

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FIVE

Vikki Barbero, Chair

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Wally Rubin, District Manager

June 12, 2020

Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Corey Johnson
Speaker
New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: *Community Board Five appeal to mandate community board input in the mayoral post-COVID-19 recovery plan.*

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson:

At the regularly scheduled monthly Community Board Five meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2020, the following resolution passed with a vote of 44 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining:

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic hit New York City with the biggest public health crisis in recent history; and

WHEREAS, The pandemic has caused the death of tens of thousands of New Yorkers - notoriously, the most of any city in the country and the world - and has created a massive economic crisis and triggered further long term negative impacts to the city; and

WHEREAS, The city will need a well thought out and carefully executed plan to embrace recovery and resilience; and

WHEREAS, In order to draft such a plan, the Mayor has created a number of councils and committees whose expertise will create and nurture their development; and

WHEREAS, The recovery plan will benefit from input from various stakeholders whose diverse voices make up New York City; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor created the following ten advisory councils:

1. **Non-Profit and Social Services Sector Advisory Council - 44 members**
2. **Public Health and Healthcare Sector Advisory Council- 40 members**
3. **Faith-Based Sector Advisory Council – 40 members**
4. **Education Sector Advisory Council – 45 members**
5. **Construction and Real Estate Sector Advisory Council – 30 members**
6. **Surface Transportation – 24 members**
7. **Labor and Workforce Sector Advisory Council – 34 members**
8. **Large Business Sector Advisory Council – 21 members**
9. **Small Business Sector Advisory Council – 31 members**
10. **Arts, Culture and Tourism Sector Advisory Council – 27 members**

Total: 336 members; and

WHEREAS, Each advisory council is composed of an average of 33 members, with membership size ranging from 21 members to 45 members; and

WHEREAS, While we applaud the creation of advisory bodies, Community Board Five notes that Community Boards have been excluded from any formal advisory input in the recovery planning process; and

WHEREAS, The future of our communities cannot be wisely planned without our input, especially in a district as diverse and complex as Community Board Five that represents, among others, residents, large businesses, small businesses, big box retail, mom&pop stores, two major train transit hubs, the Broadway theater industry, tourism, and cultural institution of international magnitude; and

WHEREAS, Community Boards have an intimate knowledge and historical perspective on their district's needs, strengths and weaknesses, that must be taken into account if we want to build a resilient post-COVID city; and

WHEREAS, Community Boards are an integral part of the City Charter and are an integral part of the city's decision-making process on budget, land use and other matters of importance; and

WHEREAS, Community Boards have a vertically integrated perspective on their community with expertise in various fields including urban planning and land use, transportation, parks and open space, public safety and budget in the context of their geographic districts; and

WHEREAS, Community Board members are appointed through a transparent process; and

WHEREAS, An advisory report prepared by advisory councils without input from community boards would be a defective one, that could lead to improper and inadequate decisions that would fail to provide the much needed resiliency that our district needs in order to recover from the

consequences of COVID on the numerous fronts where we have been impacted (health, economy, transportation, infrastructure); therefore be it

RESOLVED, Community Board Five urgently requests that one or more of their representatives be appointed to these Mayoral advisory councils, so as to share their input and intimate knowledge of our district, especially on land use and infrastructure; and be it further

RESOLVED, Community Board Five demands that formal Community Board input be designed, either through advisory councils or through a different outlet, in order to provide a formal opportunity to discuss, comment, and opine on the on-going formulation of the recovery and resiliency plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.

Sincerely,



Vikki Barbero
Chair



Layla Law-Gisiko
Acting Chair, Land Use, Housing and Zoning Committee

Cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker of the City Council
Hon. Brad Hoylman
Hon. Liz Krueger
Hon. Richard Gottfried
Hon. Carlina Rivera
Hon. Keith Powers
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Dermot Shea, Commissioner, NYPD
Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner, NYC DOT
Sarah Feinberg, Interim President, MTA-NYC