



**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY**

THOMAS DUANE  
SENATOR, 29TH DISTRICT  
ASSISTANT MINORITY LEADER FOR  
POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION  
COMMITTEES  
CODES  
CIVIL SERVICE & PENSIONS  
FINANCE  
HEALTH  
JUDICIARY  
RULES

PLEASE RESPOND TO  
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DUANE@SENATE.STATE.NY.US

February 15, 2007

Elon Kenchington  
Chief Executive Officer  
Gansevoort Hotel Group  
100 Ring Road West, Suite 101  
Garden City, NY 11530

Dear Mr. Kenchington:

I appreciated the collaborative relationship that you established with me, other area elected officials and community residents during your tenure as Managing Director of the Hotel Gansevoort in the Meatpacking District. Your willingness to meet with us and to take effective steps to address persistent noise complaints spoke volumes about the hotel's desire to be a good neighbor. I was also impressed with the hotel's interest in contributing to the character of the Meatpacking District, as evidenced by your restoration of the cobblestones in the street in front of your building.

Given your concern about the neighborhood, I was surprised and disappointed to see the two large, freestanding billboards that are currently being erected on the hotel's property at the corner of Gansevoort and Hudson Streets. I appeal to you as the Chief Executive Officer of the Gansevoort Hotel Group to overrule the decision to install these contextually inappropriate and unsightly advertising structures, which would seriously compromise the character of our neighborhood. Indeed, the enormous post and frame that have already been constructed are a tremendous eyesore at the gateway between Greenwich Village and the Meatpacking District.

While I recognize that the Hotel Gansevoort sought and was initially given permits for these signs and their support pole from the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB), I and many of my constituents disagree with your decision regarding the signs and strongly believe that they are not appropriate for our distinctive, historic, hard fought for district. The larger sign is permitted for a height of 75 feet with a total surface area of 1,200 square feet. The smaller

sign is permitted for a height of 52 feet with a total surface area of 672 square feet, and will be indirectly illuminated. Both will loom over the Meatpacking District and the residential, Greenwich Village neighborhood directly to the south. Both are terrible.

I understand that DOB is reconsidering the permits it has issued and has sought additional information from your architect to determine if your signs will, in fact, conform to regulations for signage at this location. Recently, DOB has found several other billboards that have sprung up in the Meatpacking District to be illegal, and it has committed to take action against them. Regardless of DOB's findings with respect to the legality of your signs, I appeal to you and am hopeful that in the interests of neighborhood preservation, you will choose to abandon this ill conceived billboard project. While I recognize that you have contractual obligations to the billboard company, Van Wagoner, I pledge to join other community leaders in seeking to have Van Wagoner release you from them.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your response and to your continued cooperation in preserving the beautiful, historic area that has made your establishment a destination for New Yorkers and other people from around the U.S. and the world. Please don't head with your plans to destroy that.

Sincerely,



Thomas K. Duane  
New York State Senate  
29<sup>th</sup> District.



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DUANE@SENATE.STATE.NY.US

February 15, 2007

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

*Patricia*  
Dear Commissioner Lancaster:

As you know, over the years I have been a vocal critic of the proliferation of illegal or inappropriate billboards and other advertising signs that degrade the beauty of our City.

Needless to say, I am very concerned about the abundance of illegal advertising that has recently sprung up in Manhattan's Meatpacking District and, in particular, about the two, large, freestanding billboards that are currently being built with permits from the New York City Department of Buildings (DOB) at the Hotel Gansevoort (352 West 13th Street). These contextually inappropriate and unsightly advertising structures will loom over the Meatpacking District and the residential, Greenwich Village neighborhood directly to the south, seriously compromising the character of our neighborhood. Already, the enormous frame erected for the billboards is a tremendous eyesore at the intersection of Hudson and Gansevoort streets.

I appreciate and am grateful for DOB's commitment to take action against the illegal billboards the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP) has identified in the area, and the considerable time you have spent evaluating the legality of the new billboards going up at the Hotel Gansevoort. I understand that GVSHP has raised several grounds upon which it believes that the Hotel Gansevoort signs may not conform to area signage regulations and that DOB has requested additional information from the applicant so you may investigate them.

I am optimistic that when DOB examines these issues, you will find these planned billboards illegal. I am especially hopeful that DOB will be able to obtain a reliable measure of the angle of the signs to ensure that they are constructed at an angle of more than 90 degrees away from both the Commercial and Residential District boundaries to the east and southwest respectively.

Thank you for your continued willingness to investigate this matter and your commitment to regulating outdoor advertising signage Citywide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Thomas K. Duane  
New York State Senate  
29<sup>th</sup> District



THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

DEBORAH J. GLICK  
Assemblymember 66<sup>th</sup> District  
New York County

CHAIR  
Social Services Committee

COMMITTEES  
Children and Families  
Environmental Conservation  
Higher Education  
Ways & Means

February 15, 2007

Michael Achenbaum  
Gansevoort Hotel Group  
Hotel Gansevoort  
18 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
New York, NY 10014

Dear Mr. Achenbaum:

I am writing to you regarding the large billboard that has been erected on the southeastern corner of your property at 18 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I am glad that Hotel Gansevoort has expressed an interest in being a good neighbor and my office was pleased to participate in Hotel Gansevoort's community forum in 2005. However, the addition of this visual intrusion into the neighborhood detracts from the character of the neighborhood and therefore contradicts the Hotel's goal of behaving as a good neighbor.

Hotel Gansevoort benefits greatly from the aesthetic character of the Village and the Gansevoort Market neighborhood. It is therefore distressing to see the hotel put up a billboard which creates a more trashy appearance for the neighborhood. In this instance, the addition of a large billboard creates a more highway-like and less urban feel for the block. This does not seem to be the aesthetic that Hotel Gansevoort wants to present to its guests. Nor does the addition of this billboard, against the wishes of the hotel's neighbors, comport with Hotel Gansevoort's publicly stated goal of behaving as a good neighbor.

I urge Hotel Gansevoort not to degrade our neighborhood's character and to remove the billboard immediately.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah J. Glick".

Deborah J. Glick  
Assemblymember