



**Greenwich  
Village  
Society for  
Historic  
Preservation**

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**STATEMENT OF GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANDREW BERMAN  
IN OPPOSITION TO NYU EXPANSION PLAN**

**February 23, 2012**

Over the last several months, the public has turned out overwhelmingly to show its firm opposition to the NYU expansion plan. That opposition has come from nearby residents and from those living blocks and even miles away. It has come from NYU students, NYU faculty, NYU staff, and many, many NYU alumni.

I urge Community Board #2 to be as firm in its resolution. I am confident that you will vote to oppose the plan, the massive zoning changes, the taking of public land, the undoing of open space preservation requirements, and the lifting of urban renewal deed restrictions. But it is critical that you send a message to city officials who will be voting on this plan that it is not one that can simply be tinkered with and made OK. This plan must be rejected in its entirety.

The problem is not simply that the proposed developments are too big or too tall. It is that these blocks are already very densely built up with some of the largest buildings in the Village, and the deal was that they would always be surrounded by open space and low buildings to balance that out. That deal should not be undone.

The problem is not simply that the public space NYU is proposing to provide is insufficient. It is that this community is sorely lacking in public space and cannot afford to lose any of it as it would under the NYU plan, or to have any more of it diminished by enormous buildings constructed over and around it, as NYU is proposing.

The problem is not simply that the commitment on the public school offered by NYU is too flimsy. It is that no public school will make this plan acceptable, and NYU should stick to its commitment made two years ago, and its commitment made several decades ago, to provide a public school that is NOT dependent upon this massive development plan.

The problem is not simply that a hotel as NYU is proposing does not belong on this site, but that any change in the zoning to commercial in this residential neighborhood is uncalled for and unjustified.

The problem is not simply that we will lose valuable open space under the NYU plan. It is that the public land NYU wants to take was won by this community when they defeated Robert Moses' plans for a Lower Manhattan Expressway and should never be given away, and that the zoning which requires the preservation of open space should not be diminished one iota.

The problem is not simply that NYU's proposed developments – an Empire State Building's worth, shoehorned into these Village blocks – will have a negative impact upon their surroundings. It's that NYU has simply refused to consider much better alternatives, such as the Financial District, and has refused to respond to legitimate questions raised by its own faculty and students about the impact the expansion plans would have on their lives, finances, and education.

Please make these points clear in your resolution. We know that there will be a tremendous temptation on the part of some decision-makers to tinker with the edges, to add this here and eliminate that there to make the plan "better" or "acceptable." It is critical that they hear from you loud and clear, as they have heard from the public, that this plan is wrong – wrong for the Village, wrong for New York City, and wrong for NYU – and that the plan should be sent back to the drawing board.