

State Senator Liz Krueger



Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney



Council Member Keith Powers

Council Member Benjamin Kallos

Via Electronic and U.S. Mail

July 17, 2018

Hon. Vincent Bradley
Chairman
New York State Liquor Authority
80 S Swan Street, Suite 900
Albany, NY 12210-8002

Re: Rose Group Park Avenue LLC, Serial Number: 1311462

Dear Chairman Bradley:

We are writing to urge the State Liquor Authority (SLA) to reject the application for a full on-premises liquor/catering license for the Rose Group Park Avenue, LLC (the “Rose Group”) located at 583 Park Avenue. As you may be aware, this has been an ongoing controversy for more than a decade where the representatives of the neighborhood – from the Community Board to the City Council Member to the State Senator to the Member of Congress – have consistently opposed the granting of a full liquor license and indeed, the operations of this commercial catering establishment in a historic residential neighborhood.

The SLA denied the Rose Group’s application in 2009 based upon the “200 Foot Rule,” which prohibits the issuance of a license to an establishment which is within 200 feet of a church or school. 583 Park Avenue is approximately 60 feet away from a second church – Central Presbyterian Church, which also houses a school, the Geneva School. That ruling was appealed and ultimately the decision of the SLA was upheld by the New York State Appellate Court. After that, the Rose Group, through extensive lobbying efforts, saw several legislative bills introduced to provide a carve-out from the 200 foot rule for its sole benefit, one of which reached the Governor’s desk. State Senator Liz Krueger, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, then-Councilmember Daniel Garodnick, Councilmember Benjamin Kallos, the Catholic Conference, the Board of Rabbis, the Presbyterian Board, and Community Board 8 all urged the Governor to veto the legislation. Governor Cuomo vetoed the legislation in January 2014, stating: *“The core issues raised, however, center around the differing views of what constitutes a good quality of life in the impacted neighborhood. There is a lack of consensus in that neighborhood between*

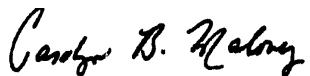
public officials and within the community on this bill and those issues, and this concerns me, such that I am constrained to disapprove this bill. I urge the interested parties to reach agreement on this matter.”

Now, the Rose Group is once again seeking a full liquor license from the SLA despite the fact that nothing has changed to warrant the granting of such license in spite of what is stated in their application. The Central Presbyterian Church that is 60 feet from their location remains an active church, and still also houses the Geneva School. The Rose Group’s statement in its application that “Central Presbyterian Church...does not meet the definition of a church under the 200’ Rule,” is without any basis whatsoever. In fact, the SLA found in 2009 when it denied the Rose Group’s original application that the Central Presbyterian Church had an active congregation of over 125 members and held regular weekly and holy day church services. Today, the congregation has increased to between 400-500 members and is planning to launch additional regular services in the fall.

Moreover, the Governor stated that a consensus should be reached before an exception can be made to the law to provide a legal pathway to a full liquor license for 583 Park Avenue. No such consensus exists, and the attempt to move this application through in July when many interested parties may not be present appears to be an attempt to limit public opposition to the application. At a hearing held by the Street Life Committee of Manhattan Community Board 8 last week, every speaker except the representative of the Rose Group spoke in opposition to this application. Residents living in multiple buildings surrounding 583 Park Avenue reported that the Rose Group’s current operations at the site have significantly diminished the quality of life and safety in the community. The residents described substantial increases in traffic and double-parked cars, garbage piling up after events that attracts rats, frequently being woken up by noise after 2 am when events end, delivery trucks going the wrong way down side streets to access the venue, and lines of people waiting to gain entry to the site extending down adjoining blocks. It is evident that the Rose Group has made no efforts to build a better relationship with the community and they continue to seek this license without further communication with those affected.

Thank you for your consideration of our opposition to this liquor license application. We strongly urge that the SLA will agree with our continued opposition and reject this application.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Maloney
Congresswoman



Liz Krueger
State Senator



Keith Powers
Council Member



Benjamin Kallos
Council Member