



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
215 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor—New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

**BRIAN BENJAMIN**  
Chairperson

**ANDREW LASSALLE**  
District Manager

**Resolution Condemning Rebranding of Central Harlem as “SoHa”**

WHEREAS, the Village of Harlem is a distinct neighborhood in the northern section of Manhattan that has been formally organized and recognized as “Harlem” since 1658; and

WHEREAS, since the early 1900s, and continuing uninterrupted to the present day, Harlem has been known and recognized throughout the world as a singular and premiere center of African-American arts, culture, tradition, business and social and political activism; and

WHEREAS, Harlem stretches from the East River to the Hudson River and northward from 96<sup>th</sup> Street (in the east) and 110<sup>th</sup> Street (in the west) up to 155<sup>th</sup> Street; and

WHEREAS, the section of Harlem encompassing Manhattan Community Board 10’s District, running from Fifth Avenue on the east to Morningside Park, St. Nicholas Avenue and Edgecombe Avenue on the west and from 110<sup>th</sup> Street on the south and Harlem River and 155<sup>th</sup> Street on the north has long been known as “Central Harlem”; and

WHEREAS, Central Harlem in particular was the focal point of the “Harlem Renaissance” which began in the 1920s and was an unprecedented outpouring of American Black music, dance, theater and literature whose impact on the world was vast and has continued unabated; and

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 10 is the voice of our Central Harlem Community whose mission includes the protection, preservation, promotion and enhancement of Harlem’s unique and historic character, tradition and universally-recognized brand; and

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 10 believes that the maintenance and protection of Harlem’s character, traditions, culture and brand is vital to the Community’s continued economic and social well-being; and

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 10 has become aware of numerous instances wherein certain real estate brokers and developers and other persons and businesses have been attempting to rename and rebrand the area of Central Harlem below 125<sup>th</sup> Street as “SoHa” (a false and misleading reference to “South Harlem,” a non-existent and historically-inaccurate geographic designation); and

WHEREAS, this effort to create a new section of Upper Manhattan called “SoHa” has been carried out through, among other actions, using the term “SoHa” as a business or trade name, to

designate certain real estate developments and as a geographic destination in lieu of the area's true name; and

WHEREAS, these attempts to excise and rename a section of Central Harlem constitute, in many cases, an apparent attempt to attract and profit from new investment and development and to market the area to potential new residents who may not understand, appreciate or value the significance of the contributions that Harlem has made to the culture and character of America and, indeed, the world; and

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 10 is not opposed to new investment and economic opportunities for Harlem residents, but we nonetheless strongly believe that this effort to rebrand Central Harlem, if continued, will in the long run have serious and lasting negative consequences for our community; and

WHEREAS, while the process of co-naming even a single block in NYC generally requires extensive Community outreach and a lengthy process to establish that there is broad support from local residents, businesses, institutions and elected officials as well as a compelling historical or cultural basis for the renaming; and

WHEREAS, the attempts to rename a large swath of Central Harlem as "SoHa" have been undertaken unilaterally without any attempt to seek or consider the views of the people of Harlem and despite the utter lack of any historical or cultural basis for this change; and

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 10 believes that these efforts to alter and rebrand Central Harlem for profit are arrogant and disrespectful and an affront to generations of Harlem residents who invested blood, sweat and tears to make Harlem what it is; and

WHEREAS, many residents of our Community as well as our elected and public officials share the concern and dismay expressed in this Resolution;

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT, Manhattan Community Board 10 objects to and condemns the use by persons and businesses of the term "SoHa" as a branding tool or trade name to market their goods or services, or as a geographic designation or destination with respect to any areas of Harlem; and

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Manhattan Community Board 10 calls upon all residents of our District and our elected officials to reject the attempts to rename any section of Central Harlem "SoHa," and to clearly voice their objection to such attempts and to similar attempts to rename or rebrand other sections of Harlem; and

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Manhattan Community Board 10 will support our elected officials in any efforts to propose appropriate legislation curtailing real estate brokers and developers and other persons and businesses from renaming or rebranding any areas of Harlem.