

Carol Conway  
35 Bond Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10012

Date: October 24, 2012  
To: NYC Districting Commission  
253 Broadway, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, NY, NY 10007  
From: Carol Conway  
Re: Opposition to proposal to change NoHo's City Council District

As president of 35 Bond Street Corp., an AIR co-op, and as a resident of Noho for 38 years, I am opposed to the proposal to move the core area of NoHo from City Council District 1 to District 2.

NoHo should not be severed from SoHo. The two neighborhoods are "communities of interest" as defined by the NYC Charter, Section 52 (c). NoHo and SoHo are the same neighborhood as defined by zoning put in place forty years ago. The unique zoning is the M1-5B Zoning District and permits Joint Living Work Quarters for Artists (JLWQA) under State legislation.

Furthermore both are historic landmark districts with a similar history and architectural heritage, including cast-iron architecture. Both have a predominance of loft buildings occupied by artists. Residents of Noho and Soho share the same concerns and have a similar demographic. This community of interests does not exist between NoHo and any neighborhood in District 2.

I respectfully request that the commission maintain NoHo's place in District 1 with its sister community of SoHo.

Sincerely,



Carol Conway,  
President  
35 Bond Street Corp.

cc: Hon. Margaret Chin, City Council District 1  
Hon. Rosie Mendez, City Council District 2  
Sean Sweeney, Director, SoHo Alliance

October 3, 2012

REGARDING: REDRAWING THE DISTRICTS - DISTRICT #1  
In support of keeping the District 1 communities together.

Dear Redistricting Commission members:

With my upmost sincerity, I would like to submit the following as testimony for our Tribeca community to remain in the district it is currently part of. We support NO CHANGE.

My name is Diane Lapson. I am a member of Community Board #1 on the Housing and Planning and Quality of Life committees. Most importantly, I am the President of the Independence Plaza Tenants Association, a large building complex opened in 1975 in a neighborhood now known as Tribeca. Independence Plaza (IP) has approximately 3,500 residents. The majority of these tenants constitute the ONLY affordable housing in Tribeca. But our numbers show that WE ARE TRIBECA. The area has recently been associated with wealth. IP is comprised mostly by folks fighting to keep affordable housing downtown.

Our key point is that the majority of our IP residents were present on September 11, 2001 when the terrible attack on America took place. We witnessed the entire attack, which included the planes hitting the buildings, the explosion and fires, the people jumping, the terrible aftermath, the original ten days when we had to care for all of our residents and neighbors who didn't have food; and the years that followed. Those years included hard work on having our downtown and local community environment cleaned properly, creating health care clinics for all of those who have been negatively impacted by the environmental disaster, helping to deal with all of those suffering from trauma and post traumatic stress, rebuilding, re-populating, and all of the numerous issues stemming from such an attack. I personally helped the Department of Health implement and manifest a Health Registry to track symptoms of 9/11 related illnesses, was appointed by the Mayor to serve on the DOH's Community Advisory Committee, was secretary of the World Trade Center Residents Coalition, to mention a few activities. These are all related to the World Trade Center – 9/11 attacks. There were endless other issues that involved the downtown area that I and my neighbors have also participated in since we moved in. That includes developing what is now known as Tribeca, when it was originally named Washington Market. We helped build schools, obtain supermarkets, have the roads paved and participated in everything you can imagine to create the viable neighborhood it is today.

First, I would like to say that issues affecting the downtown area are very different than the Soho or Greenwich Village area. This is especially true because of the already mentioned 9/11/2001 attacks. The entire downtown community has worked together to accomplish a great deal. Issues that affect our residents are unique and frankly most communities on the other side of Canal Street cannot truly relate to what we have been through and what we have done to try and remedy much of the damage. I would add that many residents on the East Side, cut off by Houston Street also shared in our experience. We all need each other.

As I said when we were told that parts of our community were going to be separated out from our State Senator Daniel Squadron's district this past year, we are even more than a "community of interest." We are actually *a special needs community and will remain so until all of us who experienced 9/11 and our children who remain here are dead and gone.* All of our

neighborhoods have at least had each other to support and work together to accomplish much. As *a special needs community of interest*, removing a piece of it is counter productive and frankly, unacceptable to all of us and doesn't make good sense. It doesn't feel right, it doesn't feel logical. Though you may say that 9/11/01 was 11 years ago, to those of us who live downtown, below Canal Street and parts of China Town (where the neighborhoods were literally cut off from everyone else) it was as if it happened yesterday. Not a day goes by where all of us, in one way or another, aren't reminded of that experience. It could be just a few moments – but I would venture to say the great majority of us will relive part of it each day. To us downtown, though moving on does not mean staying stuck in the past, we have brought the past along with our growth and it's a part of us.

Our community and Community Board #1 knows how to work with each other to be effective. We know what the issues are and we know how to help. Our elected officials have already been part of this process and have been instrumental in helping us fix a lot of what was broken during 9/11 or never fixed when a big population boom took place. They already know our issues and as exhausting as the chores have been, to start from scratch with a new elected official is a bit ludicrous.

I have spoken to many of our residents at Independence Plaza and they are stunned to hear that our part of the neighborhood could be moved out politically, to be part of a community we are so different than.

I urge the committee researching and making this decision to reconsider Tribeca. We may now have a high real estate reputation, but we our citizens are not units of real estate. Tucked into Tribeca are downtowners who have stuck together through an experience that was beyond any of our imaginations; who have put blood, sweat and tears into all of the issues that have affected the entire downtown community and are committed to continue. Tucked into Tribeca is one of the ONLY affordable housing communities in lower Manhattan, representing, in New Yorkers who keep the town running. The teachers, the firemen, the police, the secretaries, the construction workers – the middle income residents of Independence Plaza. We often need the support of our outlying community and we have lent our support to them and their issues as well.

I deeply appreciate your consideration in this serious manner, and hope you will agree that lower Manhattan should remain part of the Community Board #1 area, where we can be most effective and have the most assistance; and to continue sharing our elected official, in this case, Margaret Chin (District 1) - who has committed herself to helping us accomplish so much that remains to be done. At the very most and least, we oppose the Unity Map and would consider the current proposal by the Districting Commission to be acceptable to us.

Thank you so much for your attention to this critical matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Lapson

(917) [REDACTED]

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## Hearings

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**From:** linda gerstman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 04, 2012 12:15 PM  
**To:** Hearings  
**Subject:** 1st Council District

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend this evening's redistricting meeting, so I am writing to put my opposition to the redistricting plan on record. I own (and reside in) a condominium in the Financial District. Our community has endured more than any other neighborhood in this city and is uniquely bonded as we work together to rebuild. Not only are we united by the aftermath of 9/11 and the rebuilding of the WTC, but also by the fact that this is the fastest growing residential neighborhood and we need to continue to work together to combat the issues that impact all of us – such as school overcrowding, traffic, vending and construction. Dividing our district and removing Battery Park City and Tribeca would be a disservice to those of us who answered the call to help rebuild lower Manhattan. Now is NOT the time to divide our community.

Regards,

Linda Gerstman

[REDACTED]  
NY, NY [REDACTED]  
212 [REDACTED]

New York City Districting Commission  
253 Broadway 7th floor  
New York, NY 10007

7/24/12

We are requesting that you do not remove the core area of NOHO from City Council District 1 to District 2 as we do not want to be separate from SOHO. Both NOHO and SOHO have common interests. We have the same zoning, joint living and working for artists and similar cultural concerns. Most of the buildings in NOHO are occupied by artists. Our Co Op is solely occupied by artists and we request that we remain in District 1.

Sincerely yours,

Nancy English, president 46 Great Jones Reality Corp.  
46 Great Jones Street  
New York, New York 10012



Account: [REDACTED] Password: [REDACTED]

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**Re: Thursday, October 4th 2012 Hearing**

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PatrickYYau [REDACTED]

Thu, Oct 4, 2012 at 2:34 PM

To: hearings@districting.nyc.gov

Cc: [REDACTED]

**To the Chair of this Hearing,**

I would like to write to you to be presented at the Manhattan districting hearing on Thursday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

I am a Community Development Director of a locally owned and operated community bank in Chinatown Manhattan which has been since 2002 certified by the US Dept. of the Treasury as a *Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)*.

The idea of creating minority districts is hazardous. The "Unity Map" as advocated by several organizations, including Asian American Legal Defense Fund, have taken aim at several council districts, including the 1<sup>st</sup> Council District where we do business.

In their effort to increase minority representation through their "Unity Map," this coalition of advocacy groups has done just the opposite. Instead of having two minority representatives and hence two pots of resources and funding, the "Unity Map" runs the risk that only one minority candidate could be elected in the future. This means fewer resources for both the Lower East Side and Chinatown.

We strongly opposed such Unity Map.

Patrick Yau  
Executive Director  
First American International Bank  
恆通銀行  
游應鴻執行總監

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Lumping people together in a district does not guarantee a minority candidate will be elected. Only registering people to vote can increase voter participation and make a difference in electing minority candidates.

## **Testimony for NYC Districting Commission**

October 4, 2012

Submitted by:

Peter Cheng  
Renaissance EDC\*  
1 Pike Street  
New York, NY 10002  
Ph: 347-489-6965  
Pcheng128@aol.com

Hello, my name is Peter Cheng and I have been working in Chinatown for close to 30 years. When I first arrived in New York City back in the '70s, the number of Asians in Chinatown was much fewer and occupied a correspondingly smaller area. Through subsequent decades, Chinatown's population has increased dramatically and the community has expanded to cover its present boundaries.

As so often happens in New York City, when one ethnic group expands and moves onto other neighborhoods, ethnic tensions crop up. To be candid, there was friction between Hispanics and Asians in the Lower East Side. Both groups were predominantly low-income and language-disadvantaged. With similar needs, they competed for space, funding, and other resources. I know this from my personal experience of working in the community for almost thirty years. Fortunately, these conflicts have largely subsided. However, if we are to combine Chinatown with the Lower East Side, I am afraid lingering tensions may flare up again when both will fight for the same representation. This will be tragic as we shall pit one low-income group against another. In my opinion, the present situation with both communities having their own spokeswomen is ideal.

Looking forward, the rebuilding of the World Trade Center gives great anticipation to Chinatown. After 9/11, Chinatown's economy was devastated. Barely 10 blocks away from the WTC, Chinatown felt the full impact of the collapse of the twin towers. It was estimated one-tenth of the job loss in NYC came from Chinatown. As the former Chair of the Chinatown Partnership LDC and board member of the Chinatown BID, I believe the expected millions of tourists visiting the new WTC and the thousands of returning workers to the site will bring economic benefits to our community. To this end, it would be preferable for Chinatown and Downtown to be represented within the same district.

In conclusion, I urge you to keep City Council District 1 largely intact. Like so many Asian Americans, I used to long for an Asian American to represent Chinatown. This has become a reality. I say, "If it ain't broke, why fix it?"

Thank you for giving me a chance to testify and listening to my concerns.

\*For identification only.