



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

August 5, 2014

Councilmember Corey Johnson
250 Broadway
Suite 1856
New York, NY 10007

Councilmember Helen Rosenthal
250 Broadway
Suite 1744
New York, NY 10007

Re: Hotel Trades – Special permits for hotels

Dear Councilmembers,

We are writing to you to express our concerns about the influx of hotel development on the West side of Manhattan. Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) recognizes that New York City's economy thrives on tourism and hotels play an important role in providing accommodations for tourists, out of town business people and guests. We have learned from experience that hotels have an outsized impact on our community and that we urgently need a process that provides real community input on hotel development. Therefore, CB4 voted at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2014, by a vote of 34 in favor and 1 present but not eligible, that there should be a zoning text amendment that requires a special permit for new hotels.

Hotels operate 24-7 and generate high levels of vehicular traffic and foot traffic, which reduces available parking and clog our sidewalks and intersections. This level of activity is out of character with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Many of us have been kept up at until the early morning by the noise generated by the clubs and bars inside or on the roofs of hotels and the commotion in the street outside.

Recent hotel growth has crowded out local communities, limited affordable housing, and strained our infrastructure. This hotel growth has led to the gentrification and homogenization of our community, and inflated rents and property taxes.

To maintain our vibrant city, every effort should be made to preserve socioeconomic diversity and keep it affordable for the mix of uses (residential, commercial, community, artistic) that currently exist in our neighborhoods.

We need a real voice in the development process and an opportunity to engage in the development process before it starts. Fortunately, a mechanism already exists for the city to establish a land use policy that will address many of the concerns about hotel development. The simplest, most comprehensive approach is to amend the Zoning Resolution such that new hotels may only be developed by special permit.

We support a special permit requirement for hotels in our community district. This will empower communities like ours and ensure that hotel development is a more thoughtful, deliberative process of development in the future, and one that benefits our entire community. A special permit process would allow the community board to address issues related to new hotel development such as traffic, parking, loading/unloading, rooftop use, etc.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



J. Lee Compton
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

CC: David Greenfield, Chairman Land Use Committee
Carl Weisbrod, Chairman NYC Planning Commission