



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Shahabuddeen A. Ally, Esq., Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

November 30, 2017

Hon. Marisa Lago
Chair, City Planning Commission
120 Broadway, 31st Floor
New York, NY 10271

Re: RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ZONING REGULATIONS TO PROTECT SOLAR ACCESS.

Dear Chair Lago:

At the General Meeting, Tuesday, November 28, 2017 Community Board 12 Manhattan, passed the following resolution with a vote of 35 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstention Requesting to promptly implement revisions to the Zoning Resolution and enact related legislation as required to protect the unobstructed access to sunlight on roof-tops as a vital resource for the generation of renewal energy.

- Whereas: In Community District 12-Manhattan and city-wide there are extensive contiguous areas where adjacent buildings are essentially the same height and cast only minimal shadows on the roof-tops of one another; and
- Whereas: These shadow-free roof-tops are ideal sites for the potential location of photovoltaic solar energy receptors (solar panels) to generate carbon neutral electricity; and
- Whereas: The first solar cells, invented in the 1800s, were less than one percent efficient - not efficient enough as a useful energy source. In 1954 Bell Labs invented the first useful silicon solar panel which was about six percent efficient. Since then solar photovoltaic technology has evolved and manufacturers have been able to create solar panels that are nearly 30% efficient. These higher efficiency panels produce 25% more electricity than the earlier, lower-efficiency models; and
- Whereas: Based on research and reporting by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, MIT, Forbes and others the cost of solar panels has fallen by over 60% since 2008 and fell 30% in the first quarter of 2017; and
- Whereas: As the price of solar panels continues to decrease and their efficiency continues to increase, it is reasonable to project a time in the near future when solar-generated electricity will be economical, raising the widespread demand for the installation of solar panels; and

- Whereas: To our knowledge no plans are or have been proposed to update CD12's aging electricity infrastructure. Any power generated and potentially stored on-site would reduce the load on the electrical distribution system and reduce the risk of brown-outs and black-outs as well as reduce demands for immediate response by city, state and federal (FEMA) emergency services personnel when the electrical grid is disrupted by storms or other occurrences; and
- Whereas: New York City's 80 x 50 plan (the "80x50 Plan") will require, among other things, the examination of all available renewable energy sources to achieve the desired 80 percent energy reduction by 2050; and
- Whereas: New York City's Zoning Resolution, related land use regulations, and environmental review policies and procedures afford no protection to roof-tops that enjoy unobstructed exposure to sunlight. These land use regulations, policies and procedures must be reconsidered and modernized to include provisions to protect sun-light at roof-tops in the same way that a century ago zoning sought to protect light and air on public streets; and
- Whereas: Solar-generated electricity is an important tool at New York City's disposal to help realize the goals of the 80 x 50 Plan, address deficiencies in the distribution grid, and implement smart public policy pertaining to renewal energy. Now, therefore, be it
- Resolved: Community Board 12-Manhattan calls upon the Mayor, the City Council, and the Department of City Planning to promptly implement revisions to the Zoning Resolution and enact related legislation as required to protect the unobstructed access to sunlight on roof-tops as a vital resource for the generation of renewal energy.

Sincerely,



Shahabuddeen A. Ally, Esq.
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Letitia James, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman

Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator
Hon. Marisol Alcantara, State Senator
71st Assembly District Office
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member