



THE PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Bill de Blasio – PUBLIC ADVOCATE

August 7, 2013

William T. Castro
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
481 Eighth Ave #506b,
New York, NY 10001

Dear Mr. Castro:

I write to you with questions relating to the recent creation of the Washington Square Park Conservancy. I appreciate the active involvement of our community members to address the needs of Washington Square Park and understand that the creation of the Conservancy has been approved by Community Board 2. However, constituents have contacted my office with concerns over transparency and community involvement in the creation of the Conservancy. These concerns relate to the nature of collaboration between the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Conservancy, as well as insufficient transparency and community engagement.

In an effort to address some of the questions that have been raised and in the hopes of resolving outstanding concerns, I seek additional information regarding the planned interaction between the Department of Parks and Recreation and the newly-created Washington Square Park Conservancy. Please provide my office with:

- Documents that codify the formal relationship between the Conservancy and the Department of Parks and Recreation, including clear delineation of the responsibilities of the Executive Director of the Washington Square Park Conservancy and the Washington Square Park Administrator;
- Clarity on the expected full range of financial and planning-related interactions between the Department of Parks and the Conservancy, including any potential long-term impact on City funding for Washington Square Park from the City;
- The resolution and/or bylaws of the Washington Park Conservancy;
- Clarity on the impact that the "Gerson-Quinn Letter," dated October 6, 2005, will have on the interaction between the Conservancy, Community Board 2, and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

I appreciate your willingness to share this information with my office, and I look forward to working with you to address this issue in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

* *Bill de Blasio*

Bill de Blasio
Public Advocate for the City of New York