



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

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

**City Planning Commission
Public Hearing on
Lower Manhattan Arcades Text Amendment,
N 110193 ZRM**

**Testimony by Michael Levine, Director of Planning and Land Use
Manhattan Community Board One**

**Wednesday, March 30, 2011 at 10 a.m.
Spector Hall, 22 Reade Street, New York, NY**

Good morning. My name is Michael E. Levine, and I am the Director of Planning and Land Use for Manhattan Community Board One. I am pleased to present testimony today on behalf of the board.

Manhattan Community Board One is pleased to support the proposed zoning text amendment to the Special Lower Manhattan District regarding arcades in Lower Manhattan. Community Board One unanimously adopted a resolution on February 22, 2011, which states that the proposal would help Water Street become a lively pedestrian corridor consistent with the vision of both the Downtown Alliance and the community board.

The Alliance has proposed changes in the physical environment of the Water Street sub-district and recommended intervention to sustain its success as one of Lower Manhattan's key commercial corridors. We concur that this corridor merits rethinking and a transformation. This proposal is a part of that process of change.

Unfortunately, the arcades in the 23-block area on and around Water Street do not function well as a pedestrian corridor. They do not contribute to the creation of pedestrian precincts and frequently impede street vitality.

The text amendment would allow the currently underutilized pedestrian circulation areas to have a new purpose in the public realm as open areas with public or café seating. This amendment would allow tables and chairs to be placed in existing privately-owned, publicly accessible arcades along and nearby Water Street.

This addition to the cityscape will provide an amenity to existing commercial tenants, visitors to the area, students, and residents of the rapidly growing residential community to the north and west. It will support the economic vitality of the Water Street corridor and attract more visitors to enjoy the sights and sounds and historic treasures of Lower Manhattan. We urge the City Planning Commission to adopt this proposed zoning text amendment.

Thank you.