

Press Release

COUNCIL LAND USE COMMITTEE MODIFIES CHELSEA MARKET EXPANSION PLAN; COUNCIL ACTIONS PRESERVE ICONIC COMMUNITY ASSET

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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Contact: 212-788-7116

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COUNCIL LAND USE COMMITTEE MODIFIES CHELSEA MARKET EXPANSION PLAN;
COUNCIL ACTIONS PRESERVE ICONIC COMMUNITY ASSET

Agreement will create 1,200 local jobs and ensures 150 permanently affordable housing units
Guarantees study to explore further expansion of the Special West Chelsea District

Statement by Speaker Christine C. Quinn:

“There have been numerous calls in the neighborhood to save the Chelsea Market, and I agree that the historic nature and food focused market should be saved. That is why the Council will vote today to preserve the iconic neighborhood treasure that is the Chelsea Market. In the original plan, there were no restrictions on what the developer could do to the unique and cherished ground floor retail space dominated by food vendors. The Council’s action permanently protects 75 percent of the current total interior ground floor concourse retail space for food-related uses.

Today’s action by the Council modifies a project that is dramatically reduced from the original expansion plans. This agreement ensures the Chelsea Market we know and love today will be allowed to grow in a way that preserves its current facade and keeps it in scale with the surrounding neighborhood. Prior to the Council’s modifications, there were no protections in place to restrict future changes to the building’s exterior. The plan today, following the Council’s work, stands in stark contrast to the original proposal, an immense glass tower greatly out-of-scale with the existing neighborhood.

Today’s agreement secures key victories raised by the local community and the Borough President:
Permanent Preservation of the Chelsea Market

The Council secured an agreement to permanently preserve the current masonry façade of the Chelsea Market, prohibiting signage and allowing for only minor changes to the windows.

Ensuring the historic and food-focused nature of Chelsea Market is saved, the Council’s actions permanently protect 75 percent of the current total interior ground floor concourse for food-related uses, including space for new food start-ups.

Space within the market will be reserved at a reduced rate for a local startup food vendor that has a production facility in New York City. The community will work with Jamestown to curate an approximately 100 square foot space for either a single startup or a food incubator that could rotate the use of the space amongst its occupants. This will help to continue to promote the Council’s food production industry goals.

Without the Council’s action, Jamestown or any future owner of this building would have been able to make unlimited changes to the building’s exterior and to the ground floor retail space programming.
Affordable Housing:

A total of 150 much needed and long awaited affordable housing units are now guaranteed. This agreement ensures that 40 percent of the units at the Robert Fulton Houses will be affordable to those making less than 80 percent of the Average Median Income (AMI.)

The Bloomberg Administration has agreed to fund the new permanently affordable housing units in the FY

2014 capital budget, regardless of whether Jamestown proceeds with the project. The affordable housing agreement also names a specific start date for ULURP, a date by which certification must be completed, thus setting the path for the project's future groundbreaking.
West Chelsea Rezoning Study:

The Council has secured an agreement that the Department of City Planning (DCP) and Community Board 4 must engage in a collaborative planning process to assess the future of the expansion of the Special West Chelsea District. DCP's and CB4 will hold a preliminary meeting in the first quarter of 2013 and are required to complete a report with draft recommendations on the expansion no later than June 30, 2013. The boundaries of the study will be the area bounded by 11th and 12th Avenues and will also include 85 and 99 10th Avenue, the South side of West 15th street and the east side of 10th Avenue between 14th and 15th Street.

Technology Center for Youth:

A new community program will train youth from the Chelsea neighborhood, and in particular from Fulton and Chelsea-Elliot Houses, in the growing tech and new media industries. Jamestown is dedicating \$1.05 million over four years to this program. They have committed to building space and to supplying the needed technology for the program.

Expansion of Popular Wellness in Schools Program:

The existing, highly popular Wellness in the Schools (WITS) program, which inspires healthy eating, environmental awareness and fitness, will be expanded from P.S. 11, the William T. Harris School to P.S. 33, the Chelsea Prep School.

Funding for the High Line:

Jamestown will provide approximately \$12 million in capital funding for necessary maintenance and repairs on the High Line. This will make the highline a more usable space for the community and visitors alike with the addition of more amenities such as public elevators and restrooms.

Growing the Tech Sector:

This project will add critically needed commercial office space for the tech sector in a neighborhood with a 4% commercial vacancy rate. This will create a projected 1,200 new local jobs. Furthermore, the project is directly across the street from the offices of one of the leading technology companies in the world, which will help strengthen the Chelsea tech community and foster increased collaboration and innovation. These efforts will further the City's and the City Council's goal of making New York City the tech capital of the world.

The design originally submitted was unacceptably out of character for the Chelsea neighborhood. Furthermore, the project's original size and proposed uses were not proposals that I could support. Over the last five years, the developer has engaged the community in discussions about the future of the Chelsea Market complex, including by delaying certification of the initial proposal and acknowledging the importance of increased community input. In that time, the community has provided both thoughtful and constructive input, highlighting concerns that needed to be addressed. Today's approval builds upon the significant community-minded changes made by the City Planning Commission (CPC) last month. As a result of CPC's action, the project's total square footage was reduced by approximately 17 percent; concerns for additional sky views were addressed by providing a set back of the building on Tenth Avenue; and the highly contentious hotel use was removed. In light of these dramatic changes and those the City Council has made today, I believe the community has been heard. I want to thank the community, the developer and the Bloomberg administration for their persistence and willingness to meet at the negotiating table to ensure an agreement was reached that strikes the appropriate balance between the need for development and economic growth while preserving the distinct character of an iconic city building and neighborhood."

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From: **Speaker Christine C. Quinn** <speakerquinn@council.nyc.ny.us>
Date: Thu, Oct 25, 2012 at 8:08 PM
Subject: Chelsea Market

Dear Neighbor,

Today the NYC Council took action to save the Chelsea Market and preserve the iconic neighborhood treasure that we all love. The Land Use Committee of the NYC Council voted to approve and modify the Chelsea Market proposal, and sent its modifications to the City Planning Commission (CPC). Following the Commission's approval, the full Council will vote on the modified proposal at its Stated Meeting on October 30th.

The agreement reached today ensures that the Chelsea Market we know and love today will be allowed to grow in a way that preserves its current facade and keeps it in scale with the surrounding neighborhood.

After much community input, we were able to address numerous concerns about the original proposal. As a result, the modified plan:

- Permanently preserves the Market's original façade;
- Ensures that 75% of the ground floor concourse will be permanently dedicated to food use, while creating new space for food start-ups;
- Creates at least 150 new permanently affordable housing units;
- Establishes a future study on the expansion of the Special West Chelsea District;
- Provides important support for two valuable educational programs on technology training and wellness; and
- Creates a Community Advisory Board to review construction schedules.

The actions taken today bring a planning process that has been ongoing for the last five years to a close by bringing the Chelsea Market building into the Special West Chelsea zoning district—which was the original plan when West Chelsea was rezoned. But changes to the proposed plan were needed. The view corridor from the High Line needed to be preserved and CPC's design changes, including setting back the Tenth Avenue building and reducing the overall size, do this and reduce any shadows on the park.

What we've heard from the beginning is a clear need from the community for the Chelsea Market that we know and love to remain the same—what that means is the architecture of the original buildings get preserved and that the ground floor concourse is protected and keeps its character and doesn't turn into a generic chain store mall. We cannot lose that, and with this vote we have ensured that will never happen.

Permanent preservation of Chelsea Market's current masonry façade:

In order to preserve the iconic neighborhood treasure that is the Chelsea Market, the Council ensured only minor changes can be made to the windows of the market's façade. Without this action, Jamestown or any future owner of this building would have been able to make unlimited changes.

Permanent Food-Related Space at Market:

Ensuring the historic and food-focused nature of Chelsea Market is preserved, the Council's actions permanently protect 75 percent of the current total interior ground floor concourse for food-related uses and prohibit national and regional chain stores as well as including approximately 100 square feet dedicated to either a single food start-up or a food incubator that could rotate the use of its space.

West Chelsea Rezoning Study:

The Department of City Planning (DCP) and Community Board 4 will engage in a collaborative planning process to assess the future of the expansion of the Special West Chelsea District. DCP's and CB4's initial meeting will happen no later than December 20, 2012 and are required to complete a report on the expansion no later than June 30, 2013; any actions recommended in the report will begin by December 30, 2013.

Affordable housing:

A total of 150 much needed and long awaited permanently affordable housing units are now guaranteed. This agreement ensures that 40 percent of the units at the Robert Fulton Houses will be affordable to those making less than 80 percent of the Average Median Income (AMI).

Technology Center for Youth:

Jamestown will provide \$1.05 million for a new community program to be run by Hudson Guild which will train youth from the Chelsea neighborhood, and in particular from Fulton and Chelsea-Elliot Houses, in the growing tech and new media industries.

School Programs:

Additionally, the existing, highly popular Wellness in the Schools (WITS) program, which inspires healthy eating, environmental awareness and fitness, will be expanded from P.S. 11 to P.S. 33.

Funding for the High Line:

Jamestown will provide approximately \$12 million in capital funding for necessary maintenance and repairs on the High Line. This will make the highline a more usable space for the community and visitors alike with the addition of more amenities such as public elevators and restrooms.

The design originally submitted was unacceptably out of character for the Chelsea neighborhood. Furthermore, the project's original size and proposed uses were not proposals that I could support.

Over the last five years, the community has engaged in discussions about the future of the Chelsea Market complex. The conversations have been both thoughtful and constructive, highlighting concerns that needed to be addressed. My thanks to you and everyone else who contributed and took part in this process. My hope, as always, was to have an open dialogue where both those who agree and disagree were able to sit at the table and discuss their positions. I believe we have all found a way to preserve one of the things that we love about our city well into the future.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,
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