



The Council of the City of New York
Committees on Lower Manhattan Redevelopment
and Transportation

Thursday, February 5, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

Committee Room, City Hall

Thank you, Council Members Gerson and Liu, for this opportunity to speak about the redesign of Chatham Square. I am John Fratta, member of Community Board One and Chair of the Seaport/Civic Center Committee.

Community Boards One, Two and Three have already stated our concerns about the reconstruction of the Chatham Square Park Row area. All three boards join you, Councilmember Gerson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and State Senator-Elect Daniel Squadron in expressing dismay about this project. Community Board One has a number of concerns that I would like to raise this morning.

First is the lack of public input into the design itself and the planning process for the project conducted by the City of New York Department of Design and Construction. This flaw underlies the other problems with the project. The DDC gave inadequate time for community input on the details of the roadway reconfiguration plan and on the failure of the plan to re-open Park Row to vehicular traffic.

Second is the project's severe, adverse economic impact of disrupting commerce in the area, which will be especially onerous in the current, national financial crisis and during the shutdown of Fulton Street and the reconstruction of the Brooklyn Bridge,

Last but not least is the failure of the plan to re-open Park Row to vehicular traffic. Community Board one believes that the City should include in the plan such a contingency rather than viewing the need to maintain security at 1 Police Plaza as incompatible with enhancing public space and improving vehicular flow and pedestrian safety. We believe the economic health of the community is dependent on having Park Row as a main thoroughfare.

As we stated in our December 16, 2008 resolution, Community Board One opposes the Chatham Square/Park Row Redesign Project until there is adequate time allowed for community input on the roadway configuration plan and the impact of the project on local businesses and until there is a plan to re-open Park Row.

Thank you, Council Members Gerson and Liu, for holding this hearing and for giving Community Board One the opportunity to voice these concerns on this important issue.

City of New York



Julie Menin CHAIRPERSON | **Noah Pfefferblit** DISTRICT MANAGER

49 Chambers Street, Suite 715, New York, NY 10007-1209

Tel 212 442 5050, Fax 212 442 5055, Email cb1@cb1.org, www.cb1.org