

June 25, 2002

Lisa Schubert
Rubin Cultural Trust
115 Fifth Avenue
7th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Re: Himalayan Museum on Barney's site

Dear Ms. Schubert:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 thanks you and the Rubin Cultural Trust for your presentation on the proposed Himalayan Museum to the Chelsea Preservation and Planning Committee in May. We regret that circumstances prevented your architects from giving a more complete presentation at the June meeting of the Committee, and are looking forward to your full presentation of all aspects of the project at the full Board meeting on July 24th.

The Board welcomes this proposal for a large portion of the former Barney's store at the southeast corner of Seventh Avenue and 17th Street. It believes this is an appropriate reuse of these now vacant linked buildings that will enrich the quality of life in the area and will reinforce and extend the character of Chelsea as an arts district. We hope the Trust will be able to locate appropriate uses in the portions of the buildings that it will not be using itself.

The Board is glad that the Trust has taken over the maintenance of the much-abused planters on the Seventh Avenue side of the building, since they had deteriorated so badly that the Board had actually requested their removal. We have received your letter confirming this intention and are looking forward to seeing them restored to their original attractiveness. We note the concern of the 17th Street Block Association, between Sixth and Seventh avenues, about this issue, as shown by the presence of their leadership at your first presentation to the Chelsea Committee and we are glad to see that the Block Association joins us in supporting both the restoration of the planters and your reuse of the building as a museum.

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We trust that your presentation to the full Board will flesh out, as well as your intentions for the Museum, your plans for other uses in the buildings you have acquired near this corner. In particular the Board needs to know about any proposed changes in the rear of the buildings that may require approval by city agencies. In the meantime, we welcome the Museum to the neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Simone Sindin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

Edward S. Kirkland
Chair
Chelsea Preservation & Planning Committee

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor
Hon. C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President
Elected officials
17th Street Block Association, 6th-7th Avenues