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MAYOR BLOOMBERG, SPEAKER QUINN AND BUILDINGS COMMISSIONER LIMANDRI UNVEIL LEGISLATION TO INCREASE SAFETY AND EXPEDITE THE RESTARTING OF PROJECTS AT STALLED CONSTRUCTION SITES

Increases Safety with More Stringent Site Monitoring Requirements

Spurs Job Creation by Moving Stalled Projects Back into Construction Faster

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn and Department of Buildings Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri unveiled legislation that will allow developers to quickly restart stalled construction sites by agreeing to increased safety standards while construction is suspended. The legislation would create a new program within the Department of Buildings where participating builders will be required to notify the Buildings Department when work has stalled and to develop and submit a detailed safety monitoring and inspection plan to ensure the site is secure. Developers participating in the new program would be allowed to renew building permits at stalled sites for up to four years, as long as the program's safety requirements are met, providing a significant incentive to participate in the program and increase safety at stalled sites. Permits at stalled sites often expire, forcing developers to start the permitting process from the beginning after new financing is secured, which delays restarting construction and depresses economic activity.

"One of the many negative impacts of the national recession has been a sharp slowdown in construction activity," said Mayor Bloomberg. "Stalled construction sites pose significant safety challenges and the longer they remain dormant, the more harmful the impact on the City's economy. This legislation will provide a significant incentive for builders to dramatically increase safety by extending City permits so projects get up and moving quickly when capital becomes available - generating economic activity and creating jobs."

"In every corner of our City, we can see the effect of the economic crisis in the stalled construction projects that are scattered throughout our neighborhoods," said Speaker Quinn. "If these sites are not properly maintained, they can become safety hazards to residents and even havens of criminal activity. Our legislation is a real two-fer, in that it will allow us to have these site maintained while construction is halted and to be ready to hit the ground running once the economy improves."

"Any construction site, active or inactive, must be safely maintained so New Yorkers are properly protected at all times," said Commissioner LiMandri. "Development is a vital component to our City's economy, and stalled job sites that are safeguarded should be able to pick up where they left off once financing is secured."

"Stalled construction sites expose a community to increased risk of illegal trespassing, rats, improper posterage and various other quality of life concerns," said Council Member Gale A. Brewer, the sponsor of the legislation. "Incentivizing permit renewal through safe site planning will increase the City's awareness of ongoing development and neighborhood tranquility."

Under the legislation, the safety monitoring plan - required for developers to participate in the program - must include: proposed measures for preventing access by unauthorized persons and monitoring such

measures, schedules for inspecting the job site, details for implementation of fire and building safety measures required to protect New Yorkers and first responders and any other provisions the Department deems necessary to ensure safety at the stalled site.

Currently, construction permits expire and become invalid if the work authorized by the permit has not begun within 12 months of permit issuance or if work is suspended or abandoned for a period of 12 months. Further, if work is suspended for a period exceeding two years, a developer may not be able to achieve any reinstatement of the permit. By agreeing to the increased safety standards, developers can avoid the delays and negative consequences of permit expiration. Participating developers can have permits renewed for two two-year cycles.

Inspectors from the Department of Buildings have identified more than 138 construction sites across the five boroughs that are inactive. The Buildings Department regularly inspects the stalled sites and developers are required to immediately address any safety issues that arise from the lack of activity, such as deteriorated fences, damaged safety netting or loose construction debris. Developers who fail to maintain safe conditions on their job site are subject to violations carrying penalties as high as \$25,000.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Stu Loeser / Marc La Vorgna (212) 788-2958

Andrew Doba (Council) (212) 788-7116

Tony Sclafani / Kate Lindquist (Department of Buildings)
(212) 566-3473