



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

March 22, 1997

Dear Friends:

As you gather for the Earth Celebrations 7th Annual Rites of Spring Benefit Performance & Dance Party to save New York City's Community Gardens, please accept my warmest greetings.

On behalf of the residents of New York City I extend my gratitude to all those associated with tonight's event for making this occasion possible and for their contributions to preserving our great City's community gardens. I look forward to working with you to beautify New York City.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable event.

Sincerely,

Rudolph W. Giuliani
Mayor

Sal Albanese

DEMOCRAT FOR MAYOR

Albanese for Mayor

380 Lexington Avenue, 17th Floor • New York, NY 10168

TEL: (212) 551-1140 • FAX: (212) 551-1019

June 9, 1997

New York City Coalition For The Preservation Of Gardens
638 East 6th Street
NY, NY 10009
212-777-7969

Dear Members,

I'm writing to express my support of your work, and the work of many others in the New York City Community Garden movement. Open space and green-space are an important part of any city landscape, one that is all too often overlooked in New York City. This is why your work with community gardens is so important. Gardens serve as the heart of communities; a place for people of all generation to gather and participate in constructive and educational activities. I stand behind the garden movement and will do everything possible to maintain the position of gardens in the city. I commend the Community Garden Movement for it role in community building and education.

I would love to take a walking tour of some of the community gardens on the Lower East Side that I have heard so much about. Please contact my campaign assistant, Gregory Heller at 212-551-7870, regarding a time and date for such a tour.

Sincerely,



Sal F. Albanese



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

MUNICIPAL BUILDING
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007
(212) 669-8300

RUTH W. MESSINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

February 13, 1997

**STATEMENT OF MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT RUTH MESSINGER
AT THE "SAVE OUR GARDENS" PARADE AND RALLY**

"This rally sends a clear message to City Hall that community gardeners across the City deserve to be consulted early on in neighborhood development plans. The Mayor has turned this into a conflict about housing versus open space. Nothing could be farther from reality. Housing and open space are complementary and need to be balanced. Anyone who's walked through the Lower East Side, Bedford-Stuyvesant or Harlem knows first hand that gardens are important open space resources that have revitalized our communities.

The root of the problem is that the gardeners who have worked long and hard to transform blighted vacant lots into natural oases have been, at best, an afterthought as City Hall moves forward with its own amorphous development plans and haphazard land auctions. This Administration has decided to sell off city-owned property willy-nilly with no regard to the surrounding neighborhoods or communities' long-term goals.

The City must work with communities in its decision-making. When land-use conflicts arise, all stakeholders should be involved in creating solutions. Moreover, gardeners need more options than interim-use sites. The community should be encouraged to identify appropriate sites for permanent use as community gardens. El Jardin del Paraiso is one example of a community garden that will become a permanent park and garden on the Lower East Side—after hard work by the gardeners, the community and elected officials.

I strongly urge the Mayor to start working with the community to ensure that gardeners are given the opportunity to continue making important contributions to the quality of life of our neighborhoods and City."



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

May 30, 1993

To All In Attendance
The Third Annual Rites of Spring:
Procession to Save Our Gardens
Green Oasis Garden
8th Street between Avenues C and D
New York, New York

Dear Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to greet the celebrants of The Third Annual Rites of Spring:
Procession to Save Our Gardens.

The Green Oasis Garden is one of many such magical oases on the Lower East Side where ruined city blocks have been recycled into peaceful gardens bringing pleasure to residents and visitors alike. These gardens do more than please the mind and the eye, for they also feed the soul.

The people of our great City are our most precious resource, but our artists are the driving force of renewal. Their spirit has created a festival which is as new as it is ancient in the celebration of rebirth. In particular, I thank Felicia Young, Riva Beth Rothman, the African Drumming Ensemble, Juli Swartz, Janet Morgan, David Chmura, Kyra Svetlovsky, Amy Chazkel, Beth Ames Swartz, Diana Vivante, Robert Costa, Jerry Turdell, Perre di-Carolo, Matthew Mitchell, Ken Hiratsuka, Fred Baer, Mari-Claire Charba, Paola Ruby, Linda Cassens, Lorna Roberts-Kelly, and the many artists known and unknown whose sculptures, poetry, dance and music have given life to these extraordinary festivities.

This event is an example of what makes our City great. Enjoy the celebration!

Sincerely,

David N. Dinkins
MAYOR



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NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007
(212) 669-8300

RUTH W. MESSINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

September 10, 1995

Commissioner William Diamond
Department of General Services
1 Centre Street, 20 Floor
New York NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Diamond:

I am writing in regard to the Department's upcoming auction of Manhattan Block 458, Lots 40-41, which is currently the site of a community garden informally known as *Albert's Garden*.

For the past 21 years, this garden has been thriving on what would be yet another derelict piece of vacant city-owned land. While the garden has never been formally recognized as a Greenthumb garden, it has been a valuable resource for the surrounding community. I am disappointed that your Department has included these lots in your October public auction of city-owned land.

In this case the City's long term interests and the community's desire to retain this site as a community resource are not necessarily in conflict. In fact the community has plans to establish a private trust to transfer this land from public to private ownership while maintaining the current use.

I am also concerned about the handling of this disposition because according to the Community Board, local gardeners and area residents there has been no recent consultation with or notification of community residents regarding the Department's plans. I request that you reconsider the sale of this property and withdraw these lots from the October sale. I look forward to your prompt action on this matter. If your staff have any questions about this matter, please have them contact Thomas Flood of my staff at (212) 669-3429.

Sincerely,

Ruth W. Messinger

cc: Hon. Kathryn Freed
Community Board Three
Ms. Felicia Young



DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES

MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 17th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10007
(212) 669-7111

WILLIAM J. DIAMOND
Commissioner

September 19, 1995

Hon. Kathryn Freed
Council Member, 1st District
51 Chambers St. Room 429
New York, N.Y. 10007

RE: Block 458, Lots 40 & 41
Borough of Manhattan
Parcel # 70
October 19, 1995 Public Auction

Dear Council Member Freed:

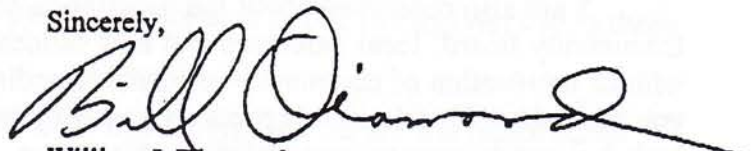
I am in receipt of your letter requesting that the above-referenced parcel be withdrawn from the upcoming public auction due to its long-standing use as a community garden.

In recognition of the important open space resource that Albert's Garden has provided to the community for over 20 years, I am pleased to inform you that I have directed that this property be removed from the public auction. Furthermore, DGS fully supports designating this site as a Department of Parks GreenThumb garden.

Regarding proposed plans for transfer of this land to a private ownership, we look forward to a formal proposal to consider this new approach.

Thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,


William J. Diamond
Commissioner

cc: Hon. Ruth Messinger
Glenn J. Elliott
Randal Fong
Jane Weissman
Martha Danziger

WHERE QUALITY MATTERS



Kathryn E. Freed

Council Member, 1st District

51 Chambers Street, Rm 429, New York, NY 10007

Phone: (212) 788-7722 FAX (212) 788-7727

COMMUNITY BOARD #3 UPDATE

September 19, 1995

ALBERT'S GARDEN SAVED FROM AUCTION

Albert's Garden, founded in 1974 and scheduled to be auctioned on October 19, has been saved from the auction block through the intervention of community based gardening groups, and my office. Please see today's letter from Commissioner Diamond of DGS. Albert's Garden, on 2nd Street between Bowery and 2nd Avenue, like all green spaces in the City provides an environment for the neighborhood to enjoy the natural beauty of trees, flowers, and fresh air. It also provides a place where children in a densely built environment can learn to work and take pride in their neighborhood. Community gardens are a place where parents can feel safe that their children are more sheltered from the dangers of the street.

Although Albert's Garden has been saved, other parks in the network of more than 50 community gardens on the Lower East Side, may be facing the same fate. My office has just been informed that The Winner's Circle Garden, on 4th Street between Avenues A and C, will also go to auction on October 19.

My office will be working with community groups and DGS to assure that this does not happen again. The community must be kept informed and their decision upheld.

ALBERT'S GARDEN COMMITTEE

30 East 2nd Street • New York, N.Y. 10003
(212) 674-5215

Louise Kruger
Ben F. Wohlberg
E. Michael Brady
William White

September 27, 1995

Felicia Young
Earth Celebrations
Lower East Side Garden Land Trust
638 East 6 Street
New York, N.Y. 10009

Dear Felicia Young:

We want to thank you and your organization for the tremendous (and successful) efforts to save Albert's Garden.

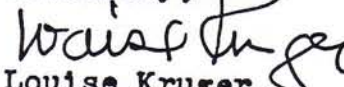
Beyond our relief at having Albert's Garden taken off the auction block for now, we are concerned as you are about the future of all these lower east side gardens.

We know these gardens are more than greenery and flowers.. The gardens help unite communities to voice and act on common needs and concerns. The gardens help clear the neighborhoods they occupy of rats and garbage, and help alert authorities to problems, from street lights to drug dealers.

We support and join you in your efforts toward a land trust to save the gardens.

Thank you again from all of us.

Sincerely,



Louise Kruger,
Albert's Garden Committee



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RUTH W. MESSINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

October 1, 1995

Commissioner William Diamond
Department of General Services
1 Centre Street, 20th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner ~~Diamond~~: Bill -

I am writing in regard to the Department of General Services' upcoming action of Manhattan Block 387, Lot 46, which is currently the site of a community garden, informally known as Mariana Bracetti Children's Theme Garden.

For the last two years, this garden has been transformed from a garbage filled vacant city-owned land to a thriving community open space. While the garden has never been formally recognized as a Greenthumb garden, it has been a valuable resource for the surrounding community. The garden organizers run activities that give children from the local headstart program an opportunity to learn more about the environment. I am concerned that your department has included this lot in the October public action of city-owned land. I ask that you withdraw the lot from the upcoming auction.

In this case, the City's long term interests and the community's desire to retain this site as a community resource are not necessarily in conflict. In fact, the community plans to establish a private trust to transfer this land from public to private ownership while maintaining the current use. I would like to set up a meeting with members of our staffs, land trust organizers and area residents to discuss the community plan for a public land trust.

Please have your staff contact David Wang, my liaison to the Lower East Side at (212) 669-4693, to set up the meeting.

Sincerely,

Ruth W. Messinger



Kathryn E. Freed



Council Member, 1st District

51 Chambers Street, Rm 429, New York, NY 10007
Phone: (212) 788-7722 FAX (212) 788-7727

COMMUNITY BOARD #3 UPDATE

October 24, 1995

Another Garden Taken off the Auction Block

The Marianna Bracetti Children's Theme Garden, on 4th Street, was taken off the auction block of October 19 after intervention from my office. I am pleased that we were able to save two gardens--the other being Alberts Garden on 2nd Street--to which the community has shown a strong commitment. Both these gardens have a long history of community participation, are well cared for, and provide a place of peaceful interaction for community residents. In addition, the Marianna Bracetti Garden hosts a number of youth-oriented activities, one of which is the Head Start Program where young children not only learn about plants and flowers, but also how to work together.