



April 17, 2024

Dear Board Members of the Madison Square Boys & Girls Club:

My name is Mel Corbett. I am an alumni of Madison's Joel E. Smilow clubhouse and am writing to you on their behalf.

The Hoe Avenue Alumni Association, and the extended community and stakeholders of the Morrisania section of the Bronx, are in shock, angry and saddened by the announcement of your proposed sale of this historic clubhouse.

As board members of Madison, there should be no need for the Alumni to emphasize the history and importance of the Joel E. Smilow clubhouse. It has been a community institution for over 50 years. In our current climate of isolation because of social media and the recent effects of the COVID lockdown, our young people are in a state of crisis. There is a scarcity of viable options for them to gather together, to be safe and to receive the kind of guidance that will lead them to being productive citizens.

As per your letter dated, April 2, 2024, the alumni association have been made aware of the dire financial obligations that a past volunteer transgression have placed on the organization.

After meeting with Alumni Members, and a small segment of the community, we are proposing having a future meeting on Thursday April 25, 2024. 5:30pm-7:30pm. This meeting will be open to all of the Madison Board, Alumni, parents and youth, extended community members, local politicians and the press. At this meeting, our goal would be to shed some light on this crisis. This will allow us the opportunity to identify funding sources to address the financial needs of Madison. There were several viable ideas that were proposed at the April 6th meeting which Tim McChristian attended. We would like to start our search for financing Madison's shortfall with local support and then extend our efforts with a national search.

Thus, we are asking the Madison Board for two critical requests:

1. That Madison Square initiate a temporary moratorium on the proposed sale of the Joel E. Smilow Clubhouse for 120 days, beginning after our proposed April 25th public gathering. That would mean keeping the building off the market.
2. We would like to see a vetted market value property appraisal of the Smilow Clubhouse, as well as an assessment of the physical and structural conditions of the building.

We understand that this appraisal and property triage will not be a final and accurate sales valuation of the property, but it will give us a baseline of where to start as it relates to raising funds to address Madison's deficit.

It is our hope that we would begin and remain in an engaged and mutually-beneficial discussion as to potential funding sources by the end of the 120-day freeze on the sale, and reassess the path forward at that point.

In the spirit of cooperation, I would hope that we will be able to work together to find a solution that will keep the Joel E. Smilow Clubhouse open for the next generation of children and teens.

Looking forward to the courtesy of a response.

Sincerely,

Mel Corbett
Alumni Member of the Joel E. Smilow Clubhouse