

**CB9M**

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COMMUNITY BOARD #9, MANHATTAN

Mark D. Levine
President, Borough of Manhattan

September 24th, 2024

Hon. Victor Edwards
Chair

Hon. Katrina Armstrong

Hon. Barry Weinberg
First Vice-Chair

Interim President

Hon. Monique Hardin-Cordero
Second Vice-Chair

Columbia University

202 Low Library

Hon. Deirdre McIntosh-Brown
Treasurer

535 W. 116th St., MC 4309

New York, NY 10027

Hon. Carolyn Thompson
Assistant Treasurer

Dear Interim President Armstrong,

Hon. Solomon Prophete
Secretary

Hon. Theodore Kovaleff
Assistant Secretary

At its regularly scheduled General Board Meeting held remotely and in-person, on Thursday, September 19th, 2024. Manhattan Community Board No. 9 passed the following Resolution re: **Columbia Investments** by a vote of 33 in favor, 1 opposed, and 0 abstentions with 34 members present.

Eutha Prince
District Manager

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 9 works diligently every year to complete our New York City Charter-mandated annual statement of community district needs, where challenges facing our district include a dearth of affordable housing, under-resourced public schools, inadequate youth enrichment and after-school activities, inaccessible mass transit stations, air pollution as a result of environmental racism in siting of industrial and infrastructure sites, and high rates of health challenges such as asthma, infectious diseases, heart disease, and stroke; and

WHEREAS Columbia University in the City of New York has two of its major campuses, the main Morningside Heights campus and the new Manhattanville campus, entirely within Manhattan Community District 9 (MCD9); and

WHEREAS the Empire State Development Corporation, at the behest of Columbia University, used eminent domain to require the remaining lots that

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SERVING HAMILTON HEIGHTS/MANHATTANVILLE/MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS & SUGAR HILL

WHEREAS MCB9 acknowledges that, as one of the largest property owners, employers, and educators in MCD9, the interests of the broader community and the Columbia community are often similar and shared, including but not limited to an interest in safe streets, accessible transit, affordable housing, good public schools, and a healthy environment; and

WHEREAS other institutions of higher education have created innovative ways of partnering with their broader communities to bring their substantial technical, financial, and reputational resources to bear on similar issues, including most notably the University of Pennsylvania's Netter Center for Community Partnerships, which uses Academically-Based Community Service (ABCS), University-Assisted Community Schools (UACSs), and Anchor Institution Partnerships to "help solve universal problems such as poverty, health inequities, environmental sustainability, and inadequate, unequal education as they are manifested in the University's local geographic area of West Philadelphia and Philadelphia at large;" and

WHEREAS a report was delivered to the then-Dean of Columbia College James Valentini by a committee of faculty and alumni encouraging him to use Columbia College as a launching pad for ABCS that could grow into a similar program as the Netter Center; and

WHEREAS Columbia continues to purchase real estate in the neighborhood to increase housing opportunities for students, faculty, and other university affiliates; and

WHEREAS Columbia has a history of acquiring rent regulated housing which eventually converts into housing for university affiliates, removing a reliable source of affordable housing from the broader non-affiliate community; and

WHEREAS the proposed City of Yes Zoning for Housing Opportunities includes floor area bonuses of up to 20% for developments that dedicate that floor area to affordable housing targeted at 60% of Area Median Income (AMI) as laid out in the proposed zoning text amendment; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 9 requests continued engagement with Columbia University's new President to work towards goals including but not limited to:

1. Capital improvements at the 125th Street 1 train station to make it ADA accessible;
2. A permanent extension of the funding for attorneys representing tenants and HDFCs in the Manhattanville Project Area as outlined in the CBA, which is currently slated to end in approximately 2030;
3. Work with the School Construction Authority, the NYC Department of Education, and the administrative and parent leadership at CSS to develop a new facility for the school as envisioned in the CBA;
4. The creation of ferry service from the West Harlem Piers;
5. The restoration of a train station on the Amtrak Empire Service tracks on 12th Avenue around 125th Street for MetroNorth and Amtrak service;
6. The leasing of the Fairway building to a tenant to be operated as an affordable supermarket, with the parking lot open to both supermarket patrons for free and to the community at affordable rates;
7. The creation and preservation of affordable housing units for non-affiliates in rent-regulated buildings purchased by Columbia and in new buildings developed by Columbia;
8. Improvement in local hiring initiatives on construction and permanent jobs, with apprenticeship programs when necessary to qualify for union positions;
9. Continued outreach and investment in community health initiatives including the free dental programs, diabetes, asthma, and stroke interventions by the Columbia Center for Community Health, and mental health and social work concerns in the community;
10. Collaboration to restore youth enrichment programming to the former site of Our Children's Foundation at 527 West 125th Street;
11. More focused engagement and clinical experience for graduate students in schools such as Columbia Law School, the School of Social Work, and other schools in the model of ABCS and the Netter Center;
12. Continued support for an affordable daycare center in the model of Red Balloon Daycare that accepts ACS vouchers, is open to non-Columbia affiliates, and has a model that supports the needs of working-class and low-income parents of children, including children with special needs;

THEREFORE, FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 9 is grateful for our continued progress in our relationship with Columbia University, and we look forward to strengthening our partnership in the future.

[University of Pennsylvania Netter Center](#)

Script: We want to fundamentally transform our relationship with Columbia University so that they are a true partner as neighbors in our community, not just as a powerful institution with larger real estate holdings. We have seen incremental progress over the years, but this presents an opportunity to drastically deepen our work together.

If you have any questions and/or further information is needed, please do not hesitate contacting me or District Manager, Eutha Prince, at the board office (212) 864-6200.

Sincerely,



Victor Edwards
Chair

Cc: Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
Hon. Brad Lander, NYC Comptroller
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Cordell Cleare, NYS Senator, 30th Senatorial District
Hon. Daniel J. O'Donnell, Assembly Member, 69th Assembly District
Hon. Inez Dickens, Assembly Member, 70th Assembly District
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member, 71st Assembly District
Hon. Shaun Abreu, City Council Member, 7th Council District
Hon. Dr. Yusef Salaam, City Council Member, 9th Council District
Mr. Zead Ramadan, Executive Director, West Harlem Development Corp.

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