



GOWANUS CANAL COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP (CAG)

your local voice for Superfund

For more information: www.GowanusCAG.org

The following CAG resolution requests formal consideration by the indicated parties to conduct activities related to the Gowanus Canal Cleanup with regard to the concerns and interests of the Gowanus community.

TITLE: Preservation of Water Supply Distribution Building at 234 Butler Street

TO: Christos Tsiamis, Senior Project Manager, Gowanus Canal Project U.S. EPA Region 2

DATE: March 27, 2018

Resolved, the Gowanus Canal Community Advisory Group (CAG) requests that DEP engage in further site and engineering analysis investigations into the Gowanus Station building's structural integrity and consult with experts in preserving historic structures adjacent to construction sites using best efforts to find a way to preserve Gowanus Station.

Before it gives any approval of DEP's current Head-of-Canal CSO Tank design, EPA is advised that the Gowanus Station building is irreplaceable, is of value to the community, and the full 2-story structure that comprises the Station at the corner of Butler and Nevins must be maintained in its entirety.

The Gowanus CAG reserves its rights to provide EPA and DEP with further input regarding the proposed Head-of-Canal CSO tank site, including as to mitigation should the agencies disregard the wishes of the CAG as set forth in this resolution and proceed toward demolition of any part of Gowanus Station.

Background:

Lost City's Guide To Gowanus noted: "This beautiful GOWANUS STATION building is a supreme example of how utilitarian civic structures can bring beauty and majesty to an otherwise rough area. Check out the windmill up top."; and

The Historic Districts Council noted: "Losing this edifice because of a lack of a creative alternative will poorly reflect on all parties involved and will be a serious loss to the built environment of this historic and industrial neighborhood, especially in light of a rezoning where care should be given on an interagency level to carefully evaluate actions' effects on the built environment.";

The GOWANUS STATION is an authentic example of the industrial character of the Gowanus Canal Corridor, and represents the history of the water-borne transportation, civic growth and industrial development in South Brooklyn;



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As the State Historic Preservation Office has indicated, in a public letter, that the GOWANUS STATION building is an historically significant resource and stated “We assure you that we always advocate for the preservation of historic and cultural resources, under Section 106”;

Gowanus has very few existing designated individual city landmarks, but examples like the Coignet Stone Building – also built on former marshlands, built decades before Gowanus Station and built immediately adjacent to a very large, surrounding new building site – demonstrate that saving GOWANUS STATION is not impossible;

The NYCDEP currently plans to demolish the GOWANUS STATION, and replace it with the head house structure relating to one of the retention tanks for the Gowanus Canal;

Demolition of the structure would result in a negative cultural impact for Gowanus;

Neither the City Council nor the Public Design Commission have signed off on the design for the proposed head house and CSO tank at this time; and

EPA has not signed off on the engineering analysis for this site.

Cc:

Olivia Brazee, Historic Site Restoration Coordinator, NYS Historic Preservation Office

Lisa Kersavage, Director of Special Projects and Strategic Planning, Landmarks Preservation Commission

Vincent Sapienza, Commissioner, NYC Department of Environmental Protection