



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

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New York City Council

**Oversight: Update on the City's Redevelopment Plans for Governor's Island
Joint Committees on Waterfronts and Lower Manhattan Redevelopment**

**Testimony by Catherine McVay Hughes, Chairperson
Manhattan Community Board 1**

**Monday, February 25, 2013
250 Broadway, 16th Floor Committee Room New York, NY
10:00 AM**

Good morning. I am Catherine McVay Hughes, Chair of Manhattan Community Board One (CB1). Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the ongoing redevelopment of Governors Island.

CB1 applauds the incredible planning effort that has taken place since the decision was made in 2003 to transform Governors Island into a public resource, including the recent plans to transform the Island into a vibrant, mixed-use destination. The Special Governors Island District zoning and re-tenanting proposal on the North Island allows for most commercial uses to be developed in the existing R3-2 district in approximately 1.2 million square feet of space in existing historic structures.

CB1 testified at the scoping session for the Governors Island Environmental Impact Statement in which we discussed our concerns over the potential impacts of commercial uses in the North Island. We are pleased that the Governors Island Trust (Trust) staff has worked with us to devise a formula that will work whereby the Community Board will have the opportunity to review large commercial developments with major impacts. We understand that Governors Island is currently preparing a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) to explore the possibilities for mixed-use development in the southern portion of the Island. We appreciate the need for the RFEI since the southern portion is not a historic district, and that the Trust will entertain all creative and imaginative proposals for redevelopment. We look forward to continuing to work with the Governors Island Trust on ways to implement imaginative mixed-use development in the south.

Mitigating negative effects of the increased development on Governors Island remains of primary importance to the Community Board. Transportation to Governors Island occurs from two ferry portals, one in Manhattan and one in Brooklyn. We are particularly concerned about the area surrounding the Battery Maritime Building in Lower Manhattan. CB1 has specific concerns regarding the potential negative impacts on the neighborhood of Lower Manhattan, both from the North Island re-tenanting plans and from potential future development in the southern portion. CB1 therefore requests that the following factors be considered as potential impacts of increased use of Governors Island:

1. *Air quality and noise issues resulting from ferries transporting to and from Governors Island* – Ferries should be retrofitted using the best available technology and industry standards and use ultra low sulfur diesel fuel.
2. *Pedestrian and vehicular flow at the Governors Island Ferry Terminal* – Sidewalks and bike paths must to be wide enough to accommodate increased traffic. In addition, vehicular and pedestrian traffic must be separated in order to reduce pedestrian-vehicular conflicts. CB1 also requests more information about increased transportation opportunities such as additional bus stops when the terminal is built out.
3. *Garbage removal from Governors Island* – CB1 requests a plan for how garbage will be handled including whether or not composting will be utilized for minimizing garbage.
4. *LEED and Energy Star* – New or renovated construction should be LEED rated and Energy Star certified.
5. *Consideration of possible future storms* – New Governors Island construction and terminal development must be built to the highest industry standards to withstand storms similar to Superstorm Sandy.
6. *Balanced retail uses* – Future development at Governors Island should seek a balance of retail uses that will attract residents of CB1 as well as tourists.
7. *Maintaining sufficient open space* – Sufficient open space must be ensured as part of any new construction on the island in order to maintain its park-like atmosphere.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and we look forward to returning to discuss continuing redevelopment and implementation plans for Governors Island.