



The City of New York

Manhattan Community Board 1

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

**The Council of the City of New York
Committee on Lower Manhattan Redevelopment
Oversight Hearing on
Update on the Status of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum
at the World Trade Center**

**Thursday, June 16, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.
250 Broadway, 16th Floor Committee Room, New York, NY**

**Testimony of Julie Menin, Chair of Community Board One and
Catherine McVay Hughes, Vice Chair**

Thank you, Chairperson Chin, for convening this important hearing regarding an update on the status of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center (WTC).

We very much appreciated a presentation by Joe Daniels about progress at the 9/11 Memorial at the Community Board 1 WTC Redevelopment Committee meeting on Monday night, and we were very pleased to learn of the continuing progress at the site. It will be enormously significant for our community to at last have a proper, inspiring place on this important anniversary for family members, survivors, and the nation to grieve and pay tribute to those who died on September 11, 2001.

As you well know, the WTC is at the epicenter of Manhattan Community Board One (CB1). Many of our members were deeply affected on that day, and we continue to live through the painstaking rebuilding process that has been underway at the heart of our community for the past ten years.

We understand that the Memorial has been set aside on September 11, 2011 for a ceremony for families and to prepare for the public opening on Monday, September 12, 2011. However, we have asked Mr. Daniels for a later time or date to be set aside following the family service on the tenth anniversary for those of us who survived the attacks and the aftermath, and who have remained downtown and contributed to the rebuilding. As of yet, we are unaware of any plans to grant access to the Memorial to community residents on the anniversary or the following day or two apart from the rest of the public. Instead, we will have to go online and attempt to secure a reservation to visit the site; there is no guarantee, given the projected demand, that we will be able to do so when the website goes live on July 12, 2011.

On the other hand, we have been encouraged by progress in preparation in other areas for the tenth anniversary opening. We remain concerned about the expected influx of tour buses and whether our community is prepared to handle an additional 5 million annual visitors, but we have worked with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to revise their bus management plan, which we initially found to be untenable. We believe that every attempt must be made to have visitors utilize public transportation to access the Memorial rather than clog the streets of downtown with more idling buses. Enforcement of rules prohibiting buses from idling rather than parking in assigned spots is already an issue, and without needed improvements in this area, it is likely that the problem will be compounded once the 9/11 Memorial opens.

We would like to know how the buses will be managed and how enforcement will be strengthened before the Vehicular Security Center is opened at the site. We believe sites such as Liberty Park in New Jersey should be utilized for tour bus parking, and we support DOT's proposal for metered parking for buses with fines going directly towards traffic enforcement downtown. More importantly, the city and state should encourage the use of mass transit rather than private tour bus companies. Taxpayers are funding a \$3.2 billion PATH station at the WTC site, and visitors should utilize PATH and other modes of mass transit to visit the site. A universal MTA/PATH/Ferry pass should be put in place with an online purchase component to encourage visitors to use mass transit.

We also are concerned about other logistical issues. For one thing, we have heard that there will be no public restrooms at the Memorial or in the area, and we are not confident that businesses around the site will be able to adequately provide this service; nor do we think it is a fair burden to place upon them.

We want to help the city facilitate the expedited building of the permanent NYPD Command. Since the World Trade Center site remains a terrorist target, the World Trade Center NYPD Command will address security issues within the World Trade Center site only and not the surrounding area. Therefore, we support the New York City DOT's suggestion this past Monday that Lower Manhattan Development Corporation consider the funding for additional officers to enforce rules regarding idling and illegally parked buses.

We understand that key portions of the WTC Memorial will be open for the tenth anniversary and the WTC Museum is to open by the eleventh anniversary. Though we look forward to the reopening of the street grid, including Greenwich, Liberty and Fulton Streets, we are concerned that plans have not yet been presented about how the changes in traffic patterns will be managed. With the expected surge of visitors to the site, CBI has repeatedly requested that officials who are developing a Vehicular and Pedestrian Management Plan and security plans for the tenth anniversary and afterwards share with us now how they will address the phase-in of WTC components and the reopening of its street grid in an active construction site. For example, it would be unacceptable to have a ring of tour buses around the Memorial and Museum when they open or clogging Greenwich or other downtown streets.

Illegal street vending also continues to be an issue around the perimeter of the WTC site and outside the 9/11 Preview Site. There must be adequate enforcement once Memorial visitors begin passing through what is already a very crowded area to gain access to the Memorial.

Finally, we would like to know more about the future of the Memorial and the World Trade Center site beyond the tenth anniversary. We don't yet know who will maintain the 9/11 Memorial and Museum and its annual budget, and how will it will be funded. The CB1 WTC & Battery Park City Committee also just passed a resolution strongly calling on Governor Cuomo to maintain continuity of leadership at the PANYNJ. The current Executive Director, Christopher Ward, is the only PANYNJ Executive Director who has met with the community, and has done so on numerous occasions. Since he took leadership in May 2008, some key milestones have been accomplished, from overhauling the engineering of the 9/11 National Memorial so that it can be opened by the tenth anniversary to issuing a report outlining the road map for rebuilding the WTC site including timetables. Without continuity of leadership, it may not be possible to meet the next major milestones, such as opening the Memorial Museum by the eleventh anniversary. For the first time, it is possible to envision the completion of this enormous project, which will have a major ripple effect on the surrounding residential and business community.

We appreciate your efforts to ensure that the survivor community will be well represented in the 9/11 Museum, and that the projected 5 million annual visitors to Lower Manhattan will be adequately managed without adverse impact to the area's residents and workers.

Thank you.