



**Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation**

132 East 11th Street
New York, New York 10003

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www.gvshp.org

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Anthony C. Wood

April 23, 2007

Governor Eliot Spitzer
The Executive Chamber
Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Spitzer:

I write on behalf of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP) to express our staunch opposition to the Related Companies' "Performing Arts Center" (PAC) proposal for redevelopment of Pier 40. GVSHP is the largest membership organization in Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo, and promotes sound preservation and planning policies for our neighborhoods.

Related Companies' PAC proposal for Pier 40 would seem to be the antithesis of sound planning for the adjacent West Side and Downtown neighborhoods. As long-standing policy, GVSHP considers issues regarding the Hudson River Park outside of our purview and therefore we generally do not comment upon them. However, because of the enormous impact and implications that the PAC proposal would have upon inland areas, we felt it necessary to break with this long-standing policy and strongly oppose this plan, and to raise some very serious issues regarding future planning and preservation of the adjacent areas.

The scale of the proposed project is breathtaking – over 600,000 square feet of development, a dozen buildings as high as the equivalent of sixteen stories, various entertainment venues with seating for more than 10,000 people, all combined in a \$700 million complex. The sheer physical size of such a development would have an enormous impact upon the bordering areas, casting a shadow – literally and figuratively – upon the Far West Village, Hudson Square, and the Hudson River Park. Given the sheer volume of traffic it would generate, it is hard to imagine how this type of complex could be compatible with the already-overburdened park within which it would be located, which serves these park-starved communities.

It is also hard to imagine how a complex like this would be compatible with our neighborhoods. Clearly the proposed "Performing Arts Center" would serve as a regional destination, drawing enormous crowds on a regular basis to the area, almost exclusively by car. The type of venues proposed bear little or no relationship to the character and history of these neighborhoods, which consist largely of residences, relatively low-impact and low-traffic generating businesses and industry, and shops, restaurants, and other cultural and entertainment attractions which are small in scale and pedestrian-oriented, and which tend to serve locals, area residents, and frequent visitors.

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We therefore feel strongly that this raises the issue of the long-overdue and very necessary planning needed for the adjacent Hudson Square and southern Far West Village neighborhoods. Clearly there is a great deal of real estate speculation going on in this area, and there is the danger that these neighborhoods could be transformed piecemeal by variances. Construction of an enormous destination entertainment complex on Pier 40 would only further fuel speculation in the area, and increase the likelihood that proposed new uses would also be of the mega-entertainment variety. This, combined with the possible impending approval of massive "condo-hotels" which violate the current zoning for the area, threaten to utterly transform this neighborhood into a high-rise, high density, high-traffic-generating regional destination zone, something we and many others in this community strongly oppose.

Since the initial announcement of the plan for Donald Trump's nearby 45-story "SoHo Condo-Hotel" in June of 2006, we have been calling for the zoning for this area to be re-examined to prohibit this sort of absolutely inappropriate scale of development. In light of this latest possibility, we now also urge that the zoning be examined to reinforce uses which are compatible with the character of the area and their surroundings, which include residences and relatively low-impact and low-traffic generating small and medium sized businesses which are generally accessed by public transportation. Without such planning, and certainly with approval of the PAC proposal, we fear that our neighborhoods will lose all connection to their history and value as humanly-scaled, pedestrian-oriented places for living, working, shopping, and recreation.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
Hudson River Park Trust President Connie Fishman
Hudson River Park Trust Board Chair Charles Dorkey III
Daniel Doctoroff, Vice-Chair, Hudson River Park Trust
Hudson River Park Trust Board
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April 23, 2007

Hon. Michael Bloomberg
Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

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Andrew Berman
Executive Director

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April 23, 2007

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Manhattan Borough President
Once Centre Street, 19th floor
New York, NY 10007

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April 23, 2007

City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

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Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
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April 23, 2007

Connie Fishman, President
Hudson River Park Trust
Pier 40, 2nd floor
West Street at West Houston Street
New York, NY 10007

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**Greenwich
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Society for
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April 23, 2007

Charles E. Dorkey III, Chair
Hudson River Park Trust
Pier 40, 2nd floor
West Street at West Houston Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Dorkey:

I write on behalf of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP) to express our staunch opposition to the Related Companies' "Performing Arts Center" (PAC) proposal for redevelopment of Pier 40. GVSHP is the largest membership organization in Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo, and promotes sound preservation and planning policies for our neighborhoods.

Related Companies' PAC proposal for Pier 40 would seem to be the antithesis of sound planning for the adjacent West Side and Downtown neighborhoods. As long-standing policy, GVSHP considers issues regarding the Hudson River Park outside of our purview and therefore we generally do not comment upon them. However, because of the enormous impact and implications that the PAC proposal would have upon inland areas, we felt it necessary to break with this long-standing policy and strongly oppose this plan, and to raise some very serious issues regarding future planning and preservation of the adjacent areas.

The scale of the proposed project is breathtaking – over 600,000 square feet of development, a dozen buildings as high as the equivalent of sixteen stories, various entertainment venues with seating for more than 10,000 people, all combined in a \$700 million complex. The sheer physical size of such a development would have an enormous impact upon the bordering areas, casting a shadow – literally and figuratively – upon the Far West Village, Hudson Square, and the Hudson River Park. Given the sheer volume of traffic it would generate, it is hard to imagine how this type of complex could be compatible with the already-overburdened park within which it would be located, which serves these park-starved communities.

It is also hard to imagine how a complex like this would be compatible with our neighborhoods. Clearly the proposed "Performing Arts Center" would serve as a regional destination, drawing enormous crowds on a regular basis to the area, almost exclusively by car. The type of venues proposed bear little or no relationship to the character and history of these neighborhoods, which consist largely of residences, relatively low-impact and low-traffic generating businesses and industry, and shops, restaurants, and other cultural and entertainment attractions which are small in scale and pedestrian-oriented, and which tend to serve locals, area residents, and frequent visitors.

Related Companies describes their PAC plan as a "downtown Lincoln Center." But Lincoln Center is a true arts center with regular visitors who are mostly New

Yorkers. The PAC would be a mass culture entertainment venue appealing mostly to tourists, of which "Vegas-on-the-Hudson" would be a much more apt description. Its glitzy, high-volume venues would no doubt attract a very transient audience with few options other vehicular transportation for accessing the area. This would fundamentally change the character, and, we believe, the appeal of not only the park but also our neighborhoods which border it.

We therefore feel strongly that this raises the issue of the long-overdue and very necessary planning needed for the adjacent Hudson Square and southern Far West Village neighborhoods. Clearly there is a great deal of real estate speculation going on in this area, and there is the danger that these neighborhoods could be transformed piecemeal by variances. Construction of an enormous destination entertainment complex on Pier 40 would only further fuel speculation in the area, and increase the likelihood that proposed new uses would also be of the mega-entertainment variety. This, combined with the possible impending approval of massive "condo-hotels" which violate the current zoning for the area, threaten to utterly transform this neighborhood into a high-rise, high density, high-traffic-generating regional destination zone, something we and many others in this community strongly oppose.

Since the initial announcement of the plan for Donald Trump's nearby 45-story "SoHo Condo-Hotel" in June of 2006, we have been calling for the zoning for this area to be re-examined to prohibit this sort of absolutely inappropriate scale of development. In light of this latest possibility, we now also urge that the zoning be examined to reinforce uses which are compatible with the character of the area and their surroundings, which include residences and relatively low-impact and low-traffic generating small and medium sized businesses which are generally accessed by public transportation. Without such planning, and certainly with approval of the PAC proposal, we fear that our neighborhoods will lose all connection to their history and value as humanly-scaled, pedestrian-oriented places for living, working, shopping, and recreation.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: Governor Eliot Spitzer
Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
Hudson River Park Trust President Connie Fishman
Daniel Doctoroff, Vice-Chair, Hudson River Park Trust
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April 23, 2007

Deputy Mayor Daniel Doctoroff
Vice-Chair, Hudson River Park Trust
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Deputy Mayor Doctoroff:

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Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: Governor Eliot Spitzer
Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
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April 23, 2007

Hudson River Park Trust Board
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New York, NY 10007

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Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: Governor Eliot Spitzer
Mayor Michael Bloomberg
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
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April 23, 2007

Amanda Burden, Chair
New York City City Planning Commission
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Burden:

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