

Russell Squire
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan

January 18, 2022

Independent Redistricting Commission
250 Broadway, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10007

To the members of the Independent Redistricting Commission,

I am Chair of Community Board 8 Manhattan, which stretches from East 96th Street to East 59th Street, from Fifth Avenue to the East River, as well as Roosevelt Island, and includes Stanley M. Isaacs Houses and Holmes Towers. The residents of Isaacs and Holmes are part of our community and have similar concerns to the rest of the Community Board. Isaacs and Holmes are located between First Avenue and the East River, between 92nd and 96th Street. While Plan B keeps Isaacs and Holmes in the 12th Congressional district, as it currently is, Plan A cuts it out of the district.

The Isaacs and Holmes complex includes a popular senior center, the Stanley Isaacs Center, that is attended by seniors from all over the Upper East Side, not just residents of Isaacs and Holmes. Issues related to the senior center, which receives a significant amount of its funding from the federal government, are of concern to the entire community, not just residents of Isaacs and Holmes. It makes sense to have one member of Congress to represent the senior center, Isaacs and Holmes residents, and the non-resident seniors who use the facility.

Children who live in Isaacs and Holmes attend Community School District 2 schools which are located in our community district. When our local schools were overcrowded, all District 2 children were impacted, including residents of Isaacs and Holmes. One of the reasons for the overcrowding is that a public school on East 91st Street had been closed and no new school had been created to replace it. Instead, children from the area were sent to adjacent District 2 schools, causing all of them to become overcrowded. Our member of Congress formed a task force that led to the creation of a new school in the neighborhood, PS 151, which helped alleviate the overcrowding.

When the city proposed to build a giant private apartment building on Holmes's property, the entire neighborhood joined with residents of Holmes and Isaacs to protest the action. We marched together, went to meetings together and stood together in opposition to the idea that taking property from public housing tenants was a good way to solve underfunding of NYCHA. We pointed out that the amount of

money the city would receive would in no way come close to solving the deficit. Our member of Congress was among the elected officials representing our neighborhood who led this effort.

When the city proposed building a large marine transfer station adjacent to Holmes and Isaacs, residents joined the effort to try to defeat it. They worked in coalition with residents throughout our community district. Some looked at the community district at large and said that it was environmental justice to build the marine transfer station next to Isaacs and Holmes. Our member of Congress pointed out that the structure was being built next to a public housing development and said that it was just as wrong to burden the public housing residents who lived in our community district as those who lived in other community districts. Residents of Isaacs and Holmes should have a member of Congress who understands the nuances of the neighborhood.

If you divide Isaacs and Holmes from the community board in which they live, they will no longer have a member of Congress who has an interest in understanding the neighborhood issues that affect all of us in this community district. Moreover, it would suggest that public housing residents are not full and equal members of our neighborhood—that they are distinct and should be considered separate. I reject any such separation. Isaacs and Holmes residents are Upper East Siders and part of our neighborhood and should be in our Congressional district. Accordingly, I urge you to adopt district lines that keep Isaacs and Holmes with the rest of the Community Board.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Squire". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "R." and the last name "Squire" clearly distinguishable.

Russell Squire
Chair