



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
COMMUNITY BOARD 9
MANHATTAN

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October 23rd, 2023

Minouche Shafik
President
Columbia University
202 Low Library
535 W. 116th St., MC 4309
New York, NY 10027

Dear President Shafik,

At its regularly scheduled General Board Meeting held remotely and in-person, on Thursday, October 19th, 2023. Manhattan Community Board No. 9 passed the following resolution re: **MCB9 Requesting Columbia University to provide CBA promised 5,000 sq. Ft. in West Harlem for Artist and Art Organizations** by unanimous consent with 32 members present.

WHEREAS there is a need in Manhattan Community District 9 (West Harlem) for a more cohesive cultural community in which artists and arts organizations have the resources and support necessary to maximize their artistic, social, and economic potential; and

WHEREAS in 2021 Community Board 9M unanimously passed a resolution requesting that the community, funders and elected officials help fund and constitute an umbrella arts organization to serve the West Harlem community; and

WHEREAS the WHAA was formed and incorporated and has been formalized with a governing board of directors and staff to promote and support Manhattan Community District 9 local artists, arts organizations, and institutions and to celebrate the diversity of cultural programming in the West Harlem community and to collaborate with surrounding neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS the West Harlem Arts Alliance recognizes that collaborations and partnerships are key to the cultivation and development of arts organizations and for all members of the community to come together and identify, develop, and achieve common goals around the arts while serving the community; and

WHEREAS on May 18, 2009, Columbia University President Lee Bollinger, and the President of the West Harlem Local Development Corporation (WHLDC) signed the West Harlem Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) marking a unique partnership between the University and the residents in Manhattan's Community District 9; and

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WHEREAS a space facilitates the creation of new works by both emerging and established artists; strengthens the infrastructures of local arts organizations; encourages public dialogue, engagement, and collective reflection around issues that affect West Harlem's cultural community; and fosters the region's economic development and overall vibrancy; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 9 requests that Columbia University fulfill its promise and agreement by providing 5,000 square feet of space to house the West Harlem Arts Alliance, as an umbrella arts organization facilitating regular use of the space in service to the artists and arts community of West Harlem, subject to annual renewal upon recommendation by Manhattan Community Board 9 based on the organization's successful administration of the space so that it is utilized fairly and fully by West Harlem community artists and arts groups; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 believes that the 5,000 square be designed as a "flexible arts space" for the following uses:

- live performances, and
- theatre, dance, and multi-use rehearsals, and
- workshops, convenings and educational presentations, and
- recording and sound engineering, and
- art exhibitions, and
- production, and office space to run and administer the flexible use space; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MCB9 believes the following principles and priorities should guide the WHAA's administration of the arts programming space:

- space allocated for MCB 9 artist and art organizations; and
- space should not be monopolized by one entity; time limits provided; and
- rental fees and costs should be affordable to West Harlem artists and arts organizations.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 9 requests that Columbia University begin conversations with Manhattan Community Board 9 and the West Harlem Arts Alliance regarding the location, composition, build-out, and eventual administration of the arts space in anticipation of the first TCO being issued for a building in Phase I, Stage 2; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 9 believes that, in the event that the promised arts space is not provided by the date of the issuance of the first TCO for a building in Phase I, Stage 2, that the 25 year period for which such space shall be made available should be extended until such time as the space is completed and made available to the community; and

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