

AB-167 Sub no. 1094A



News...

FROM COUNCIL MEMBER

CHRISTINE C. QUINN

208421



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Testimony of Councilmember Christine C. Quinn Before the Surface Transportation Board Regarding a Certificate of Interim Trail Use for the Manhattan High Line

July 24, 2003

Good afternoon. My name is Christine Quinn, and I am the elected Councilmember who represents the City's 3rd Council District, including both the Hell's Kitchen/Clinton and Chelsea neighborhoods.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to comment in strong support of the City's proposal that the Surface Transportation Board (STB) grant a Certificate of Interim Trail Use (CITU) for the Manhattan High Line. Granting the High Line a CITU, as you know, will impact a significant amount of my district by protecting this unique space from demolition.

The 1.45 mile-long High Line, which was originally paid for in part with public funds in the 1930's and served as a commercial freight railroad until 1980, is a historic landmark that has the promising potential to be even more significant to the people of New York City. I believe that by granting a CITU and allowing the City of New York and the Consolidated Rail Corporation to preserve the Manhattan High Line, the STB would be doing an invaluable service to the people of New York City by creating a much-needed park and public space. The High Line, with its unique location, would link the lively cultural and growing West Side neighborhoods together, forming a recreational center for the three surrounding communities that would attract visitors and help area business. As seen in the popularity of the Hudson River Park, the High Line is another example of a deserted commercial/industrial facility that can be successfully converted into open space.

I am a long-time supporter for the preservation of the Manhattan High Line. I have been working closely with Speaker Gifford Miller, Deputy Mayor Dan Doctoroff, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg to not only save this timeless piece of our city's history, but to restore it for public use. The conversion of the High Line, like the Hudson River Park, is another creative way of enhancing the quality of life for many New York City residents. In such a crowded community and city, this type of improvement is not only encouraged but necessary as the West Side lacks the parks and open space the City's residents and children need. I urge the Board to look favorably upon the request of Conrail, the City, and community residents and issue a CITU to preserve the High Line for public use. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to share my thoughts and concerns.

Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001



News

FOR RELEASE
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No. 03-26

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Public & Media Advisory: Surface Transportation Board to Hold July 24 Public Hearing in New York City on "Highline" Rail-Line Abandonment Case

Surface Transportation Board (Board) Chairman Roger Nober today announced that the Board will hold a public hearing beginning at 2:00 p.m. EDT, on Thursday, July 24, 2003, in the Federal Conference Center, in the Jacob Javits Federal Building, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, New York, to provide a forum for interested persons to express their views on the matters at issue in the case entitled *Chelsea Property Owners--Abandonment--Portion of the Consolidated Rail Corporation's West 30th Street Secondary Track in New York, NY*, Docket No. AB-167 (Sub-No. 1094)A.

In advance of the public hearing, the Board advises that:

- Parties and persons wishing to speak at the hearing should file with the Board a written notice of intent to participate, and should indicate a requested time allotment (with the understanding that speaking times will be limited to accommodate those expressing an interest to speak) as soon as possible but no later than **July 15, 2003**, and
- Written statements by hearing participants may be submitted prior to the hearing but are not required. Those wishing to submit written statements should do so by **July 17, 2003**.

An original and 10 copies of all notices of intent to participate and any written and/or

demolition costs in excess of \$7 million. In addition, another party, Friends of the High Line, Inc., has asked the Board to reopen the 1992 Highline abandonment proceeding on historical and environmental grounds. The City of New York (the City) has asked the Board to issue a certificate of interim trail use (CITU) under Section 1247(d) of Title 16, *United States Code* [16 U.S.C. 1247(d)] to allow the City to negotiate an agreement with Conrail to "rail bank" (to preserve until a time when rail use might be restored) the Highline and allow it to be used for the time being as a trail. Finally, Conrail has asked the Board to determine whether the agency has the authority to issue a CITU under the particular circumstances of this case.

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TO: ~~RE~~ Docket No. AB-167 (Sub No. 1094) A

FAX #: 202-565-9016

DATE:

FROM:

____ Councilmember Christine Quinn

☒ Danielle DeCerbo

____ Peter Rider

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Other: _____

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MESSAGE:

Re: Docket No. AB-167 (Sub-No. 1094) A

Written Statement

~~to participate~~