



# Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MWA, Save Our Seaport and the City Club of New York Present South Street Seaport Public Forum – Nov. 10**

*With civic experts and the community, top New York state and city elected officials gather to discuss new ideas for the Seaport Historic District, East River waterfront, and South Street Seaport Museum*

New York, NY – On Monday, November 10, 2014, four leading elected officials – New York State Assembly Speaker **Sheldon Silver**, Manhattan Borough President **Gale Brewer**, New York State Senator **Daniel Squadron** and New York City Council Member **Margaret Chin** – will join civic experts and community members to discuss a path forward for the South Street Seaport Historic District and its waterfront. Open to the public, the forum begins at 6pm and takes place at the Spruce Street School auditorium (12 Spruce Street). Organizers expect a hearty give-and-take with audience members.

This public forum is co-sponsored by Save Our Seaport (SOS), the City Club of New York, and the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (MWA). Speakers include

- Kent Barwick, *City Club of New York*
- April Bloomfield, *Chef*
- Jonathan Boulware, *South Street Seaport Museum President*
- Gary S. Fagin, *SeaportSpeaks Co-Founder*
- Roland Lewis, *Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance President and CEO*
- David Sheldon and Michael Kramer, *Save Our Seaport*

With its cobblestone streets, 19th-century buildings, and historic vessels jeopardized by destructive flooding and economic downturn, the Seaport District is at a crossroads. Preservationists, maritime enthusiasts, and many others are working to ensure its extraordinary heritage is maintained in the face of major proposed redevelopment.

The Howard Hughes Corporation (HHC), which leases much of the Seaport District from the City, has proposed a 50-story skyscraper at the waterfront, pier reconstruction and East River Esplanade improvements, a marina on the north side of a new Pier 17 retail building, reconstruction of the historic Tin Building, and the creation of a public market.

Earlier this year, the Seaport Working Group task force – which had been formed by Manhattan Community Board 1 and elected officials with support from city agencies – issued a set of guidelines for development in the Seaport district. These guidelines, which may be found on the [CBI website](#), include:

- Improve existing open space and create publicly accessible open space at the water's edge
- Ensure preservation and creative adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings
- Support commercial vitality with diverse retail programming

Forum organizers say these guidelines will be used as a tool for proposing a new sustainable business model for the district that respects the South Street Seaport Museum as the cultural anchor of the district, encourages new public markets, and nurtures maritime activity and programming.

“The South Street Seaport district was once, and can be again, the beating heart of New York’s harbor home to vital civic, commercial, and maritime activity. Community involvement, imagination, and civic and political leadership will get us there,” said Roland Lewis, President and CEO of MWA.

“The South Street Seaport, one of New York’s greatest historical and cultural assets, must be restored as a community for residents and businesses, and an attraction for visitors,” said Michael Gruen, President of the City Club of New York. “On November 10, we will discuss how this can be done in a way which both preserves the character of this unique community and is financially responsible.”

“Save Our Seaport has repeatedly called for a transparent master plan that respects the Seaport Historic District, the South Street Seaport Museum, the East River waterfront and a public food market,” said Michael Kramer, a member of the Save Our Seaport steering committee. “We are confident that our voices will be heard and that a better plan can be found by creating a consensus amongst stakeholders, rather than off-loading responsibility to a private entity seeking to maximize profits.”

The forum on November 10 is free and open to the public. Seating is limited. Please RSVP at <http://tinyurl.com/SOSpublicforum>.

**About the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance**

The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance (<http://www.waterfrontalliance.org>) works to protect, transform, and revitalize our harbor and waterfront. **@MWAlliance**

**About Save Our Seaport**

Save Our Seaport (<https://saveourseaport.wordpress.com>) works to preserve and enhance the original founding concepts of the South Street Seaport Historic District as reflected by the South Street Seaport Museum, local merchants, landmarked architecture, streets, public markets, piers, and ships. **@SaveOurSeaport**

**About the City Club of New York**

The City Club of New York (<http://cityclubny.org/>) promotes thoughtful urban land use policy that responds to the needs of all New Yorkers. CCNY provides a forum for public discussion of development issues affecting the urban environment and advocates vigorously for solutions that best serve the greater good. **@CityClubNY**

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