

Greenwich Village Block Associations

20 Bank Street, New York, NY 10014

Bedford, Barrow & Commerce
Bedford Downing
Bleecker Area Merchants & Residents
Carmine Street
Central Village (Cornelia, Barrow, Jones)
Charlton Street
Christopher Street Block & Merchants
Christopher Street East
East 10th Street
East 11th Street
East 12th/13th Street
Far West Bank Street
Far West 10th Street
Grove Street
Horatio Street
Jane Street
MacDougal Alley Assoc.
MacDougal Street North
Mercer Street
Minetta
Morton Street
Mulry Angle/W. 11th Street
Perry Street
St. Luke's
Upper West 13th Street
Washington Place
Washington Sq/
Lower 5th Ave
Waverly
Waverly-Bank 11 Neighbors
West Houston Street
West 8th Street
West 9th Street
West 10th Street
West 13th Street - 100 Block

November 4, 2007

Henry Amoroso,
President and CEO, St. Vincent's Catholic Medical Centers
170 West 12th Street
New York, NY 10014
Dear Mr. Amoroso,

The Greenwich Village Block Associations (GVBA) is a community wide organization dedicated to preserving and improving the quality of life for residents of our historic neighborhood. The GVBA is seriously concerned about St. Vincent Hospital's plans for its future. Since the new St. Vincent Hospital will serve the entire lower west side of Manhattan, the hospital could reasonably consider selling its Greenwich Village buildings in order to move elsewhere where restrictions and expectations would be less exacting.

The GVBA is pleased that St. Vincent's chooses to remain a Greenwich Village "resident". The protection of our historic designation has many benefits, however, it carries responsibilities, obligations and limitations. We remind you that St. Vincent Hospital has asked for and received several building concessions in the past.

Unfortunately, the recently revealed plans for the new St. Vincent's Hospital Tower and the Rudin residential complex (which the hospital maintains is necessary to fund the new hospital's construction) is so massive as to render the concept of the historic district virtually meaningless. The project's enormous scope at over 1 million square-feet includes a significant, unacceptable increase in the density of development on its current sites. As proposed, this would be the largest development in Greenwich Village in half a century with a potentially devastating impact upon its surroundings and the entire neighborhood.

At over 300 feet tall (including mechanicals), the new St. Vincent's Tower will loom dramatically over neighboring blocks. Its height and scale is out-of-context for the neighborhood from a zoning and a landmarks perspective. Due to the area's unusual street pattern, the building is located at the nexus of several different streets and will be omnipresent throughout the vicinity and from blocks far downtown on Seventh Avenue. While we appreciate the innovation and elegance of the tower's design, we believe it to be incumbent upon the hospital to develop a proposal that drastically lowers its height.

The Rudin residential building planned for the east side of Seventh Avenue is significantly too massive and bulky for its surroundings. Like the hospital tower, this building will be sited at the confluence of several streets and will be visible for many blocks in many directions. The size of this building must be substantially reduced to make it more harmonious with other apartment buildings in the district and to make it "acceptable" to the neighbors who will have to live with it.

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The GVBA appreciates the effort that St. Vincent Hospital has made to work with the community and we expect to keep the lines of communication open and cordial. We hope that our concerns will be positively addressed and that St. Vincent's will alter and downsize its building plans before this proposal moves farther ahead and is formally filed. It would give the GVBA great satisfaction to support the hospital's plans in the future.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Marilyn Dorato
Executive Director

Cc: City Planning Commission Chair Amanda Burden -- 22 Reade Street, NY NY 10007
L P C Chair Robert Tierney -- One Centre Street, 9th fl., NY NY 10007
City Council Speaker Christine Quinn -- 224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206, NY NY 10001
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer -- One Centre St., 19th fl. So., NY NY 10007
State Senator Tom Duane -- 322 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1700, NY NY 10001
Assemblymember Deborah Glick -- 853 Broadway, NY NY 10003
Community Board #2, Manhattan -- 3 Washington Sq. Village, 1A, NY NY 10012
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Members GVBA
Published on our website www.gvba.org

