

March 7, 2023

New York State Senate Corporations Committee
New York State Senate Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building 612
Albany, New York 12248

Email Delivery

Dear Chairpersons Comrie, Kennedy and Committee Members:

I would like to add some comments to those you heard during the Joint Standing Committees held on Friday, March 3.

1. The reconstruction of Penn Station must be publicly funded as it is the most important public transportation hub in the New York City region and the surrounding metropolitan area, and its success cannot be dependent on the vagaries of NYC's commercial real estate market. This transformation must be the responsibility of New York State and its governmental partners in New Jersey and in the Federal Government.

- a. The public use of Penn Station must be paramount to all other uses on the block, including Madison Square Garden and 2 Penn.
- b. Penn Station must have a substantial above-ground presence. The Station should have a building that is both striking and visible from 7th and 8th Avenues and the surrounding area, as Moynihan Train or Grand Central Station are.
- c. Public open space should be an integral part of the redesign. Together, the building and open space will be the crown jewel of a revitalized Midtown West, welcoming new visitors, residents and commuters.
- d. The Station plan should have several phases. Phase 1 should assume substantial improvements to Penn Station with Madison Square Garden remaining in its current location and configuration for some time. Phase 2 would be executed when Madison Square Garden moves to another site or is reconfigured on site.

2. The Governor must create a development authority to coordinate all the disparate aspects of the Penn Station project. That development authority would oversee planning, coordination, negotiation and development of (i) the renovation and, if determined necessary by the railroads, any expansion of Penn Station, and (ii) the new public realm.

- a. The State of New York, New Jersey, the City of New York, Amtrak, the MTA (including LIRR, Metro-North and City Transit Authority), New Jersey Transit would have a seat at the table.
- b. In addition, the Penn Station Public Realm Task Force, and Madison Square Garden should have a seat at the table.

3. The property tax abatement for Madison Square Garden must be predicated on Madison Square Garden participating constructively in the development process for Penn Station.

I welcome an opportunity to discuss any element of these comments with you and your committee members. I may be reached at egoldstein@mas.org or (212) 935-3960, ext. 1289.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth Goldstein
President

cc. Nia James, Committee Clerk njames@nysenate.gov