement, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, The Open Society, and the Carnegie Corporation, aimed at creating small, rigorous academic institutions that prepare New York's most under- served students with a college-preparatory education. NYHS seeks to do this by providing its students a challenging and compelling high school experience that engages them through study of the maritime culture, history, and environment of New York City and its surrounding waters.

Their unique approach to public education is borne of the belief that:

the maritime world provides the ideal context for an educational experience based on rigor, discipline and collaboration;

infusing a standards-based curriculum with hands-on, inquiry-based learning engages students and leads to improved academic performance;

every academic discipline can be invigorated, enhanced and enlivened when taught in a cohesive context of New York's relationship to water;

every student has within him and her the desire and intellect to reach the highest academic standards, given the right environment and expectations.

We hope that you will consider our request and support the financing of a feasibility study that the City will review.

This means a lot considering that our board is also developing a committee to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the European discovery of the Hudson River. West Harlem played a pivotal role in the last centennial celebration. It is our hope to continue that participation and proudly spotlight our community.

Sincerely,

Jordi Reyes-Montblanc
Chairman