

Resolution passed by CB2 Parks Committee April 9, 2007

Whereas in April 2005 Community Board 2, with conditions, passed a resolution approving the then-stated Parks Department plan to renovate Washington Square Park; and

1. **Whereas** in November 2005 Community Board 2 again reiterated its approval of the renovation plan, while also endorsing an agreement between the Parks Department, Council Speaker Quinn, and Council Member Gerson which modified that plan and reconstituted a Washington Square Park Task Force; and

Whereas in June 2005 the Parks Department put its plan for the first phase of renovation out to bid and did not receive a response from any contractor within its budget, requiring that the project be rebid; and

Whereas subsequently, a temporary restraining order and then preliminary injunction prevented the parks Department from rebidding the project; and

Whereas on November 16, 2006 Community Board 2, following judicial findings and public allegations that the Parks Department had altered the substantive renovation plans, and the failure of the Parks Department to receive a bid on the construction project within the existing budget, unanimously passed a resolution asking the New York City Department of Parks to provide Community Board 2 with *accurate, written, up-to-date* plans for renovation of Washington Square Park at the January 8, 2007 Community Board 2 Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting; and

Whereas no representative of the Parks Department attended the January 8, 2007 Community Board 2 Parks and Waterfront Committee meeting to provide the requested plans; and

Whereas in consideration of the Parks Department explanation that ongoing litigation and instructions from the Office of the Corporation Counsel prevented it from making a substantive presentation to the aforementioned meeting and making any substantive statements or presentations to the Board or the Washington Square Park Task Force, Community Board 2 on January 18, 2007 unanimously approved a letter addressed to Commissioner Adrian Benepe asking the Parks Department to make the requested presentation to the Parks Committee meeting immediately following a decision of the Appellate Division; and

Whereas the aforementioned letter included the proviso that *[i]f the Parks Department does not appear at that meeting or at some other time mutually agreed on by the Board and the Department within the thirty day period following the Appellate decision, Community Board 2 Manhattan will consider a resolution withdrawing its approval*; and

Whereas the Appellate Division issued its opinion on March 9, 2007, and the thirty-day period identified by Community Board 2 in its January 18 letter has expired without any effort by the Parks Department to provide the requested plans, and without a presentation by the Parks Department of its plans at meetings of either the Parks Committee of Community Board 2 or the Washington Square Park Task Force, despite requests from the Chair of Community Board 2 and

the Chair of the Community Board 2 Parks Committee that it appear and make such a presentation; and

Whereas the Appellate Divisions opinion affirmed Community Board 2's legal right to be fully informed and provided with accurate plans for review, irrespective of the Parks Department's adherence to the Board 's recommendation,

Therefore be it resolved , that Community Board 2 will rescind its prior approval of the plans for renovation of Washington Square Park effective May 9, 2007 unless before such date the Parks Department presents for review and examination its current plans for renovation to the full Community Board 2, the Community Board 2 Park and Waterfront Committee or to the Washington Square Park Task Force; and

Be it further resolved that Community Board 2 calls on our elected officials, most especially City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Councilman Alan Gerson, State Senator Tom Duane, Assemblymember Deborah Glick and Borough President Scott Stringer, to use their respective offices to urge the Parks Department to appear before the Community Board and/or the Washington Square Park Task Force and present its detailed plans for Washington Square Park before any contracts are put out to bid and work of any nature is performed in connection with the renovation of Washington Square Park.