

March 5, 2004

Laura Osorio
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
Department of Buildings
60 Hudson Street - Fifth Floor
New York, NY 10013

Re: Ruling on Residential Development at 848 Washington Street

Dear Commissioner Osorio:

Manhattan Community Board No. 4, at its regular meeting on March 3, 2004, voted 31 in favor, 0 against, 1 abstaining, 1 present but not eligible, to support Manhattan Community Board No. 2 and request that the Department of Buildings reverse its ruling permitting the construction of a building that is 49% residential in an M1 zone at 848 Washington Street.

The Board believes that this ruling is in conflict with the general practice by which any non-auxiliary residential use in a building in a manufacturing zone is prohibited. Historically, this prohibition has been enforced strictly.

CB4 has extensive M1 zones within its district, and as elsewhere in the city the types of jobs in its M zones have changed over time. However, rather than falling into disuse and decay, some of the Board's M zones have proved surprisingly resilient. For example, the southern M zones have been reborn as the Chelsea Arts District, hosting more than a hundred art galleries and numerous arts-related support services.

The Board has worked extensively with the Department of City Planning to seek formal rezoning that would protect these new uses while permitting the residential development of other underutilized M zone areas. By establishing a precedent that effectively opens up all M zones in the city to as-of-right residential development the 848 Washington Street ruling effectively vitiates this work and endangers all remaining M zones throughout the city.

CB4 urges DOB to reconsider, and ultimately reverse, its ruling on 848 Washington Street.

Sincerely,



Walter Mankoff
Chair
Manhattan Community Board No. 4

Cc: Local Electeds
Amanda Burden, Director, Dept. of City Planning