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February 6, 2012

Amanda Burden, Chair  
City Planning Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007  
Dear Chairwoman Burden,

I am writing to express my support for the East Bowery Preservation Plan proposed by the Bowery Alliance of Neighbors (BAN). I also ask that the Department of City Planning (DCP) conduct a study to evaluate a potential rezoning for the east side of the Bowery.

I greatly appreciated DCP's work on the 2008 Lower East Side/East Village Rezoning. Specifically, I commend DCP's willingness to meet with community stakeholders to develop and implement a viable plan that will not only preserve the Lower East Side's distinct low-rise buildings, but also create opportunities for affordable housing development. As much of the Bowery is already preserved through the Little Italy Special District, the NoHo Historic District, and the Third Avenue Corridor Rezoning, a plan to preserve the east side is now necessary to ensure the historical integrity of the street and to protect the Bowery's unique built form.

As you know, the Bowery is one of the city's oldest historic districts and is a vital component of the culture and history of Lower Manhattan. At the same time, the lack of contextual zoning for the east side of Bowery has precipitated a wave of out-of-scale development which not only threatens the affordability of the area but changes the cultural, historical and architectural significance of the Bowery. The Bowery Preservation Plan maintains that any new developments in the area would be of a size and scale that would not interfere with the Bowery's architectural integrity. The Plan calls for controlled, responsible development, including community facilities, while maintaining the low-rise character of the street and will promote the retention of mixed socio-economic populations, affordable housing, social services, & artists' live/work spaces.

I echo Community Board 3 and my city, state, and federal colleagues in asking that DCP act expeditiously to conduct a study and implement a plan to preserve all of the Bowery.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosie Mendez".

Sincerely,  
Rosie Mendez