

December 10, 2015

Carl Weisbrod, Director
New York City Department of City Planning
120 Broadway, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10271

Dear Director Weisbrod:

We wrote to you on July 14th to express our support for the University Place and Broadway Contextual Zoning Proposal with Inclusionary Housing advanced by the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHIP) and Councilmember Rosie Mendez, and with the unanimous endorsement of Community Board 2 (CB2). Despite wide-ranging support, the Department of City Planning (DCP) has announced its decision not to implement the proposal. We now urge you to reconsider your position.

We all share the goal of increasing the supply of affordable housing. GVSHIP has proposed changing the existing C1-7, C6-1, and R7-2 designations to C1-7A, C4-4A, and R7-A, with an inclusionary housing bonus. Operating under a standard of 20% affordable units for inclusionary zoning, this rezoning proposal has the potential to create at least 200,000 square feet of affordable housing in Greenwich Village, where it is desperately needed. We hope that DCP will support measured development with affordable units, rather than allowing high-rise dormitories and luxury towers to dominate the area.

We are also concerned about DCP's claim that there are few additional development possibilities in these corridors, thereby rendering the rezoning proposal unnecessary. Without appropriate zoning protections, almost any site in Greenwich Village is ripe for redevelopment. The Manhattan real estate market is so speculative that it easily defies City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) criteria for site assemblage due to the potential financial windfall sites can generate. This is why we believe so strongly that the number of soft sites and assemblage sites is much higher than CEQR would normally identify. For example, two sites in the proposed rezoning area are 809 Broadway (Blatt Billiards) and 34 East 13th Street, which DCP asserted were not potential development sites, and are now in the process of being demolished and redeveloped.

It is alarming and disconcerting how quickly DCP's assessment proved inaccurate. Given this, we urge you to adopt GVSHIP's rezoning proposal before more out-of-scale development can take place.

Thank you in advance for your reconsideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jared Odessky in State Senator Brad Hoylman's office at 212-633-8052.

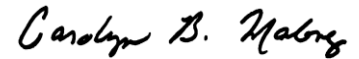
Sincerely,



Brad Hoylman
State Senator



Rosie Mendez
City Council Member



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President



Deborah J. Glick
Assembly Member

cc: Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Community Board 2, Manhattan