



COMMUNITY BOARD ELEVEN

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Nilsa Orama
Chair

Angel D. Mescaín
District Manager

April 20, 2021

NYC Environmental Justice Advisory Board
Mayor's Office of Climate Policy & Programs
253 Broadway, 14th Floor
New York, NY 10007

To the NYC Environmental Justice Advisory Board,

Community Board 11 (CB11) supports your endeavor to create the Environmental Justice for All Report, a framework that centers New York City's low-income and minority communities. The report's aim to identify which communities are being disproportionately impacted by environmental burdens and which are not seeing the benefits of green investments made by the City is an important consideration for our district as an Environmental Justice Zone. With the convergence of initiatives that address the intersecting issues of health equity and economic development such as the Environmental Justice for All Report and the *Where We Live Plan*, it is important that communities like East Harlem receive equitable resources and opportunities for comprehensive solutions.

The Vision Plan for a Resilient East Harlem highlights East Harlem's vulnerability to climate change. Our neighborhood is particularly vulnerable to flooding from extreme rain, sea level rise, and storm surge; managing inland drainage is a critical priority as water is easily trapped in low-lying areas. East Harlem also experiences extreme heat in the summer months due to a variety of physical factors including high density and lack of green space, putting our senior and vulnerable populations at risk. CB11 has requested and been denied access to the full plan, which would be instrumental in helping the community to understand and better advocate for the infrastructure and funding required to keep Community Board 11 safe in a climate emergency.

CB11 would like the Environmental Justice Report and plan to consider and address the following resiliency and climate justice concerns and opportunities in East Harlem:

1. Interior drainage;
2. Waterfront resiliency;
3. Resiliency interventions planned in conjunction with the infrastructure work required for the 2nd Ave. Subway extension;
4. Address flooding and drainage infrastructure in parks;
5. Address issues of extreme heat;
6. Address air quality and pollution issues;
 - a) Metro-north train

- b) Highway convergences
 - c) Traffic/Car pollution and safety
 - d) Bus depots
 - e) Gas line maintenance
7. Provide for the permanent relocation of the sanitation garages as prescribed by the East Harlem Points of Agreement;
 8. Provide increased sanitation services;
 - a) Provide additional street trash cans;
 - b) Provide more frequent trash collection;
 9. Provide vacant lot cleaning;
 - a) Address the responsibilities of absentee landlords regarding sanitation concerns;
 10. Implement street trees;
 11. Implement pervious concrete on roads and sidewalks;
 12. Implement bioswales in hardscaping, roadways, and soft scaping (i.e. tree-pits);
 13. Consider rain collection and detention on roofs;
 14. Consider run-off water and leakage from elevated subways/trains;
 15. Consider social resilience and emergency preparedness.

Our board has also been advocating for the Harlem River Greenway Link and East River Esplanade improvements that were included in the East Harlem Points of Agreement, a list of commitments from the City as part of the 2017 neighborhood rezoning. These important projects will need to incorporate sufficient resiliency strategies in order to assist with protection of the community in flood events.

As an identified Environmental Justice Zone, CB11 would like to see policies implemented and designed to close the gap on environmental health disparities achieved through a process that ensures access and inclusion for people at every level of the planning and decision-making process, and equal protection from environmental and health hazards.

We recognize the complexity of the problems facing East Harlem and the high costs of capital improvements to infrastructure at such a large scale. However, bold interventions, although costly, are necessary to combat the dangers of climate change and ensure the livability of our neighborhood for generations to come. We look forward to working with the city in the development, planning, and implementation of the environmental justice plan.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Nilsa Orama
Chair
Community Board 11

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York City (via email)
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President (via email)

Hon. Diana Ayala, New York City Council (via email)
Hon. Ben Kallos, New York City Council (via email)
Hon. Robert Perkins, New York City Council (via email)
Hon. Keith Powers, New York City Council (via email)
Hon. Brian Benjamin New York State Senate (via email)
Hon. Jose Serrano, New York State Senate (via email)
Hon. Robert Rodriguez, New York State Assembly (via email)
Hon. Inez Dickens, New York State Assembly (via email)
Daniel A. Zarrilli, Mayor's Office of Climate Policy & Programs (via email)
Jessica Elliott, Community Board 11 (via email)
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