

January 8, 2004

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

**Re: 636 Eleventh Avenue**

Dear Ms. Burden:

We understand that representatives of the new owner of 636 Eleventh Avenue, has begun discussions with your office about the possibility of a zoning change to permit the conversion of this building to residential use. In concept, this Board supports residential use at this location, provided a portion of the units can be made affordable to moderate and middle income residents. We therefore write to encourage the DCP's preliminary discussions with the owner.

At its meeting on December 10, 2003, this Board's Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee heard a preliminary presentation by Mr. Jacob Frydman on behalf of the new owner. In recent years this building underwent extensive (but incomplete) renovation as a telecommunications center for Global Crossing. Mr. Frydman and his partners report difficulty in commercial tenants for the building, and are now considering the possibility of a residential conversion.

The zoning lot is now in an M1-5 zone. The balance of the block to the east consists primarily of residential uses in an R-8 zoning district. Areas to the north in the Clinton Urban Renewal Area have recently been rezoned to R-8 or R-8A, and the eastern side of Eleventh Avenue between 42<sup>nd</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Streets is becoming increasingly residential. This is a trend that we support.

Mr. Frydman has expressed a commitment to a conversion that will produce residential units that are affordable to moderate and middle income residents, and that will be sensitive to other community priorities, including maintaining the existing scale and character of this portion of Eleventh Avenue. The planned conversion would retain and restore the existing building, and would not result in significant additional bulk.

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Though the owner believes a case can be made for a zoning variance, they are to be commended for preferring to achieve the same result through a zoning change, which allows for coordination with other planning efforts for the area.

We therefore support DCP's consideration of a zoning change that would accommodate the owner's present plans, and we look forward to working with DCP and the owner to achieve a redevelopment of this property that brings more affordable housing to Manhattan Community District No. 4.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff  
Chair  
Manhattan Community Board No. 4



Anna Hayes Levin  
Co-Chair  
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee



Simone Sindin  
Co-Chair  
Clinton/Hell's Kitchen Land Use Committee

cc: J. Frydman