



An Open Letter to the Editors of Curbed and New York Magazine

September 13, 2026

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Mr. Haskell and Ms. Hong,

As the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan — himself a fierce advocate of historic preservation — once said: "You are entitled to your own opinions. But not your own facts."

That is exactly what Curbed and New York Magazine have done in "The Last NIMBY in a YIMBY Town" (David Freedlander, Sept. 11, 2026). The piece is built on factually false statements, misquotation, and a one-sided framing of my work at Village Preservation and our record on affordable housing. Every error below was brought to the magazine's attention, in detail, both before and after publication. You have declined to correct any of them.

The errors

The article states: Workers renovating the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center "determined that it was structurally unsound and needed to be demolished entirely." *The facts:* This is false. [Multiple Parks Department documents](#) and letters from the [Landmarks Preservation Commission](#) — shared directly with the magazine — say otherwise.

The article states: Extending the Greenwich Village Historic District, which we have supported, "prevents not just new building, but even renovations on existing buildings." *The facts:* This is false on its face. [Dozens of new buildings](#) have

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been permitted within the Greenwich Village Historic District, and [quite literally thousands of permits](#) have been issued for renovations, alterations, and additions there.

The article states: The SoHo/NoHo rezoning "would add nearly 1,000 affordable units." *The facts:* The city's own projections put the number at [382 to 573](#) units. Halfway through the time period in which those units were supposed to materialize, the rezoning has [produced zero affordable units](#) — and has destroyed several existing ones, exactly as we predicted. None of this appears in the piece. The article also frames our position as opposition to a "white and wealthier neighborhood" adding affordable housing. In fact, as explained at length to the magazine, Village Preservation [supported changing SoHo/NoHo's zoning](#) to require affordable housing, and pushed for broader and deeper affordability, without the loopholes developers have since used to avoid the requirement entirely. What we opposed were the plan's giveaways for luxury condo, office, and retail development.

The article states: We "doubted the claims of affordable housing promised by the developer" at 388 Hudson Street. *The facts:* What we actually did — as explained repeatedly to the reporter and fact-checker — was [demand details on the mechanism guaranteeing permanent affordability](#), details the city has yet to produce two years into the process. We also [questioned the choice of a developer](#) for the project named one of the "[100 Worst Landlords in New York City](#)," who [owned and managed](#) the Twin Parks apartment complex in the Bronx where a 2022 fire killed 17 people, and we called for changes to the building's design.

The article's most serious distortion: Asked how I'd respond to being called a "hardliner," I said I considered myself "pragmatic but principled... and that half a loaf is better than none." The magazine instead placed that quote as my response to the accusation that my work is done on behalf of "wealthy homeowners saying 'no' to affordable housing" — reframing it to suggest I believe blocking *some* affordable housing is better than blocking none at all. That is a fabricated meaning for a real quote, taken wildly out of its original context — and a particular irony given my career spent working on behalf of affordable housing and tenants. This distortion was flagged repeatedly. The magazine refused to correct it.

What the article leaves out

The piece accurately notes that our East and West Village rezonings (both proposed and adopted) capped new building heights in some instances at

roughly twelve stories. It omits that those same rezonings for the first time introduced affordable housing provisions in those areas — a fact that undercuts the article's chosen narrative, and therefore was omitted.

That's the smallest part of what the magazine had access to and chose not to use:

- We helped secure the first rezoning in Lower Manhattan with affordable housing provisions, [in 2008](#).
- We led the successful fight to [stop the demolition of 139 Thompson Street](#) — 19 apartments, 12 of them rent-regulated — to make way for a building with just 6 super-luxury units.
- We fought the city-approved plan to demolish [14–16 Fifth Avenue](#), a 20-unit building with 10 rent-regulated units, for a 17-unit super-luxury tower.
- We supported securing a city-owned parking lot on East 5th Street [for a community land trust](#) to build permanent affordable housing.
- We [opposed provisions](#) in “City of Yes” that eliminated existing affordable housing incentives, substituting them with purely voluntary ones, which have thus far resulted in [towering 100% super-luxury developments in our neighborhood like 11 West 13th Street](#), and have called for rules changes to prevent more of the same.
- We backed [citywide legislation](#) enabling community land trusts and nonprofits to buy at-risk buildings to make them permanently affordable.
- We called for [scrapping planned super-luxury housing](#) on a [city-owned Meatpacking District](#) site in favor of 100% affordable housing.
- We supported construction of, and gave our organization's highest award to, a [development housing formerly homeless LGBTQ+ youth](#) in our neighborhood.

There is no honest definition of "NIMBY" that describes an organization with this record.

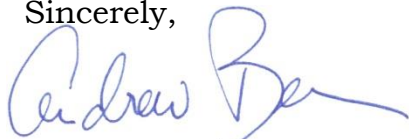
Even where the article raises a real issue — housing loss in historic districts — it omits the [data we shared](#) showing that areas of the city with the largest increases in new housing -- overwhelmingly expensive housing -- have seen skyrocketing prices and a shrinking share of Black and Hispanic residents. Leaving that out lets the piece imply landmarking causes displacement and unaffordability, when the pattern holds across the city, especially where rezonings have driven the most new construction.

"At odds with just about everyone"

The article's framing — that my work on behalf of Village Preservation has put me at odds with "just about everyone" — rests on a twice-failed candidate for local office, a pro-deregulation real estate scion, and a Yale Law professor who's lamented the fall of Tammany Hall and predicted Eric Adams could be "just what New York City needs." That framing sits uneasily next to the fact that we just closed our [best year ever](#) for membership donations (largely small dollar donors), public engagement, and participation in our programs and campaigns — from not just across the neighborhoods of Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo, but across New York City.

It is not surprising anymore to see opinion dressed up as journalism. It is more disappointing to see a publication abandon factual accuracy in the pursuit of clicks and the favor of the real estate industry that funds its advertising.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director