

Neighborhood Retail Alliance

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Press Advisory

Bronx Terminal Market Merchants Holding City Hall Press Conference to Protest Proposed Market Disbandment

When: Tuesday, April 26th

Where: Steps of City Hall

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Merchants, employees, and customers from the Bronx Terminal Market - with the support of small business groups, community organizations and labor - will be holding a press conference Tuesday, April 26th at 11:00 a.m. on the steps of City Hall to protest the proposed disintegration of their popular and unique wholesale market. The 23 merchants, a majority of whom are African, Latino and Asian, will be voicing their concerns about the deal that would lead to their eviction as well the City's failure to come up with a viable relocation plan, one that will insure the survival of the market and its 700 workers.

The Neighborhood Retail Alliance, a coalition of small businesses and community groups, strongly supports these merchants and is further concerned about the city's complete disregard for the economic survival of the market customers- the tens of thousands of restaurants, bodegas and stores that rely on these entrepreneurs for the unique ethnic products that New York City's immigrant communities depend on. The Terminal Market is the largest African Market on the east coast not to mention a supplier of Dominican, Columbian, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Ecuadorian, and Mexican, Korean and Chinese products. Under the current

proposal, one that affords the new developer tens of millions of dollars of subsidies, the city callously disregards the needs of this vital distribution network.

Making matters worse, we have reliable information that The Related Companies, the politically-connected new developer of the market, is planning to replace the merchants with box stores, including a BJ's Warehouse Club store whose proposed development in the East Bronx was soundly rejected by the City Council in February (In a unanimous vote of the Land Use Committee), because of its anti-union policies and its negative impact on the surrounding Hispanic-owned supermarkets.

The Economic Development Corporation's plan to shoehorn in this new developer was done without any attempt at a competitive bidding process. As a result, the merchants have filed a lawsuit against the city, Buntzman, the notorious Bronx Terminal Market landlord, and Related, arguing that the new lease contract was entered into unfairly and illegally and should be abrogated.

A number of Neighborhood Retail Alliance coalition members and other supporters will attend the press conference to show their support for the Bronx Terminal Market storeowners. Leaders from the Bodega Association of the United States, the Latino Restaurant Association, the National Supermarket Association, the Bronx Chamber of Commerce, the Queens Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the African Business Network, the Gambian Society in New York, the Council of Ghanaian Organizations and the Bodega Cooperative will all be on hand to voice their opposition to the most comprehensive minority disinvestment in the city's history.