



ERIK BOTTCHER
COUNCIL MEMBER

**THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**
224 WEST 30TH STREET, #1206
NEW YORK, NY 10001

TELEPHONE
(212) 564-7757

August 8, 2025

Mayor Eric Adams
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

First Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Commissioner Iris Rodriguez-Rosa
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation
The Arsenal, Central Park
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10065

Dear Mayor Adams, First Deputy Mayor Mastro, and Commissioner Rodriguez-Rosa:

I write once again to express my strong position regarding the future of the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center in the West Village.

As the Parks Department continues evaluating options for expanding recreation facilities on this site and along the Clarkson Street corridor, I want to be absolutely clear: any new recreation center at this location must, at a minimum, retain the visible façade of the current building. The Dapolito Center is a deeply cherished part of the neighborhood's cultural and historic fabric.

Our community recognizes that the needs of residents have grown. West Side residents — including families, seniors, and young people — deserve access to a state-of-the-art, spacious, affordable fitness and recreation center that doesn't require spending thousands of dollars a year on private gym memberships.

High-quality public recreation space is essential to public health, social connection, and equity — especially in a city where affordability is increasingly out of reach.

Previously, the Parks Department indicated it would engage a consultant or subcontractor to explore how much of the existing structure could be incorporated into a new design, giving us reason to believe that all preservation options — including retaining the façade — would be considered. However, at the August 6, 2025 meeting of the Community Board 2 Parks & Waterfront Committee, Parks representatives stated that their intention is “removing the [Dapolito] building as it stands,” and, at best, potentially retaining only “elements” of the current façade.

A viable path forward must include the preservation of the building’s visible façade, fully integrated into a revitalized, 21st-century recreation facility that meets the evolving needs of the community.

I want to acknowledge the City’s \$164 million investment in this corridor — including plans for expanded recreation space, larger indoor and outdoor pools, the redesign of the dated and underutilized eastern portion of J.J. Walker Park, and other long-overdue improvements. These enhancements are welcome and important. However, the approach to the Dapolito site has so far lacked the creativity and responsiveness we’ve seen in other projects.

This community deserves better than a false choice between preservation and progress. We can — and must — achieve both.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to collaboration on a path that serves the public, honors the past, and meets the needs of the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erik Bottcher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Erik Bottcher
New York City Council Member
District 3