



May 9th, 2018

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

Re: Meeting Request – Veterans Center

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

I'm writing to you to request a meeting on behalf of my client, Gregg Singer, and the vacant 152,075 sq. ft. building he owns located at 605 East 9th Street in the East Village (old PS64). As you are aware, this building has been vacant for the past two decades. I would like to have a meeting to discuss a potential partnership between my client and New York City along with major stakeholders and nonprofit veteran groups to find a way that the old PS64 building can be used to support our veterans in their careers, education, shelter, and lives in New York City. (Please see attached flyer- PS64 Veterans Resource Center).

You made a bold pledge to end chronic veteran homelessness in New York City and made employment opportunities for veterans and their families a top priority for your administration. As a result, many Veteran Service Organizations (VSO's) and veteran-focused non-profits have either chosen to call New York City their home or host significant operations and events here, which also adds to the commerce and culture of the city. These activities and venues provide a compelling rationale to support strong veteran policies, including opening a Veteran Resource Center in the East Village at the Old PS64. http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/veterans/downloads/pdf/annual_reports/2016.pdf

As you know, the creation of the Department of Veteran Services comes during your administration's unprecedented efforts to improve and strengthen veteran services and resources in New York City: *"DVS will continue to focus on the administration's goals of connecting our city's veterans to permanent housing, expanding job opportunities for our veteran community, and ensuring our veterans and their families have access to services and support from the City's agencies and federal partners."* <http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/337-16/mayor-de-blasio-new-department-veterans-services>

1399 Franklin Avenue, Suite 200 Garden City, NY 11530
P: 516.880.8170 • F: 516.880.8171



www.GothamGR.com • www.GerstmanSchwartz.com
New York City • Long Island • Albany



New York City is home to more than 200,000 veterans who have courageously served our country and defended our freedom. Regardless of age, color, gender, and sexual orientation, all veterans deserve more than just a “thank you” – they need our support to thrive at home after returning from service. We owe these men and women, and I look forward to meeting with you and your staff to discuss how we can use my client’s property, together, to improve upon the support we provide to them.

I thank you in advance for giving me the opportunity to discuss this opportunity in more depth.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Gerstman", written over a horizontal line.

Bradley Gerstman

Cc:

Mayor’s Office of Veterans’ Affairs Department of Veterans’ Services Commissioner Loree Sutton
MOVA, Assistant Commissioner for Housing and Support Services, Nicole Branca
MOVA, Director of Public Private Partnerships and Development, Cassandra Alavarez
MOVA, Assistance Commissioner for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship, Jama Othman
MOVA, Assistant Commissioner for Integrative Health and Community Resilience
Councilman Deutsch, Chairman of Committee on Veterans
Todd Haskins, Chair of the Veterans Advisory Board.
Joe Bello, Founder of NY MetroVets
Charles Greinsky, Commander of the Jewish War Veterans Staten Island
Wendy McClinton, President and CEO of Black Veterans for Social Justice
John Rowan, President and CEO of Vietnam Veterans of America
NYC DOB Veterans Liasion, Lisa Lewis
NYC Department of Homeless Services Veteran Liasion, Iris Rodriguez



INTRODUCING

The National Veteran's Resource Complex

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Mayor Bill de Blasio

City University of New York

NYC Department of Veterans Services

NYC Council Committee on Veterans

NYC Health + Hospitals

WHO WE ARE

Our organization's goal: to advance and contribute to both the lives of the city's military veterans as well as their families.

- We serve individuals, organizations and communities for veterans
- We develop and deliver programs and services for the community to show our support
- We offer innovative, high performing, and effective services for our community

OUR PROGRAMS

We plan to deliver class-leading programs in career, vocational and entrepreneurship education and training, providing service members, veterans and their families with the skills needed to be successful in education, work and life. We also plan to coordinate and create comprehensive collective impact strategies; and work with communities and nonprofits to develop and enhance service delivery for veterans and their families.

- Preparing for careers & employment
- Teaching entrepreneurship & small business development
- All backed with community support

HOUSING

In order to help reintroduce our veterans back into society, we are looking to help alleviate some of the problems vets face when returning. Homelessness is a major problem for vets, so we offer housing and living space for those back from service.

FOR MORE INFO

Contact us: 516-880-8170



Improving Transitional Services for Veterans in New York

HOW CAN WE DO BETTER?

We strongly believe that local governments need to invest in veteran policies and programs. Veterans are this country's greatest renewable resources and attracting them to New York City supports our continued success. Veterans tend to have higher earnings and lower unemployment than non-veterans once their transition is complete. Veterans also tend to be more civically active and have lower incarceration rates than non-veterans. Increasing our veteran population will continue to add to the vibrant fabric of culture in the city.

New York is full of economic opportunity, with thousands of businesses, hundreds of educational institutions and an economy larger than many countries.

If we want to continue making progress for our veterans, the focus needs to shift to long-term employment, vocational training and transitional support. New York can improve their environment for veteran's employment by investing in comprehensive resource centers that link returning veterans with professional and educational opportunities, and provide services that help veterans transition into civilian life.

INVESTING IN OUR VETERANS, IMPROVING OUR FUTURE

The Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University provides a model that New York City can use to improve transitional services to veterans. The institute is a partnership with Syracuse University, corporate partners, and veteran's service organizations. The institute pools resources to provide veterans with career training, supportive resources, research, advocacy, and entrepreneurial support.

Schools and businesses in New York have the most to benefit from such an institute. A hub where veterans can get support, will make New York City schools more attractive to returning veterans hoping to use their GI benefits. Businesses will also have the opportunity to partner with the center, giving them access to large pools of veteran talent.

Veterans have a wealth of experience that translates well to the workforce. They are instilled with strong leadership fundamentals and they have significant experience working with others in transition from military to civilian life every year. If we are not encouraging those people to settle and work in New York, it is a missed opportunity.

Public and private colleges around the City should be striving to match Syracuse's commitment to our veterans. Investment by schools, businesses, nonprofits and governments, could turn New York into a hub of veteran education and employment.

HOW CAN WE MAKE THIS VISION A REALITY?

Our proposal is for a Veterans Resource Center located in the underutilized P.S. 64 building at 605 East 9th Street in the East Village. The NYC Veterans resource Center will serve the entire Metro area, which is home to about 30 SUNY Schools.

Using the IVMF at Syracuse as a model, the center will develop partnership with schools in the area, VA facilities, employers, and non-profit organizations that provide services to veterans.

The center would help veterans to access training, support, counseling and even healthcare. The ideal resource center will integrate veterans with the professional and educational opportunities that exist in New York City, while also providing a support structure that ensures a smooth transition into civilian life and enables veterans to achieve academic and professional success.

