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September 15, 2014
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Public Design Commission of City of New York
City Hall
3rd Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: 25163 – Playground 89

My name is Helen Rosenthal, and I am the City Council representative for the 6th district, which includes Public School 166 and its adjacent playground - Playground 89. Thank you for the opportunity to comment today on the reconstruction of a portion of Playground 89.

What we can't do is nothing. The playground, in its current state, is not tenable. That is not in dispute in any serious discussion of this space. The Parks Department, school administration and the community have agreed that we need to address the space in a way that assures the school community - which may have two hundred children at a time playing there during recess each school day - has a usable and safe playground. I believe what we have is an excellent compromise design that incorporates the concerns for maintaining the spirit and charm of the original design with the concerns for making it a useful and safe space for school use. The community has been working on this for two years and what we have now is really a wonderful design that will serve the neighborhood and the school communities very well. All sides have been well heard and the Parks Department and Mr. Friedberg did an excellent job weighing concerns and incorporating suggestions into this new design. Congratulations to them for this great effort in working with the community.

Let me be clear: I fully support the design that was brought before the Community Board this past July and approved unanimously. This design brings accessibility to the entire playground, increases a play area the school considers critical, creates a greener space with more plantings and interesting creative play options. I am proud of the fact that most folks involved in this process have been able to understand and embrace the compromise process and are now anxious to move forward with this design - the direct result of that process. For my part, I have allocated another

\$300,000 to fund this new design on top of the funding previously allocated by both the then City Council Member and Manhattan Borough President.

I am proud to be able to contribute to this project and lend my office's support to a fully usable and beautiful playground for the school and the neighborhood to use for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Helen Rosenthal