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Mr. Kevin Rampe, President
Lower Manhattan Development Corporation
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor
New York, New York 10006

August 24, 2004

Dear Mr. Rampe:

The World Trade Center Survivors' Network has supported the redevelopment efforts whole heartedly. We fervently seek the time when LM returns to the vibrant working community that we lost that day. We also are resolved to never again become complacent or forget those who lost so much more than we did. In this regard it is not at all clear why the E-Train entrance or the Stairway remnants on Vesey Street have to be sacrificed in the name of redevelopment.

As survivors of that attack, we believe that a thriving development is the best way, not only to heal and preserve, but to honor our dead. These historical structures should be integrated into that development.

In our comments on the garage demolition, May 24, 2004, we said:

To document everything and preserve the most significant elements of the horror that we experienced that day is more than sufficient to meet the nation's rational and emotional needs. To the extent possible what remains should be undisturbed and preserved as a reminder of the place we all came to enjoy as the WTC and of what terrorism did to it and us. We ask that portions of the remnants of the garage decks be visible in the sublevels of the Freedom Tower. While partial demolition may be needed to build the Tower, physical evidence of the former WTC structure could be preserved in place. Similarly, why not leave the stairs and escalator support at Greenwich and Vesey exposed or partially exposed and incorporated in the design? These seem to be measures that would not cause delay....(in) the redevelopment process that is so desperately needed in Lower Manhattan.

We were heartened by the Port Authority's efforts in developing alternatives to the demolition proposal for the E-Train entrance.

But we are equally concerned about “the stairway to no where” as it has been called. We prefer to think of it as the “stairway to safety” or the Survivors Stairway. Attached are pictures, one was circulated in the press after 9/11 and the other is a current photo. The one taken on 9/11 shows people from Tower One who survived because they descended those stairs moments before their building collapsed. We believe that this was the only escape route for hundreds of survivors, after Tower Two collapsed.

The Survivors' Network proposes that those stairs should remain as a testament of hope and strength to the thousands who survived that day. The Survivors' Stairway could provide a fitting vantage point from which survivors, and everyone whose life was profoundly changed that day, could gain a vantage point from which to contemplate the footprint voids, paying respect to their lost friends, colleagues and loved ones.

Finally, we propose that development plans should be modified to dedicate a survivors area on the plaza. An area where survivors could remember in peace and gain strength from the renewed WTC community. The area should include the Survivors' Stairway.

Sincerely,

The World Trade Center Survivors' Network



