



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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DELORES RUBIN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

February 7, 2017

Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building, 9th floor
One Centre Street New York, NY 10007

Re: 525 West 26th St. Proposed Alterations

Dear Chair Srinivasan:

On the recommendation of its Chelsea Land Use Committee, following a duly noticed public hearing at the Committee's meeting on January 17, 2017, Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4), by a vote of 41 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining and 0 present but not eligible to vote, recommended, with a specific comment on brick replacement, approval of an application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for alterations to 525 West 26th Street, originally an industrial building in the Chelsea Historic District.

CB4 has no objection to the proposed penthouse enlargement, which will not be visible from the public way, nor to the proposed exterior stair removal and window and door replacement within a single masonry opening on the street façade.

CB4 does have reservations about the proposed removal and replacement of approximately half of the street façade's brick facing, and regrets the potential loss of original fabric this would incur along with the testament to the building's history and heavy-duty service presented by its weathered condition. Much of the brick surface proposed to be replaced in fact appears in good condition, including gracefully arched window heads. While the proposal calls for brickwork to be painted over after replacement, concealing any mismatched color between new and old brick, this would preclude a more sensitive future restoration from stripping all paint down to the original brick surface and exposing its current, authentic, consistent and tellingly weathered appearance, similar to that now on view in other industrial buildings within the District including 537 West 26th Street, two buildings to the west. CB4 asks the Commission to seriously consider whether the proposed extent of brick replacement is warranted and to work with the applicant to preserve as much original fabric as possible.

Sincerely,

Delores Rubin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4

John Lee Compton, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee
Manhattan Community Board 4

Betty Mackintosh, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council