

## PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK

WHEREAS on October 6, 2005, after two public hearings and extensive discussion of the Parks Department agreement with Councilmembers Alan Gerson and Chris Quinn (the "Agreement"), the CB2 Parks and Waterfront Committee unanimously adopted a resolution addressing the Agreement, and several contentious issues involved in Phase 1 of the Park's renovation; and

WHEREAS a very important change had occurred since the Board's resolution of April 21, 2005, namely, the Parks Department committed itself, in the Agreement, to proceeding with the Park renovation even if the Arts Commission and/or the Landmarks Commission did not approve the existing plans concerning the location of the fountain and the height of the fence; and

WHEREAS after the committee passed its resolution, the Parks Department engaged in a scare campaign, privately calling CB2 members and telling them, falsely, that if the CB2 resolution passed, the Washington Square renovation would be delayed two years and that the Parks Department would be out somewhere between \$150,000 and \$500,000 it had spent on design drawings; and

WHEREAS, without notice to the community, several members of CB2, at CB2's October 2005 meeting, presented a substitute resolution which reversed not only some of the points contained in the Committee's resolution (such as its opposition to moving the fountain, raising the area around the fountain and having a fence higher than 30 inches), but also reversed the Board's position in support of retaining the mounds by surreptitiously leaving out approval of that portion of the Agreement which promised retention of the mounds; and

WHEREAS at the CB2 October meeting there was considerable confusion and no debate on the "substitute resolution" once the Board voted to bring it to the floor instead of the Committee's resolution, leaving many members of the Board with the belief that by endorsing the "substitute resolution" they were taking "no position" on the fountain, the plaza around the fountain, or the height of the fence; and

WHEREAS the Board was misinformed by former Parks Committee Chair Audrey Lees that "nothing had changed" since the April 2005 resolution; and

WHEREAS the role of the Community Board is to responsively reflect the sentiment of the community, and the sentiment of the community is in support of the October 6, 2005 Parks Committee Resolution; it is hereby

RESOLVED:

1. That CB2 endorses the entire Agreement between Council Members Gerson and Quinn, and the Parks Department, to modify the reconstruction plan for Washington Square Park.
2. CB2 joins the Fine Arts Federation in opposing the movement of the fountain, and asks that the Arts Commission and the Landmarks Commission take note of CB2's position.
3. CB2 reconsiders and further modifies its April 21, 2005 resolution to the extent that:
  - a. CB2 opposes the plan to elevate the area surrounding the fountain to street level.
  - b. CB2 opposes a reduction in size of the Park's central plaza.
  - c. CB2 supports the placement of a fence around the park any higher than 36 inches above the sidewalk level, and the placement of a fence around the park which is not open and delicate.
  - d. CB2 supports the creation of a pre-teen play area in addition to the mounds area.
4. CB2 re-emphasizes its support for the maintenance of the mounds in the same location as they are presently located, in a similar form and design;
5. CB2 further emphasizes its support for the requirement, negotiated by Councilmember's Gerson and Quinn, requiring that CB2 be consulted in advance of any further "namings" within the Park.
6. CB2 further emphasizes its support for Councilmembers Gerson and Quinn's efforts to preserve and expand accessibility to the Park and its playgrounds for children and adults with disabilities.