



## **Elizabeth Street Garden Questionnaire - Eric Ulrich**

### **1. Have you visited Elizabeth Street Garden before? If so, please describe your experience.**

No, but I plan to do so in the coming weeks. As a councilmember from Queens I have fought to preserve and protect our open space and ensure their use for all our residents and will take the same approach as your next Public Advocate. Mayor de Blasio has time and time again, been unresponsive to individual communities, and learning about the Garden it appears that this issue is no different. As Public Advocate, I intend to hold the Mayor accountable to the needs of all communities.

### **2. What is your position on the alternative site solution that would use 388 Hudson – a gravel-filled, city-owned lot – to provide 5x the amount of affordable housing and additional public open space while saving Elizabeth Street Garden?**

The existence of an alternate site makes destroying a community treasure like ESG all the more unnecessary. We talk about affordable housing, we talk about seniors. This site appears to provide us with so much more to create housing for seniors. There is no good reason why the City is ignoring this site in favor of destroying the Garden.

### **3. Given the immediate threat, how as Public Advocate would you work with our community to protect and preserve Elizabeth Street Garden and use the alternative site for the proposed development?**

I believe in community driven development, not centralized, top down, city hall directed development. You can't promote major projects and then talk to the community after the fact. You need to first develop plans with the community, those who live there, those who are most affected and build a plan around those thoughts. The de Blasio approach of dictating to a community their needs, rather listening to a community, is one that I oppose, and one that I will fight as Public Advocate. The role of the Public Advocate is be a check on a Mayor and Administration that is unresponsive to the needs of individual communities and to hold him accountable to the people who elected him. All communities, community boards, will have a base of operation in my office so we can force the de Blasio administration to listen to us before he announces plans. Not after.

### **4. What is your position on how the City prioritizes public open green space and how community gardens are being pitted against the need for affordable housing?**

This is not an "either or" proposition. And the Saga of the Elizabeth Street Garden proves just that. We have an opportunity for even more affordable senior housing at the alterative site on Hudson street. Building over there will give everyone what they need. More housing and the community treasure that is the Garden. We must take that approach with every development proposal, and the only way to do that is with the community-based development that I am proposing.