



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.nyc.gov/mcb4

COREY JOHNSON
Chair

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

April 9, 2012

Hon. Robert B Tierney
Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building, 9th floor
One Centre Street
New York, NY 10007

RE: 357 West 20th Street

Manhattan Community Board believes that the proposal to replace the twin round-headed dormers on the rear of 457 West 20th Street in the Chelsea Historic District with a large single dormer is not appropriate, as it involves removing distinctive historic features.

The rear of the group of row houses that includes 457 West 20th Street is visible across the P. S. 11 playground from points on West 21st Street, especially the south sidewalk just west of the school, and the dormers on this building and a neighbor stand out clearly, forming a conspicuous group of four. The view is unobstructed in the leafless season, but is largely obscured when leaves are on the trees.

The proposal is to replace the pair of round-headed dormers of 357 with a single large dormer created by replacing the space between the present dormers with a single oblong vertical window. The head of the new window would approximate the curve of the historic single windows.

Although this proposal is ingenious, it would entail the loss of the historic windows, which are of a fairly rare type, change significantly the appearance not only of the roof of 357 itself, but also of the group formed by this house and its intact neighbor. (The group was originally larger but some neighbors have been altered).

If the applicant is concerned about the limited light from the existing dormers, the possibility of inserting a skylight in the plane of the roof in the interstice between the existing dormers could be explored: This could be effectively invisible if done correctly.

Sincerely,

Corey Johnson
Chair

Edward Kirkland
Co-Chair
Landmarks Committee

[signed 4/9/2012]

Damyanti Radeshwar
Co-Chair
Landmarks Committee

cc: Applicant