



Greenwich  
Village  
Society for  
Historic  
Preservation

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January 18, 2007

Hon. Patricia Lancaster  
Commissioner, NYC Department of Buildings  
280 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Amanda Burden  
Director, NYC Department of City Planning  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Signage at 651-657 Hudson Street/25-33 Gansevoort Street/10-20  
Ninth Avenue/352-363 West 13<sup>th</sup> Street, The Hotel Gansevoort**

Dear Commissioner Lancaster and Director Burden:

I write regarding two large signs currently being erected at the above-referenced location. I am greatly concerned about the rapid proliferation of inappropriate and illegal signage in the Gansevoort Market/Meatpacking District neighborhood, and their continued presence even after these signs have been reported to the City. With its wide-open intersections, large crowds on evenings and weekends, and low-rise buildings, there is the danger that the proliferation of large-scale signage could turn the Gansevoort Market/Meatpacking District neighborhood into a new mini-Times Square. This would be wholly inappropriate, and I am concerned that this latest addition of signage would only add to this growing problem.

According to Department of Buildings records, on 7/27/06 a permit was issued for a 14' x 48' (672 sq. ft.) indirectly illuminated advertising ground sign, and as of today a permit is "in process" for a 20' x 60' (1200 sq. ft.) non-illuminated business sign at this address. The latter seems particularly grotesque in its proportion and entirely out of place for this neighborhood. While certain types of signage are allowed in M1-5 zones (the zoning district for this site), I question whether permits should have been issued for these signs in light of their size, their distance from an arterial highway, their distance from a public park, and their proximity to several zoning districts which allow residential uses, including several nearby R6 zones. Even in M1 zones, there are prohibitions against certain types of signage when they are within viewing distance of a public park of ½ acre or more, and the nearby Corporal Seravalli Park is 1.143 acres according to Parks Department records. There are also of course prohibitions on some types of signage within a certain distance of an arterial highway, of which the nearby Route 9A is one, and other prohibitions regarding proximity of certain signs to districts zoned for residential uses. I urge the Department to re-examine these permits in light of these factors to ensure that the existing permit was not issued in error, and the pending permit will not be.

Hopefully you will find that such large-scale signage is not allowed at this location, where it certainly does not belong. I am also hopeful that the various nearby signs which are indisputably illegal, and which GVSHP has already reported to the City several times over the last several months and asked for enforcement action against them, will be removed (see attached copies of letters). However, should it be found that the planned signage at the Hotel Gansevoort is in fact legal, I would urge the Department of City Planning to consider changes which would prohibit such signage in the future. I believe that there is a strong desire not to see the Gansevoort Market/Meatpacking District neighborhood overrun with the type of large-scale signage and advertising we are unfortunately seeing proliferate there now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Berman", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew Berman  
Executive Director

Cc: City Council Speaker Christine Quinn  
Borough President Scott Stringer  
State Senator Tom Duane  
Assemblymember Deborah Glick  
Municipal Art Society  
community groups