



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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BURT LAZARIN
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

July 5th, 2018

Hon. Fredrick Bland, Vice Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building, 9th floor
One Centre Street New York, NY 10007

Re: 421 West 14th Street - Rooftop Electrified Sunshade Trellis with LED lights over bar area

Dear Vice Chair Bland:

Manhattan Community Board 4's (CB4) Chelsea Land Use Committee (CLU) held a duly noticed public hearing on June 18th. Subsequently, on June 25th the CB4 Executive Committee, voted, by a vote of 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining and 1 present but not eligible to vote, to support the consensus of CLU Committee and recommended the **denial** for a proposed rooftop sunshade trellis at 421 West 14th Street in the Gansevoort Market Historic District. This letter is subject to ratification by the Full Board to be held on Wednesday, July 25th.

Background and Description of Proposal

Originally known as the Gillen Building, for its developer, the concrete building was constructed in 1914 as a three-story market building. A fourth story was added to 413-419 West 14th Street above its four eastern bays in 1922. The building is primarily occupied by offices.

The applicant explained that office workers enjoy using the rooftop terrace for lunch breaks but it can be extremely hot and sunny without any shade. The proposed sunshade would have electrified louvers and a black metal finish trellis. It would be 16 feet 8 inches long and 9 feet 10 inches high. The applicant said that the height of the sunshade trellis was determined by the Fire Department and could not be lower. The louvers could be opened or closed depending on the weather. The sunshade trellis would include LED lights and is set back 22 feet from the front edge of the building.

The applicant's rendering depicts a high three-sided counter with high chairs under the sunshade. This drawing looks suspiciously like a bar. A wall-mounted weatherproof TV would be under the sunshade. Eight small café tables line the front edge of the terrace. Numerous planter boxes are shown in the rendering.

CB4 Analysis and Recommendations

At the time of the June 18th Chelsea Land Use Committee meeting only a partial mock-up of the sunshade trellis had been constructed. A small edge of the structure could be seen from the street. The full mock-up

is to be completed by July 7th. Committee members could not evaluate in the field the visual impact of the proposed sunshade trellis.

In response to Committee members' questions about whether or not the terrace is intended to be used as a bar, the applicant said the owner has no intention to use the space as a bar. There is no liquor license nor is one to be applied for. In response to a question about the built-in lighting on the sunshade trellis, the applicant said that there might be some night-time use of the terrace, perhaps for events. According to the applicant, the terrace is not to be used by the public.

CB4 recommends **denial** of the proposed rooftop sunshade trellis for the following reasons:

1. The visual impact of the sunshade trellis could not be understood without a full mock-up; and
2. The use of the terrace is unclear because the proposal depicts a bar with a high counter and chairs, a wall-mounted TV, lighting for night use and a row of café tables.

CB4 suggests that the applicant:

1. Complete the mock-up of the sunshade
2. Clarify the use of the terrace with modified drawings and written confirmation that:
 - The space is not to be used for a bar
 - No events would use loud music
 - Evening events would be limited.
3. To minimize the visual impact or to have no visual impact of the sunshade, consider:
 - Creating a smaller sunshade and/or
 - Shifting the sunshade area further from the front wall.

Sincerely,



Burt Lazarin
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4



John Lee Compton, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh, Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council
Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President