



June 11, 2009

Department of City Planning
Amanda Burden, Chair
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007

RE: Bowery District

Dear Ms. Burden and Colleagues:

Please help preserve the vibrant Bowery District culture, rather than enable its demise. Dixon Place is a performing arts venue, which was located on the Bowery for 20 years, and recently relocated to Chrystie Street. We strongly support the neighborhood efforts to extend the protective low-rise zoning that exists on the Bowery's west side to the unprotected east side. Our location is the ground floor and basement of a residential building, which was renovated by independent rather than commercial developers.

It is easy to argue that DCP's proposed luxury developments are out of scale for this neighborhood, whose character will be dwarfed or destroyed if commercial development continues. From a business perspective, it is also quite possible that further development of upscale housing and hotels will fail. If upscale high rises continue to sprout up and, due to the shrinking economy, landlords fail to fill them, the area will suffer fallow high-rises. Bowery East will lose its original hotel/tourist appeal of boutique shops and independent eateries, performance venues, and galleries. The very foundation of its economic development potential will be gone. The new landscape will be sterile, unappealing, and uninhabited.

Some development has helped the area--new residents moved here with the allure of new construction and anchors like the Sunshine Theater and Whole Foods. This has brought potentially new audience opportunities for us and perhaps entrepreneurs who can independently rehab old charming buildings like our own. However, we are concerned that continued large-scale development will drive out independent neighborhood-driven projects and will destroy the history rich, century old character and charm, which discerning New Yorkers and international tourists venture here to find.

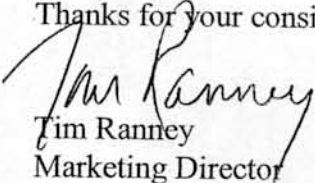
Artists and entrepreneurs keep neighborhoods like this culturally rich and interesting. While hotels have been needed in the area, the price points of \$300/night and up in this district are overly ambitious and rooms are already left vacant. In this economy, tenants are vacating apartments that are over \$1,800/month and are not in the market to buy expensive condos. Losing tenants from the neighborhood threatens both economic and cultural development as it forces far too many young professionals and artists out of the city and into the less cohesive neighborhoods of the outer boroughs.




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We support the BAN preservation plan, designed with zoning consultant Doris Diether, which sets a height cap of 85', protects particular historical buildings within the zone, and brings the east side of the Bowery into context with the west side. We hope to see you at June 16th stakeholders' meeting with City Councilman Alan Gerson.

Thanks for your consideration,


Tim Ranney
Marketing Director


Emily Morgan
Acting Executive Director

cc:

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