



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Supporting a New Location for Stile's Market

BRAD HOYLMAN February 5, 2014

Today I joined Councilmember Corey Johnson, Congress Member Jerry Nadler, and Assembly Member Dick Gottfried in writing to the Port Authority of New York/New Jersey (PANY) to open a discussion about securing a viable location for Stile's Farmers Market in Hell's Kitchen. We would like to explore the possibility of space for this affordable grocery store on PANY property at 551 Ninth Avenue near 42nd Street to ensure the health and well-being of residents along Manhattan's West Side. Please see our letter to the Port Authority and a recent article on the market in DNA Info below.

Shuttered Affordable Grocer Should Get Port Authority Space, Pols Say

By Mathew Katz on February 11, 2014

HELL'S KITCHEN — Don't count Stile's out yet.

Local officials are fighting to revive Stile's Farmers Market — which was forced out of its longtime Ninth Avenue home in December — with the goal of reopening it a few doors down in a building that is owned by the Port Authority.

Congressman Jerrold Nadler and other local politicians wrote a Feb. 5 letter asking the Port Authority to lease its vacant space at 551 Ninth Ave. to the market, which had operated just up the street at 569 Ninth Ave. since 1987.

"The closure of this market shut down a vital supply line of affordable, fresh food to these neighborhoods," said the letter from Nadler, state Sen. Brad Hoylman, Assemblyman Richard

Gottfried and City Councilman Corey Johnson.

"Since then we have received an outpouring of community support to secure a new location for this market near their former location on Ninth Avenue."

Locals loved the market for providing affordable fresh fruit, veggies, coffee and other basics, but it was forced out after its home — a drafty, shack-like building — was sold, owner Steve Stile said in December.

The Port Authority space, directly across from the agency's bus terminal, was Project FIND's Senior Center until 2012, and has been empty for more than a year. The Port Authority was in talks to lease it to the Big Apple Meat Market, another affordable grocer that was forced from its home last year, but the deal fell through, officials said.

"The space is available," said Port Authority spokesman Chris Valens. "The Port Authority and Vornado [Realty Trust] continue to actively market the space and will continue to entertain offers from prospective tenants including Stile's Farmer Market."

Stile, who still owns the market's other location on West 52nd Street, did not respond to a request for comment, but is open to signing up to a 10-year lease on the Port Authority building, local politicians said.

"He's got a good track record and widespread neighborhood support and he was forced out of his current space. It seems like a confluence of events and opportunity," Hoylman said.

"I think it's appropriate when government does serve as a landlord, that the community and their elected officials raise options such as Stile's."

Eleanor Payge, a frequent customer of Stile's, said that she'd be "overjoyed" if it returned to her neighborhood. Since the market closed, she's shopped at a nearby Food Emporium,

which she described as "expensive."

"I don't make enough money for those well-to-do grocery stores," she said. "They can give Stile's a nice, new home, just like the old one."