

Thank you Mike McSweeney. You've made New Yorkers proud with your historic leadership, and I'm so glad you have joined us.

And thank you all for making time to be here today-- and making this special day possible.

Four years ago, a few of us went to City Clerk McSweeney's office to be officially sworn in, and afterwards, he showed us "The Book"—the big, yellowed, leather-bound ledger.

In it were the signatures of all of the former elected officials who had been sworn in over the decades – Mayors and Comptrollers and even "Aldermen"!

Seeing those names—so many who helped build this city, and helped make it great-- helped put in perspective the daunting work ahead.

When we first came into office, there were some issues that we knew we needed to address immediately.

I did NOT want to see a huge tower built in the middle of our historic Seaport. So we brought all stakeholders to the table – residents, business owners, the Seaport Museum and the Economic Development Commission – and, yes, even the developer.

We hired a facilitator to manage our discussions and over many meetings, presentations and much public outreach, we came up with a set of guiding principles for the development of the seaport neighborhood.

And that tower has not been built! There is still lot of work to do at the Seaport, but through that process, we developed a community-based pre-ULURP planning model that we have and will continue to employ in other communities.

Re-zonings continue throughout Manhattan and we are using pre-planning to fight for more affordable housing without losing the character of our neighborhoods.

We completed the East Midtown rezoning and weighed in on the plan for East Harlem. We are in the middle of Inwood rezoning now, and about to start SoHo/NoHo. We are grappling with many changes on the Lower East Side. And throughout these efforts, we helped push the Mayor on his Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) plan.

We deeply value those who have long time service in the Community Boards but we also wanted to open up the Boards to new ideas and perspectives. By doing massive recruitment—including, for the first time, Facebook ads—we have appointed hundreds of first-time Community Board members, bringing new talent and energy to these important bodies. I am also proud for initiating the law that allows 16 and 17 year olds to serve, and we have made these appointments. (We're in the midst of another Community Board appointment cycle. Grab an application at the Front Desk.)

A few other highlights from our first 4 years:

- We've passed 20 pieces of legislation. Highlights include the Fair Chance Act, which prohibits employers from asking about criminal history until a final job offer is being made.... Our legislation requiring a database for all Deed Restrictions will help prevent us from losing valuable community resources like Rivington House... and our bill to add "Caregiving" to the City's anti-discrimination statute has passed so those of us who care for aging relatives will now have protections.
- We've allocated millions in funding technology for public schools and promoting hydroponics and other forms of urban gardens.
- We've also funded library projects, park improvements, and lots of important capital investments to enable our non-profit community to continue to do its important work. We have also awarded hundreds of small expense grants and cultural tourism grants. And we've spearheaded special funding initiatives such as a program to enhance police and youth relationships.
- We run a huge senior food bag program, working with Grow NYC and Corbin Hill, to provide thousands of seniors with discounted bags of fresh produce.
- We have held hundreds of events – from our 1,000 person conferences on Brain Health and Caregiving to our cultural celebrations, and honoring talented Manhattan professionals and others in many communities.
- We've researched and written reports on everything from street congestion to small business, from supermarket survival to mental health care in schools.
- We've helped thousands of constituents at our first of its kind Borough President's storefront office, and staffed information tables at almost every NYCHA Family Day, a whole LOT of street festivals, and marched in a range of parades.

I could go on—you know me!—but today is about getting ready for our next 4 years. I am excited for what lies ahead; yet still a very daunted by the challenges. . .

- We have a multi-pronged approach for addressing the crisis our small businesses are facing. We are working on legislation, funding, technology and promotion – doing everything we can to help small businesses stay open and thrive.

- There are many school issues to address but one that we focus on is finding the support to hire a social worker in every school.
- In all re-zoning efforts and in our ongoing role in the land use process, we continue to fight for every unit of affordable housing possible, while keeping our neighborhoods intact.
- We will pursue legislation to address many quality of life concerns such as the incessant and noisy construction happening all over Manhattan.
- We are still on the cutting edge of technology, creating BoardStat with our team of CUNY Fellows to enhance Community Boards' use of open data... and providing LoRa, a system where we can better track issues such heat problems in buildings or unsafe street conditions.
- And I am excited to have sponsored legislation, just introduced, calling for a new Charter Revision Commission that could truly enhance the way NYC is governed.

I will close by saying that I am energized. I have been in government a long time. I know the struggles and barriers, but I'm pretty good at breaking through. Our record shows we know how to identify the amazing possibilities. I am proud to work with the very talented MBPO staff, friends and allies, and even some enemies, to find solutions and make the borough of Manhattan a more affordable place and a place that never stops improving.