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Int. No. 249

By Council Members Palma and Nelson

A Local Law in relation to the creation of a task force on stepstreets.

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Legislative findings and declaration. Stepstreets are sets of stairwells located between avenues to connect streets that have a significant height differential and they may range in size from six steps to one hundred and seventy-one steps. New York City has ninety-four stepstreets, most of them concentrated in neighborhoods in the west Bronx and upper Manhattan.

These stepstreets are of vital importance to the City in that they provide major access for the citizens of New York City, and are vital links to and from subway and bus lines, commercial areas, and residential areas. However, many of the stepstreets in New York City have been neglected by City agencies in terms of repair, maintenance, and safety. There have been a growing number of complaints to local officials and community boards regarding criminal conduct such as drug trafficking, littering, and dumping on the stepstreets. The

Department of Education has excluded stepstreets from the walking routes used to calculate whether a student is eligible for public transportation due to problems with safety and maintenance.

The Council finds that there has been a failure to properly maintain stepstreets. Based on this finding, the Council determines that it is necessary to create a task force to repair, maintain, and clean stepstreets.

§2. Stepstreets Task Force. a. There shall be a task force to study the City's stepstreets and to make specific recommendations to the mayor and council for the effective repair, maintenance, safety and cleanliness of stepstreets.

b. Such task force shall consist of five members as follows:

i. Two members shall be appointed by the mayor, provided that at least one such member shall have experience that relates to the either the repair, maintenance, safety or cleanliness of roadways.

ii. Three members shall be appointed by the speaker of the council, provided that at least one member shall have experience that relates to the either the repair, maintenance, safety or cleanliness of roadways.

iii. The commissioners of transportation, sanitation and police, or their designees, shall serve ex officio.

iv. The members shall be appointed within sixty days of the enactment of this local law.

v. At its first meeting, the task force shall select a chairperson from among its members by majority vote of the task force.

c. Each member, other than members serving in an ex officio capacity, shall serve for a term of twelve months, to commence after the final member of the task force is appointed. Any vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A person filling such vacancy shall serve for the unexpired portion of the term of the succeeded member.

d. The departments of, transportation and police may provide staff to assist the task force.

e. No member of the task force shall be removed from office except for cause and upon notice and hearing by the appropriate appointing official.

f. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation and shall meet no less than once a

month.

g. No later than twelve months from the date all members of the task force are appointed, the task force shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council a report that shall include their findings, along with legislative and policy recommendations, based upon their review.

§3. This local law shall take effect immediately after its enactment into law.

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