Dear Mr. /Ms.:

We, the community in the Dunbar Apartments and around the proposed Plaza plan are against the Bradhurst Plaza Proposal for many reasons. The main reason, which has not been addressed, is that it permanently closes the intersection in front of 2816 8th Avenue between 150th st and Macombs Place creating emergency access issues for fire, EMS and police as well as Access-A-Ride and other car services for the elderly and disabled.

We ask that you read our concerns and evaluate or re-evaluate your position for the Plaza Proposal.

The supporters of the Plaza have been pushing the “safety, fresh produce and open space” aspect of the plan, but not addressing the reason their plan has to include the permanent closure of a 150 year old street. Some of the issues not fully addressed to the satisfaction of the community against the Plaza Proposal are:

**Safety Data**

No correction or data update of misrepresented, misinterpreted and incorrect data for the “safety issue” argument

They claim in their Plaza Proposal Summary:

Safety
15 crashes occurring at plaza site from 2008 – 2012, 3 resulting in severe injury
12 crashes at adjacent intersections during the same time period
Source: NYCDOT Traffic Safety Data Viewer

- The source listed “NYCDOT Traffic Safety Data Viewer” does not exist.

There is a Traffic Data Viewer on [https://www.dot.ny.gov](https://www.dot.ny.gov) that does not give any safety data. If anyone interested in seeing for themselves the safety data for the intersection, you would have to go to:

1. The NYPD Motor Vehicle Collisions / NYC Open Data at [https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Public-Safety/NYPD-Motor-Vehicle-Collisions/h9gi-nx95](https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Public-Safety/NYPD-Motor-Vehicle-Collisions/h9gi-nx95) for collision data 2011 to present or to


If you sort the data by:

- zip code (10039)
• filter 8th Avenue / west 149th st,
• 8th Avenue / west 150th st, or Macombs Place
Then copy the location coordinates and paste it in Google maps and pick street view, it will show you the exact place of the “crashes” and you will find that none of them occurred at the intersection that they want to permanently close for “safety reasons”.

If you still want believe their interpretation of the data, they are still using old data from 2008-2012. Thanks to better transparency on the part of NYPD and the city, you can get up to date collision info on the intersection from the sites listed above. They have had over 2 years to address the “data issue” and have not done so because it is crucial to their argument for the permanent street closure and to continue to perpetuate the idea that the intersection is not safe and warrants closure.

Emergency Access

Fire, EMS and Police will have to take extra time to go around the proposed plaza if the intersection is permanently closed. While to the normal driver it is less than a minute to stay on 8th avenue, go around the plaza and turn, for the people in life and death situations in need of immediate assistance, it is a lifetime to wait. Even with a fire lane, emergency vehicles will be delayed when they have to weave though granite blocks, produce stands, pedestrians sitting and children to get to their emergency.

Parking Impact

In an area where new housing is being developed and more new residents are populating the area, the loss of 4 parking spots is significant to those who drive. Where will the farmers park during their five day market? This has not been addressed. The farmer’s trucks carrying produce from upstate NY who, if the plaza supporters had their way would take up more parking space for the entire work week. If there is a drop off plan- where is the drop off location? Will it be every day?

Design

You could have the plaza and not permanently close the street if time was spent in the redesign of the present plaza. Lowering the plaza and getting creative with the space could work if it was considered. It would be a missed opportunity not to have an inclusive bid/contest of diverse local architects, designers, students and community members in the creation of a multi-use space that satisfies all.

Voting Process - Lack of Transparency and Delay of Vital Information

We have witnessed several disturbing instances where concerned community members were excluded from the opportunity to voice their opinions concerning
the Plaza proposal during discussions at various Community Board 10 committee meetings while the Plaza Team members were allowed to present multiple times to the CB 10 committee. The CB10 Transportation Committee Meeting June 14, 2015 was held without informing the community that there would be an update presentation by The Plaza team and a vote by committee members to push the proposal to the CB10 Executive Committee Meeting June 24, 2015. Even certain committee members were not informed until they arrived. The result was that questions raised were vaguely answered without a full responses and challenges from those who posed the questions. The whole Plaza discussion was commandeered by the Manhattan borough office – a letter writing supporter of the Plaza, rendering the standing Transportation chair a spectator who was handed back her seat for the final agenda topic after the Plaza vote was passed. The Executive Committee Meeting was no better with the opponents of the plaza limited to a few minutes of comments after a two hour wait for the topic to be presented. The meeting was once again steered by the Manhattan Borough office with the CB 10 Chair present. The vote was pushed through to present in September to the general board. The audio minutes for both meetings were not posted and sent out until mid - August. To upload an audio file to Dropbox may take a while due to the size, but it shouldn’t take until mid - August. If the June 14th minutes would have been sent out before the Executive Committee Meeting June 24th took place. Then those who were no there would have had an idea of what took place. This all amounts to a clear attempt to mute the opposition to the plaza and push forward the Plaza proposal without the need to address key questions to the satisfaction.

The process to move the proposal forward with Community Board 10 was delayed by the Plaza team when they initially presented their proposal without considering the community affected by the permanent street closure needed to push the proposal through with the DOT. In December 2014 the public was allowed to voice their concerns at the transportation committee meeting which forced the plaza supporters to respond to the concerns of the community.

Alternative sites for Farmers Market – Storefronts

If the supporters of the plaza are sincere about revitalizing the community, HERBan Farmer's Market can utilize the combined resources, expertise, influence and connections of its partners HCCI, HCDC + the Bradhurst Merchants Association and those who gave them letters of support to help the get a storefront in the community. Three stores are available for rent in front of the plaza right now and have been vacant for years. HCCI has commercial real estate holdings for rent right now in the area. HCDC’s mission is to attract new businesses and retain and grow existing businesses and have several initiative designed to do so. The BMA has the force of several store front businesses in the area to assist the market as they are a member of the association. IF the goal of all the Plaza supporter team is to revitalize the area with new businesses, then why don’t you help HERBan Farmer’s Market become a store? The rumors of Pathmark closing may become a reality. A storefront with produce directly from farmers would fill the void while still running

Parks

6 parks are within walking distance from the plaza site debunking the claim of the plaza supporters that there is a lack of open space in the area. They are:

- **Rucker Park** on 155th street and 8th Avenue, Colonial Park or Jackie Robinson Park from 145th Streets - 155th Streets and Bradhurst Avenue with the Band shell with open space and a 10 block uninterrupted sidewalk-perfect for a farmers market and other activities

- **Colonel Charles Young Triangle** at Macombs Place and Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard between 153rd and 154th Streets across from the post office

- **7th Avenue Park or Frederick Johnson Park** located at 150th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard

- **Colonel Young Park** at 145th street and Lenox Avenue

- **Harlem River Park** – starting at 145th streets down to 132nd Street along Harlem River Drive

- **Bill Bojangles Robinson Playground** West 150 St. close to 7th Avenue.

The concern is that this fact is played down as not important. Yet it is in the DOT’s requirements to be eligible for the NYCDOT Plaza Program. Theses parks are also viable options for the market. The claim that the Parks Department won’t allow more than one market needs to be confirmed for Jackie Robinson Park because of the size of the park. Grassroots Farmers’ Market operates on West 145th St between Edgecombe & Bradhurst Aves Tues. & Sat. 9am - 4pm. The Park runs along Bradhurst Ave from 145th to 155th! Which is plenty of distance away from the other market and you can operate on the days it is closed. I am sure the Plaza partners could work out an arrangement with Parks that benefits the community providing fresh produce, open space and keep the intersection open. Another alternative for the market is the Under the Harlem Viaduct Proposal. Plenty of room and foot traffic from the Polo Grounds and Rangell Houses.

Colonel Charles Young Triangle is a perfect site-close to the Polo grounds and the many of the plaza supporters, open space, green space, and benches and easily
accessible by the two uninterrupted sidewalks- one from 151st and 7th avenue and the other from 152nd and Macombs Place. Plaza supporters say there is no foot traffic. That is when the collective contacts + marketing skills of your partners HCCI, HCDC and BMA to promote, market and spread the word of the market come into play. You can create additional jobs by building a street team of community youth to pass flyers and build your social media presence to inform every one of your market. The bonus is that you will generate new customers with the constant vehicle traffic coming from the Viaduct and From the Bronx if you have proper signage.

With the large amount of people involved, for and against the Plaza proposal, it is puzzling that no one has bothered to seek out alternative plans that involve not permanently closing the street and having the plaza. Doing both, along with major improvements, such as angle parking on Macombs Place, better cleanup of the area etc. would benefit all in the community. These improvements were suggested before this second incarnation of the plaza proposal (the first was in 2008 –HCCI, HCDC and Pinnacle hijacked the Matthew Henson Plaza memorial concept honoring the many historical giants that have lived in the Dunbar and added the street closure to facilitate the warehoused commercial store in front of the plaza for a sidewalk cafe. This plan was defeated by the community due to most of the same concerns as now.) This and many other events that have transpired during this long journey, give the long time tenants of the area a feeling that they do not have a true say in what goes on in their neighborhood.

We ask for your support by attending the general CB10 vote/meeting on the proposal this Wednesday September 2nd at The Harlem State Office Building at 6pm. Please arrive early and sign up to speak if possible. Those who have supported the plaza, please revisit your early vote and sincerely read what is before you. If you feel that the street must be permanently closed for the community to get healthy foods and for safety, then continue your support.

Thank you