



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

February 9, 2022

Sarah Carroll, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
David N. Dinkins Municipal Building, 9th Floor North
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness for Rear Addition to 442 West 22nd Street

Dear Chair Carroll:

On the recommendation of its Chelsea Land Use Committee, following a duly noticed public hearing at the Committee's meeting on January 18, 2022, Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4), at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 2, 2022, voted, by a vote of 41 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to recommend to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) an Approval with Conditions of the application for a rear façade redesign.

This vote of approval is conditional upon:

- Increasing the third- and fourth-floor rear setbacks to conform with the previously approved third-floor setback line.
- Removing the top floor canopy and its supporting columns, which negatively impact the light-and-sky exposure of the rear yard “donut hole.”

Background

442 West 22nd Street is located in the Chelsea Historic District. It is a rowhouse built in 1846-47 with three floors and a lower level. In 2016, a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued with the support of MCB4. We applauded the applicant's proposed historic restoration, returning this building to its former elegant appearance, and enhancing this block's integrity. CB4 was comfortable with the rear extension yet urged the reduction of the then-proposed vertical extension.

Proposal

The current applicant, who purchased the house subsequent to the issuance of the earlier LPC permit, proposes a revised rear addition design. This new addition does not encroach as far into the rear yard as the previous application. A canopy at the ground level is proposed to provide shelter upon exiting the home into the rear yard. The new design rises four stories with an extension of columns above the roof line to support a

rooftop metal canopy. A single 4'-2" setback is proposed at the third floor, creating a terrace on the second-floor roof. The current proposal maintains the previously approved street façade.

MCB4 Analysis and Recommendations

MCB4 is comfortable with this new design. We are grateful that the new proposal reduces infringement into the rear yard and will not project beyond the rear facades of the adjacent houses. However, the rooftop columns and canopy are seen as unnecessarily reducing light- and sky-exposure to the open interior of the block. We recommend that the proposed third- and fourth-floor setbacks be increased to conform with the previously approved third-floor setback line, without reducing the fourth floor's previously approved front setback.

There was also concern expressed by neighbors that an appropriate construction mitigation plan has not been instituted. We urge the applicant to re-double efforts to coordinate with adjacent neighbors at 438 and 444 West 22nd Street.

We appreciate the developer's efforts to combine their client's desired aesthetic of a modern interpretation of a rowhouse while preserving the integrity of the constraints of the 2016 Certificate of Appropriateness. The street-facing components of the building reflect the historic character of this block.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey LeFrancois

Chair

Manhattan Community Board 4



Betty Mackintosh

Co-chair

Chelsea Land Use Committee



Paul Devlin

Co-chair

Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Mark Levin, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
Owner and Representatives of 442 West 22nd Street