

COMMUNITY BOARD #1 – MANHATTAN  
RESOLUTION

DATE: DECEMBER 19, 2012

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: PLANNING

BOARD VOTE:                    33 In Favor    0 Opposed    0 Abstained    0 Recused

RE:                    N 130105 ZRM  
                          Manhattan Core Public Parking

WHEREAS: The Department of City Planning (DCP) is proposing to revise the zoning regulations governing off-street parking in the Manhattan Core, which is comprised of Manhattan Community Districts 1-8, south of 96th Street on the East Side and below 110th Street on the West Side; and

WHEREAS: The Manhattan Core currently has some of the most progressive parking regulations in the country with no minimum parking requirement, and with limitations on the amount of permitted parking; and

WHEREAS: The Manhattan Core Public Parking Study (2011) undertaken by DCP identified recent trends in off-street parking as well as a number of deficiencies in the 30-year old existing parking regulations; and

WHEREAS: DCP is now proposing changes to existing off-street parking regulations with the stated objective of ensuring that the right amount of parking spaces is being provided to support Manhattan Core businesses, residents and visitors while also addressing the city's sustainability objectives to encourage public transit and reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. The proposal addresses the following primary subjects: Automated Parking Facilities; Loading Docks;

**Rental Vehicle Parking; Commercial Vehicle Parking; Permit Accessory Parking to Operate as Public Parking; Special Permits, as described in more detail below:**

**Automated Parking Facilities.** The proposal defines guidelines for automated parking facilities including wrapping requirements and floor area exemptions. These provisions would encourage the development of automated facilities, which are a more efficient use of space and have environmental benefits over conventional attended garages. The Commissioner of the Department of Buildings would be given authority to determine capacity and the number of reservoir spaces needed based on the operational characteristics of the facility. This flexibility is needed as each automated parking facility is custom-designed

for the site and technology for this type of facility is evolving. The proposal would also increase the floor area waiver, now permitted for garages up to a height of 23', to 40' for automated parking facilities by Chair certification, provided that: (a) there is floor area above the garage (there has to be another use and not just a stand-alone garage); (b) the first story must be wrapped by another use to a depth of 30'; and (c) the façade up to 40' is consistent with the rest of the building's façade.

**Loading Docks.** The proposal would increase the minimum loading dock depth to 37' x 12' from 33' x 12' to address the issue of trucks blocking sidewalks in front of loading areas. Additionally, internal areas used for dumpsters may be excluded from floor area (up to 25' x 12'). The proposal would grant the Commissioner of the Department of Buildings a waiver through a certification for sites with below grade or infrastructure constraints and expand the ability to exempt loading requirements on zoning lots that have two street frontages, when one frontage does not permit curb cuts. The waiver would be allowed if the second street frontage, where curb cuts are permitted, has an unusually narrow street width (as in Lower Manhattan), or is encumbered by residential buildings, landmark buildings, or large commercial buildings that preclude access to a required loading dock.

**Rental Vehicle Parking.** The Manhattan Core is a prime location for car rental vehicles (and car share), which contribute to the low rate of car ownership, encourage transit use and reduce the need for off-street parking. The proposal would allow more flexibility for car rental vehicles to park in public parking facilities by increasing the permitted number to 40 percent in C2, C4, C5, C6, C8 and M districts. The current 100 space limit on rental car vehicles in standalone facilities in the Manhattan Core would be modified to allow for additional storage (150 in C2 districts, 225 in C4, C5, C6 and C8 districts, 300 in M districts). Rental car vehicles and car share vehicles would also be permitted to count towards the 50 percent of commercial vehicles in C5, C6, C8 and all M districts (see below). Reservoir spaces would be required in standalone rental car facilities.

**Commercial Vehicle Parking.** Many small commercial vans and vehicles (a maximum of 20 feet) have to leave the Manhattan Core to park overnight due to current restrictions on parking location. The proposal will provide additional opportunities for these vehicles to park in the Manhattan Core by increasing the number of spaces they may occupy overnight in public parking facilities: up to 50 percent in C5, C6, C8 and all M districts. This will reduce vehicle miles traveled and decrease congestion. Permitted car rental vehicles would be counted within this cap.

**Permit Accessory Parking to Operate as Public Parking.** The Manhattan Core study found that most new accessory parking facilities in residential buildings have received licenses from the Department of Consumer Affairs to

operate as public garages. This proposal would allow all new accessory parking facilities and those with DCA licenses to operate as public facilities within the maximum amounts allowed today. DCA-licensed accessory garages existing as of January 1, 2012 may file their DCA license with the Department of Buildings to indicate that public use is permitted.

**Special Permits.** Currently, there is a lack of guidance to inform CPC's determination about the appropriate amount of parking for a proposed development seeking accessory spaces above the permitted as-of-right ratios. Additionally, there are no findings on the appropriateness of the amount of parking for a proposed public parking facility application. New findings for the parking Special Permits would provide a rational framework for evaluating whether the number of spaces proposed is appropriate. The findings would set a standard of reasonableness for the number of spaces, based on recent residential development in the surrounding area and recent changes in the supply of public parking used by residents in the area. The proposed Special Permits would have a uniform set of conditions and findings for all applications and would also establish four new Special Permits to exceed as-of-right parking ratios and maximum capacities allowed as part of a development. The proposed Special Permit findings are described in the attached summary; and

WHEREAS: Community Board 1 supports the general principles underlying the proposed Manhattan Core Parking zoning changes, but has concerns regarding three aspects of the proposed changes: first, CB1 believes that permitting up to 40 percent of a public parking garage to be devoted to rental car parking could negatively impact the availability of parking in such a garage for local residents; second, CB1 believes that the local community should have the opportunity to comment on any floor area waiver to be granted by CPC Chair certification with respect to an automated parking facility under the new regulations; and third, CB1 does not agree with the proposal to allow new accessory parking facilities and those with DCA licenses to operate as public facilities within the maximum amounts allowed today and objects to the proposal to allow DCA-licensed accessory garages existing as of January 1, 2012 to file their DCA licenses with the Department of Buildings to indicate that public use is permitted, now

THEREFORE  
BE IT  
RESOLVED

THAT: Community Board 1 supports the proposed Manhattan Core Parking zoning changes with the following modifications: (1) that the percentage of rental car parking in a public garage be set at 25%, rather than 40%; (2) that floor area waiver that would be subject to CPC Chair certification with respect to an automated parking facility also be subject to a notice to the Community Board and Council Member in whose districts the facility is located, sufficiently in advance of the deadline for Chair certification such that the Community Board and Council Member would have opportunity to comment, and (3) that new

accessory parking facilities and those with DCA licenses not be allowed to operate as public facilities within the maximum amounts allowed today and, specifically, that DCA-licensed accessory garages existing as of January 1, 2012 should not be permitted to file their DCA licenses with the Department of Buildings to indicate that public use is permitted.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 3

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Gigi Li, Board Chair

Susan Stetzer, District Manager

December 20, 2012

Hon. Amanda M. Burden, Chair  
City Planning Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007

Re: N 130105 ZRM Manhattan Core Parking Zoning Text Amendment

Dear Chair Burden:

At its December 2012 monthly meeting, Community Board 3 passed the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Department of City Planning is proposing a text amendment (N 130105 ZRM) to the Zoning Resolution to modify the off-street parking regulations in the Manhattan Core; and

WHEREAS, the proposed regulations would apply to Community District 3 (among others); and

WHEREAS, the proposed text amendment would promote a more rational and efficient allocation of off-street parking; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of these regulations would result in a better match between parking needs and the amount of parking provided while addressing the city's sustainability objectives; so

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that CB3 approves the Manhattan Core Parking Text Amendment N130105 ZRM.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gigi Li".

Gigi Li, Chair  
Community Board 3



**COREY JOHNSON**  
Chair

**ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.**  
District Manager

CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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January 14, 2013

Director Amanda M. Burden  
Department of City Planning  
22 Reade Street  
New York, New York 10007

**Re: Proposed Manhattan Core Parking Text Amendment (N 130105 ZRM)**

Dear Chair Burden:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) appreciates the Department of City Planning's (DCP's) efforts to improve parking regulations in the Manhattan Core. These text changes are the first proposed major revisions to the Manhattan Core parking regulations since their creation in 1982 – when the city first limited, rather than required, parking in new developments in the Manhattan Core, comprised of Manhattan south of 110<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side and south of 96<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side. The 1982 revisions have proven successful with a December 2011 DCP study finding a reduction in car usage and car accumulation in the Central Business District while at the same time there has been substantial economic and residential growth.

As we stated in our July 27, 2012 letter when DCP first presented their concepts to the Community Board, we applaud this effort to update the parking regulations and feel many of the proposals warrants support. However, four of the proposals would present a major step backward, rather than building on the success of the 1982 policy as described by DCP – “limiting off-street public parking has “proved to be compatible with population and job growth and a thriving Central Business District.” We oppose the proposed text amendments unless these provisions are removed or revised.

- **Allowing Public Parking in Accessory Parking** garages: As additional residential and commercial buildings will be developed throughout the Manhattan Core, particularly in neighborhoods rezoned in the last 10 years, this proposal would increase congestion on residential streets. DCP indicates the major reason they make this proposal is to serve Manhattan Core residents who do not have parking at the residence. We propose a logical compromise to permit “Monthly Parking” for non-residents in accessory buildings to accommodate neighborhood residents, as this will not attract transient drivers and will still meet DCP's goal.
- **Allowing special permits to be based on the inventory of existing and projected parking spaces without taking into account parking garage vacancies, neighborhood traffic or character.** While we appreciate that the proposed new findings for special permits includes a focus on garage entrance/exit interaction with pedestrians and streetscape, we are concerned that existing findings regarding impact on traffic congestion and increasing traffic through local residential streets are removed. We feel those current findings should remain. We are also concerned that the revised proposed findings focus on overall projection for parking rather than include the need for the parking

(documenting insufficient current spaces/low vacancy rates). Without these clarifications, special permits can lead to the building of excess capacity and increased traffic congestion in residential streets. We also feel that changes permitted by Certification rather than Special Permit, including Automated Garages and enabling garage space below regulatory minimums, should require Community Board notification and minimum 45 days review.

- **Reducing reservoir requirements and merging all non-parking space into unified “access zones.”:** The proposed changes include substantially reducing reservoir requirements for public garages with less than 50 spaces and also classify reservoirs within newly defined “access zones” of garages that would enable using ramp, bicycle parking and other “access” space for reservoir space without separate dedicated space for each function. We feel this can lead to substantial overflow onto streets for entering cars during peak hours, a substantial problem already in many neighborhoods. We feel a more reasonable proposal would permit some flexibility and mixing of “access zones, but require bicycle parking and up to 50% of required reservoir spaces be separate space.
- **Creating new Special Permits for increased parking for Large Scale Developments, general Residential Growth, and Health Care, Arts, Public Assembly and Economic Generators, including within the Clinton Special District.** We are concerned about the potential for substantial increases in parking spaces and congestion in the Manhattan Core through these Special Permits, but understand the need to encourage economic activity and respond to a growing health care and cultural sector in the borough. We propose an inclusion of some maximum ratio or standards in lieu of a maximum number. We also feel strongly that these larger scale project Special Permits are incompatible with the Clinton Special District and should not be allowed in that part of the Community District.

While many of the overall proposals are beneficial, these above specific changes have the potential to reverse 40 years of successful efforts to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in the Central Business District (CBD) and will pose a specific burden on Manhattan Core neighborhoods with mixed use development.

Our analysis of the above-mentioned proposed changes shows that they would increase the usage and number of public garage facilities even though there is no demonstrated need for more public parking. In fact all statistics point to a decline in car usage and a related reduction of car accumulation in the CBD. Further the recent DCP study found that while the supply of off-street parking in the CBD declined by one-fifth since 1982, Manhattan employment increased by 16% and population by 10%. These statistics point to the success of the 1982 policy.

DCP’s presentation of survey results (August, 2011) points out that “moderate constraints on parking supply may help induce some portion of [drivers] to use transit instead.” As long as that is the case, we should not be increasing the number of transient parking spaces in the guise of accessory parking or otherwise.

These specific proposals will also negatively affect the safety and quality of life on residential streets and lead to more driving and traffic congestion in Manhattan Core, a trend the 1973 Transportation Control Plan and the 1982 zoning resolution recognized and set out to reverse.<sup>1</sup> In turn, the increased congestion is likely to worsen air pollution. New York City is currently not in compliance of the Clean Air Act targets for Ozone and PM2.5. NYC experienced 37 unhealthy air days in 2010, the third worst in the country.<sup>2</sup>

## Overview

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<sup>2</sup> FHWA,

[http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/airquality/publications/air\\_quality\\_planning/aqplan04.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/airquality/publications/air_quality_planning/aqplan04.cfm)

The Department of City Planning proposal rewrites Section 13-00 through 13-562 of the zoning code – “The Comprehensive Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations in the Manhattan Core.” In essence this rewrite includes several major changes, though only four (as noted below<sup>3</sup>) affect the Clinton and Hudson Yards Special Districts. This proposal will affect Chelsea directly and the remainders of the district indirectly, since a large portion of transient traffic drives through the district, in order to reach its parking destination in other parts of the Manhattan Core.

**1. Permit Public Parking in new Accessory Parking Garages (Section 13-21, “Public Use and Off-Site Parking) and permit existing (as of 1/1/2012) non-compliant Accessory Parking garages to continue to permit Public Parking (13-07d)**

As indicated above, DCP proposes that, “All “accessory” off street parking spaces may be available for public use.”

Making “accessory” parking “public” will inevitably attract more commuters and visitors, which would add to traffic congestion contrary to DCP belief that the proposed zoning text change will have “no impact on the number of cars in the street.” This proposal hurts residents and reduces their safety by attracting a much larger volume of in- and out-trips than would otherwise be generated by accessory parking<sup>4</sup>, instead of reducing traffic and improving pedestrian safety in residential neighborhoods, a goal the Planning Commission endorsed in 1982.<sup>5</sup>

DCP makes this proposal indicating that most existing garages zoned for Accessory-only in the Manhattan Core operate with licenses from the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) that permit public parking, a requirement when a commercial operator (instead of the owner) seeks to operate a garage. While we acknowledge this inconsistency between the Parking zoning and licensing, we think it is inappropriate to change a major policy (discouraging public parking in the Manhattan Core and particularly in residential areas) because of a loophole. DCP, which in this case is subject to the ULURP process, should ensure that the zoning text conforms to responsible planning rather than default to DCA rules - as inadequate as they may be. This is particularly concerning for CB4 because it comes at a time when there is substantial increased residential and commercial building, particularly in Chelsea.

DCP also notes that Manhattan Core residents utilize a majority of spaces in Midtown Core accessory parking with public garage utilization, though that is not the case in CB’s 1, 4, 5 and 6. They also expect this demand to increase because of the growing number of higher income residents in that Manhattan core, who have a higher car ownership rate (35% versus the existing 23% of current Manhattan Core residents). We do not agree with this assessment, since the ownership rate in the Manhattan Core has remained constant between 1980 and 2009 at 23% despite substantial up-scale residential growth. In addition, the study notes that households without children have a far lower car ownership rate – 20% in 2010 – and much of the growth in the Manhattan Core has been in 0 and 1-bedroom apartments. In fact, in CB7 and CB8, which have the highest concentration of higher income residents and households with children, the car ownership rate has decreased by 3% in the last 10 years.<sup>6</sup>

We also note that the proposed provision would make the existing ban on new Public Parking garages in Midtown Manhattan meaningless, since new buildings could build accessory parking as of right, but then

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<sup>3</sup> Automated parking, rental car establishments, small commercial vehicles and loading docks

<sup>4</sup> See EAS for 400 space parking garage for 310-320 West 38<sup>th</sup> Street (CEQUA 08DCP0003M)

<sup>5</sup> As stated in its March 16, 1982 report on the Manhattan Core parking provisions, “The Commission believes that, as a matter of good land use planning, public parking facilities do not belong in residential buildings or neighborhoods” as of right.

<sup>6</sup> MNCORE HH\_Vehicle\_Increase\_1980+. DCP, December 2012



legally utilize the facility as a Public Parking garage without a Special Permit. The barriers to creating new public parking would be lowered.

In the long term while this will likely lower parking costs for transient parkers, by increasing the parking space supply available to them. It would likely increase parking costs for resident (particularly in neighborhoods adjacent to major commercial and/or tourist areas) as it increases the demand from transient parkers for spaces in those garages.

DCP also proposes to grandfather garages that do not comply with the current zoning and operate public parking in what should be an accessory only garage. This would reward operators who willfully engaged in years of illegal behavior, allow them to continue to put residents at risk and give them a competitive advantage over new legal operators who will have to comply with new reservoir and other requirements.

We feel meeting the demand of Manhattan Core car owners in buildings without parking could be met more easily and with fewer in-and-out traffic movement by permitting currently Accessory Garages to be “Only for Residents and Monthly Parking,” with signs and plaques stating that and the Monthly Parking rate. DCA regulations already provide that signs at certain residential accessory garages can say “No transients or non-residents permitted. Residential tenants only.” That rule could be amended to include all accessory garage and to have required external signs stating, “No transient parking permitted, Residential Monthly Parking Only” in Accessory Garages.

**Thus, Manhattan Community Board 4 opposes the Department of City Planning’s revisions of Sections 13-000 to 13-562 of the zoning code unless the proposed Sections 13-21 and 13-07d delete the reference to Public Parking and replace it with Accessory and Monthly Parking. All currently non-compliant garages should be required to comply with the new safety [§13-26] and reservoir requirements [§13-25] within a certain time period.**

## **2. Reservoir Space (Section 13-25)**

Manhattan CB4 appreciates that under DCP’s proposal as of right Accessory garages will be required to have reservoir space – previously only Public Garages and Accessory garages applying for Special Permits had reservoir requirements. However, we are concerned that DCP proposes to classify reservoir space as part of an “Access Zone “ (13-02) of a garage, which also includes ramps, bicycle parking, and pedestrian egress routes. This implies that reservoir space does not need to be separately designated and could be part of the ramp or other “Access Zone” areas. According to DCP, in fact, most garages currently use ramps for a majority of their reservoir space. We feel this is insufficient. In addition, the proposal calculates reservoir parking by “parking space,” but does not define the dimensions of the parking space.

DCP also proposes to eliminate reservoir requirements for attended accessory and public parking garages with less than 25 spaces and reduce the requirement from 20% to 5% of the permitted parking spaces for parking garages with between 25 and 50 spaces. This would be a substantial reduction from the current policy, which exempts only garages with less than 10 spaces and requires 20% of parking spaces for garages with 10 and 50 spaces. It keeps the requirement for 50 to 100 spaces at 10%.

We are concerned by such a substantial reduction in reservoir space and size since, without proper reservoir, the queuing for garages can spill onto the street. In CB4 where a number of parking garages serve the theater district, arrivals are very concentrated in time; and without proper staffing for peak hours arrivals, cars overflow in the street. Cars standing in the way of pedestrians at garage entrances are a frequent complaint of pedestrians in CB4. However, given the lower traffic in smaller accessory garages, we support the request for some reduction.

Thus, Manhattan Community Board 4 **opposes** the Department of City Planning's revisions of Sections 13-000 to 13-562 of the zoning code unless proposed Sections 13-25 is rewritten to state that accessory and public parking facilities with more than 25 parking spaces but less than 100 spaces, are required to have off-street reservoir space of at least 10% of the parking spaces provided in the facility. We also request that at least 50% of reservoir space must be solely reservoir space. Further, we request that DCP define the size (in square feet) of parking spaces to be used in meeting the reservoir requirement.

### **3a. Special Permits, Certifications, and Authorization (13-40, 13-41, 13-42, 13-43, 13-431, 13-432, 13-45, and 13-46a-c)**

DCP proposes to replace the current set of special permit *findings* with a universal set of *conditions* and *findings* for all applications. The proposed special permit *conditions* include layout provisions for as-of-right facilities, enclosure and screening requirements, curb cut restrictions; reservoir space requirements, pedestrian safety requirements, and minimum and maximum size of facility provisions. Special permit *findings* would require the City Planning Commission to find that locations of entrances and exits will not result in a conflict between pedestrian and vehicular movement, locations of entrances and exits will not interfere with efficient function of streets, exempted floor area in public parking garages is needed to prevent excessive on-street parking demand, and the parking facility/curb cut is not inconsistent with the character of the existing streetscape.

We applaud the proposed conditions, as well as the idea of giving more information and flexibility to the Commission to evaluate Special Permits and to encourage uniformity and simplicity. However with the rewrite, some key concepts have been removed from the findings (the current 13-561), most notably verifying the need for parking for the building occupants and reviewing that the proposed use would "draw a minimum of vehicular traffic to and through local residential streets." Also concerning is that DCP is removing a requirement that the Department of Transportation and the Department of Environmental Protection review applications for special permits (and Authorizations) for traffic and air quality impacts, respectively. Finally DCP does not include an evaluation of vacancies/utilization in the area and safety or lack thereof at adjacent intersections. We propose that DCP include the evaluation of vacancies/utilization for all special permit applications and include the current special permit findings that relate to vehicular traffic through residential streets.

The provision (Section 13-431) also enables the City Planning Commission to permit parking facilities to have less than the required gross square feet providing City Planning Commission reviews their plan for lay-out and provides a "Certification" that the garage has sufficient space for parking, travel aisles and reservoir spaces given car turning required to enter and exit. While we are not opposed to this provision, we do request that the local Community Board be notified of any requested Certifications and be allowed to review the application and make comments to DCP within a 45 day period.

It also (Section 13-432) enables the City Planning Commission to approve an increase of exemption from FAR for a garage in a building that has at least 2 FAR from the current 23' to 40' feet if the City Planning Commission provides "Certification" that the proposal is for an automated parking facility, the facility has screening as otherwise required for a parking facility and that the street wall above 14' has a similar street wall and material composition as to the area above the 40.' We support the concept of encouraging use of Automated Garages, garages where vehicular storage and retrieval is "accomplished entirely through a mechanical conveyance system." We understand that this technology improves vehicle safety within garages, makes for more efficient use of space, and encourages increased ground floor retail uses. However, since we are concerned that the street wall be consistent with the rest of the building, and often the surrounding buildings, we request that Community Boards be notified of any requested Certifications and be allowed to review the application and make comments to DCP within a 45 day period.

There is also a provision, similar to a current provision (proposed deleted 13-551), permitting CPC to provide “Authorization” to permit a building that currently does not have any parking to add up to 15 spaces (13-442) with the findings that entrance and exits do not unduly interfere with the pedestrian or vehicular traffic movement or other street lanes (e.g. on-street loading and unloading) and that it not be inconsistent with the surrounding streetscape. Given the small number of spaces proposed for this Authorization we are not opposed to this provision, but are concerned that required additional curb cuts can impact the street, the reprogramming of a portion of the building can impact the street ambiance and, if public parking is permitted in accessory parking, the increased traffic. We understand that Community Boards are already notified of proposed “Authorizations.”

**Thus, Manhattan Community Board 4 opposes the Department of City Planning’s revisions of Sections 13-000 to 13-562 of the zoning code unless proposed Sections 13- 40, 13-431, 13-432, 13-442 and 13-45 are rewritten to include the following:**

- Retain the findings of “building occupant need” and limited impact on “local residential streets” (Currently found in the proposed deleted 13-561).
- Include a finding that there is “insufficient parking spaces (e.g. Taking in account current vacancy rates),”<sup>7</sup> for accessory parking permits; and include them in all proposed new public parking permits (13-461, 462, 463, and 464, as outlined below),
- Include a finding requiring mitigation of dangerous intersections nearby for all permits
- Amend the finding related to vehicular entrances and exits not resulting in “any undue conflict between pedestrian and vehicular movement,” by adding “or to increase or create pedestrian safety hazards.”
- Include a finding of need based on vacancies and clarify the language of the new special permit for Limited Increase of Parking Spaces in Existing Buildings or Parking Facilities (13-45)
- Retain the finding and include it in all special permits that “the proposed #use# will not cause a violation of ambient air quality standards, exacerbate an existing violation of such standards, nor be inconsistent with maintenance of such standards or the goal of reducing traffic congestion in the Central Business District.”
- Retain the role of DEP and DOT in determining traffic, and air quality impacts by retaining and strengthening the current Section 13-53 by giving the departments two months to respond.

### **3b. New Special Permits for**

- **Additional Parking Spaces Section 13-46d and 13-461**
- **Additional Parking Spaces for Residential Growth 13-462**
- **Additional Parking Spaces for Health Care, Arts or Public Assembly Uses; 13-463**
- **Additional Parking Spaces for Economic Development Uses 13-464**
- **Additional Parking Spaces for Additional Parking Spaces for Large Scale Development (exceeding 1.5 acres)**

DCP proposes to replace the Existing Special Permit for additional Accessory Parking (proposed deleted 13-561) with a Special Permit for “Additional Parking Spaces for Residential Growth” (proposed 13-461) and to add three additional Special Permits.

The proposed Additional Parking Spaces for Residential Spaces would permit a proposed residential Accessory garage to exceed the 20% of apartments and 200 space maximums if the City Planning Commission finds there has been residential growth in the immediate vicinity of new facility and that there

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<sup>7</sup> Vacancies would be determined by a utilization study as specified in the CEQR technical manual.

is a reasonable expectation that the number of off street parking spaces in the area “is not excessive in relations to recent trends.” It also permits garages to exceed to the 200-unit maximum without meeting any finding for vicinity need if it remains within the 20% limit. In both cases, the findings outlined in the previous section - not unduly interrupt pedestrian traffic or cause vehicle/pedestrian conflicts; not interfere with efficient street functioning; and not be inconsistent with the existing streetscape - apply.

This provision will severely weaken the important limits on Accessory Parking imposed 1982 at the same time DCP proposes to open these facilities to Public Parking and is thus very concerning. We would prefer that the current 13-561, which requires a need based on the individual building, remain in place and that this proposal be withdrawn. At a minimum we insist that the findings we request above for all Special Permits, be clearly applicable here – documentation of low vacancy rate at nearby garages, limited effect of nearby residential street traffic, DOT review and finding of limited traffic impact (both degree of traffic and accidents), DEP funding of limited air quality impact, and documented additional need in the building.

The Proposed Additional Parking for Health Care, Arts and Public Assembly uses and Economic Generators would permit hospitals, community facilities and office/manufacturing to exceed the current Accessory 100 space maximums and Retail to exceed the current 10 space Accessory maximum through a Special permit process that includes the conditions and findings mentioned in the above section, as well as a finding that increased parking is essential to their operation and that they have taken reasonable measures to minimize parking demand.

The proposed Additional Parking Spaces for Large Scale Development (over 1.5 acres), which also waives the Accessory 200 space maximum for residential, 100 space maximum for community facility/commercial/manufacturing and the 10-space maximum for retail. In addition to the findings outlined in the previous section, this special permit also requires documentation that there is a parking deficit created by the relocation of parking users from eliminated facilities or that there insufficient capacity to accommodate potential parking users in surrounding areas. It also requires a finding that reasonable efforts were made to minimize parking demand.

While we are concerned about the long-term potential for these Special Permits on the Manhattan Core, we understand the need to be responsive to growing health care, arts (museums, theaters, etc.) and high impact and larger economic projects. However, we would request that maximum amounts include some proportional measurement, such as the Retail/Commercial/ Community Facility limit of 1 space per 4,000 square feet/Residential 20% of apartments or another reasonable measure. We also request that the reasonable measures to minimize parking demand finding be expanded to also require a finding that the project design/traffic plan minimizes vehicular travel in nearby residential neighborhoods (through way-finding signs, speed bumps and other means). Reasonable measures to minimize parking demand should be required to include inducement to use nearby mass transit. We also request that these Special Permits not be permitted in the Clinton Special District. The Clinton Special District was created specifically (Section 96-00 of the zoning code) to “preserve and strengthen the residential character” and “preserve the small scale character” of the area. These Special Permits run in direct contradiction to that purpose.

**Thus, Manhattan Community Board 4 opposes the Department of City Planning’s revisions of Sections 13-000 to 13-562 of the zoning code unless proposed Sections 13- 461, 462, 463 and 464 unless:**

- Additional findings as outlined in section 3A of this letter also be included;
- Section 461 include findings related to the need in for additional accessory parking within the building;
- Sections 462, 463 and 464 should not apply to the Clinton Special District;

- Sections 462, 463 and 464 should have an additional finding that the traffic plan minimizes vehicular travel through nearby residential neighborhoods;
- Section 462, 463 and 464 should mention some specific examples of how a Special Permit applicant can meet the finding that the development includes reasonable measures to minimize parking demand that might include active inducements to use area mass transit, car pooling apps., etc.

#### **4. Permitted Parking for Automobile Rental Establishments (13-15) and Permitted Parking for Car Sharing Vehicles and Commercial Vehicles (13-16)**

DCP proposes to increase the percent of permitted car rental vehicles in Manhattan Core Accessory garages from the existing 10% to 40% in C1, C2, C4, C5, C6, C8 and M districts. DCP also proposes increasing car share vehicles to 20%. The combined Car Share and Rental Vehicles percentages would be increased to 40% in C1-5, C1-6, C1-7, C1-8, C1-9, C2, and C4 districts and to 50% in C5, C6, C8, M1, M2 and M3 Districts. We note that this provision will apply to the Hudson Yards and Clinton Special Zoning Districts. We also note that Chelsea has substantial C6-2 and 2A, C6-3 and 3A, and C6-4 mapped areas and several areas with C2-5 overlays along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the east sides of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and M1-5 between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Hell's Kitchen/Clinton Special District has substantial C2-5 overlays along both 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the east side of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and M2-4 between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Most of these areas have already become or are in the process of becoming substantially residential or more mixed use in character.

We support DCP's goal of increasing rental car and car share availability as a means to decrease car ownership rates. However, we are concerned the substantial proposed level of increase – from 10% to 40% for car rentals in C Districts and from 100 maximums to 150, 225 and 300 maximums, depending on zoning district. Rental cars can cause increased traffic, particularly on weekends, in these increasingly residential areas. We would propose instead an increase (including for combined Car Share and Rental Car spaces) to 25% with an overall maximum of 150 spaces in all C2, C4, C6, C7 and C8 Districts and 40% with an overall maximum of 200 spaces in M Districts. We would also propose that any rental car parking in the Clinton Special District require a Special Permit.

**Thus, Manhattan Community Board 4 opposes the Department of City Planning's revisions of Sections 13-000 to 13-562 of the zoning code unless proposed Sections 13-15 is revised to indicate Rental Parking/Car Share of up to 150 spaces in C2, C4, C6, C7, and C8 Districts and 200 Spaces in M Districts and proposed Section 13-16 be amended to limit combined car rental parking and car share parking not to exceed 25% in C1-5, C1-6, C1-7, C1-8, C1-9, C2, C4, C5, C6, C8, and 40% in M1, M2 and M3 zones and require a Special Permit to increase above the current maximums in the Clinton Special District.**

5. Most of the additional provisions in the proposed zoning text are ones that CB4 supports and which improve the current system. We have some recommendations one two of the changes we hope DCP will consider to further improve their affect.

- Loading Docks 13-30

The proposal would increase the minimum loading dock depth to 37 ft x 12 ft. from 33 ft. x 12 ft. to address the issue of trucks blocking sidewalks in front of loading areas. Additionally, internal areas used for dumpsters may be excluded from floor area (up to 25 ft. x 12 ft).

This proposed change, based on the request of another Community Board, should assist in reducing truck loading and unloading from double-parked positions. **Manhattan CB4 supports the proposed changes to loading dock depth and FAR exemption for dumpsters (Section 13-30)**

- Floor Area Exemption 13-23

In residential districts, exempted floor area would also have planting and screening requirement. This proposed change, adding conditions for the floor exemption, would encourage new developments with parking garages to have other uses adjacent to the garages and encourage planting and screening. **Manhattan CB4 supports the proposed changes for conditions for floor area exemption in new parking garages.**

- Retail Uses – 13-12c

The as-of-right retail parking allowances for Use Groups 6A and 6C (smaller retail shops) and 10A (larger retail shops) would be capped to 10 spaces. This change would cap as of right spaces for retail to the lesser of 1 space per 4,000 square feet or 10 spaces. This would limit these higher turnover spaces and thus likely reduce traffic. **Manhattan CB4 supports the proposed change capping retail related parking.**

- Reduction in Parking Spaces – 13-445

This provision enables the City Planning Commission to authorize the reduction in the number of parking spaces in facilities built previous to the 1982 Manhattan Core Parking changes, as long as the reduction won't unduly impact the residents, business, or community facility affected. This provision has the potential to eliminate unneeded parking spaces in the Manhattan Core. **Manhattan Community Board 4 supports the proposed change permitting CPC to authorize the reduction of pre-1982 approved parking spaces.**

- Commercial Vehicles – 13-16b2

The proposed amendment would permit commercial vehicles of less than 20 feet to have up to 50% of the spaces in public parking garages. This provision would assist CB4 in dealing with the substantial number of commercial vehicles that park on our streets. **MCB supports the proposal to permit commercial vehicles to use up to half of the spaces in public parking garages.**

- Encouraging Ramp and Reservoir Space – 13-27

This proposed amendment indicates that access zones, which include ramps, reservoirs, mechanical space, pedestrian access, and bicycle parking, in parking lots shall not have a minimum or maximum gross surface area. We support the effort to not establish a maximum, since the economics of having non income producing space already provides a disincentive. **Manhattan Community Board #4 supports this proposal to have no maximums on "access zone space," but encourage a minimum totaling at least the total of minimum required bicycle parking, mechanical room, and 50% of reservoir space calculation in a garage.**

- Pedestrian Safety and Access 13-26

The proposed regulations would require a stop sign and a speed bump on the exit lanes of accessory parking garages. Community Board #4 has long supported increased safety features for parking garage exits and entrances and supports this change. However we feel there should additional safety features for those with visual disabilities, as well as for larger garages. **Manhattan Community Board #4 supports the proposed changes to the Manhattan Core Parking that require pedestrian safety and access, but also request that detectible warning strips with truncated domes also be required on the sidewalk around the entrance/exit curb cuts. We also request that garages with over 200 spaces be required to have additional safety devises such as a warning light and/or sound for pedestrians when vehicles are leaving.**

## 6 –Other issues

Changes to Manhattan Core Parking have not occurred since 1982 and are not likely to occur again for a similar time. We thus request that DCP review a couple of existing requirements for further refinement:

- **Curb Cuts on Wide Streets:** Curb cuts for Public Parking Garages on wide streets are prohibited in 8 locations in the Manhattan Core. Currently only a small portion of one of those locations is in CB4 (West 14<sup>th</sup> Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue). In addition, curb cuts are prohibited in the Special Clinton District along West 42<sup>nd</sup> Street (Section 96-21f). **CB4 requests that DCP consider adding some additional high vehicle and pedestrian trafficked areas including West 14<sup>th</sup> Street from 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue between West 14<sup>th</sup> and West 23<sup>rd</sup> Streets, and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue between West 42<sup>nd</sup> and West 57<sup>th</sup> Streets.**
- **Self-Parking Facilities:** Section 13-25d requires that accessory and public self-parking facility entrances have a barrier a minimum of 20 feet beyond the street line. This minimum distance should be related to the capacity, and thus the likely queuing, for the garage. **CB4 requests that DCP consider increasing this distance by 10' each 100 increase in capacity above 200.**

We also want to note, with substantial appreciation, the extensive outreach DCP staff undertook in this process. They gave in-depth presentations to our Community Board first after the completion of the study and then again after the regulations were drafted. We understand they made similar efforts with other Manhattan Core Community Boards. In CB4, they took an extra step of doing the presentation for two different committees in one month. They also made themselves available to Community Board members and advocates to discuss the proposed changes. While we disagree on some larger points in the proposed zoning change, we also feel that many of the positive changes we support would not have occurred if not for the dedication of the policy work staff.

We look forward to working with the DCP to effect the proposed changes.

Sincerely,



Corey Johnson  
Chair



Christine Berthet  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee



Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair  
Transportation Planning Committee



J. Lee Compton, Co-Chair  
Chelsea Preservation & Planning Committee



Brett Firfer, Co-Chair  
Chelsea Preservation and Planning Committee



Jean-Daniel Noland, Co-Chair  
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee