September 1, 2010

Borough President Stringer
City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
City Council Member Margaret Chin
State Senator Tom Duane
State Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Community Board 2 Chair Jo Hamilton
via fax and e-mail

Dear Borough President Stringer, Speaker Quinn, Councilmember Chin, State Senator Duane, Assemblymember Glick, and Chair Hamilton:

We write to you as a coalition of community groups concerned about the future of our neighborhood in light of NYU’s massive proposed expansion plan. Many of us have worked for years on issues surrounding NYU’s growth, and many of us spent several years as members of the Community Task Force on NYU Development which has since been suspended.

We believe that NYU’s 2031 Expansion Plan would have a dramatically negative impact upon our neighborhood, and that there are reasonable and viable alternatives to NYU’s plans. As we will soon enter the public review and approval process for NYU’s plans, which you will all either vote or comment upon, we strongly urge you to adopt the recommendations of the Community Task Force on NYU Development which called for the following:

- NYU must look first to alternative locations such as the Financial District and stalled building sites throughout the city to accommodate its planned growth, and must justify why any new development cannot go there rather than further oversaturating the Village, East Village, NoHo, and surrounding area.
- Anything remotely like 3 million square feet of space in the core and surrounding neighborhood is too much -- if NYU is to grow, better utilization of existing space and re-use of existing buildings is preferable to new construction.
- Loss of open space or parks for new NYU development is not acceptable, and NYU should not acquire or build upon city-owned land or public open space (this includes public land on LaGuardia Place and Mercer, Bleecker, and West 3rd Streets).
- Replacement of low-scale buildings with exponentially larger ones is not acceptable.
- Any growth by NYU which would introduce more school age children must coincide with an increase in the number of public schools seats to accommodate them.

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Some elements of the NYU 2031 plan were not yet public when the Task Force issued its recommendations in March. As the fuller breadth of NYU’s plan has since been revealed, we also strongly urge you to adopt the following positions regarding the NYU 2031 plan which are consistent with the spirit of the Task Force’s recommendations:

- No change of zoning in residential areas to commercial zoning
- No change in zoning to remove or diminish requirements for maintaining open space
- No lifting of deed restrictions on formerly-publicly-owned land to allow construction before 2021

NYU's 2031 Expansion Plan would irreversibly change the character of our neighborhood, and cannot move ahead as planned without your support and approval. We call upon you, our elected officials and community representatives, to work with us and neighbors and residents of this community to ensure that the university’s plans do not inalterably destroy the quality of our community.

Sincerely,

Constance Dondore
Constance Dondore, Coordinator
15 Washington Place Tenants' Committee

Andrew Amer
Andrew Amer
200 Mercer Street Board

Patricia Albin
Patricia Albin, President
505 LaGuardia Place Board

Terri Cude
Terri Cude
77 Bleecker Street Board

Lee Schwartz
Lee Schwartz
88 Bleecker Street Board

Judith Callet
Judith Callet, Resident Chair
Bleecker Area Merchants and Residents Association

David Handler
David Handler, Merchants Chair
Bleecker Area Merchants and Residents Association

(continued)
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East 10th Street Block Association

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Jeanne Wilcke, Chair
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Margery Evans Reifler, Treasurer
Grove Street Block Association

Marjorie Colt, Vice President
Horatio Street Association

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Beth Gottlieb, President
Mercer-Houston Dog Run Association

Elaine Hudson, President
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Cynthia Crane, Chair
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