

September 10, 2002

Hon. James Chin
Board of Standards and Appeals
40 Rector Street
9th Floor
New York, NY 10006

Re: Variance for 154 West 18th Street

Dear Chair Chin:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4, having held a duly noticed public hearing on BSA Cal. No. 947-80-BZ, an application for an amendment of a zoning variance at the Hellmuth Building located within its district at 154-158 West 18th Street, voted at its regular monthly meeting on September 4, 2002, to support this application: 32 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote.

The Board notes that the variance that it is proposed to amend allowed conversion of the upper floors to residential uses in an early loft conversion in what was at the time of the variance a manufacturing zone, and that the current zoning of the site, C6-2A, would allow as of right the residential uses that the proposed variance would enable. The Board supported the change in zoning that allowed residences in this area in the Chelsea Rezoning, which implemented the revised version of the Chelsea 197-a Plan sponsored by this Board.

The present application seeks to remove the remaining obstacle to the conversion of the second floor, the non-compliance of the building with a condition of the variance that 25 percent of the roof area be allotted as tenant residential space. Because of penthouses erected at the time of conversion and the mechanical equipment on the roof it has long been unfeasible to fulfill this requirement. Although much of the file has been lost, the original offering plan for the coop and the Certificate of Occupancy issued at the time made no mention of this requirement. The owners of the non-residential space on the second floor are also members of the coop and owners of residential units as well, and the coop board voted unanimously to support this application. The security of the building will be increased by removing traffic to the commercial units from the lobby and the only elevator. There will be no change to the exterior of this handsome building.

Hon. Chin
September 10, 2002
Page 2 of 2

Since no one is harmed by the proposed variance and the coop residents in general will benefit by the change, this Board sees no reason not to support the application to amend the variance.

Sincerely,



Simone Sindin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

Edward S. Kirkland
Chair
Chelsea Preservation & Planning
Committee

This letter was passed at Manhattan Community Board No. 4's September 4, 2002 Full Board Meeting.

cc: Local Elected Officials
Stuart Beckerman, Applicant