

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

September 29, 2008
Hon. Scott Stringer
Manhattan Borough President
One Center Street — 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007
Dear BP Stringer:

At our September 25, 2008 meeting the Greenwich Village Block Associations (GVBA) reconsidered our previous decision not to adopt the NYU Task Force Planning Principles that received consensus adoption in February/March/April by the various participating Task Force members and by NYU individually. In our April 28 letter we raised a number of issues: the salient point of not ratifying the Planning Principles revolved around the first principle — the prioritization of “reuse before redevelopment.” Considering that the redevelopment of the Provincetown Playhouse was NYU’s first proposal following the adoption of the Planning Principles, GVBA thought that ratification might be perceived as endorsing the project that, at the outset, contravened the Principles. Hence, we made our decision not to ratify the principles.

At two recent meetings of the Task Force Shaan Khan and representatives of NYU mentioned that GVBA acted in haste, because as of our April 28th decision, the revised project had not yet been presented to the Task Force or to CB2 — that took place in late May. These revisions comprised retaining the structural walls and volume of the Playhouse including integrating “relevant historical features and pieces of the existing theater such as the seats.” While these revisions did not, in GVBA’s opinion, change the scope from redevelopment to reuse in consonance with the Principles, we readdressed the ratification issue at our September meeting. Indeed, nowhere in this process did NYU provide documented evidence that “gut renovation” of Provincetown was infeasible compared to total demolition.

In readdressing this issue it was GVBA’s consensus that we should not hold the Planning Principles hostage, which we firmly support, in order to convey to NYU our strong opposition to its Provincetown redevelopment scheme. Accordingly, we voted to approve the Planning Principles at this time.

We are, however, particularly wary that this may be a harbinger of future proposals flowing out of the NYU Plans 2031 with its massive 6 million sq. ft. of which roughly half is slated for the “Core” area — the heart of Greenwich Village. If there is one overriding factor that causes anxiety, it is the fear that the Village is rapidly evolving into University City, notwithstanding NYU’s rhetoric that it “recognizes we are part of a wonderful neighborhood,” (see John Sexton’s communication of April 23, 2008 — An Important Milestone and The Road Ahead”). This anxiety intensifies as we approach the unveiling of the Superblock proposals in the coming months; the zoning of which is open to wide interpretation.

Since the GVBA is composed of volunteers, its members frequently must consider whether or not a meeting, effort or movement is sincere or whether it is merely a public relations ploy with no genuine expectation of positive community benefits. We trust that the NYU Task Force is genuine and will have a positive influence on the university's future growth and its relationship with the community that has fostered it for so many years.

Sincerely yours

Marilyn Dorato
Executive Director

CC: Hon. Michael Bloomberg
Hon. Christine Quinn
Hon. Rosie Mendez
Hon. Alan J. Gerson
Hon. Thomas Duane
Hon. Deborah Glick
Hon. Jerrold Nadler
Hon. Brad Hoylman
Community Board 2
Community Board 3
Andrew Berman — GVSHP
Members GVBA
The Villager
Published on our web-site www.gvba.org