



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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Delores Rubin
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

September 27, 2016

Howard Zemsky
President
Empire State Development
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Re: The Women's Building at 550 West 20th Street: Requested Zoning Overrides

Dear Mr. Zemsky:

On September 7, 2016 Manhattan CB4 (MCB4) ratified unanimously the August 18, 2016 letter sent to you regarding the zoning overrides proposed for the Women's Building. At that meeting MCB4 also voted unanimously to express our displeasure about the process that Empire State Development (ESD) followed in determining the proposed zoning overrides and in submitting them for public review.

At the time that public review of the proposed zoning overrides was initiated, the applicant had hired neither an architect nor an engineer for the design of the Women's Building. Because of this, the descriptions and rationales for the zoning overrides were limited, resulting in a much slower and much more difficult review process for both the applicant and MCB4.

While the revised General Project Plan for this project is a great improvement, getting to this point was difficult and time consuming. We encourage ESD to revise its public review process to require sufficient information for informed recommendations before the public review process begins. Community boards, Borough Presidents and the City Planning Commission will then be better able to fulfill their land use responsibilities in a more effective and timely manner.

Sincerely,

Delores Rubin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4

John Lee Compton, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

Betty Mackintosh, Co-Chair MCB4
Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Carl Weisbrod, Chair, City Planning Commission
Hon. Brad Hoylman, State Senate
Hon. Richard Gottfried, State Assembly
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council
Goren Group