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Contact:

Sommer Omar

Founder, Coalition to Save the Public Recreation Center Downtown (SPRCD)

sommeromar1@gmail.com

646-286-5266

Andrew Berman

Executive Director, Village Preservation

andrew@villagepreservation.org

917-533-1767

*****PRESS RELEASE*****

**Downtown Organizations Release FOIL Records Confirming The Tony Dapolito
Recreation Center Can be Repaired, Despite Claims to the Contrary**

New York, NY - Today, a coalition of downtown organizations and community leaders joined by Village Preservation held a rally to publicly release government records obtained through a year-long Freedom of Information Law request that undermine the claim that the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center is beyond repair. One year ago, Sommer Omar, founder of the Coalition to Save the Public Recreation Center Downtown (SPRCD), submitted a FOIL request seeking any documents or communications that informed the City's decision to demolish the recreation center. Although the City produced copious files, not a single document disclosed indicates that the facility is beyond repair, and multiple ones indicated clearly that the city found that the building could be repaired.

- **The full records are accessible [here](#).**
- **An email from a NYC Parks Department staffer stating the facility “can be fully repaired” is [here](#).**
- **A preliminary report detailing how to repair, modernize and return the facility to public use is [here](#).**
- **A 50+ master reconstruction plan produced by contracted architects and engineers detailing how to render the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center ADA accessible, code compliant, and generally adapted for continued public use is [here](#).**

“For almost two years, we have been told that the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center must be demolished, that there is no alternative and that it is beyond repair. In response, I submitted Freedom of Information Law request No. 19589 seeking the records behind that decision. What the City produced flatly contradicts that narrative. Claim by claim, point by point, these documents generated by the City’s own architects, engineers, and staff refute the justification for demolition. There is a more than 50 page detailed reconstruction plan rendered by expert architects and engineers indicating the facility can be fully modernized and can be rendered ADA accessible and code compliant and returned to public use. There is even an email from a NYC Parks Department staffer explicitly stating the facility ‘can be fully repaired.’ Taken together with more than \$120 million in already-allocated capital funding that remains untapped, the record leaves no basis for delay. Mayor Mamdani has already committed to repairing and reopening this facility, and that commitment now stands on a clear and copious public record that shows repairs can and must begin immediately," **said Sommer Omar, Founder of the Coalition to Save the Public Recreation Center Downtown.**

“There is no excuse for the city not to finally repair, restore, and reopen the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center. These recently uncovered documents confirm what we have been saying all along — this building can be repaired; its problems, like those of any older building, are fixable; and the money to do so is already available. It’s time for us to turn a page on the lies and mismanagement of the Adams Administration, fulfill Mayor Mamdani’s campaign promise, and move ahead with restoring and reopening this beloved landmarked public recreation center. The City can no longer violate its own laws and obligations and allow this important historic building to deteriorate further,” **said Andrew Berman, Executive Director of Village Preservation.**

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