



October 18, 2005

Hon. Laura Osorio
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
New York City Department of Buildings
280 Broadway
New York, NY 10007
via fax: 212/566-5575

Re: 360 West 11th Street

Dear Commissioner Osorio:

I am gravely concerned about the determination by the Department of Buildings regarding whether or not the owner of this building has “vested” and can proceed to build a 110-ft. tall addition atop this structure in violation of the recently passed rezoning for the area.

As you know, on October 11th, the City Council enacted into law a rezoning for the area which would prohibit this sort of development, and the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation requested an immediate inspection to determine if permits for construction at this site should be revoked. It is my understanding from neighbors that in the time *after* the passage of the new zoning, the owner continued to pour concrete foundations, which should not count towards any determination of whether or not work is far enough along to qualify. It is also my understanding from neighbors that there was a considerable amount of illegal after-hours and weekend work preceding the passage of the zoning, about which complaints were filed (and of which the neighbors claim to have videotaped evidence), which should also not be used to enable the owner to claim that he is vested. On the basis of these facts, I strongly urge the Department of Buildings to revoke these permits and NOT allow construction contrary to the current zoning to continue.

The Greenwich Village community fought long and hard for these zoning changes, and the owner of this property, Mr. Schnabel, has known for many months that such changes were coming. The fact that he has apparently chosen to flout the law and attempt to illegally complete his foundations should not be rewarded by the Department of Buildings, as this would send a terrible message to other owners and to those in this neighborhood who we would urge to abide by the new zoning’s provisions.

I appreciate the time and attention you and staff at the Department have given to this matter. However, as it is now a full week since the new zoning for the area was enacted, I strongly urge the Department to revoke the current building permits for the site and ensure that Mr. Schnabel does not continue with any construction in violation of what the new zoning allows.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Executive Director
Andrew Berman

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Calvin Trillin
Jean-Claude van Itallie
Anne-Marie Wiener-Summer
Anthony C. Wood

Cc: State Senator Tom Duane
City Council Member Christine Quinn
Assembly Member Deborah Glick
Assembly Member Scott Stronger
Community Board #2
Greenwich Village Community Task Force
Federation to Preserve the Greenwich Village Waterfront and Great Port
155 Perry Street
167 Perry Street
359 West 11th Street
366 West 11th Street