



Greenwich  
Village  
Society for  
Historic  
Preservation

252 East 11th Street  
New York, New York 10005

(212) 475-9585  
fax: (212) 475-9582  
www.gvshp.org

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## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NYC BOARD OF STANDARDS AND APPEALS

### Regarding Calendar #289-12-BZ

### 726-730 Broadway

### January 8, 2013

Good afternoon Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. My name is Andrew Berman, and I am the Executive Director of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the largest membership organization in Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo. GVSHP strongly urges you not to approve the variance requested by New York University for this location.

First, the applicant has not proven the need for a variance in this case. Their only argument appears to be that allowing their proposed uses at this location would work well for them, and therefore should be allowed. If followed, this stunningly low standard would more or less make zoning of any sort irrelevant to NYU and all other universities.

Instead, the university should be required to provide some proof that there are no reasonable alternatives available to them which do not require a zoning variance. They have not done so and cannot do so, because the simple fact of the matter is that the university simply refuses to consider any alternatives to continuing to concentrate their facilities in what they refer to as their 'core,' but which the rest of us refer to as the neighborhoods of Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo.

Secondly, allowing NYU this variance will have the effect of beginning a fundamental and profound shift in the character of NoHo and SoHo. In spite of their proximity to NYU's vast facilities, SoHo and NoHo have a relatively small NYU presence because of their M1-5A and B zoning, which strictly limits the types of university facilities which can be located there. Should the board make it so that NYU can locate a broader range of facilities in these neighborhoods simply on the basis of it being convenient for them, as the university is requesting, we will no doubt see the NYU presence in NoHo and SoHo grow exponentially in the near future.

Finally, the board should be aware that in its recent ULURP application allowing the addition of 2 million square feet of new facilities in the blocks to the southwest of 730 Broadway, NYU claimed that EXACTLY the facilities which they are seeking to locate at 730 Broadway would be located in the new facilities for which they sought ULURP approval. This has now turned out not to be the case at all. What has also turned out to be untrue was the university's claim throughout the ULURP process that they were being completely transparent and putting all their plans on the table. Less than a

week after NYU received their ULURP approvals, they revealed for the first time that they would also be seeking a zoning variance for this site, and permission to add four stories atop this building within the NoHo Historic District.

For all of these reasons, I strongly urge you to reject this application. Thank you.