



WHERE COMMUNITY AND CREATIVITY CONNECT.

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Thursday February 9, 2012
New York City Industrial Agency (IDA) Hearing

Comments prepared by
THE POINT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

THE POINT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION is a nonprofit organization dedicated to youth development and the cultural and economic revitalization of the Hunts Point section of the South Bronx. We are here today to urge the New York City Industrial Agency to take the environmental justice impacts of the proposed expansion of Fresh Direct in our already overburdened community under very careful consideration while building this subsidy package worth over 80 million dollars. The POINT has dedicated over a decade of advocacy to assist and fight for the equitable, balanced and just development of our South Bronx community and our waterfronts as members of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance, the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods and as a lead project partner of The South Bronx Greenway.

We ask that The NYC IDA utilize its full agency to hold Fresh Direct and this expansion proposal to the highest environmental justice standards while ensuring that the economic benefits to our surrounding community are real and lasting. South Bronx residents deserve the guarantee of clean air, sustainable transportation practices that will result in safer roads, more livable communities and better transit routes for all, and jobs that will reward hard work with good wages and access to fresh produce to alleviate our status as a food desert.

As Fresh Direct expands, the city must expect increased truck traffic throughout the city, and especially in neighborhoods en route to the proposed distribution center in the Bronx. We urge you to vote support this project **only** if the grocer's expansion will not negatively impact vulnerable populations, especially the elderly and the very young. If benefits are extended to Fresh Direct, the firm should be required to reciprocate public benefit by reducing its carbon emissions and improving air quality in the community through remediation practices and by fully supporting The Randall's Island Connector of The South Bronx Greenway. The South Bronx Greenway Project, now in its 5th year of implementation since its ribbon cutting in 2006. The impetus of this project was to provide the environmental justice communities of Hunts Point, Mott Haven and Port Morris, which are suffering from dire health crisis such as asthma; some much deserved green space, waterfront access and healthy economic development. Our concern is that well over a decade of community advocacy/activism and public/private planning as well as an overall investment of \$53 million could be lost if we cannot secure the needed resources to make the Randall's Island Connector possible. It has long been the goal to have the green way as a means for community residents and workers to gain some access to the waterfront that has so long been dedicated solely to industrial uses. We believe in a safe, healthy and balanced working waterfront. Our request is that an easement be granted to allow the South Bronx Greenway to pass through Harlem River Yards as always envisioned. We are grateful to have heard support from Harlem River Yards and The Borough Presidents office on the connector. However, our community remains vulnerable until the issue is fully resolved. We do hope that

all elected officials, NYCEDC and the IDA will continue to work to ensure this can happen as the community envisioned and hoped for.

Lastly, the proposed site at Harlem River Yards has an extensive, existing rail yard, yet the city, state or Fresh Direct has made no mention of its possible use of rail transit. This existing infrastructure has a quantifiable value to any company interested in locating at this site, and that value should be reflected in the benefits package. We ask that city officials provide more details on how the rail yards may or may not be an asset of the site, and a commitment from Fresh Direct to effectively use rail transportation and thereby reduce some of its dependence on truck traffic.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration.

Respectfully,
Kellie Terry- Sepulveda
Executive Director