



Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation

232 East 11th Street
New York, New York 10003

(212) 475-9585
fax: (212) 475-9582
www.gvshp.org

Executive Director
Andrew Berman

President of the Board
Arbie Thalacker

Vice-Presidents
Arthur Levin
Linda Yowell

Secretary/Treasurer
Katherine Schoonover

Trustees
Mary Ann Arisman
John Bacon
Penelope Bareau
Elizabeth Ely
Cassie Glover
Thomas Harney
Leslie S. Mason
Ruth McCoy
Florent Morellet
Peter Mullan
Vals Osborne
Andrew S. Paul
Cynthia Penney
Robert Rogers
Jonathan Russo
Judith Stonehill
Fred Wistow
F. Anthony Zunino III

Advisors
Kent Barwick
Lucy Cecere
Joan K. Davidson
Christopher Forbes
Margaret Halsey Gardiner
Elizabeth Gilmore
Carol Greitzer
Tony Hiss
Martin Hutner
James Stewart Polshek
Elinor Ratner
Henry Hope Reed
Anne-Marie Sumner
Calvin Trillin
Jean-Claude van Itallie
George Vellonakis
Vicki Weiner
Anthony C. Wood

September 14, 2009

Hon. Amanda Burden
Director, NYC Department of City Planning
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007

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

Re: East Side of the Bowery, Manhattan

Dear Director Burden and Chair Tierney,

I write to express the serious concerns of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP) regarding the inappropriate scale of new development along the east side of the Bowery, and the ongoing loss of significant historic resources from this singularly important historic thoroughfare.

As the broad historic significance of the Bowery is well-established and irrefutable, I will not attempt to convince you of this fact. However, it is almost equally undeniable that the scale of recent new development, which includes several tall, narrow towers of 20 stories or more, is destructively out-of-character for this street. The current zoning on the east side of the street has no height limits, and encourages tall narrow towers either set back from the street or on short podiums. Additionally, recent developments have been almost exclusively hotels or dormitories, which we think also changes the character of the street, and not necessarily for the better.

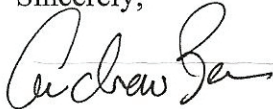
While parts of the west side of the Bowery are regulated by the NoHo Historic District, NoHo Historic District Extension, and NoHo East Historic District, or by the Special Little Italy District, the east side of the Bowery enjoys no such stricter regulations. The current zoning and lack of landmark protections for the wealth of historic resources on the east side of the street are therefore notably inadequate to protect the character of the street, ensure that new development is appropriate in scale, and preserve unique and irreplaceable historic resources.

GVSHP therefore encourages both of you and your respective agencies to take action to better preserve the character of the east side of the Bowery and to prevent inappropriate and out-of-scale development there. The zoning for the east side of the Bowery should be changed to establish appropriate height limits more in keeping with the current scale of the street, and to encourage the

retention and development of compatible uses on the Bowery. The myriad historic resources of the street, reflecting New York's social as well as architectural history, should be closely examined, and the many exceptional pieces of our city's history should be preserved.

The breadth and speed of out-of-scale development and destruction of historic resources on the east side of the Bowery is staggering. GVSHP has for some time been calling upon the Department of City Planning to rezone this area. With the recent East Village/Lower East Side rezoning now complete, it is vital that the city take action to change the zoning for this area and protect its historic resources for once and for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Andrew Berman", written over a horizontal line.

Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: Borough President Scott Stringer
Councilmember Rosie Mendez
Councilmember Alan Gerson
State Senator Tom Duane
State Senator Daniel Squadron
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Assemblymember Brian Kavanaugh
Community Board #3, Manhattan
Bowery Alliance of Neighbors