



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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Manhattan Community Board 10 Resolution Regarding The Proposed LPC Rules Amendments

WHEREAS the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) announced in January 2018 that it would be issuing a set of proposed amendments to its governing rules. These rules amendments are outlined in a 131-page document, with the overwhelming majority of proposed changes to Chapter 2 of LPC rules entitled “Alteration of Landmarks and Historic District Buildings;” and

WHEREAS LPC listed six goals it aims to achieve through these Proposed Rules Amendments: (1) “authorizing the LPC Staff to approve a variety of work-types that are consistently approved by the Commission utilizing established criteria;” (2) “ensuring that applicants do not have to go through the more time-intensive Certificate of Appropriateness public hearing process;” (3) “bring the Commission’s rules up to date with Commission approvals concerning compliance with a wide variety of other governmental codes and criteria;” (4) “amend existing rules, as well as add new ones, to reflect current and established practices of the Commission;” (5) “reorganize the rules comprising Subchapter B of Chapter 2, including consolidation of some existing rules;” and (6) “delegating to the LPC Staff the authority to approve work that is consistently approved by the Commission;” and

WHEREAS LPC aims to eliminate the current requirement for LPC applications to be reviewed by its Commission in a public hearing setting, which would in turn allow LPC applications to be subject to any formal public review and effectively eliminate presentations to community boards to facilitate a community discussion on the appropriateness of LPC applications in their respective districts; and

WHEREAS we are extremely concerned that LPC is attempting to drastically modify its processes to eliminate the requirement of LPC public hearings and effectively community board public hearings and advisory recommendations. Currently, at LPC public hearings, community members, elected officials, and concerned residents of New York City have the ability to submit public testimony, letters or support or dissent, or even signed petitions regarding all applications scheduled at a particular hearing. LPC’s rules amendments will eliminate the ability of the general public and elected officials to submit public testimony before a public hearing; and

WHEREAS on March 27, 2018, LPC convened a public hearing on the Proposed Rules Amendments, at which dozens of organizations, residents, and elected officials submitted testimony and protested against the Proposed Rules Amendments; and

WHEREAS in a joint letter issued on April 13, 2018, nine preservation groups urged the LPC to withdraw the Proposed Rules Amendments. These nine groups included Historic Districts Council, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Brooklyn Heights Association, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Municipal Art Society, the Society for the Architecture of the City, the City Club, Landmark West!, and FRIENDS of the Upper East Side Historic Districts. This joint letter criticized the LPC's efforts to diminish public review of LPC applications, LPC's usage of landmarks process categorization that had no relevance or reference to the Landmarks Law, and LPC's introduction of incentives for the use of substitute and faux materials on historic buildings. This joint letter was co-signed by dozens of elected officials, advocates, community groups, and community boards; and

WHEREAS the Chair of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission Meenakshi Srinivasan announced her resignation on April 19, 2018 amid much controversy and criticism involving these LPC Rules Amendments and other issues; and

WHEREAS the CB10 Transportation, Historic Preservation, and Landmarks Committee discussed the proposed LPC rules amendments in the April 2018 committee meeting and determined that these proposals will compromise the transparency of LPC reviews of LPC applications and will ultimately compromise the integrity of the historic districts and buildings across the City of New York; and

WHEREAS LPC is proposing an unprecedented overhaul of current LPC rules and procedures that were originally set to ensure the transparency of the review process of proposed work in historic districts and on historic buildings; and

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 10 urges LPC and the Mayor's Office to withdraw the LPC Proposed Rules Amendments as it diminishes the transparency, trust, and accountability that the LPC review process should have; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Manhattan Community Board 10 urges the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to discard the proposed LPC Rules Amendments and uphold its existing rules without amendments with a vote of 29 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.