



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND**  
Chair

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District Manager

July 31, 2007

Hon. Robert Tierney  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Center Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: 481 West 22<sup>nd</sup> Street**

Dear Chair Tierney:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 is writing about the application of the owner of 481 West 22nd Street for a Certificate of Appropriateness for a rear yard extension approximately eight-feet deep on the lower two floors and also for a rooftop addition. The owner is also working with staff on designs to restore the facade to a fully appropriate historic condition. After a presentation to the Landmarks Task Force of the Board at its meeting on July 19th, 2007, the full Board adopted at its summer meeting on July 25th the recommendation of the Task Force to accept the rear yard addition but to oppose the rooftop addition as proposed as being excessively visible from the public way by an unanimous vote.

The Board commends the owner on his intention to restore the facade to a condition appropriate to the row of fine houses of which number 481 is a member. We have no objection to the proposed rear yard addition, which is invisible from the street, does not destroy any significant historic feature such as a tea porch, and is similar to existing additions close by.

The Board, however, believes that the rooftop addition, although significantly smaller and less dominating than the addition recently proposed for its neighbor to the west, 483 West 22nd Street, which we opposed as excessive and which the Landmarks Commission refused to approve as too large at its hearing on July 10th, is nevertheless overly visible and likely to reduce the historic character of the row of which it is a part.

The front of the addition would be very minimally visible from West 22nd Street, and somewhat visible in the leafless season from points in the south side of Clement Clarke Moore Park across the street as well as from a few points on both sides of Tenth Avenue to the south. It would almost certainly be considerably visible from the High Line at the point it crosses West 22nd Street.

Unfortunately the still standing mockup for its neighbor number 483 makes the exact effect of this proposal in the area of maximum visibility for both applications, the west side of Tenth Avenue between 22nd and 23rd Streets, hard to evaluate.

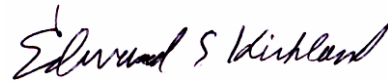
The mockup and the drawings make it plain, however, that the proposed addition will not directly impinge on the rear cornice line of the row of which this a part, but will nevertheless be clearly visible over the cornices. The new mechanicals are being placed within the addition; and, even though they would be partially sunk into the stair well, the resulting structure would have a real presence and would diminish the striking view of the back walls of the row over the low buildings of the Empire Diner that is one of the important resources of the Historic District.

The Board therefore believes the addition as proposed is inappropriate and urges that the applicant work with the Commission to reduce significantly the impact of the addition on the major view from the west side of Tenth Avenue without increasing its visibility from other points.

Sincerely,



Jean-Daniel Noland  
Chair, Manhattan Community Board 4



Edward Kirkland  
Chair, Landmarks Task Force