

## ***Neighborhood Outreach Workshop Report Comments***

Below is a description of comments received in response to the January 20, 2004 release of the LMDC and City of New York Neighborhood Outreach Workshop report. The comment period for the report was open from January 20, 2004 to February 29, 2004.

The LMDC received 14 comprehensive comment submissions (13 submissions from individual organizations/individuals and 1 submission represented by three organizations) in response to the report that addressed the several different topics as listed below. These comments came from community based organizations that were represented at the workshops as well as interested individuals that had participated in the workshops on their own accord.

### ***The Process***

- Several comments offer thanks to the LMDC and the City of New York for reaching out to the communities to gain a better understanding of each Lower Manhattan's neighborhoods needs and hopes.
- Three comments pertained to the respondents feeling that the neighborhoods involved in the process had been through similar events before such as "Listening to the City". The comments evoked that nothing had been done in response to their efforts in the past and they want to ensure that their efforts would not be ignored once again.
- One comment reiterated that participants felt that the workshops were a repeat and wished the money for the workshops went to programs or services for New Yorkers and also pointed out that these comments were not reflected in the appendix of the report.
- Five comments addressed the concern that the Neighborhood Outreach Workshops were invitation-only meetings.
- Two comments expressed appreciation for the additional Chinatown/LES workshop.
- Five comments addressed displeasure with the long delay between summer workshops and January release of the report.
- One comment explains that the report simply outlines a laundry list of neighborhood priorities and fails to truly define people's real priorities. The feeling is that this will lead to decision makers being able to "Cherry Pick" individual projects and justify their decisions based on an illegitimate report.
- Two comments suggest that the LMDC should use the report to pick out representative groups of projects that seemed to emerge from multiple workshops, and put estimated price tags on them, and then proceed to hold a set of follow-up meetings where participants have a budget and are asked to develop their own priority lists of what to fund w/in that budget.
- Three comments explain that during the workshops participants stated concerns that their voices would not be heard by decision makers.
- One comment notes that there are differences cited between neighborhoods on the initiatives presented to workshop participants. The question was posed, "How will LMDC respond to the different priorities between neighborhoods?"

- One comment explains that the workshop report lacks a clear plan of action. It does not describe how these concerns will be incorporated into the decision making process or how community residents can continue to be involved in the planning and development of their neighborhoods.
- One comment questions how the LMDC and the City plan to convince participants in the workshops and the general public that it is acting in good faith and will take what the report says into serious consideration in the use of the remaining 1.2 billion.
- Six comments urge the LMDC to ensure that the priorities that were addressed in the workshops are not lost when decision are made about the expenditure of the remaining 1.2 billion.
- Two comments request a dialogue w/ decision makers rather than a hearing.

***Criteria: What types of things are important to consider when looking at any program or funding initiative.***

- Two comments define an apparent conclusion to the workshops as one that states all neighborhoods want many different improvements and ones that benefit people of all income levels and business of all sizes, not just big businesses and the wealthy.
- One comment states that improvements should benefit community residents of moderate and lower incomes and businesses that are small in gross income, not just the number of employees, as big businesses, big real estate and wealthy residential interests have had been addressed through Liberty Bonds.
- Two comments address that the report sometimes captures and sometimes misses the clear feeling that the rebuilding process needs to be equitable in its impacts, and the feeling that this has not been the case so far.
- One comment states that maintaining neighborhood character is strongly reflected in the summary report and is important and endangered by the big development projects. Respect downtown character.
- One comment states that during the workshop series concerns for rebuilding in the most environmentally friendly way were voiced.

***Transportation***

- Four comments state clear opposition to spending Community Development Block Grant money on the airport access options.
- One comment states that downtown neighborhoods will lose by not getting the local community improvements if the funding goes towards the lower cost alternative using existing East River subway tunnels for airport access. JFK access from downtown has been addressed by the opening of the airtrain, let that take its effects on gaining riders.
- One comment addresses that after reading all workshop notes, “airport access” was only a priority in 1 or 2 workshops, and those participants did not consider relative costs of airport access vs. other projects.
- Two comment states that what got notably little support in the workshops was the proposal for the tunnel to Kennedy airport for the LIRR. The tunnel was not a priority for this diverse group.

- One comment states that it would be outrageously illegitimate for the workshop results to be used to justify funding for JFK airport access.
- One comment states that the Neighborhood Outreach Workshop report is a red herring that has been cherry picked to slant it towards the approval of the JFK link.
- Two comments state that the Chinatown comments seem to reflect the common theme of re-opening Park Row.
- One comment supports the workshop participants call for major transportation infrastructure improvements and realize that these improvements will serve as the cornerstone on which a revitalized Lower Manhattan will be built.
- Two comments explain that transportation did not seem to be a top priority at the workshops however; it was presented as one of the main areas of focus in the report. The elements that were discussed were a bus loop, access to transit from the far west and especially east sides, and the Second Avenue Subway.
- One comment supports an improved Fulton Street Transit Center however the scope of the project must be expanded to include all points of entry into the station.

***Neighborhood Issues (including housing, civic amenities, and quality of life issues)***

- One comment requests that the LMDC reserve the CDBG funds for needed community improvement in Lower Manhattan not for JFK airport access.
- Two comments state that discussion of neighborhood amenities seemed trivial in light of more serious and necessary topics such as displacement and unemployment.
- One comment states that grant money should be used to fund new schools, more and better parks, pedestrian streets and local street management and civic amenities that will keep downtown livable.
- One comment cites comments made in the City Hall/Seaport District Workshop “Integrate income levels for all new housing, and provide affordable housing to balance the loss of mid-, moderate, and low-income residents.” The distinct meaning of people at the workshop was that the planned 300 upper-middle income “affordable” units was not nearly enough, and did not reach a wide enough spectrum of family income levels, leaving out moderate and low income families.
- One comment states that grant money should be used to fund Traffic/Environmental management w/ street level air quality monitoring stations and publicly report air pollution levels. Tighten traffic restrictions if/when levels get too high.
- One comment states that grant money should be used to fund affordable housing and related services w/ public services and amenities for more families, including schools and parks and affordable private services such as supermarkets priced for moderate and low income families to balance all the high-priced markets we already have.
- One comment states that a clear priority that can be drawn from the Neighborhood Outreach Workshop report is job creation programs.
- Two comment states that it is clear that jobs are a major funding priority. The report seems to blurs the line of distinction between direct job-creation and jobs hoped (but far from certain) to be created by trickle down impact of development.

- Two comments state that participants made it clear that they support the development of jobs for low-income people and the LMDC is urged to link low-income people with good jobs.
- Two comments cite the appendices as proof that participants strongly stressed the need for direct action from the LMDC on job creation, especially in lower income neighborhoods of Chinatown and the Lower East Side.
- Three comments state satisfaction with the LMDC's efforts towards addressing the issue of creating jobs, but there is fear that the LMDC does not understand what types of jobs that are needed.
- Two comments state that the report makes it apparent that mixed use neighborhoods and mixed income housing are major priorities across all Lower Manhattan communities specifically addressing the lack of access for low income families.
- One comment offers support for the affordable housing/HUD project and also ferry and train link service to LGA and JFK.
- One comment supports workshop participants' calls for retail development throughout the area that supports the residents' needs.
- One comment supports the improvements being made to beautify the security barricades and streetscape in front of New York Stock Exchange as well as the reduction of barriers to vehicular and pedestrian traffic throughout Downtown, including street closures and access restrictions.
- One comment supports a full service community center and the efforts of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y to become the operator of such a center.
- Community residents have always emphasized the need for more jobs and low-income housing.
- One comment defines the issue of staging tour and commuter buses as a priority prior to the finalization of the planning process.

***Public Spaces (including cultural institutions, parks, and open spaces.)***

- One comment states that workshop participants support the development of new park areas, upgrading existing park areas and providing maintenance and programming in the parks across all of Lower Manhattan.
- One comment supports the development of public open space, specifically, the East River Waterfront
- One comment supports an outdoor performance space including a stage for dance programming by the LMCC.

***Other***

- Two comments state that the appendices were underplayed in the actual report.
- Two comment states that the report seems accurate based on the participants' views and having time to comment on the report is appreciated.
- One comment states that the appendix of the notes for the City Hall/Seaport Workshop failed to include a comment made regarding a call for a continuing dialogic process.

***Comments were submitted by:***

Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Community Voices Heard (2)

The Downtown Alliance

Labor Community Advocacy Network to Rebuild New York (2)

REBUILD with a Spotlight on the Poor Coalition (2)

G.O.L.E.S. Tenant Union

Good Old Lower East Side, Inc. (G.O.L.E.S)/ Business Owner in Lower Manhattan

911\_healthAlerts/Resident of Lower Manhattan

Residents of Lower Manhattan (3)

Lands End One Tenants Association/Resident & Employee in Lower Manhattan

Employee in Lower Manhattan