



Greenwich  
Village  
Society for  
Historic  
Preservation

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March 1, 2018

Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
One Centre Street, 19<sup>th</sup> floor South  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: ULURP 180201ZMM, 180202ZRM, and 180203ZSM, 124 East 14<sup>th</sup>  
Street, aka Union Square 'Tech Hub'**

Dear Borough President Brewer:

**We write to strongly urge you to include a request for zoning protections for the neighborhood to the south of the proposed Tech Hub, between Union Square and Astor Place, as a condition for your approval of the rezoning needed for that development.**

This area has seen increasing pressure for out-of-scale and out-of-character development, including 300 ft. tall luxury condo and office buildings, and 300 room hotels. This is at least partly a result of the expansion of the tech industry's 'Silicon Alley' into the area, as well as the announcement of the city's intention to locate a "tech hub" on the south side of 14<sup>th</sup> Street. Without these protections, the Tech Hub will accelerate the process of inappropriate development in the area, changing the character of the neighborhood.

In response, the proposed zoning protections would do the following:

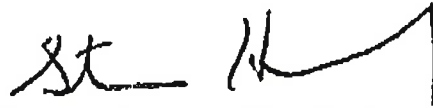
- Eliminate the current incentives for large commercial (hotel, office) developments in predominantly residential areas.
- Eliminate the current loophole which encourages developers to sidestep existing affordable housing incentives by building purely market-rate commercial developments, to which the affordable housing provisions do not apply.
- Add affordable housing incentives where none currently exist.
- Put in place reasonable height limits for new development where none currently exist.

These are all desirable and necessary changes that would protect the character of the neighborhood and encourage and maintain socio-economic diversity. To approve the proposed Tech Hub without such zoning protections would doom this area to rapid transformation and commercial overdevelopment, and forgo the opportunity to create and protect existing affordable housing. This is especially necessary given that the proposed rezoning for the Tech Hub site would transform it from predominantly residential to commercial zoning, and eliminate the opportunity for the site to include affordable housing as many had long hoped for.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman, Executive Director  
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation



Steve Herrick, Executive Director  
Cooper Square Committee



Damaris Reyes, Executive Director  
Good Old Lower East Side (GOLES)



Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director  
Historic Districts Council



Jonathan Westin, Executive Director  
New York Communities for Change



Charles Barnstool  
East Village Independent Merchant's  
Association (EVIMA)



Laura Sewell, Director  
East Village Community Coalition



Richard Moses, President  
Lower East Side Preservation Initiative



Ryan Gilliam, Executive Director  
Fourth Arts Block



David Mulkins, President  
Bowery Alliance of Neighbors



Marilyn Appleberg, President  
10<sup>th</sup> & Stuyvesant Block Association



Judith Zabrowski, President  
East 9<sup>th</sup> Street A-1 Block Association

Cc: City Councilmember Carlina Rivera  
State Senator Brad Hoylman  
State Senator Liz Kruger  
State Assemblymember Deborah Glick