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VIA EMAIL [aburden@planning.nyc.gov]

Ms. Amanda Burden
Director
NYC Department of City Planning
Manhattan Borough Office
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007-1216

Re: Zoning Protection for The Bowery

Dear Ms. Burden:

I rediscovered the Bowery soon after I moved to New York City in 1969 while enjoying the deeply discounted shopping experience for home lighting and kitchen supplies. I say rediscovered because my first experience on the Bowery was in February of 1959 following my graduation from a Baltimore high school. One of my former classmates and I came to New York for a long weekend and had been referred to a lower east side "nightclub" which required us to walk along the Bowery for several blocks and past 55 gallon drums that were alight with wood fires and people (who we understood to be homeless) warming themselves. Hours later, we retraced our steps and found many of those people curled up on the sidewalk asleep. As you can imagine, this was an awakening experience for a couple of nineteen-year old Baltimoreans who, up to that point, had only a vague notion of what it meant to be down on your luck and out on the street.

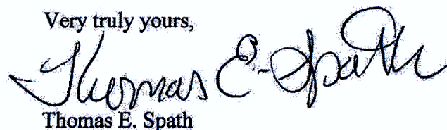
Times have certainly changed for the better, most would say, although the current rate and range of development in the Bowery and its environs threatens to change the character of that district entirely. Although I have lived in Cobble Hill since arriving in New York in 1969, I have noted and remarked many times over the years the special feel of openness that exists in a district of relatively low-rise buildings and, in some areas, extraordinarily wide streets.

I have also relatively recently become aware of the group that identifies itself as the Bowery Alliance of Neighbors. To the extent that that local organization wants to maintain what has up until recently been the long-standing low-rise characteristics of the Bowery, I support their goals. I am so very happy to be living in one landmark district and adjacent another (Brooklyn Heights) and appreciate the controls that the designation has on height limitations and other building characteristics. The very interesting history of the Bowery warrants consideration, as does the desirability of maintaining some semblance of the lower density residential characteristics of the neighborhood in an ever upwardly extending Manhattan.

I ask that you also give favorable consideration to a zoning resolution that will marginalize the massive development and construction of buildings that will literally "overshadow" their long-standing modest neighbors.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue. I look forward to learning more of City Planning's deliberations and decisions for the area.

Very truly yours,


Thomas E. Spath

TES/ss

cc: State Senator Daniel L. Squadron
Assembly Member Deborah Glick
Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver
Council Member Rosie Mendez
Council Member Margaret Chin