



TESTIMONY OF UNITED STATES SENATOR CHARLES E. SCHUMER AND NEW YORK STATE SENATOR DANIEL SQUADRON REGARDING THE ALLOCATION OF LMDC FUNDING

September 17, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments.

It is clear that the work of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) is not yet finished and much remains to be done to revitalize Lower Manhattan following September 11th and, more recently, Hurricane Sandy.

At its July board meeting, LMDC identified a number of projects ready to be funded across Lower Manhattan that deserve consideration in allocating the \$50 million settlement related to the Bovis litigation. One such project that we have long pushed for, along with the community, and which LMDC has previously committed to funding, is the redevelopment of Pier 42 into a world-class park. Completion of Pier 42 is an important step toward our long-term investment in a Harbor Park – a central park for the center of our city, and an emerald ribbon around the borough.

We support the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) current request for additional funding to continue the redevelopment of Pier 42, which continues to be a top priority for the Lower Manhattan community, and must continue to be a funding priority for LMDC. We strongly urge the LMDC board to allocate sufficient funds for the anticipated \$12 million cost of Pier 42's phase 1A.

In 2010, we called on LMDC to use federal redevelopment dollars to build out Pier 42. Millions of dollars were being spent on building a green ribbon around Lower Manhattan's waterfront, while Pier 42 was being left behind. In 2012, we successfully secured \$16 million from LMDC to commence and complete the first phase of Pier 42's redevelopment, with supporting advocacy from Manhattan Community Board 3 (CB3), where Pier 42 is located, and the community more broadly. With this existing support, DPR has moved the project forward by drafting plans for the Pier's first and master phases, in close consultation with the community.

We, along with the community, have long believed that the redevelopment of Pier 42 is a crucial step towards improving Lower Manhattan. The redevelopment of Pier 42 into a park has consistently received a high level of community support. CB3 has continuously ranked the redevelopment of the pier as the region's number one capital priority. Moreover, thousands of visitors have flocked to the pier since our work with the community and DPR to open up a section of the pier for interim use.

It is our understanding that another allocation from LMDC would allow DPR to begin Phase 1A of the project. This Phase entails build-out of a playground and comfort station, as designed in the Pier 42 master plan.

We strongly believe that the Pier 42 project meets the criteria that the LMDC board plans to use to allocate new funding from the Bovis settlement. LMDC has already provided funding to the pier; new funding for the pier does indeed fall within the scope of projects already funded by LMDC; DPR has completed substantial planning and reviews for the Pier's redevelopment; DPR has managed to move the project forward in a timely manner; and, DPR has put forth a master plan for the pier which sets a clear goal for completion, and can attract diverse sources of funding for the Pier in the future, especially given its broad community support.

It is also critical that LMDC fulfill the commitments already made to our community over the last decade, some of which were identified by the Board at the July board meeting. One of the earliest and most significant such commitments is the Performing Arts Center at the World Trade Center (WTC). While the overall progress being made at the WTC site has been significant, there has not been sufficient progress towards the promised Performing Arts Center. With the June 2015 announcement securing 2 WTC, the Performing Arts Center is the only one of the eight proposed developments at the WTC site that lacks a definitive path forward.

Once completed, the Performing Arts Center will be a cultural fixture for the Lower Manhattan community, our city more broadly, and millions of visitors. The City and State have promised to work with our community to construct a Performing Arts Center of which we can be proud, and it is vital that promise be acted upon quickly. We look forward to working with LMDC and the Performing Arts Center's board to ensure the Performing Arts Center receives adequate planning and financing to ensure it comes to fruition. LMDC's job will not be complete until the Performing Arts Center's future is secured.

Lower Manhattan's resiliency needs also require due consideration in the LMDC process. Hurricane Sandy presented new and serious challenges in Lower Manhattan. At a minimum, LMDC must be at the table with other stakeholders as we figure out how to fund and coordinate needed resiliency improvements around Lower Manhattan. LMDC's billions in rebuilding efforts will be undermined if the community is not comprehensively protected against extreme weather events.

As we move towards the 15th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, there is no doubt that the Lower Manhattan community has unmet needs, and our work is far from over. It is crucial that Pier 42, fulfilling commitments for the WTC Performing Arts Center and evaluation of resiliency needs should be LMDC priorities, along with a number of other projects under consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with the LMDC to ensure Lower Manhattan has the resources and infrastructure to support the neighborhood's ongoing needs.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit comments.