



Battery Park City Authority

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STATEMENT OF GWEN DAWSON, VICE PRESIDENT OF REAL PROPERTY, TO MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 1

Statement as Prepared for Delivery

Good evening and thank you.

Essential to BPCA's ongoing South End Avenue/West Thames Street Assessment is an open and transparent process of public feedback and updates as we take a holistic view of potential improvements to these streets – including, among other things, traffic and parking concerns; pedestrian safety and amenities; and street vitality and appeal.

This Assessment sprang in large part from joint efforts involving Community Board 1, the City Department of Transportation (DOT), and BPCA in 2013 to examine possible improvements on South End Avenue focused on pedestrian safety. Indeed, our Study seeks to optimize DOT's previous suggestions for South End Avenue improvements by taking a comprehensive look at potential enhancements to the overall streetscape.

Of course, pedestrian safety considerations would figure prominently in any street-level improvements pursued; and any changes would be made only with DOT's approval, consistent with its prior recommendations to calm traffic, promote safer crossings, and reduce double-parking.

As part of our ongoing Study, we conducted street intercept surveys, retail surveys, and resident surveys to invite active and substantive involvement from a broad set of interested constituents. We received responses from residents in every building along South End Avenue and West Thames Street, and conducted outreach to nearly 20 retail establishments as part of these efforts. We continue to solicit feedback today.

And this past summer, we were pleased to see many of you at our open house events, where attendees shared their thoughts, viewed preliminary concepts, and spoke with the designers who developed them.

To be clear: There is no work currently planned, and we are committed to providing additional opportunities for public input before any design decisions are made.

We're also committed to providing updates to the Community Board and public as we move through what was, from the start, intended to be an iterative process. And in keeping with that promise please note the following:

- As a result of the feedback process to date we've heard substantial concern about filling in the arcades for the purposes of providing additional, indoor retail space. Our own economic analysis as well indicates significant potential barriers to pursuing this course of action at this time. Therefore, enclosing the arcades will not be a recommendation of our Study;
- Over the coming weeks we'll be coordinating a joint public meeting with DOT, in Battery Park City, to continue engaging the community and soliciting its valued input on these efforts. I invite you all to attend as BPCA's work with DOT on a set of recommended strategies for street and pedestrian improvements along South End Avenue and West Thames Street continues.

Thank you.

South End Avenue / West Thames Street Assessment Materials:

<http://bpca.ny.gov/public-information/>

Feedback on the Assessment may be submitted to: design.review@bpca.ny.gov

About BPCA: The Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority is a New York State public benefit corporation with a mission to plan, create, coordinate, and maintain a balanced community of commercial, residential, retail, and park space within its designated 92-acre site on the lower west side of Manhattan. For more info visit: bpca.ny.gov