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**Councilmembers Bill de Blasio and David Yassky Endorse  
“Gowanus Summit” Principles for Responsible Development**

*Community organizations call for affordable housing, height limits in Carroll Gardens,  
saving manufacturing jobs, high labor and environmental standards*

November 17, 2008 – New York City Councilmembers Bill de Blasio and David Yassky today endorsed the “Gowanus Summit” principles for responsible development of the Gowanus Canal area. The Gowanus Summit is a diverse coalition of community organizations, labor unions, and advocates for blue-collar jobs. The principles include guarantees for affordable housing, to preserve space for artists, artisans and light manufacturing, to create good jobs, to require responsible contractors, and to maintain high environmental standards.

"The Gowanus rezoning has the potential to be great for the community, but only if it is done right," said Councilmember David Yassky. "We must ensure a healthy supply of affordable housing, smart protections for the canal, and preservation of the area's mix of light manufacturing, artisans and artists – things I have been fighting for since I joined the Council. These are the things that make Gowanus special; without them, we could significantly change the character of the community without improving the lives of the people who live and work there."

The endorsements came as City Planning Commission Chairperson Amanda Burden came to the neighborhood to present City Planning's proposal for rezoning the area to the Land Use Committee of Community Board 6. Gowanus Summit groups welcomed the presentation, saying that they were glad to see City Planning moving forward, and that many aspects of Commissioner Burden's proposal align with their responsible redevelopment principles – particularly affordable housing. They expressed optimism that their remaining goals – including stronger protections for a mix of uses including manufacturing and artists, a comprehensive approach to neighborhood infrastructure, and responsible contracting standards – would be addressed as the rezoning process moves forward.

"I am pleased with the hard work City Planning has put into the rezoning of the Gowanus Corridor thus far, and I thank Commissioner Burden for coming to the community tonight," said Councilmember Bill de Blasio. "We share the goals of affordable housing, contextual development in Carroll Gardens, alleviating sewer overflows, and insuring proper environmental remediation. I look forward to working together to achieve these goals, and other critical Gowanus Summit principles, such as responsible contracting and preventing out-of-context hotel development."

The coalition – which has an unusually diverse membership of community development and preservation, including the area's premier community organizations, some of the City's major trade and service unions, and development watchdogs – developed its principles for the one-and-a-half-mile area around the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn last year.

"The redevelopment of the Gowanus Canal area offers a unique opportunity to get the balance right. With the right rules, we can create affordable housing, good jobs, and waterfront open space, preserve the character of Carroll Gardens and neighborhood manufacturing, and guarantee high environmental and labor standards," said Brad Lander, Director of the Pratt Center for Community Development and a local Community Board 6 member.

"City Planning made the right decision in agreeing that a significant portion of the Gowanus Canal corridor should remain zoned for manufacturing. Unfortunately, traditional manufacturing zoning leaves big loopholes, and the area could still be overrun by big-box stores and hotels, as was recently the case in Dutch Kills in Queens," said Adam Friedman, Director of the New York Industrial Retention Network. "In other areas, City Planning has recognized that when it up-zones one area to stimulate new development, it must down-zone the adjacent area to prevent displacement, in this case of light manufacturers and artists."

"With the economic downturn, New York City is facing an affordable housing crisis that requires attention to both development and preservation," said Michelle de la Uz, executive director of the Fifth Avenue Committee, a Brooklyn community development and advocacy organization.

"Responsible redevelopment of the Gowanus area, with real affordable housing guarantees, can generate hundreds of permanently affordable apartments and homes, while preserving the rent stabilized units that are already there. Developers shouldn't be able to build just as tall, if they don't include any affordable units."

"Redevelopment of the area around the Canal is consistent with making this a more sustainable community," said Bob Zuckerman, executive director of the Gowanus Canal Community Development Corporation and the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, and a member of Community Board 6. "Development can bring more open space and waterfront access. We must make sure that the cleanup and infrastructure investments are in place and well-coordinated between all government agencies, so that recreational uses are emphasized, and that developers build green buildings."

"Any rezoning or redevelopment in our community must protect the rights, safety and dignity of workers and neighbors," said Elly Spicer, with the New York and Vicinity Carpenters Labor Management Corporation, and a member of the Executive Committee of Community Board Six. "This community has been burned too many times. We need guarantees that developers will only hire contractors who obey the law, who pay prevailing wages and benefits, and who care about the health and safety of workers and community members alike."

City Planning developed a framework for the Gowanus Canal area in a series of community meetings co-sponsored with Community Board 6, from January through July, 2007. However, that framework is only advisory, and does not have the force of law. With the Toll Brothers proposal and other development plans on the horizon, City Planning is now moving forward to rezone the area.

The "Platform for Responsible Development of the Gowanus Canal" (attached) was drafted by a coalition including the Fifth Avenue Committee, Gowanus Canal Community Development Corp., AFL-CIO, Mason Tenders' District Council of Greater New York, 32BJ SEIU, NYC Central Labor Council, NYC District Council of Carpenters, New York Industrial Retention Network, New York Hotel & Motel Trades Council, Pratt Center for Community Development, Public Housing Communities, the Carroll Gardens Association, and the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation.