

Jorge Rivera

1. The current zoning of the area dates back to the 60s, where the times were drastically different. I have many problems with zoning in our district, but I am in full support of the proposed rezoning because it preserves the contextual, historical integrity of the neighborhood- and increases the Community Facility FAR. My main concern is keeping a low Residential FAR that isn't just limited to one bedroom luxury units, and make way for potential growing families. We must make New York City, especially in D2 where we are seeing this rapid change, a place families are comfortable planting their roots indefinitely.
2. Upon assuming office in City Hall, I would definitely make sure that certain provisions are added before the Tech Hub (and by extension) Silicon Alley have my support. First and foremost, they must take every precaution not to crowd out residential buildings in the surrounding area. Being the area it is in, I'm not overwhelmingly concerned with the architectural disturbance it presents. My main concern is whether these mega-organizations are utilizing the workforce from right here, within the district. Whether that entails jobs for future college graduates, or at the very least summer opportunities for those still in school to keep up with families' growing expense to income ratio.
3. I completely support the SBJSA. As a candidate endorsed by the Small Business Congress here in the city, and the byproduct of small business shop owners, this issue is extremely close to my heart. This bill will see its way to the floor, even if it takes tireless lobbying on my part. As a "non-traditional" politician, without the connections to the machine many of the other candidates have, I have no problem standing up to Council and other elected officials throughout the City to put more and more pressure on Council to take action or at LEAST justify this inappropriate delay. Our small businesses are the underlying determinant of our rents, and even the presence of crime on our streets. This act must be codified by City Hall as soon as possible.
4. I think special zoning limiting one chain store to a block would be hugely beneficial. I can witness directly what is happening to my neighborhood in the LES. Empty storefront after empty storefront, one just to recently be filled by a Starbucks. There's another Starbucks in a much more understandable area half a mile away, and those living in the area certainly were not looking forward to this new implant. A zoning limit like this is the first step to taking away incentives from landlords to leave these storefronts open, sometimes for YEARS, waiting for retailers who can afford a 200-300% rent hike.
5. It's no secret that this area is losing its communal resources. I grew up on these resources. I am an attorney today due to the resources I was provided as a child, here in the city. So, in that vein, I absolutely support the City's efforts against this landlord to preserve the cultural center and improve communal access. It's important that the City tracks this progress from start to finish, and makes sure no corners are cut. This city does not need another dorm, which at this point are

essentially luxury buildings for a transient community. This, in turn, will turn surrounding retailers into stores that are mainly geared towards supplying goods to the kids moving in and out. This is absolutely counterintuitive to community building.

6. I do agree with this assessment. Many City agencies are becoming increasingly less effective over time. What's important is that people continue to file official complaints that I can review once I am in City Council. I need that data to go directly to the Mayor and show what the community needs- and by extension, what the City needs. There are areas of NYC that can afford these major changes, but District 2 in its essence is not one of them. It's not why people live here currently, and it certainly diminishes the worth of the neighborhood to potential implants relying on the reputation of a diverse and historic East Village.
7. I think the Mayor is completely misguided in his assumptions. I always ask myself what will provide a longer lasting, community-oriented New York City. The answer to this is rezoning when rezoning is due. I can speak from the stance of my district; we need no more upzoning. We need less ICON and Kushner in our neighborhoods. We need less luxury one bedrooms. We NEED people to see their rent and be assured they'll be able to pay for it for years to come. We NEED people to have the option to buy space they can own and pass down through their future generations. I am not a voice for developers, I am a voice for the people in this city I talk to daily- struggling individuals, working 2-3 jobs, who don't know if their next rent hike will be the last one they can afford.
8. I, as a councilmember, can continue to speak about this issue. But when it comes down to it, we need more transparency, and our constituents need to be able to delineate between politicians who have accepted money from either developers directly through PACs, or other politicians who have done the same. The system is rigged in favor of those willing to take money and owe a favor, to those willing to make compromises on behalf of their constituents without their voters knowledge. Transparency is key.
9. I don't think these two things should be considered in conflict at all. There are ways to increase area density without tearing down buildings and watching high-rises soar. We can reuse our existing housing stock and create more multi-family units, which can be affordable AND promote family resiliency. It's a two bird, one stone situation: not only preserve the historic integrity of the buildings themselves, but the culture and nature of the community. At least that is what I would love to see in District 2, and fully believe can happen.
10. Like I've said, if these resources didn't exist when I was a kid, I wouldn't be an attorney- let alone a candidate in competition for this lucrative seat. My plans rely on primarily opposing rezoning that falls on the wrong side of community building. I want to be a tireless advocate for those community centers that do exist, and play tough negotiator as developers enter my office hoping their projects get approved. I promise you that these negotiations will have the further accessibility of community resources at the forefront of our efforts.