

January 9, 2003

Jerilyn Perine, Chair
Charles Brass, President
New York City Housing Development Corporation
110 William Street, 10th floor
New York, NY 10038

Re: Gotham Organization: \$65,000,000 Multi-Family Mortgage Revenue Bonds (400 W. 55th St. Development)

Dear Ms. Perine and Mr. Brass:

We write to express our dismay that the financing of the proposed 18 story residential building at 400 West 55th Street has been allowed to proceed without notice to this Board or an opportunity for us to discuss with you our serious concerns about this project.

As you know, the proposed building is in the Preservation Area of the Special Clinton District. The 18 story building would be achieved by piling onto the corner portion of the development site development rights from the mid-block portion of the development site, as well as rights purchased from adjoining residential and commercial properties, and by setting the building back from the property lines on Ninth Avenue and 55th Street. The proposed height and streetwall setbacks are dramatically at odds with the existing character of the neighborhood and with the goals and intent of the Special Clinton District regulations. We believe that the plans raise significant zoning issues, which we and our elected officials are addressing separately with the Department of Buildings and the Department of City Planning.

However desirable affordable housing may be, the proposed building presents a very real threat to the Special Clinton District. It is unfortunate that public funding resources have been used on a project that significantly undermines the important public interests that the Special Clinton District regulations have protected for the past 30 years. Had we had an opportunity to review and discuss the plans before they became final, perhaps a design more consistent with the goals of the Special Clinton District could have been achieved.

For the future, we would request that prior notice to the community board be made a standard part of HDC's application process.

Sincerely,



Simone Sindin
Chair

cc: electeds