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Briefing Material II

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March 29, 1965

Mr. Roger Starr, Executive Director
Citizens Housing and Planning Council
of New York, Inc.
20 West 40 Street
New York, New York 10018

Dear Mr. Starr:

Thank you for your recent letter in which you request information on The World Trade Center to supplement that previously provided to a Committee of your Board. We appreciate the interest which the Citizens' Housing and Planning Council has taken in the project and the thoughtful consideration which has been given to it.

Your first two questions deal with the willingness of foreign trade firms to locate in The World Trade Center and they are perhaps best answered by the actual results of our negotiations to date. Space reservations, together with our parking, consumer services and similar areas, reflect rental commitments at this time in excess of 65% of the available space in the Trade Center.

As you know, there is in The World Trade Center approximately 4,000,000 rentable square feet available to private firms in international trade activities. Of this 4,000,000 square feet, reservations for almost 1,500,000 square feet have been received from specific tenants. These tenants have signed or are in the process of signing agreements which express their intent to lease specific areas in the Trade Center at a designated rental. They include financial institutions, freight forwarders, exporters and importers, steamship companies and agencies, trade associations, United States manufacturers and foreign manufacturers.

In effect, therefore, over one-third of the space available to private firms already is covered by agreements signed or in the process of being signed. I think it important to note that the first space in The World Trade Center will not be available until July, 1968, more than three years from now. Of necessity, our current activities, involving the balance of the space available to private firms, must deal with space that will not be available until 1969, at the earliest.

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In addition, space in the Trade Center has been reserved for public service and governmental organizations, including the United States Government, the State of New York, other state governments, foreign governments and the Port Authority.

Extensive discussions have been held over a period of years with Treasury representatives concerning the functional advantages of consolidating the New York operations of the Bureau of Customs in the Trade Center. All concerned are convinced that the move to the Center will result in greater efficiency of customs operations and superior service for the American businessmen they serve. The Secretary of the Treasury has confirmed this view in his public statements on the subject. Detailed discussions concerning the proposed consolidation are currently being held with representatives of the General Services Administration in Washington. These discussions are progressing in an orderly manner and we are confident that a mutually satisfactory arrangement will be reached in the near future.

Governor Rockefeller has announced that the offices of the State of New York, now located throughout the City of New York, will be consolidated in the Trade Center. These offices currently occupy over 1,500,000 square feet of office area and will be consolidated into a major portion of the South Tower of the Center.

The plans for the relocation of the Port Authority's own offices to the Trade Center also are moving forward.

In addition, a number of state and foreign governments have reserved space in the Trade Center for the establishment of their respective trade promotion activities. Several State and foreign governments have made reservations for space, and we are in active discussion with many of the other State governments and with more than 60 foreign governments.

The third question concerning relocation of on-site tenants is one of the most important and sensitive we face. In this connection, as early as August, 1962, I met with General Greenbaum of the firm of Greenbaum, Wolff & Ernst, who represented retail tenants on the site, so that we might work out a constructive solution to the problems of his clients and other merchants in the area.

As you know, litigation was commenced which ultimately was decided in favor of the Port Authority by the Supreme Court of the United States. Renewed litigation is currently before the courts. These suits have deterred working out a specific relocation program in cooperation with site tenants. For example, the litigation frustrated our efforts in retaining a real estate firm to review with the merchants their relocation requirements. While the details of the relocation program have not yet been developed, we are confident that our efforts on relocation requirements of the Trade Center will be successful.

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just as similar programs which have been conducted in connection with other Port Authority projects such as our two Bus Terminals. In developing this program, we will, of course, be guided strongly by the criteria adopted by Federal and other governmental agencies.

As to your fourth question, the plans for The World Trade Center do provide for staging of construction. Construction will start in 1965 and completion is scheduled for 1970. At the present time, reservations for space encompass substantial areas in each of the towers. It does not appear probable, therefore, that a need for modification of the plans will arise in these areas. We doubt that modification would be required in the lower Plaza Buildings, but this could be accomplished if required.

As to your last question, I want to emphasize that our policy is to make Trade Center space available only to firms active in world trade, or those providing auxiliary services for such tenants. Tenancies outside this framework will continue to be ineligible.

If there is any further information you wish, I hope you will not hesitate to call upon us.

Sincerely,

Austin J. Tobin
Executive Director

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(Prepared by Richard C. Sullivan)

bcc: Messrs. Kurshan, Tozzoli, H. Johnson, Banahan, Falvey,
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