

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 Place
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

February 11, 2009

Hon. Toby Bergman, Chair
Parks Committee, CB2
Washington Square Village
New York, NY
Dear Mr. Bergman;

At our January meeting, the Greenwich Village Block Associations (GVBA) agreed that the location and configuration of the Performance Space in Washington Square Park should not be moved or redesigned. The performance area as it existed in the past proved to be ideal for music and voice dispersal. Sight lines added to audience enjoyment of performances by optimizing views of the artists.

GVBA agrees with the Washington Square Music Festival (WSMF) executive committee that the NYC Parks Department space design should not relocate or significantly change the performance area. The Gerson/Quinn agreement (October 5, 2005) states "the permanently elevated concert stage will be roughly the same location as the current "Teen Plaza" ...and will be constructed to meet the needs of the Washington Square Music Festival." This agreement should be honored.

The re-design of Washington Square Park is a controversial project. Many believe that New York University has been unduly influential in the resulting design with community concerns taking a secondary role. The park's performance space should not be minimized and/or gerry-rigged. Temporary solutions to meet the space requirements of the WSMF — a temporary railing and a temporary platform addition — imply that the NYC Parks Department has not put a high priority on the needs of the festival as the community would wish. The popularity of these concerts attests to the significance of this program in lower Manhattan. We cannot overestimate the importance of giving the WSMF the home that it needs to mount a first-rate event. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Dorato
Executive Director

CC: Hon. Christine Quinn, Council Speaker
Hon. Alan Jay Gerson, Council Member
Hon. Deborah Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Adrian Benepe, NYC Parks Commissioner
Hon. William Castro, Manhattan Parks Commissioner
Hon. Brad Hoylman, Chair CB2
Community Board 2
Hon. Thomas Duane, NY State Sen.
Hon. Scott Stringer, Man. BP
GVBA Members
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