



The New York
Times 02/15/2005

"An Overseer Is
Chosen For All Work
Downtown"

For more information, visit
www.LowerManhattan.info

An Overseer Is Chosen For All Work Downtown

By DAVID W. DUNLAP

Charles J. Maikish, a former Port Authority official who was responsible for rebuilding the World Trade Center after the 1993 terrorist attack, was named yesterday to oversee rebuilding throughout downtown.

He is to be the first executive director of the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center, created three months ago by Gov. George E. Pataki and Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg to bring some order to the building, demolition and roadwork in one of the city's densest and most constricted quarters.

Neighbors and businesses have despaired about the prospect of so much work occurring simultaneously that streets will become impassable, noise will become deafening and the air will grow thick with dust, if not hazardous contaminants.

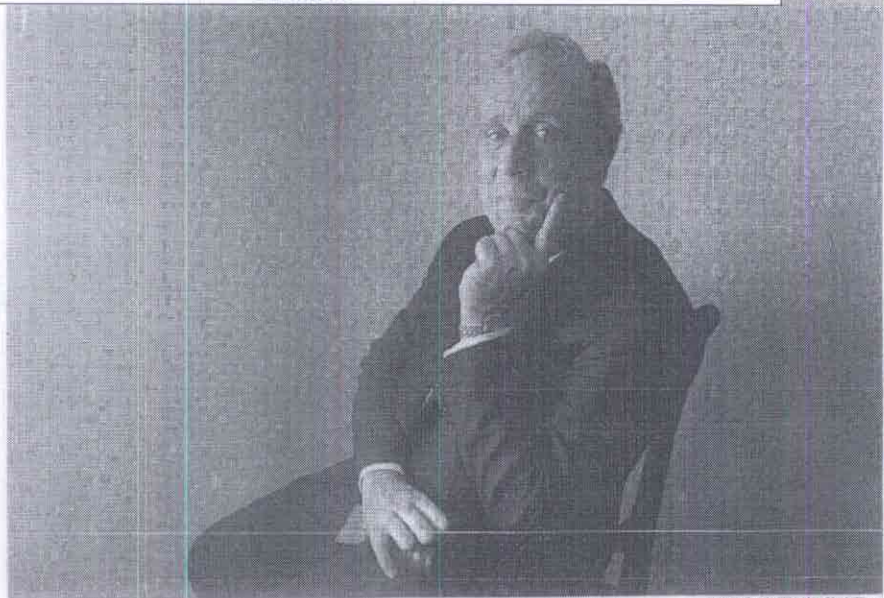
"Within six months, we're going to have so much construction down here that it's good he's coming now," said Madelyn Wills, the chairwoman of Community Board 1. She said: "Charlie is direct. He's a person of action. And when he starts this job, it will come together fairly quickly. He knows who he needs to talk to."

Mr. Maikish, 57, lives in New City, N.Y., and is currently the executive vice president of global real estate business services at J.P. Morgan Chase & Company.

But his familiarity with the trade center site runs from the ground up. In 1988, as an engineering student, he joined the Port Authority as a provisional employee. Among his tasks was to strike bedrock around the twin towers' foundations with an iron bar to determine, from the sound, whether it was solid enough to build on.

As director of the authority's World Trade Department from 1991 to 1996, Mr. Maikish supervised the recovery of the trade center after the first attack. Some measures he and his colleagues instituted were credited with saving lives on Sept. 11, 2001.

Mr. Maikish and Frank Lombardi, the chief engineer of the authority,



James Estrlin/The New York Times

Charles J. Maikish, named executive director of the Lower Manhattan Construction Command Center.

removed stores and created new corridors in the shopping concourse. In "102 Minutes: The Untold Story of the Fight to Survive Inside the Twin Towers" (Times Books and Henry Holt, 2005), Jim Dwyer and Kevin Flynn wrote, "They had done underground what could not be done to the towers themselves: given more peo-

Bringing order to building, demolition and road changes.

ple better chances to get out."

In his new \$200,000-a-year job, Mr. Maikish will supervise work in Lower Manhattan south of Canal Street and southwest of Rutgers Street. The command center will coordinate all roadwork and other construction projects that are valued at more than \$25 million, that are financed by Liberty Bonds or that require government action or permits.

Though his full-time transition from the bank to the command center will not occur until April, Mr. Maikish said in an interview yester-

day that he intended to begin immediately. "This is the right time," he said. "Six months from now would be too late."

He added that there had been "a lot of good planning and a lot of coordination" leading up to his appointment, which was announced by the governor and the mayor.

Mr. Maikish will conduct a cacophonous orchestra — cat herding may be a better analogy — whose players include the city and state Transportation Departments, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Battery Park City Authority, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the city's Design and Construction Department, the Economic Development Corporation, Silverstein Properties, Verizon, Consolidated Edison, the Police and Fire Departments and at least five other agencies and bodies.

"It means getting people to put aside agendas," Mr. Maikish said. His goal, he said, was to keep everyone focused on the greater objective of rebuilding Lower Manhattan, "so we don't get weighed down in minutiae and weighed down in obstructions."

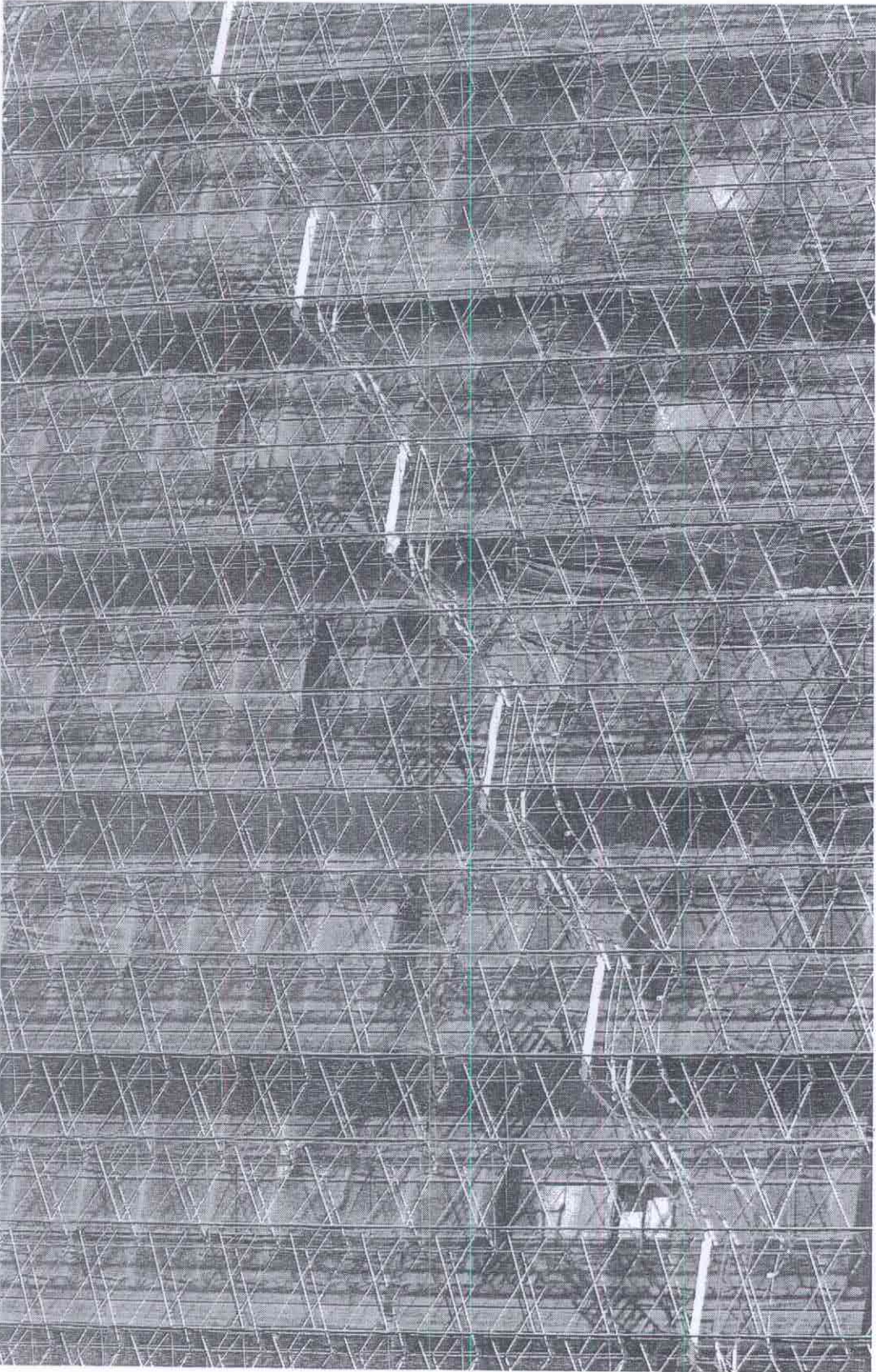
Last month, Verizon warned publicly that without better coordina-

tion, telephone service downtown and the trade center development timetable might be jeopardized. Yesterday, Paul A. Crotty, the group president for New York and Connecticut, welcomed Mr. Maikish's appointment, citing his "skills, experience, expertise and temperament."

Carl Weisbrod, the president of the Alliance for Downtown New York, said, "It was worth the wait to get a quality appointment." (The Alliance said last month that if an executive director were not appointed soon, the command center risked "becoming obsolete before it is even operational.") Mr. Weisbrod said Mr. Maikish had been "an intimate part of this community for a very, very long time."

Iris Weinsall, the city transportation commissioner, said Mr. Maikish would bring "a wealth of experience in both construction and property management."

Before joining Chase Manhattan Bank in 1998, Mr. Maikish was vice president for facilities management at Columbia University. But most of his career was at the Port Authority, which yesterday also praised his appointment. He was principal attorney in the litigation division from 1977 to 1986 and director of ferry operations from 1986 to 1990.



A view of the former Deutsche Bank building, which was damaged and seriously contaminated when the nearby World Trade Center towers fell.

Martyn K. Yee/The New York Times