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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Downtown Alliance Submits Testimony on Pier Redevelopment in Lower Manhattan

New York, NY (May 21, 2012) – The Alliance for Downtown New York today submitted testimony to the New York City Council supporting proposals to redevelop Pier 17 and Pier A in Lower Manhattan.

The testimony was delivered at a joint Waterfronts and Lower Manhattan redevelopment committee hearing. Full text below:

To the members of the Committee on Waterfronts and the Committee on Lower Manhattan Redevelopment:

I am Connie Chung, Planning Analyst with the Alliance for Downtown New York, here to speak on behalf of Elizabeth Berger, the President of our organization.

The Downtown Alliance strongly supports the renovation plans for Pier 17 and Pier A.

We believe the Pier 17 project—proposed by the Howard Hughes Corporation—would create more publicly accessible open space, more shops, more jobs and more New York City sales tax revenue at the South Street Seaport.

We believe the Pier A project—advanced by restaurateurs Harry and Peter Poulakakos with the Dermot Company—would similarly create jobs and City sales tax revenue while bringing new life to a 125-year-old structure that has been dark and decaying since 1992. Plans for Pier A include an oyster bar and a beer garden, an event venue, a fine-dining restaurant, an outdoor promenade and a café.

The redeveloped piers would provide compelling new destinations for Lower Manhattan's 310,000 workers, 57,000 residents and nearly 10 million visitors a year—but that's just a start. The revitalized piers would also serve to connect the Lower Manhattan waterfront experience, complementing the necklace of esplanades, green space and pavilions that now stretches from the East River to the Battery to the Hudson.

The development of piers 17 and A—by two cutting-edge organizations—would give visitors even more reasons to come to Lower Manhattan and more reasons to stay.

The benefits would reach beyond our waterfront. A revitalized Pier 17 would drive foot traffic into the Water Street corridor, giving that area a much-needed boost.

Anchored by the Seaport on the north and Battery Park on the south, the corridor is Lower Manhattan's premier commercial boulevard, with 70,000 workers, 19 million square feet of office space and 12,000 nearby residents. But if Water Street is to keep up with the district's metamorphosis as a 24/7 live-work-visit neighborhood, it must develop more dining and retail options and a street life that bustles beyond business hours.

A revitalized Pier 17 and a more pedestrian-friendly Water Street would create the foot-traffic that could make this happen. So would redevelopment of the Battery Maritime Building near the south end of the Water Street corridor. Current plans also call for the Poulakakos family and the Dermot Company to create a boutique hotel, a specialty-foods market and a rooftop restaurant there.

Meanwhile, the redevelopment plans for Pier A just west of Battery Park would give Battery Park City residents, in particular, increased dining and leisure options, and they would give visitors to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty more reasons to linger in the district.

The Downtown Alliance believes the plans for both piers would provide a strong economic benefit for Lower Manhattan and New York City.

Thank you.

The mission of the Alliance for Downtown New York is to provide service, advocacy, research and information to advance Lower Manhattan as a global model of a 21st century Central Business District for businesses, residents and visitors.

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