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COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE
NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

www.cb2manhattan.org

P: 212-979-2272 F: 212-254-5102 E: info@cb2manhattan.org

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March 24, 2017

Carmen Farina
Chancellor
Department of Education
New York, NY 10271
Tweed Court House
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Farina:

At its Full Board meeting March 23, 2017, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution in Support of Naming MS 297 in Honor of Jane Jacobs

Whereas:

1. Community Board 2 (CB 2) has nurtured and shepherded a new public middle school at 75 Morton Street for 11 years, passed 17 resolutions and hosted three rallies and numerous forums and public meetings;
2. MS 297 will open in Fall 2017 and move into 75 Morton Street in Fall 2018, due to sustained, community-driven, grass roots advocacy by CB 2, Community Education Council District 2 (CECD2), parents, community activists, community organizations and our elected officials, who identified the existing building and put forth a recommendation for its reuse as new school;
3. Jane Jacobs, an author, activist and community organizer who lived in Greenwich Village, had a profound impact on our community:
 - a. Jacobs' 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, became one of the most influential American texts about the inner workings and failings of cities, inspiring generations of urban planners and activists;
 - b. Jacobs disagreed with the notion that the city's oldest neighborhoods should be demolished to make way for high-rise buildings and highways;
 - c. Instead, Jacobs helped preserve neighborhood from the West Village to Little Italy and led initiatives to i) prevent the demotion of a 14-block stretch from West Eleventh Street to Morton

Street for an urban renewal project, ii) block Robert Moses from allowing cars to drive through Washington Square Park and iii) stop the construction of the Lower Manhattan Expressway; and,

- d. Jacobs championed new, community-based approaches to planning, which created a framework for community boards, community education councils and other community organizations to give voice to local communities in decision-making and planning;
4. Our community's push to open a new middle school in Greenwich Village is the embodiment of the spirit of Jane Jacobs work, in particular, the grassroots movement that identified the 75 Morton building and advocated for its reuse as a new public school in response to the problem of overcrowding in our neighborhood schools;
5. The addition of 600 new middle school students and 100 new District 75 students combined with the design of the new school, which includes a light-filled ground floor cafeteria and the regeneration of a corner parking lot into a welcoming play yard, will breathe new life into our community and add to the sidewalk ballet – an unrehearsed choreography of urban dwellers going about their business – that, according to Jacobs, creates the vitality of city life;
6. This example of community-based urban planning can become a model for how the local community partners with the Department of Education and School Construction Authority to site, design, envision new public schools;
7. The legacy of Jane Jacobs provides rich curriculum opportunities for middle school students at MS 297; and,
8. Greenwich Society for Historic Preservation supports naming MS 297 in honor of Jane Jacobs in light of Jacob's historical importance in our community and her advocacy for community-based planning and in recognition of the community-driven effort and grassroots campaign to identify the 75 Morton building and reuse it as a public school.

Therefore be it resolved that Community Board 2, Manhattan (CB 2) urges the Department of Education to name MS 297 the Jane Jacobs Middle School in honor of the legacy of Jane Jacobs to community-based urban planning and the preservation and regeneration of the West Village and surrounding neighborhoods, and how our community's advocacy for a new middle school at 75 Morton Street embodies this legacy; and,

Be it further resolved that CB 2 urges the Department of Education and the School Construction Authority to embrace the 75 Morton model of local community engagement and input for how the city sites, designs and envisions new public schools.

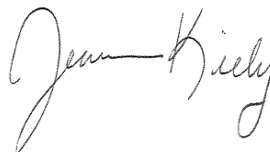
VOTE: Unanimous, with 36 Board Members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Terri Cude, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Jeannine Kiely, Chair
Schools and Education Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TC/EM

c: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Congress Member
Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member
Hon. Yuh-Line Niou, Assembly Member
Hon. Daniel Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator
Hon. Corey Johnson, Council Member
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Council Member
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Lorraine Grillo, President and CEO, School Construction Authority
Yolanda Torres, Executive Superintendent of Family and Community Engagement, NYC DOE
Bonnie LaBoy, Superintendent, District 2, NYC DOE
Jacqui Getz, Project Leader, M.S. 297, NYC DOE
Robin Broshi, President, CECD2
Andrew Berman, Executive Director, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation