



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007**

Date : 02/19/02

To : fax- Bob Avaltroni

From : Blatchford, Laurel

Department : Executive

Fax number : 917185954544

Total number of pages : 4

Subject: Next Draft of Environmental Coordinator Proposal

Please find attached the next draft of the Environmental Coordinator Proposal. We've sent it on to Dan. I hope to send out another version incorporating Dan's comments prior to Wednesday's meeting. However, please review this document and let me know of any thoughts you may have. Thanks.

Laurel

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*Lower Manhattan Environmental Coordinator Proposal**DRAFT 2/18/02 - Do not circulate***Draft Proposal for Lower Manhattan Environmental Coordinator**

The City must act quickly to restore public confidence in the environmental safety – in particular in the indoor and outdoor air quality – of Lower Manhattan. Reassuring the thousands of people who live and work in the area that the air is safe and that other environmental issues are being addressed in a timely manner is essential to the rebuilding and revitalization process.

In particular, the City must:

- Reassure the public that their ongoing concerns regarding a range of environmental safety issues – including indoor and outdoor air quality – are heard, and that the City is seeking to mitigate these concerns through targeted research, information dissemination and, where appropriate, cleaning and abatement.
- Improve the overall marketing of available data regarding area environmental safety, so that the data to reassure and inform Lower Manhattan's residents, employees, and visitors is distributed in an effective and timely manner.
- Inform the public of ongoing research efforts by the Department of Health and the Department of Environmental Protection, and reassure the public that this research is designed to address the numerous health concerns surrounding this unprecedented environmental disaster in a timely and efficient manner.
- Assert the scientific validity and relevance of City research results, and challenge contradictory research results where appropriate.
- Remind the public of the continual improvements to area environmental safety that have been made in the days and months since September 11th.

The first step in this process is the Mayor's appointment of a Lower Manhattan Environmental Coordinator, to be based at the Department of Health, who will serve as the public point person on all matters of environmental concern. The Coordinator will be supported by the resources and expertise of an inter-agency task force, spearheaded by the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and comprised of all City agencies with expertise in environmental, health, and safety matters.

The Lower Manhattan Environmental Coordinator

The Environmental Coordinator will focus on the numerous environmental and health issues affecting those who live and work in Lower Manhattan as a result of the World Trade Center disaster. In this capacity, he/she will:

- ***Serve as a public point person and full-time liaison between the public and the Inter-Agency Task Force regarding ongoing environmental safety concerns.*** This role is essential to bridging the gap between the public and the many agencies that have been working to address Lower Manhattan's environmental safety challenges since September 11th. Other issues that may emerge will be referred to the appropriate party; for example, concerns regarding area construction will be referred to Lower Manhattan Construction Coordinator Andrew Salkin.
- ***Manage the development and launch of a public relations campaign*** regarding environmental safety in Lower Manhattan that seeks to reassure and inform the public, other governmental entities, local businesses, and the City as a whole that peoples' concerns are being addressed and the area is environmentally sound. In

*- MOVE SW/Hly
- Mayors Announcement
- 1 Coordinator
- Program with
Coordinator Clinton
- Adopting 5-point
Plan
- Have Health
Commissioner a
Blue Ribbon Health
Panel present
- At dinner, NYU
Columbia, etc.*

*Advisory
in the press
would boost
circulation*

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particular, this campaign must address residents' ongoing concerns regarding indoor air quality. This campaign could be done in partnership with a major advertising or public relations firm, provided that such a firm could offer its services to this important cause on a *pro bono* basis.

- **Disseminate ongoing research conducted by relevant City agencies** into the environmental safety of Lower Manhattan, with a particular focus on air quality. The Coordinator must also be fully aware of ongoing research conducted by other government entities (e.g., FEMA, Regional EPA, OSHA) and private researchers. The Coordinator must be able to clearly articulate and defend City conclusions should they differ from other conclusions, and be able to reconcile these results with City results if necessary.

The Environmental Coordinator will be supported in his/her efforts by an Inter-Agency Task Force, consisting of representatives of all City agencies involved in this effort, including but not limited to: OEM, DOH, DEP, DDC, OMEC, DOB, City Legislative Affairs, and the Law Department.

In its capacity as an internal liaison to the Environmental Coordinator, the Inter-Agency Task Force will:

- **Coordinate lower Manhattan environmental and health activities among relevant agencies, and develop standards and protocol for ensuring environmental safety.** In particular, the Task Force must develop standards and protocol for indoor air quality that must be met by building owners in the affected area. In addition, the Task Force must determine agencies' enforcement authority regarding testing and cleaning dust. Once enforcement authority has been determined, enforcement efforts must be documented in a consistent manner.
- **Establish a public hotline for all Lower Manhattan environmental and health matters.** This hotline will feature agencies' environmental testing results (such as daily DEP asbestos update, EPA, ATSDR, NIOSH data) as well as preliminary interpretations of those results. Five people from DEP and five from DOH could serve as staff, and additional computer/database staff would be necessary as well. A website will be established as well to manage and disseminate information, and if possible will be coordinated with other governmental websites with information on the status of Lower Manhattan (e.g., Lower Manhattan Construction Coordinator, LMDC).

Quick
This is a very sensitive area. We have no present enforcement authority. We have to be careful in not being overbearing to businesses and landlords. We are opening a fire line.

Maximum expected volume is approximately 100 calls per day, based on calls made to DEP's hotline, DEP-HELP, on air quality issues in Lower Manhattan. The hotline will respond to hotline calls regarding specific environmental problems by referring them to the appropriate agency for review, and then following up on the referrals within a specified time period. The hotline will be modeled on the hotline established in response to the West Nile Virus.

- **Serve as a clearinghouse for environmental monitoring data and cleaning/abatement information collected by all relevant parties.** The Task Force should serve as a clearinghouse for both environmental monitoring data and cleaning and abatement information. This would then be shared with the public through the Environmental Coordinator in a form that is timely and accessible.

There is much work to be done in this area, and it must be done quickly. For example, the Task Force must electronically compile DEP sampling results. DEP currently has information on over 100,000 air quality samples taken by contractors in private buildings. Once it is electronically accessible entered, it could be used by hotline operators to provide up-to-date information to callers regarding buildings in Lower Manhattan that have been tested.

- **Inform the Mayor, the Deputy Mayors, and the Environmental Coordinator of critical issues and decisions regarding the environmental safety of the area.** The issues concerning Lower Manhattan's environmental safety change constantly; consequently, all relevant decision-makers must be kept informed of new developments on a regular basis.

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- **Determine how best to refute misleading data.** There have been numerous instances in which misleading data regarding Lower Manhattan's environmental safety has been publicly released, causing confusion among area residents and businesses. The eventual result has been the erosion of the public's confidence in the ability of various government agencies to address environmental issues in Lower Manhattan. For example, an EPA scientist, Cate Jenkins, has circulated a number of memos on EPA letterhead disputing EPA's air quality assurances. EPA has to date not refuted her allegations, but apparently they intend to do so in the near future. Nonetheless, the City should aggressively refute this kind of misleading data as soon as it becomes public. In addition, the City should consider establishing a blue ribbon panel of health experts from institutions such as New York University, Mount Sinai Hospital, and Columbia University to comment on City data and provide feedback on the City's efforts.
- **Serve as a liaison with state and federal agencies and elected officials** and, as necessary, propose legislative initiatives regarding environmental health in Lower Manhattan.

Project Timetable

This initiative must be implemented as soon as possible. Clearly, the selection of an Environmental Coordinator is the top priority. Several candidates for this position are being considered. The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding will make the final decision regarding the Coordinator's selection.

The Inter-Agency Task Force is currently up and running. It is working to identify further project components, assign them to relevant members, and establish timetables for completion of these tasks.



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