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Members: **Black Veterans for Social Justice** (Job Masharaki), **Church of the Open Door** (Rev. Mark V.C. Taylor), **Brooklyn Christian Center** (Rev. Dennis Dillon), **Brown Memorial Baptist Church** (Rev. Clinton Miller), **Emmanuel Baptist Church** (Rev. Anthony L. Trufant), **Hanson Place Central United Methodist Church** (Rev. Patrick Perrin), **Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church** (Rev. David Dyson), **Old First Reformed Church** (Rev. Daniel Meeter)

Hon. Peter S. Kalikow
Chairman
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Re: **Vanderbilt Yards RFP**

July 15, 2005

Dear Mr. Kalikow,

The disposition of the development rights to the Vanderbilt rail yards demands that the public interest be protected not only with regard to the immediate revenue realized by the MTA but also with regard to the long-term economic benefits to be derived from the transaction and the environmental and community impacts. As such, it is imperative that the process of disposing of such a significant asset be conducted in a manner that is transparent and which provides for the maximum level of public oversight and involvement.

As you are certainly aware these goals are embodied in legislation – the Public Authorities Accountability Act of 2005 - recently enacted by the New York State Legislature and awaiting the signature of Governor George E. Pataki. The legislation, sponsored by Member of Assembly Richard Brodsky and Senator Vincent Leibell, will require public authorities such as the MTA to assure the public of the fairness of the bid review process by requiring that:

- an appraisal is conducted by an independent appraiser where, such as is the case with the Vanderbilt Yard, the unique nature of the property renders it not subject to fair market pricing; and
- all bids are publicly disclosed immediately.

In a letter dated June 14, 2004 to Assemblyman Brodsky, Mr. Kalikow said that he would be retaining the services of a qualified appraiser to appraise the Vanderbilt Yard. We respectfully call upon you and the other members of the MTA Board to follow the spirit of Public Authorities Accountability Act now, even before it is signed into law, by releasing the appraisal of the Vanderbilt Rail Yard and by releasing to the public all bids received by the MTA for the sale of the property.

In addition to releasing the information, there must be transparency in the process and an assurance that all bids are given due consideration. Therefore we also urge you not to rush to judgment on the bids and to

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Michelle De La Uz, Executive Director
The Fifth Avenue Committee

Phillip Kellogg, Chair
Fort Greene Association

Marlene Donnelly, Water Quality Representative
Friends and Residents of Greater Gowanus

Mark Borino, Presiding Officer
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Eric McClure, Atlantic Yards Campaign Coordinator
Park Slope Neighbors

Deborah Howard, Executive Director
Pratt Area Community Council

Gib Veconi, Chairman
Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council

Lee Warshavsky, President
Prospect Place Block Association

Elizabeth Broad
Revel Arts

Gloria Clarke Cassis, Chairperson
Senior and Retirees Committee of Willoughby Walk Cooperative Apartments

Simon Bertrang, Atlantic Yards Committee Coordinator
South Portland Block Association

Christine Niles, Garden Co-ordinator
Warren St. Marks Community Garden

Eve Sibley, Co-founder
Williamsburg Warriors

undertake the careful study of the bids that they deserve. We are sure that you will agree that such a review cannot be rushed to meet an artificial deadline of the July Board meeting. We urge you to postpone Board action until at least the September meeting to provide an opportunity for the review and public input.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Very truly yours,



Daniel Goldstein
Spokesperson
Develop Don't Destroy–Brooklyn Inc., on behalf of the Co-signers
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Brooklyn, New York 11217
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Cc:

Hon. Governor George Pataki
Hon. Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Hon. Assemblyman Richard Brodsky
Hon. NY State Senator Vincent Leibell
Hon. US Congressman Major Owens
Hon. NY State Senator Velmanette Montgomery
Hon. NY State Assemblyman Roger Green
Hon. NY City Council Member Letitia James
Katherine Lapp, Executive Director, MTA
Roco Krsulic, Director of Real Estate, MTA
David S. Mack, Vice Chairman, MTA
Edward B. Dunn, Vice Chairman, MTA
Andrew Albert, Board Member, MTA
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Micharel J. Canino, Board Member, MTA
Barry Feinstein, Board Member, MTA
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Susan Kupferman, Board Member, MTA
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