



Community Board 12M

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Manny Velazquez, Chairman
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

February 2, 2008

Hon. Patricia Lancaster
Commissioner
NYC Dept. of Buildings
280 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Emily Lloyd
Commissioner
NYC Dept. of Environmental Protection
59-17 Junction Blvd
Flushing, NY 11373

Hon. Jeanette Sadik-Khan
Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
40 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Dear Commissioners Lancaster, Lloyd & Sadik-Khan:

Please be advised that at the general meeting of Community Board 12-Manhattan, held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, the following resolution was passed by a vote of 26 - 0:

RESOLUTION: Recommending that the New York City Department of Buildings, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the New York City Department of Transportation revise New York City's construction-related regulations to be more responsive to the needs and preferences of community residents, while affirming the potential economic benefit of development to New York City neighborhoods.

Whereas: In Community District 12, Washington Heights-Inwood, an estimated 21 as-of-right construction projects either have been completed recently, are underway or are planned, and there already has been a significant increase in the number of construction-related complaints; and,

Whereas: The 23-story construction project underway at 29 Overlook Terrace has generated numerous construction noise complaints, which Washington Heights residents strongly believe have not been satisfactorily addressed by the New York City Department of Buildings or the New York City Department of Environmental Protection; now, therefore be it

Resolved: That Community Board 12, Manhattan requests that New York City government agencies revise construction-related regulations to recognize that neighborhoods are both a home for residents as well as a place of investment for developers of new housing, including the following provisions:

1. The Department of Buildings should require developers to send notices of their construction schedules, with a detailed project time frame specifying the duration of exterior and interior construction, and noise mitigation plans to Community Boards by registered mail 30 days prior to beginning construction on-site. The schedules should identify the site of construction by address, block and lot number.

2. The Department of Transportation should require developers to submit a traffic mitigation plan for its approval and to send the plan to Community Boards 30 days before starting any construction.

3. All construction noise mitigation plans and utility noise mitigation plans should be submitted to the Department of Buildings and the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Environmental Protection should approve the noise mitigation plans prior to the Department of Buildings' approval of construction permits.

4. The Department of Environmental Protection should improve its complaint response time and post construction noise complaints it receives on its website with its responses in a publicly-accessible web-based database, including the time and date of its inspection and measured noise levels.

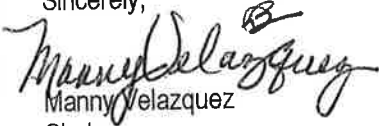
5. At the request of Community Boards, the Department of Environmental Protection should prohibit the use of noisy equipment such as pile drivers and jackhammers before 9 a.m. on weekdays and at any time on weekends, unless emergency public safety concerns warrant an exception.

6. Developers of both as-of-right and discretionary projects should be required to meet with Community Boards to resolve the community's concerns regarding construction whenever they arise.

We would appreciate your comments on these recommendations and look forward to receiving a report on any action taken by your agencies in response to this resolution.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,


Manny Velazquez
Chairman

cc: Hon. Betsy Gotbaum, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Charles Rangel, Congressman
Hon. Eric Schneiderman, State Senator
Hon. Bill Perkins, State Senator
Hon. Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Assembly Member
Hon. Miguel Martinez, Council Member
Hon. Robert Jackson, Council Member
Lolita Jackson, Manhattan Director, Community Assistant Unit
Kathleen McGee, Deputy Director, Office of Special Enforcement



Manny Velazquez, Chairman
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

February 21, 2008

Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan
Chair
Board of Standards & Appeals
40 Rector Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10006

Dear Chair Srinivasan:

Please be advised that at the General Meeting of Community Board 12, Manhattan held on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, passed a resolution re: The way-finding signage program at a majority vote of 24-0-1-1.

- Whereas: Columbia University and New York Presbyterian Hospital (collectively "Columbia- NYPH") are the joint owners of over 24 buildings that comprise the Columbia University / New York Presbyterian Hospital Medical Center (the "Medical Center") which is located in Washington Heights on a campus generally bounded on the east by Broadway, on the south by West 165th Street, on the west by Riverside Drive and on the north by West 168th Street. Fort Washington Avenue divides the campus into two super-blocks - Block 2138, Lots 30 and 40 (west of Fort Washington Avenue) and Block 2139, Lots 1, 15, 80 and 85 (east of Fort Washington Avenue). The Medical Center is located in a R-8 residential zoning district; and
- Whereas: Columbia-NYPH has undertaken a way-finding signage program that is intended to provide enough information on exterior signs so that individuals can self-navigate the campus of the Medical Center and identify its major points of entry for emergency, clinic, inpatient and visitors services. Free-standing pylon-style illuminated signs are proposed to be erected at three major entrances (the "Critical Locations") to the Medical Center - the Broadway Emergency Center Atrium entrance, the 168th Street Vanderbilt Clinic entrance and the corner of 165th Street and Fort Washington Avenue, where a sign is desired to alert traffic approaching the hospital along West 165th Street to turn on Fort Washington Avenue; and
- Whereas: On December 3, 2007 Columbia-NYPH submitted an application (Application # 27807BZ) (the "Application") to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals ("BSA") seeking a zoning variance to permit the signs in the Critical Locations to exceed the maximum height limit for signs located in a R-8 residential district so that each can be 30-feet above the curb; and
- Whereas: Section 22-342 of the New York City zoning resolution limits the height of signs in a residential districts to 20-feet above the curb or the level of the ground floor ceiling-height of adjacent building, whichever is less; and
- Whereas: A zoning-compliant sign at the Broadway Emergency entrance can be 20-feet tall but zoning-complaint signs at the Vanderbilt Clinic entrance and at the corner of West 165th Street and Fort Washington Avenue would be limited to 15-feet above the curb and 12-feet above the curb respectively based on the ground-floor ceiling height zoning restrictions; and

- Whereas: Columbia-NYPH presented its way-finding signage program to and reviewed the Application with the Land Use Committee of Community Board 12-Manhattan ("LU" or the "Committee") on December 5, 2007 and January 9, 2008; and
- Whereas: The materials presented to the Committee document that zoning-complaint signs at the Critical Locations could routinely be obscured by ambulance, bus, van, truck and related vehicular traffic; and
- Whereas: The Vanderbilt Clinic entrance is not open 24-hours a day and, in response to the concerns expressed by the Committee that the installation of a 30-foot illuminated sign at this location may attract visitors and clients to it at times when the entrance is closed, Columbia-NYPH agreed to review this matter and advise CB12-M it would be addressed; and
- Whereas: The Committee is supportive of the way-finding signage program and concurs that the visibility of the signs, in particular at the Critical Locations, is necessary and important; now therefore be it
- Resolved: That Community Board 12-Manhattan supports the application submitted by Columbia-New York Presbyterian Hospital to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals (Application No.: 27807BZ) seeking a zoning variance to permit the signs proposed for the Broadway Emergency Center Atrium entrance, the 168th Street Vanderbilt Clinic entrance and the corner of 165th Street and Fort Washington Avenue to exceed the maximum height limit for signs in a R-8 residential district and to each be 30-feet above the curb level; and be it
- Further Resolved: That Columbia-NYPH is requested to report back to CB12-M, as it agreed to do, on its plans for addressing the access issues that may occur in connection with the erection of the proposed way-finding sign at the Vanderbilt Clinic entrance.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,



Manny Velazquez
Chairman

cc: Hon. Betsy Gotbaum, Public Advocate
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Charles Rangel, Congressman
Hon. Eric Schneiderman, NY State Senator
Hon. Bill Perkins, NY State Senator
Hon. Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Assembly Member
Hon. Miguel Martinez, Council Member
Hon. Robert Jackson, Council Member
Sandra Harris, Govt & Community Affairs – Columbia University Medical Center
Lisa Hogarty, Chief Operating Officer – Columbia University Medical Center
Maria Delgado, Director of Facilities – Columbia University Medical Center
Julio Batista – NY Presbyterian Hospital