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COMMUNITY BOARD No. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE

NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

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August 3, 2010

Robert B. Tierney, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre St., 9th Floor North
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

1ST LANDMARKS MEETING

LPC Item 11 - 64 Wooster Street (Spring/Broome) - SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District

A warehouse building designed by E.H. Kendall and built in 1898-99.

Application is to install new storefront infill and alter the building's base.

Whereas, the cleaning of the façade and restoration of the cast-iron is commendable; but

Whereas, the central door is too modern in appearance for this building. We suggest having a single door with side lights, or having more frame around the proposed door, or approving the door but with a higher metal base coming up a foot or so in height from the pavement, not a couple of inches as proposed; and

Whereas, we prefer *authentic* double-hung windows instead of the proposed single-pane windows, in order that the fenestration would have a shadow line and not appear flat, which is a look the single-pane window would bestow; and

Whereas, we suggest that the paint at the ground floor be of a darker color or shade than the upper floors in keeping with the style of the Cast-Iron Historic District, where the base is usually a darker tone than the upper floors; and

Whereas, the proposal to shorten the original railings in front of the ground-floor display windows is unacceptable. This intricate ironwork is a rare example of window guards in this historic district. We understand the need of a retailer to present an unobstructed view of the merchandise, but someone should not buy an historic building with the intention of removing historic material. There is a choice: either don't buy the building, or else buy it and preserve the rarity that you have purchased; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application with conditions: namely, keep the original window railings intact; provide more historic character to the center door; restore the fenestration with authentic double-hung windows; use a darker shade or color of paint at the base of the building.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

LPC Item 12 - 39 Barrow Street, aka 70-72 7th Avenue South - Greenwich Village H.D. A rowhouse originally built in 1828 altered in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Application is to construct a stoop, modify masonry openings and the areaway, and install railings and a skylight.

Whereas, the roof railing, while visible, is required by Code, and the profile of the unusual Mediterranean parapet and roof line will be lost, unfortunately; and

Whereas, the applicant represented that the rooftop bulkhead is not more than minimally visible from any public thoroughfare. But doubt exists regarding this assertion, especially because only one photograph showing only one angle was presented to us. The applicant further asserted that the southerly view was blocked by a tree, but a tree has seasonal foliage and also may be pruned or removed in the future; and, further,

Whereas, one of the committee members this weekend walked by the project and there is now a mock-up and it is indeed clearly visible from the street, contrary to what was told to us earlier: and

Whereas, shifting the doorway within the areaway does not detract from the building; but

Whereas, the admirable proposal to replace the ironwork on the Barrow Street stoop uses the wrong model, however: namely, the ironwork at nearby 49 Barrow Street, which is not original to that building. In fact, it is several decades out of style.

The committee suggested that the applicant use 51 Barrow Street (1826) as a model for the stoop railings and fence because 51 Barrow Street retains its original ironwork, and the applicant expressed a willingness to explore that suggestion; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application provided that the bulkhead is not more than minimally visible from any public thoroughfare, which, despite the assertions by the applicant, we do not believe to be the case; and

Further, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends the LPC rigorously determine exactly how much of the bulkhead will be visible by requesting more and clearer photos, or perhaps even a sight visit; and

Further, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends LPC staff work with the applicant at getting more historically specific ironwork for the stoop.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

LPC Item 13 - 80 Washington Place (Wash.Sq.West/6th Ave) - Greenwich Village H.D.
A Greek Revival style rowhouse built in 1839 and altered in the early 20th century.
Application is to excavate the cellar.

Whereas, the proposed skylight at ground level in the backyard will be masked by the gazebo already approved and so will not be visible to neighbors, thus expiating its unattractive appearance within a rear yard that traditionally had greenery to beautify the area rather than a skylight for illuminating an extended basement below; and

Whereas, the large old tree in the backyard that was extant when this project was initially filed had to be cut down early this year, supposedly due to disease and certainly a convenient misfortune; but

Whereas, which brings us yet again this month to the disturbing and increasing trend of homeowners with wonderful old backyards who seek to extend their basement for a wine cellar or swimming pool or what not, at the cost of excavating drastically the rear yard, thus destroying the arboreal nature of the “hole in the doughnut” that characterizes so many Village homes.

Indeed, it is ironic that Mayor Bloomberg’s Plan 2030 calls for more green spaces and parks, more green roofs, more street trees (visit the MillionTreesNYC.org website) but yet we often witness the destruction of attractive vegetation in historic districts merely to extend a basement.

Perhaps more ironic is the fact that the applicant will get valuable LEED credit for building a “rooftop garden” on top of the basement extension, in the very location where the old, original garden had once bloomed.

As we do with each of these types of applications, we respectfully request the Commission to consider carefully the ramifications with regard to the character of our historic districts, as well as for the environment of our city; and, further,

Whereas, we recommended a new rule that 30% of the rearmost portion of the yard remain undeveloped. Otherwise we will lose all our large doughnut trees; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application; but

Further, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. respectfully recommends that the Commission begin to recognize the destructive and deleterious results that these excavations cause to so many people, in order merely to extend a basement space that benefits just a few; and

Further, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends a new rule requiring that 30% of the rearmost portion of the yard remain undeveloped. Otherwise we will lose all our large doughnut trees

Vote: Passed, with 34 Board members in favor, and 3 in opposition (I. Dutton, A. Schwartz, C. Yankay).

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

LPC Item 14 - 28 Little West 12th Street (Washington/9th)- Gansevoort Market Historic District
A neo-Georgian style stable building designed by John M. Baker and built in 1911.
Application is to install a fence and a wall at the roof.

Whereas, the proposal will not detract from the building or the district; and

Whereas, the applicant gave the committee a choice for the proposed roof fence: either a glass rail with vertical metal posts or one without posts. A majority of the committee preferred a fence with posts; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

LPC Item 15 - 420 West 14th Street (Washington/9th)- Gansevoort Market Historic District
A neo-Classical style store and loft building designed by Thomas H. Styles and built in 1903-04.
Application is to establish a master plan governing the future installation of storefront infill.

Whereas, this master plan is needed and will improve the building and the district; and

Whereas, restoring the cast-iron elements is commendable, but the applicant wants to use clear polyurethane to preserve the iron columns, thus exposing the raw metal; and

Whereas, cast iron was meant to simulate the stone masonry of Classical architecture. That is why just about every cast-iron building is painted. Further, it is our understanding that the LPC staff recommends that applicants who want to re-paint their historic cast-iron facades use a palette that reflects the historic stone colors that the iron columns should evoke; and

Whereas, there was a question of whether coating the bare cast-iron is an appropriate treatment for this material, although some nearby storefronts have it. We are unsure of how and when these treatments were approved; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application for a master plan; but

Further, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends that the Commission consider carefully whether the use of polyurethane instead of the paint is appropriate treatment for historic cast-iron columns.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

LPC Item 16 - 416-418 West 14th Street (Washington/9th) Gansevoort Market Historic District
An Italianate style warehouse designed by Joseph M. Dunn and built in 1887, and a factory building designed by S.W. Johnson, built in 1874 and altered in 1917 and 1940-1980. Application is to replace storefront infill and install signage.

Whereas, the addition of transoms adds to the building, and the diamond-wired glass is a nice touch, evoking the area's industrial past; and

Whereas, the proposed signage, although larger by a couple of square feet than the standard 2'x3' signage requirement, is not obtrusive and is creatively designed; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

LPC Item 17 - 206 Bowery House (Spring/Prince) Proposed Individual Landmark

Built: c. 1810s

Architect/Builder: Not Determined

Style: Federal

Whereas, several neighbors representing a larger group, the Bowery Alliance of Neighbors spoke in favor of designating this structure as an Individual Landmark; and

Whereas, one of these neighbors claimed possession of a tax assessment record for this building that is dated 1808, which may make the structure even older than the putative date of “circa 1810s”; and

Whereas, a house of this age and style is so rare, being only one of a handful of early Federal houses surviving relatively intact; now

Therefore, be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

2ND LANDMARKS MEETING

Item # 1: LPC Item 3 – 599 Broadway– SoHo Cast Iron Historic District A Commercial building designed by J. Odell Whitenach & built in 1917. Application is to install storefront infill & signage.

Whereas this building is highly visible, being at the intersection of Broadway and Houston St., and

Whereas the applicant intends to use the first and second floors as retail in this M1-5B District, and

Whereas the proposal is to install a new door at the south end to match the existing door at the opposite end of the building, and

Whereas the signage proposed is cut letters attached to a rail, which will therefore not damage the façade of the building, and

Whereas fixed awnings are proposed for the first and second floors of the building, and

Whereas the storefront will have a stone base and aluminum trim above, and

Whereas a banner will be installed above the first floor where there already is an existing flagpole, and

Whereas the applicant intends to restore the windows and transoms on the 2nd floor, and

Whereas the applicant is not planning any illumination on the building,

Therefore, although most of the proposal will be an improvement on the existing condition, and we would recommend approval of the application for 599 Broadway, there are a few comments we would propose for this application:

1. The 12" high bulkhead for the building is too low.
2. The proposed 4' x 8' banner is too large, larger than most of the banners we have approved.
3. The awnings on the second floor obstruct the design of the building and should be eliminated.
4. The awnings on the first floor should be retractable, not fixed.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

Item # 2: LPC Item 4 – 724 Broadway – NoHo Historic District

A one-story taxpayer built in 1936 & altered in 1987. Application is to re-design the facades, install storefront infill, a canopy & illuminated signage.

Whereas the Landmarks Preservation Commission's publication "The Certificate of Appropriateness Public Hearing: Information for Applicants" states that "Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Community Board to arrange for review of the proposal before the public hearing"; and

Whereas the applicant failed to appear before the Community Board Committee, nor did he contact us for a layover,

Therefore Be It Resolved CB#2, Man. recommends denial of this application for 724 Broadway, in the absence of this important step in the review process.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

Item # 3: LPC Item #5 – 240 Mercer St. aka 681 Broadway & 2-6 West 3 St. – NoHo Historic District

A Modern style residence hall designed by Benjamin Thompson & Associates & built in 1979-81.
Application is to construct a terrace pergola.

Whereas this building, the NYU Law School, proposes a terrace pergola on a section of the roof of the building, and

Whereas the fencing, which includes 4 windows, would be placed along the edge of the roof of the building, and

Whereas the fencing would be metal and 10' high, and, they believe, would eventually be obscured by the vines to be planted along the fence, and

Whereas the fencing proposed is too industrial for the building, and the placement of windows in the fencing is odd, not what one would expect in looking at a fence, and

Whereas the fence might be more appropriate if it was set back from the edge of the roof a short distance,

Therefore be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends denial of this application for 240 Mercer St.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

Item # 4: LPC Item #6 – 88 MacDougal St. – MacDougal-Sullivan Gardens Historic District

Whereas the proposal is to construct a rooftop addition 14' wide and 9' high on the roof of this building, and

Whereas the rooftop addition would have steel and glass windows with a black frame on the windows and stucco on the front around the windows, and

Whereas the same type fence will be used, but placed at the edge of the roof in the rear and 15' back from the façade on the front, and

Whereas, although the applicant stated there was minimal visibility, it seems to be quite visible, especially from the central courtyard, and

Whereas the design looked quite different in the drawings and the rendering, with the drawings looking much more appropriate than the rendering, and

Whereas the addition was off-center, making the building look lopsided, and

Whereas this is the oldest Historic District in CB#2, Man., therefore any changes should be handled with the greatest care and attention,

Therefore be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends denial of this application for 88 MacDougal St.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

Item # 5: LPC Item #7 – 45 Grove St. – Greenwich Village Historic District

Whereas the applicant proposes two signs for he basement store as follows:

- 1 sign above the first step of the house, 2' x 4' oval and hand stenciled, and
- 1 sign painted on the current sign panel, an old-fashioned sign with gold letters on the brown background, and

Whereas these signs are well done, and very much in character with the building,

Therefore be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends approval of this application for 45 Grove Street.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

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Dear Chairman Tierney:

At its Full Board meeting on July 22, 2010, CB#2, Manhattan (CB#2-Man.), adopted the following resolution:

Item # 6: LPC Item #10 – 55 Gansevoort St. – Gansevoort Market Historic District.

A vernacular style store and loft building designed by Joseph M. Dunn & built in 1887. Application is to construct rooftop bulkheads, raise the parapets & install railings.

Whereas this application is for a rooftop addition of two stair bulkheads to accommodate a proposed new bar and lounge on the roof, and

Whereas, although the applicant stated the structures were minimally visible, to our eyes they were very visible, especially the larger stair bulkhead, and

Whereas patterned fencing 2' back from the parapet wall, steel and painted black, and 42' high was proposed, and

Whereas the walls of the additions would be zinc clad paneling, and

Whereas the roof deck would be paneling installed above the existing roof of the building, with drainage still continuing to be from the existing roof, and

Whereas this building has maximum visibility because of its shape, narrowing to a point at one end, and

Whereas opposition for this application came from members of the immediate community,

Therefore be it resolved that CB#2, Man. recommends denial of this application for 55 Gansevoort St.

Vote: Unanimous, with 37 Board members in favor.

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jo Hamilton". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

Jo Hamilton, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean Sweeney". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sean Sweeney, Chair
Landmarks & Public Aesthetics Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

JH/fa

cc: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Thomas K. Duane, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Man. Borough President
Hon. Christine C. Quinn, Council Speaker
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Council Member
Sandy Myers, CB2 Liaison, Man. Borough President's office
Lolita Jackson, Manhattan Director, CAU
Andrew Berman, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Jenny Fernandez, Director of Government & Community Relations,
Landmarks Preservation Commission
David Reck, Land Use & Development Committee, CB#2, Man.