

January 7, 2009



Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation

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Harvey Spevak, Chief Executive Officer
Equinox Fitness
895 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

Stephen M. Ross, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
The Related Companies
60 Columbus Circle, Floor 19
New York, NY 10023

**Re: Illegal Multi-story billboards at Equinox Fitness Building,
97 Greenwich Avenue, Manhattan**

Dear Mr. Spevak and Mr. Ross:

As the Chief Executive Officers of Equinox Fitness and its parent company The Related Companies, I write to urge that the illegal, multi-story billboards be immediately removed from the Equinox Fitness Building at 97 Greenwich Avenue in Manhattan. These signs were erected just after Christmas without required permits from the Department of Buildings or the Landmarks Preservation Commission, in violation of zoning restrictions for this residential neighborhood and landmark restrictions for this designated New York City Historic District.

As you no doubt know, erecting such signs without the appropriate permits presents serious safety concerns. Erecting such signs in locations where zoning and landmark regulations prohibit them denigrates neighborhood character and shows a disrespect for the rules by which we must all abide to protect the quality of life of our communities. As you no doubt know, these signs have elicited broad condemnation from its neighbors in Greenwich Village, who care deeply about and work very hard to protect the character of their neighborhood.

I am concerned that almost two weeks after these multi-story billboards were erected and their illegality has been made clear by both the New York City Department of Buildings and the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the signs remain up. Worse, in its public statements, Equinox Fitness has refused to acknowledge that these billboards violate zoning and landmarks regulations and lack required permits, or that it has any intention to remove them.

The reputation of your companies will no doubt be affected by their response, or lack of response, in this situation. I believe it is in your long-term interest, as well as that of our neighborhood, for you to ensure that these signs are removed as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: State Senator Tom Duane
Assemblymember Deborah Glick