

Greenwich Village Block Associations

20 Bank Street, New York, NY 10014

Bedford, Barrow &
Commerce
Bedford Downing
Bleecker Area Merchants &
Residents
Carmine Street
Central Village
(Cornelia, Barrow, Jones)
Charlton Street
Christopher Street Block &
Merchants
Christopher Street East
East 10th Street
East 11th Street
East 12th/13th Street
Far West Bank Street
Far West 10th Street
Grove Street
Horatio Street
Jane Street
MacDougal Alley Assoc.
MacDougal Street North
Mercer Street
Minetta
Morton Street
Mulry Angle/W. 11th Street
Perry Street
St. Luke's
Upper West 13th Street
Washington Place
Washington Sq/
Lower 5th Ave
Waverly
Waverly-Bank 11 Neighbors
West Houston Street
West 8th Street
West 9th Street
West 10th Street
West 13th Street - 100 Block

November 11, 2007
Hon. Adrian Benepe — Commissioner
Dept. of Parks and Recreation
The Arsenal, Central Park
New York, NY 10021
Dear Commissioner Benepe,

The Greenwich Village Block Associations (GVBA) is a community wide coalition dedicated to preserving and improving the quality of life for residents of our historic neighborhood. One of the GVBA's concerns about the Parks Department's plan to reconfigure Washington Square Park has been the arcane nature of the planning process. Nevertheless, we are still surprised that the plans for the park appear to cavalierly violate the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The regulations implementing Title II of the ADA, 28 C.F.R. 35.150(D) require that public entities of 50 or more employees have a transition plan which includes steps to make facilities accessible to the disabled. As we understand it, no such plans exist for this project. The Parks Department has indicated that it will make the bathrooms ADA compliant during Phase 3 of construction; that is clearly unacceptable. The Parks Department must make ADA compliance a priority. Furthermore, the regulations require that the Department of Parks and Recreation perform "Self Examinations" of accessibility for disabled persons. To our knowledge, the Parks Department has failed to do so.

Although the Washington Square Community Task Force has attempted to provide meaningful recommendations on the redesign of the park, the Parks Department has consistently failed to provide the detail necessary to make a productive discussion possible. The lack of detail regarding clear pathway width, access to grassy areas and bathroom renovation, specifically concern the disabled community, but it also aggravates an aggrieved community who believe that the Parks Department is forging ahead with an inappropriate and unwanted re-design for a beloved neighborhood green space.

We hope the Parks Department will review all documents relating to the redesign of Washington Square Park to ensure compliance with ADA regulations. The disabled community's needs must be addressed as a priority and as a matter of federal law. Although this will certainly not persuade the community to agree with many aspects of the Washington Square Park re-design, it will eliminate one area of dispute. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Marilyn Dorato
Executive Director

CC: Hon Jerrold Nadler
Hon. Deborah Glick
Hon. Thomas K. Duane
Hon. Michael Bloomberg
Hon. Christine Quinn
Hon. Alan Jay Gerson
Community Board 2
Members GVBA
Published on our website www.gvba.org

