



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.ManhattanCB4.org

JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND
Chair

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

October 4, 2007

Hon. Shaun Donovan, Commissioner
New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development
100 Gold Street
New York, NY 10038

Re: Inclusionary Housing Applications in CD4

Dear Commissioner Donovan:

We are surprised and extremely disappointed to have learned recently that the concerns raised in our January 4, 2007 letters to HPD's Division of Housing Incentives concerning the Rockrose and River Place II developments have been almost entirely ignored, and that HPD is allowing those projects to go forward without any significant effort to ensure that those projects will produce quality affordable housing. Copies of our letters are enclosed. We have never received a reply.

We are most particularly concerned about the separate but unequal inclusionary housing that is part of Silverstein's River Place II project on Tenth Avenue between 41st and 42nd Streets. There, the developer has segregated the inclusionary housing in a separate building on the least desirable portion of the development site, and calls it off-site development. The entrance to the building is planned to be on 41st Street, west of Tenth Avenue, opposite the blank back wall of the MTA's Quill bus garage and on a street with no other activity except when traffic is queuing for the Lincoln Tunnel. This is a no-man's-land for a residential entrance, and a potential security hazard. In addition, the layouts of the apartments are awkward. We included suggested solutions to both issues in our letter.

At a meeting in February 2007, then Deputy Commissioner Rafael Cestero assured us that HPD would address these concerns with the developers before their applications were approved and that changes would be required. We now learn that the project was approved with no changes. Your staff was apparently worried that the developer would drop the project if asked to make changes. That's absurd, and an embarrassment to HPD's mission.

We urge you to investigate, and to take immediate steps to remedy this situation before construction starts.

Sincerely,

Jean-Daniel Noland
Chair

Anna Hayes Levin, Chair
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use

cc: Electeds