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CONTACT: RACHAELE RAYNOFF, PRESS SECRETARY (212) 720-3471, fax: (212) 720-3219

**City Planning Commission Reviews World Trade Center Plans;
Recommends Guidelines to Ensure Reintegration of Site into Lower Manhattan,
And Create Vibrant, Pedestrian-Friendly and Inviting Place**

March 8, 2004 – The City Planning Commission today made recommendations for the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site in order to better connect the complex to Lower Manhattan streets, ensure a pedestrian-friendly environment and help create a vibrant destination with a mix of accessible retail and generous open space as well as a respectful environment for the memorial. The recommendations were guided by the Mayor's vision for Lower Manhattan as a "vibrant global hub of culture and commerce, a live-and-work-and-visit community for the world". The recommendations were issued in a letter approved at a Review Session of the City Planning Commission (CPC), and sent to the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC).

"The Commission believes that adoption of the LMDC's World Trade Center Plan will be an important milestone in the redevelopment of the site and congratulates both the LMDC and the Port Authority for their outstanding work in creating an open, participatory, and inclusive planning process," said City Planning Director Amanda M. Burden, " We share the same goals with the LMDC and the Port Authority with respect to the site and have proposed a limited number of changes which we believe are important to fulfill our shared objectives. To ensure that this important complex becomes a world-class destination, it is essential that there be vibrant streetlife, generous public spaces, adequate light and air, as well as clear and strong connections to the rest of Lower Manhattan and surrounding neighborhoods."

Recognizing that restoration of streets is the key to reintegrating the World Trade Center site into the fabric of Lower Manhattan, the Commission recommended modification of the LMDC plan to restore Dey and Cortlandt streets, between Church and Greenwich, in addition to the restored Greenwich and Fulton Streets already set forth in the LMDC plan.

The CPC called for incorporation of urban design controls to preserve light and air throughout the complex and its surroundings, make it easier for pedestrians to traverse the site and ensure the quality of the public realm. In addition, CPC advocated skylobbies in each of the office towers, freeing the ground floors for active retail establishments and restaurants that open to the street and promote a revitalized 24/7 community. To ensure an active street life, CPC recommended that at least half the retail in the complex be built at or above street level, with guidelines for retail continuity as well as requirements for transparency to create a livelier pedestrian environment.

CPC urged special standards to ensure that retail signage on Greenwich Street is quiet in tone and respectful of the adjacent memorial. CPC also strongly recommended relocation of a planned truck access ramp on Liberty Street that conflicts with pedestrian access to the southern edge of the memorial as well as to Battery Park City. CPC also underscored the need to develop design standards to minimize the intrusiveness of security devices on public streets and sidewalks.

Other matters urged by the CPC:

- Maintain open space in front of the Performing Arts Center as envisioned in the original plan for the complex.
- Require minimum streetwalls and building setbacks for the Commercial towers to preserve light and air to the street.
- Require minimum sidewalk widths throughout the site.
- Specify a minimum percentage for retail uses in commercial building frontages on major streets, in order to ensure a lively pedestrian environment.
- Ensure inclusion of a hotel and conference center, as originally planned, in order to signal the importance of the site as a world-wide destination.
- Adopt maximum slope, elevation and grade controls to facilitate pedestrian movement, avoid blocking view corridors and avoid the need for undesirable blank retaining walls.
- Explore making tenant parking accessible to patrons of the Performing Arts Center in the evenings or to shoppers on weekends.
- Avoid use of "sky-bridges" or elevated platforms over streets between buildings.

The CPC responded to the World Trade Center plan pursuant to provisions of the New York State Urban Development Corporation Act that require LMDC to refer to the City Planning Commission any General Project Plan (GPP) to be implemented through the override of local regulation. Under the statute, the Commission may recommend approval, disapproval or modifications to the GPP. In the event the Commission recommends disapproval or modification of the GPP, the LMDC Board of Directors may "override" the CPC recommendations only by a two-thirds vote. The CPC

followed a presentation by Department of City Planning staff on March 1. The GPP together with the modifications proposed by the CPC will be considered at an upcoming LMDC board meeting.

A similar CPC review in June, 2002 facilitated the opening of Greenwich Street when the Commission approved the narrowing of Vesey Street to accommodate narrower footprint of 7 World Trade Center.

An [illustrated description](#) of the recommendations by the Department of City Planning that guided the CPC response is available. The [CPC's letter to the LMDC](#) was released earlier today.

About City Planning:

The Department of City Planning is responsible for the City's physical and socioeconomic planning, including land use and environmental review; preparation of plans and policies; and provision of technical assistance and planning information to government agencies, public officials, and community boards.