



March 20, 2014

Carl Weisbrod
Chair, City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Weisbrod:

We represent New York State's 26th and 27th Senate Districts, which include Manhattan's South Village. We are writing to urge the Department of City Planning to consider the proposed contextual rezoning of the South Village that was unanimously approved by Manhattan Community Board 2, and work with the neighborhood stakeholders to create and push forward a zoning plan.

As you may know, the South Village is listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, a recognition of the special nature of this neighborhood. Yet much of the area's zoning is not appropriate for it. The current R7-2 zoning in the area roughly bounded by West 4th Street/Washington Square South to the North, Thompson Street/LaGuardia Place to the East, Canal Street to the South and Avenue of the America to the West, was established in 1961, when New York was a very different city. This outdated zoning was meant to encourage the development of high rises surrounded by open space, which is contrary to the goal for this area today. Furthermore, a "community facility" floor area ratio (FAR) bonus is often exploited by developers as a means to construct unsuitably large buildings based on the inclusion of facilities of questionable benefit to the community, such as dormitory housing. In some cases, these dubious community facilities never materialize, even after developers have taken advantage of the FAR bonus.

In addition to CB2, we have heard from a wide range of local block associations and individual constituents who support a contextual rezoning. We hope that the CPC will partner with the community to develop contextual, sound zoning and consider acting as the applicant in this process.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Should you have any questions or to follow up, please contact Senator Squadron at 212-298-5565 and Senator Hoylman at 212-633-8052.

Sincerely,

Daniel Squadron
New York State Senator
26th District

Brad Hoylman
New York State Senator
27th District

cc: Manhattan Community Board 2
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation