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POLL REVEALS DESIRE FOR PUBLIC VOICE IN DEVELOPMENT OF MOYNIHAN STATION

New Website Unveiled

The Municipal Art Society released new poll results today which reveal that commuters and mass transit riders overwhelmingly favor a whole-scale renovation, redevelopment and expansion of Midtown's Penn Station that enhances pedestrian access and accommodates increased rail traffic. Though the results show that respondents believe they are not fully informed about plans to expand the station into the Farley Post Office building, they do want to have a voice in its development.

MAS also unveiled a new website, newpennstation.org, which will document its campaign for the development of a grand Moynihan Station that will rival Grand Central Terminal. The website will present updated news on plans for the station as well as historical information on the original Pennsylvania Station. Visitors can sign up for updates and share their own views on what makes a great train station.

Poll respondents overwhelmingly supported an expansion of the current station that would accommodate a projected increase in passengers while improving the facility aesthetically, architecturally and functionally. More than 66 percent of all respondents would rather travel through a train station that looks like Grand Central than Penn Station.

While almost all participants are residents of New York City and its suburbs, their awareness of plans to renovate Penn Station was low. Despite consistent media coverage on the issue since 1999, only 40 percent of respondents had heard about plans to build a new station and only 42 percent were aware of a plan to expand it across Eighth Avenue to the Farley Post Office building.

Notably, 92 percent of respondents believe the public should have a chance to see the renovation plans before they are endorsed by Governor Spitzer or Mayor Bloomberg.

Eighty percent of participants want public oversight of the renovation. Nearly all respondents stated it is important for the city and state of New York to preserve historic buildings and more than 90 percent believe it is important to preserve the Farley Post Office building in particular. Nearly 75 percent of respondents would prefer to use the grand entry hall and historic exterior of the Farley Post Office for Moynihan Station rather than for Madison Square Garden.

The association of MAS with the project dates back to the early 1990s, when Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan first promoted the concept of building a new rail station within McKim, Mead & White's Post Office. MAS has supported the expansion project throughout the planning process and continues to support it today.

The poll, conducted by Whitman Insight Strategies LLC, used online interviews to gather information and opinions from 500 New York area residents, including 160 Penn Station commuters. The poll was conducted from June 20 through June 25, and has an overall margin of error of +/- 4.4 percent. Respondents were asked a series of open- and closed-ended questions about their use of Penn Station and Grand Central Terminal, and their preferences between the two stations.

The Municipal Art Society of New York is a private, non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote a more livable city. Since 1893, the organization has worked to enrich the culture, neighborhoods and physical design of New York City. It advocates for excellence in urban design and planning, contemporary architecture, historic preservation and public art.

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