



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

Catherine McVay Hughes CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

**New York City
Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination**

**The Phased Redevelopment of Governors Island
Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement
11DME007M**

Public Scoping Meeting

**Testimony by Michael E. Levine
Director of Land Use and Planning**

**Tuesday, January 8, 2013
22 Reade St, New York, NY
6:00 PM**

Good evening. I am Michael Levine, Director of Land Use and Planning at Manhattan Community Board One (CB1). Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scoping for the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) for the proposed zoning change, North Island Re-tenanting, Park and Public Space Master Plan and expanded ferry service.

CB1 applauds the efforts of the Governors Island Trust to transform the Island into a vibrant, mixed-use destination. The zoning and re-tenanting proposal would create a new Special Governors Island District on the North Island that would allow most commercial uses to be developed in the existing R3-2 district and the reuse and re-tenanting of approximately 1.2 million square feet of space in existing historic structures.

We believe that the zoning proposal and the re-tenanting plan will result in increased public use of the island, bring revenue to the Governors Island Trust to maintain the island and create economic opportunities for local small business and organizations. Now, more than ever, we are enthusiastic about the incredible potential of the island for appropriate redevelopment benefiting the surrounding communities, the City and the region.

The proposed special zoning would allow commercial uses in the existing R3-2 district, but would require a certification by the City Planning Commission Chairperson that the Community Board has reviewed all such proposed commercial uses. The applicant for any such use is required to certify that a written description of such use has been submitted to the Community Board, and that responses have been provided to community board comments, including any modifications that have been made as a result of such comments, or an explanation as to why modifications have not been made.

Community Board 1 is pleased that we are part of the review and approval process, but we feel that the requirements, in an attempt to be comprehensive, may be a bit too onerous for the Trust,

for the applicant and for the community board to administer. The requirement of all applicants to submit a comprehensive narrative, with modifications if requested, may not be necessary or desired for many "low impact" commercial uses such as restaurants and hotels with certain size limitations. We therefore recommend that the zoning text list "low impact" "as of right" uses which would waive the review process, and require the more rigorous written comprehensive narrative and review process only of applicants proposing uses not on the "low impact" list. We believe this will limit the review process to uses that could truly have a negative impact. We ask that the SGEIS identify such "high impact" uses that must submit to the more rigorous review process, and list possible anticipated mitigation measures.

Also, in addition to the proposal's requirements that the applicant shall demonstrate that uses promote the goals of the Special Governors Island District, compliment existing uses within the Special Governors Island District and be compatible with the nature, scale, and character of other uses within the special district, a fourth requirement should be added stipulating that applicants must provide plans to mitigate any potential negative impacts of "high impact" uses that may occur in the community board areas with ferry portals to the island.

I will be followed by Catherine McVay Hughes, Chairperson of CB1, who will outline our specific concerns regarding the potential negative impacts of increased commercial development in the area surrounding Lower Manhattan's Battery Maritime Building.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.