



**Manhattan Community Board 2 Parks & Waterfront Committee
Hearing on Pier55
December 3, 2014
Submitted testimony of New Yorkers for Parks**

Good evening. I am Tupper Thomas, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Parks.

We are always happy to welcome new open space to our dense city, and we are pleased that this ambitious and complex plan to extend parkland beyond the waterline is proceeding largely with private funding. We believe Pier55 will become a popular resource for New Yorkers of all ages and incomes, as the rest of Hudson River Park has become, and the Diller - von Furstenberg Family Foundation's commitment to support maintenance and programming fuels our optimism.

New Yorkers for Parks supports this plan to bring 2.7 acres of visionary open space architecture and inclusive arts and cultural programming to New York City. We are also pleased to see that the lease agreement between the Trust and the Foundation has been carefully crafted to ensure maximum public access, as well as a maintenance funding plan for the next 20 years.

Knowing how vitally parks can boost public health, quality of life and economic stability, we hope to work with the Hudson River Park Trust to ensure ongoing dialogue about Pier55's long-term future. This will mean sustaining dialogue about providing for maintenance and capital costs well into the future. While we expect Pier55's events and unique landscape to attract additional private support, its ambitious design may bring long-term maintenance challenges. We hope to collaborate with the Hudson River Park Trust to advocate for funding strategies that will support this and all other parts of the park.

By fashioning a place for great events, Pier55 answers a long-held question about how our parks can provide spaces for recreation, passive use, and entertainment to the public without shortchanging other public services. We appreciate the spirit behind this project and we hope to work with all parties as Pier55 becomes another local landmark.

Thank you very much.

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For over 100 years, New Yorkers for Parks has built, protected and promoted parks and open spaces in New York City. Today, NY4P is the citywide independent organization championing quality parks and open spaces for all New Yorkers in all neighborhoods. More information: www.ny4p.org