

Russell Squire
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan**

May 22, 2023

Honorable Mayor Eric Adams
Mayor of New York City
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Honorable Adrienne E. Adams
Speaker of the New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Legislation to address the proliferation of sidewalk sheds on our streets

Dear Mayor Adams and Speaker Adams,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on May 17, 2023, the board approved the following resolution by a vote of 39 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 abstentions and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS; The proliferation of scaffoldings and sidewalk sheds is a major quality of life issue in Community District 8; and

WHEREAS; Scaffoldings and sidewalk sheds within Community District 8 are often unsightly and contribute to visual blight; and

WHEREAS; Scaffoldings and sidewalk sheds reduce natural light and have detrimental impacts on plantings and trees that beautify and absorb heat; and

WHEREAS; Scaffoldings and sidewalk sheds result in poor lighting and limited visibility at night and contribute to perceptions of diminished safety; and

WHEREAS; the duration of time that many scaffoldings remain standing is often too lengthy, resulting in increased costs and inconvenience; and

WHEREAS; Building façade inspection requirements mandated under local law 11 currently require the use of scaffolding and new building construction also requires scaffolding and sidewalk sheds; and

WHEREAS; the use of drones to assist in the building inspection process, which could provide opportunities to reduce inspection costs and allow them to be done without the need for scaffolding and sidewalk shed installation is worthy of further study and consideration; and

WHEREAS; the New York City Council is considering a package of proposed bills to attempt to address the issues regarding scaffoldings and sidewalk sheds; and

WHEREAS; the following bills have been introduced to address these issues:

- [Introduction 970](#) will establish new design requirements for scaffolding, such as allowing the structures to be painted in several different colors and raising their minimum height to 12 feet, as well as creating alternatives to scaffolding (such as mesh netting).
- [Introduction 972](#) will create timelines for the removal of scaffolding if no active construction is taking place over an extended period of time. Instead, the City would be allowed to step in and correct unsafe conditions on building facades, and then bill the property owner.
- [Introduction 973](#) will allow newly constructed buildings to have their first facade examination take place in 8 years instead of 5 since they use safer materials. It would also require the Department of Buildings to coordinate inspections on the same block so facade repairs happen simultaneously.
- [Introduction 971](#) will protect our tree cover. It will require any trees that are damaged or removed when setting up equipment to be repaired or replaced within 6 months.
- [Introduction 452](#) will allow the City to establish a pilot program to use drones, in conjunction with physical examinations, for the inspection of building faces.
- [Introduction 954](#) protects our city's green spaces by requiring scaffolding to avoid obstructing playgrounds and parks. Scaffolding in these areas would have to be a minimum of 12 feet high and avoid use of cross-bracing.
- [Introduction 955](#) makes scaffolding brighter and safer - especially at night - by updating lighting requirements to LED lights that have at least 90 lumens per watt as opposed to the current 45.
- [Introduction 956](#) establishes penalties for property owners who fail to apply for a work permit within 6 months of installing scaffolding.
- [Introduction 966](#) requires the Department of Buildings to inspect scaffolding every six months and issue an administrative fee per inspection.

WHEREAS; Community Board 8 believes that the package of bills should be debated and seriously considered;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Community Board 8 supports efforts of the City Council to address the issue of excessive and unsightly scaffoldings and sidewalk sheds that adversely impact the quality of life of residents, visitors and businesses, and urges hearings on and passage of the package of bills introduced by Keith Powers and others, Intros 970, 972, 973, 971, 452, 954, 955, 956, and 966, that aim to address the subject matter in a comprehensive manner.

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

Sincerely,

Russell Squire

Russell Squire
Chair

Craig Lader and Charles Warren

Craig Lader and Charles Warren
Co-Chairs, Transportation Committee

cc: Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York
Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Jerry Nadler, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District
Honorable José M. Serrano, NYS Senator, 29th Senatorial District
Honorable Edward Gibbs, NYS Assembly Member 68th Assembly District
Honorable Alex Bores, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District

Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District
Honorable Julie Menin, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District