

From: [Adina M Taylor](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [Adina Taylor RA/AIA](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] My Testimony AGAINST the SOHO/NOHO Neighborhood Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:58:38 AM

I have lived and worked in this area as an architect. I have visited SOHO, NOHO and Chinatown several times in the past year. I see neglect and serious problems not in Little Italy adjacent to Chinatown. I have taught children who lived in Chinatown.

Regarding Land Use Item: **SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan**. I am testifying **against** this application.

This is a **pre-pandemic plan, an** ill-conceived plan, now more than ever. Now that we are post-pandemic, we have changed. We have no choice anymore **but to change and change** how we treat our environment and neighborhoods and each other. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has changed dramatically. Why? Because George Floyd died. It is training firms how to be inclusive. **It** must be a leader in the race to reduce carbon emissions world-wide. And **It** must be responsible for delivering healthier buildings (ventilation/codes). Our city government must meet the new challenges of the private sector and residents for health, safety and welfare.

Millions have died from COVID-19. Our building codes are not up to the standards now required. We sat at home and watched as fires burned millions of trees and destroyed homes. We watched the forecast of a storm and learned later that basement apartments were flooded and families lost their lives in Queens. Flooding occurred in basements in brownstones in the upper east side, higher elevation, neighborhoods of Manhattan. **Our infrastructure is old.** The President of the US makes this message clear and is taking the discussion of climate change and the global cost to save our world as we know it to the world leaders. What are your new priorities?

Park Avenue residents fled Manhattan for perceived safer environments. Many families now like the new concept of work and zoom from home. Is this concept part of the thinking for the SOHO/NOHO Plan? The American Institute of Architecture (AIA) has dramatically changed its moral and ethical stance on practice. Why because buildings contribute the most to the world's carbon pollution. Are we on track for NYC?

Fact: Community Board 2 voted to reject the SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan 36 to 1. They also wisely voted to reject the City Planning Department's first Waterfront Development Plan unveiled in 1991/2. The beautiful master plan for Hudson River Park followed. It is almost fully implemented and provides what several top architects have called the greatest asset in NEW York City. "Buildings once built disappear within the streetscape."

Over a dozen community and tenant groups offered NEIGHBORHOOD alternative rezoning plans during public engagement by the city. We are speaking of Chinatown as well. They feel totally ignored. The AIA with the ACSA (Assoc of Collegiate Schools of Architecture) held a 3 day

conference, Sept 29 to Oct 1st 2021, called **"Communities."** Each research paper brought "home" the position that we must have **inclusive communities**, and have open dialog between community and government to survive and expect to have well functioning, healthy, livable cities, period. Please

call on the conference manager, Michelle Sturges, ACSA. She may offer access to the videos and give you the names of **professors** who contributed including those who live in the Bronx and spoke. We need to open our hearts and minds to include our well educated young residents. We are a well educated society and deserve a democratic system at all levels.

Stand up for what is right please. We have time. Vote No. AND THANK YOU. ADINA TAYLOR 1225 Park Ave, NY, NY 10128 avtarchitect@mindspring.com

From: [Alan Steele](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 3:54:42 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Alan Steele
87 E Houston St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Amelia Dallis](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 11:22:16 AM

To the City Council:

I have called this neighborhood home for the last 35 years and I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Amelia Dallis
83 St Marks Pl
New York, NY 10003

From: [Amelia Josephson](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan Written Testimony
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 5:02:30 PM

Chair Moya and Members of the NYC Council Subcommittee on Zoning & Franchises,

My name is Amelia Josephson and I am providing written testimony in support of the SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan application. This rezoning would be a significant step in making New York City more equitable and would help more New Yorkers live in a high-opportunity, transit-rich neighborhood of our city.

According to NYC demographic data, the rezoning area is 77% white, compared to 32% of the City as a whole. In addition, median household income in this area is approximately \$140,000, more than twice the household income of the City as a whole. This rezoning would provide approximately 900 new affordable units in SoHo/NoHo, helping to stem residential and school segregation and breaking with longstanding patterns that place new affordable housing in less well-resourced parts of our city.

Incentives for affordable housing should take precedence over considerations related to SoHo/NoHo's commercial zoning, given the size and seriousness of the city's housing crisis. Specifically, the City should modify this application to lower the commercial densities. This modification would incentivize much-needed mixed-income housing over additional office space.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I strongly encourage the Council to vote "Yes" on this important application.

Sincerely,
Amelia Josephson

From: [Amy Zeng](#)
To: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#); [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] VOTE NO ON SOHO/NOHO REZONING
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 7:53:35 PM

Hi all,

I write today to submit testimony AGAINST the impending possible rezoning of Soho/Noho. This plan will not create economic diversity because it does not guarantee actual "affordable" housing; instead, it opens the floodgates for a massive increase in luxury dwellings. Why do we want another Midtown or Tribeca?

Furthermore, the plan proposes a nearly 50% increase in population for the neighborhoods but no accompanying infrastructure or improvements. There are no parks, no schools, and no hospitals slated to accompany the rezoning. The Mayor's plan--which city councilmembers Margaret Chin and Carlina Rivera should be ashamed to support--is dependent upon the whims of private property owners and provides no real "end benefits" to the community or neighborhood, destroying the character of a historically important and vital area and destroying that which makes NYC a great city.

Best,
Amy Zeng (District 1 resident)

From: [Andrew Weber](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Vote For The SoHo/NoHo Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:37:52 AM

As a New York City resident, I would like to strongly urge the council to approve the SoHo/NoHo rezonings. I love NYC's buildings but they can not and should not be protected at the expense of it's greatest resource, it's people. Rent is rising throughout the city at astronomical rates, and the only way to counter that trend is to build new housing. The most equitable place to start that process is in a wealthy neighborhood like SoHo. Many city politicians talk a big game about affordable housing, but then oppose any opportunity to bring that housing to bear. This is a great opportunity to make headway towards providing more apartments in a great location for more New Yorkers. Please vote to approve these rezonings. Thank you.

-Andrew Weber

From: [Anita Jorgensen](#)
To: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@HelenRosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@BenKallos.com](#)
Cc: [info@sohoalliance.org](#); [Matthew Haag](#); [themail@newyorker.com](#); [letters@nytimes.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote NO on destroying SoHo / NoHo
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 4:25:48 PM

Dear Council Members,

I implore you to vote NO of Mayor DiBlasio's disastrous plan to up zone SoHo. This cynical plan has been pitched as "affordable housing". When one reads the fine print, nowhere in the plan does it state providing affordable housing is mandatory. This is a plain and simple developer give away to one of the Mayor's top contributors: Edison Properties, who owns three of the largest sites that would benefit the most from the up zoning. I live, work, and raised my family in the neighborhood. The plan makes no mention of the desperate need to provide green space, schools, or parks.

This proposed up zoning would be very the FIRST landmarked neighborhood to be destroyed since 1965. Where oh where is Jackie when we need her.

The plan would allow new construction which is more than 2-1/2 times the size of the average existing building in the neighborhood.

The plan would encourage the demolition of important historic buildings.

Plenty of alternatives have been proposed that would actually require affordable housing, especially by the Village Preservation.

Our beautiful, unique neighborhood was built on sweat equity, not private equity. Now that the neighborhood has become a golden goose, the vultures swoop in to rape us. Many store fronts are empty because these vultures jack up rents so high that no one can afford them. Just think how high the rents will become if rapacious developers are given free reign.

The density of our neighborhood and the crowds that visit already make walking down the sidewalk difficult. Think what this plan will do. More, more, more: traffic, noise, garbage, people, air pollution.

Do you want to be remembered for the destruction of one of the most unique neighborhoods in the world that brings in countless tourist dollars?? Visitors will not want to visit another blah neighborhood with airport shops. They will go elsewhere.

Arts organizations will no longer be able to afford the rent should big glass boxes replace our neighborhood gems. What will you tell your children and your grandchildren when they ask what happened? Please remember what happened to the magnificent Pennsylvania Station, which I have never seen due to it being raised in the 1960's. Please, please, I beg you to vote **NO** and not destroy our neighborhood, our community, our lives.

Anita

ANITA JORGENSEN LIGHTING DESIGN • 100 Lafayette Street, Suite 604 • New York, NY 10013 • T (212) 343-0454 • M (646) 824-9574 • www.ajld.net

From: [Barbara Quart](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:56:23 PM

To the City Council:

As someone who have lived in the area for many decades, and sees the uniqueness of neighborhoods, especially downtown, as the crowning jewel of the city, the draw for tourists, the source of every pedestrian's pleasure, I am horrified by this proposed upzoning, which will give the realestate industry, already in such control of the city, a total carte blanche in this area. We'll see big box stores, and more monstrous sterile glass towers, we'll see more people pushed out of rent controlled apartments. I am appalled by the prospect, and deeply saddened for our city if that is the future direction it will take, destroying everything that I find valuable. I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% "affordable" housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the "affordable" ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Barbara Quart
14 Washington Pl
New York, NY 10003

From: [Bobby Gorrill](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I Support the Soho Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:26:19 AM

Dear Council,

I would like to express my support for the Soho rezoning. Soho is a predominantly wealthy, white and transit-rich neighborhood and is an excellent location for new mixed-income housing. Building this housing in Soho will help alleviate displacement pressures in nearby gentrifying neighborhoods like the Lower East Side and Chinatown. Although I live further away in Ridgewood and work in a warehouse in Maspeth/East Williamsburg, I too will benefit from increased housing supply in neighborhoods like Soho. Increasing housing supply can help reduce housing costs regionally, and if built in Soho (or Gowanus or other wealthy, white neighborhoods) that means lower-income neighborhoods, communities of color and industrial neighborhoods (like E. Williamsburg/Maspeth) won't be as burdened with new housing growth. This is a basic issue of equity.

I would suggest a few recommendations to improve the current rezoning plan, however. Firstly, office development should be discouraged in favor of housing development. The office industry is currently flailing and its future is unclear; land would be better developed as housing. I urge the council to shift the proposed FARs in favor of residential development. I would also urge the council to expand the "community preference" for MIH affordable units to include Chinatown and the Lower East Side and low-wage workers who are employed in Soho, but may not currently reside in the neighborhood. Finally, it is essential that Soho's high market-rents be cross-subsidized to support deeply affordable MIH units. To that end, I ask the council to map "deeply affordable" MIH Option #3 in the rezoning area. Producing a slightly smaller number of deeply affordable units is more important than producing a larger number of moderate-income units.

Thank you for your time and I again urge support for this rezoning proposal.

Sincerely,
Bobby



**Testimony of Brendan Cheney, New York Housing Conference
SoHo / NoHo Neighborhood Plan**

New York City Council
Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises
November 9, 2021

Good afternoon. My name is Brendan Cheney. I am the director of policy and communications at the New York Housing Conference (NYHC). NYHC is a nonprofit affordable housing policy and advocacy organization. As a broad-based coalition, our mission is to advance City, State and Federal policies and funding to support the development and preservation of decent and affordable housing for *all* New Yorkers.

New York Housing Conference strongly supports the SoHo / NoHo Neighborhood Plan, which, among other changes, would bring desperately-needed affordable housing to the neighborhood. The city is facing an affordable housing crisis and every neighborhood must participate in the solution.

Our housing affordability crisis existed before the pandemic but has been exacerbated by the economic and health effects of Covid. Homelessness continues to be at a crisis point, with more than 77,900 people experiencing homelessness on one night last year.ⁱ Nearly 1 million households in New York City are rent burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on rent, and 460,000 pay more than half their income on rent.ⁱⁱ And by one measure, New York is rated the fourth most segregated city in the country.ⁱⁱⁱ It is an unsustainable situation.

We must add affordable housing in every neighborhood; we cannot continue the trend of relying on lower-cost neighborhoods for affordable housing production. One way to achieve this in higher-cost neighborhoods is through rezonings and inclusionary housing.

The SoHo/NoHo neighborhood currently does not have any income-restricted affordable housing^{iv} while the rezoning would bring a projected 3,200 units^v of new desperately-needed affordable housing to the neighborhood through the mandatory inclusionary housing program.

Asking every neighborhood to be a partner in creating affordable housing and upzoning in high-income neighborhoods has wide appeal – both were recommendations of the United for Housing coalition – a coalition led by NYHC and joined by 90 partner organizations in New York City.

The city is planning something similar with the Gowanus rezoning. These two rezonings would bring affordable housing to two higher-cost neighborhoods, which is a great step in the right direction. We support both plans.

Bringing affordable housing to SoHo/NoHo would also bring diversity to a neighborhood that is predominately white and wealthy. The affordable housing, desperately needed, would also work to reverse and repair our history of racial discrimination. SoHo / NoHo is 77% white and only 2% Black and 6% Hispanic / Latinx.^{vi} The neighborhood is also wealthier than many other neighborhoods in the city; the median income is \$144,508^{vii} and 66% of households make \$100,000 per year or more, a higher rate than the borough and citywide averages. Bringing more affordable housing to this community would help add diversity to the neighborhood and provide new opportunities for families.

While the affordable housing will provide tangible benefits for the people that get the housing, it will also create economic benefits to the community. Housing investment creates jobs and can spur needed economic recovery. Research has found that 100 units of affordable housing construction creates 230 jobs and \$46 million in economic activity, and the city, state and national economy need additional stimulus to recover from the recession.

There is one change we'd like to see in the rezoning. We recommend lowering the proposed allowed commercial FAR to 2.0. We believe that the current high allowable commercial FARs will result in office buildings instead of mixed-income residential. This change would still allow ground floor retail, second floor office space and mixed-use buildings.

As the city's economy struggles to recover, opportunities like the SoHo/NoHo rezoning can create needed affordable housing, unlock new tax revenue, refill the construction pipeline, and help local businesses.

The New York Housing Conference supports this rezoning. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

ⁱ https://files.hudexchange.info/reports/published/CoC_PopSub_CoC_NY-600-2020_NY_2020.pdf

ⁱⁱ <https://cbcny.org/research/think-your-rent-high>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2018/12/17/black-white-segregation-edges-downward-since-2000-census-shows/>

^{iv} <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/soho-noho/soho-noho-fact-shett-housing.pdf>

^v <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/soho-noho/soho-noho-qa.pdf?r=b110920>

^{vi} <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/soho-noho/soho-noho-fact-shet-demographics.pdf>

^{vii} <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans-studies/soho-noho/soho-noho-qa.pdf?r=b110920>

From: [Carla Masters](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 8:55:51 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Carla Masters
712 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

From: [carol.chen](#)
To: [District2](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Do NOT up zone SoHo/NoHo
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 8:33:40 PM

Dear Councilmember Rivera,

I live in SoHo and am adamantly opposed to the mayor's proposal to punish working artists with a flip tax for simply living here and being pioneers in reclaiming the neighborhood.

It's completely unfair that the deep pockets in the neighborhood—the commercial property owners—are not being asked to contribute anything at all in taxes to convert their zoning from manufacturing to retail.

Once collected, where will this money go? Will it be returned to the neighborhood to benefit the residents?

There is enough big-box, mall-type retail in other parts of the city and outside of NYC. Why pollute and dilute the intrinsic character of this fine city and charming neighborhood with more of what already exists elsewhere? It would put mom and pop shops out of business and remove the reason a lot of us chose to live here.

SoHo and NoHo are already destinations for eating and drinking. We do not need to enlarge this propensity, as this is a live/work district. We need to go to sleep at night like regular people.

Why is downtown great? Why is it attractive? Height restrictions have a lot to do with it. Changing the zoning will alter the livability and desirability of living in this unique area. Towers would be out of scale and would darken the neighborhood with huge shadows.

This is a historic district and is worthy of preservation. Once gone, you can't get it back. SoHo/NoHo already attracts millions of shoppers and tourists to visit and spend here. If it became a mall like Times Square or Herald Square or anywhere else, why bother to come here? What is the value?

I fail to see how any affordable housing will be built under this proposal. There are no guarantees. In fact, if anything is likely to happen it's that the existing residents will be priced-out of the area, exacerbating income divides of who gets to live in Manhattan. It just looks like a way to speed up gentrification. There are other ways to increase affordable housing here without ruining the character of the area in the process. And there is no need for NYU to encroach on SoHo, something that it stated it would not do.

For these reasons and others, I urge you to vote NO on the de Blasio proposal and send it back to fix these flaws.

Thank you,
Carol Chen
108 Wooster St, [REDACTED]
New York, NY 10012



**Testimony of Cordelia Persen, NoHo BID
New York City Council Hearing – November 9, 2021**

Hello, I'm Cordelia Persen, the Executive Director of the NoHo BID. As a member of the Envision Advisory Group, I have been deeply engaged with this process from the beginning.

Everyone knows there are some real problems with the current zoning that need to be addressed. The current mishmash of zoning rules that have been patched together since our last rezoning, continue to lead to the kinds of problems the opposition to this plan have been complaining about. What the area needs is a coherent plan to follow going forward. We need zoning that actually matches current usage vs continuing with the long cumbersome expensive variance process that only works for certain well financed tenants and developers.

From the beginning, the NoHo Business Improvement District's goals for the rezoning center around retail use of our buildings. We are happy to see that the plan makes retail as of right and ends the arbitrary 10,000 sf limit to size of retail that makes no sense, due to the sizes of our building floor plates. We have said since the beginning that retail is in a major flux and property owners and retail uses need flexibility to use their spaces as the time and trends lead them. Covid has only made this more true.

The NoHo BID also feels very strongly that we want to preserve the historic character of the district and are concerned with the level of upzoning currently proposed.

Others have come up with alternative zoning scenarios that we believe will allow more growth, encourage more housing, but also set height limits that will be less detrimental to character of the district. We hope the Department of City Planning will look closely at these plans and alter their current proposal and we can get this done and move the district into the future.

From: [Daniel Cohen](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please approve the SoHo rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:44:39 AM

Hi, I'm a resident of Manhattan and I'd like you to approve the SoHo rezoning. We have a severe housing shortage, and it's completely unethical that the zoning code bans new housing anywhere in NYC, much less in a wealthy, transit-rich neighborhood like SoHo. The rezoning only modestly scales back the zoning code's existing ban on new housing, but even so, every little bit helps.

Thank you,
Daniel Cohen

From: [David Araki](#)
To: [Speaker Corey Johnson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City Council Must Vote Down the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Monday, November 1, 2021 8:42:05 PM

Dear Council Member Johnson,

Please vote NO on the Soho Soho Chinatown Upzoning plan. I've attended a couple of the public hearings and clearly the people arguing for this plan are representing developers who only care to have their developments approved and receive some sort of tax benefits. Their claims of creating economic diversity are misleading because MOST of their apartments will be higher rental units, and even the so called low-rent units will be a mix of below median, median, and ABOVE median rents. The NUMBER of units available are only a small number of units, so the real benefits do NOT go to the public or displaced residents, but to the developers.

It's pretty clear that the developers are pushing hard to get this opportunity to make THEIR money, and it seems clear that anyone who is allowing this process to occur must not be on the side of the people of downtown.

Regards,
David Araki
64 Thompson St
New York, NY 10012

From: [David Jarrett](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 12:29:55 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
David Jarrett
225 E 46th St
New York, NY 10017

From: [David Rosenberg](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:10:15 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

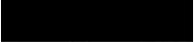
Regards,
David Rosenberg
210 6th Ave
New York, NY 10014

From: [Deanna Wallach](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:46:46 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Deanna Wallach

Brooklyn, NY 11216

From: [Debbie Glasserman](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:27:03 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Debbie Glasserman
24 E 7th St
New York, NY 10003

From: [Deborah Kadetsky](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 6:50:00 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Deborah Kadetsky
111 4th Ave
New York, NY 10003

From: [Debra Jabbari](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:02:39 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Debra Jabbari
77 Charlton St
New York, NY 10014

From: [Diana Kurz](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho/Noho / Chinatown up zoning proposal
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 10:17:55 PM

Hello,

I am writing task you to please reject Mayor de Blasio's Soho/Noho / Chinatown up zoning proposal.

As a 50 year resident in one of the original artist co-ops in Soho I am aghast at this plan which would ruin the unique character of the area.

I am especially troubled by the proposed punitivr flip tax on artist-residents, but no tax on commercial owners. , and the possible proliferation of big box stores, the resulting gentrification of the neighborhood and the many other points roubleingcurrent residents of the area of which i am sure you are aware.

So in sum, I am asking you to please use your vote to defeat this proposed plan which woud sureyhaveaverynegtiveimpacton theneighborhood.

Thank youu ,
Sincerly,,
Diana Kurz

dianakurzart@gmail.com
www.dianakurz.com

From: [Doug Smith](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 2:19:07 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Doug Smith
260 E 10th St
New York, NY 10009

From: [Tom LaGatta](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dr. Tom LaGatta Testimony Against SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Luxury Development Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:55:45 AM

Dear Land Use Committee and City Council Members,

My name is Dr. Tom LaGatta, and I am an Executive Member of the Downtown Independent Democrats and a co-representative from DID to the Chinatown Working Group. I am a former resident of Greenwich Village and Chinatown, and an active Democratic County Committee member from the Lower East Side in Council District 1.

I personally live outside of the direct SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown rezoning impact area. However, my neighbors in Chinatown and the Lower East Side are very concerned about the speculative impact of this zoning plan on our districts, which will cause displacement, and increase rents and property taxes. My neighbors say we should build affordable housing on public land like 5 World Trade Center, and convert empty commercial storefronts to affordable housing, not subsidize luxury developments filled with 80% wealthy, mostly white residents. If the City really wants diversity and affordable housing, then we should eminent domain luxury properties and replace them with NYCHA housing.

We should support and cultivate community-led zoning plans, such as the SoHo/NoHo Alternative Community Plan and the Chinatown Working Group Plan. My neighbors and I are excited for Christopher Marte's win in District 1, and we look forward to pivoting away from pro-development policies toward community-led plans.

We ask that the current and future Council Members vote no on this plan.

Thank you,
Dr. Tom LaGatta

Executive Member, Downtown Independent Democrats
DID Co-Representative to the Chinatown Working Group
Democratic County Committee Member, AD 65 ED 76

From: [Elena Alexander](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:10:22 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Elena Alexander
103 Bowery
New York, NY 10002

From: [Elena Sytcheva](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo Testimony - Supportive of SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 2:16:40 PM

Chair Moya and Members of the NYC Council Subcommittee on Zoning & Franchises,

My name is Elena Sytcheva and I am a lifelong resident of New York City. I am providing written testimony in support of the SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan application. This rezoning would be a significant step in making New York City more equitable. As you are aware, the City has an affordable housing and homelessness crisis. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, 45% of NYC renters were rent burdened. While the eviction moratorium and emergency rental assistance have helped curb an uptick in evictions since the pandemic, NYC faces a massive housing crisis when these protections expire.

New affordable housing is desperately needed especially in wealthy, high-opportunity neighborhoods such as SoHo/NoHo. According to NYC demographic data, the rezoning area is 77% white, compared to 32% of the City as a whole. In addition, median household income in this area is approximately \$140,000, more than twice the household income of the City as a whole. This rezoning would provide approximately 900 new affordable units in this area. Approving a rezoning in this neighborhood is critical to stem residential segregation in New York City.

I would strongly encourage the City to incentivize more affordable housing in this Neighborhood Plan. Specifically, the City should modify this application to lower the commercial densities. This modification would incentivize mixed-income housing over additional office space. This is key to providing more housing for the most vulnerable New Yorkers.

Thank you for holding this important hearing and allowing me to submit testimony. I strongly encourage the Council to vote "Yes" on this important application.

Sincerely,
Elena Sytcheva

--

Elena Sytcheva
ElenaSytch@gmail.com

From: [Elizabeth Weatherford](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 9:30:09 AM

Dear Speaker Johnson and Council Members:

In the year before the Pandemic an unexpected process was launched by the city to change the zoning in SoHo/NoHo and adjacent Chinatown housing, and despite their protestations that they consulted the neighborhood, a plan has been issued and endorsed by Mayor de Blasio--and now his City Planning board--that in no way reflects any thoughtful approach to these neighborhoods, that incomprehensibly seems to be oblivious to the fact that this is a city that at this moment has the advantage of diverse neighborhoods with their potential for uniqueness, beauty, and even quirkiness--what draws us, citizens and visitors alike, to relish the urban environment.

I am writing because of my distress. I have lived in a loft on Spring St with my late artist husband for about 50 years, and we have spent much time and resources on maintaining our old building for our present, and for the city's future. SoHo was then a place of great discovery and still is. I fear for the current city politicians' ham-fisted approach that neither takes care of this valuable history, nor actually does the "good" it purports to be aiming for--when the proposed plan is read carefully, there is no actual commitment made in the document to really provide affordable housing.

Worst of all is to ignore what the neighborhood has proven. Instead of making the commitment to enhance small enterprises and affordable housing using the buildings there in imaginative and productive ways, they want to build up higher than feasible, or tear down and expand. What's even more puzzling is that the narrow streets don't permit the kind of trucks and so forth that multiple Target-like stores would need for their merchandise. The sewer system? And...well there are so many flaws.

I worked for nearly 30 years in the Old US Custom House which, in the early 1970s when Customs moved to the World Trade Center, was slated for replacement by an office building, and it was Brendan Gill and Daniel Patrick Moynihan who stopped this. I don't know who has the cultural clout of these two proponents of the beautiful city now, but it's obvious these real estate people are taking advantage of the distraction all of us have felt during the time of Covid-to burst their way in. Our major political representatives have advocated against the upzoning plan, from our neighborhood associations through the Community Board through our City Council member right up to the Borough President. And we had thought that Broome St. Expressway was over and done with for the right reasons, and due to the urban

intelligence of Jane Jacobs with her ideas about livable cities, was victorious....

The beautiful neighborhood with its interesting buildings and near-mythic story has been a real draw for the world, good for the city, and a paradigm for creatively and respectfully repurposing old urban industrial sectors which has been copied all over the world. (Also the sleight of hand about affordable housing in the rezoning plan-- they say that's a major reason for changes, but they have actually promised nothing. And Chinatown associations are NOT for this, supposed "benefit" seeing how it will harm that residential population. So the public good is not being served either.)

I wanted to raise the alarm on behalf of a more creative and constructive way to keep SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown alive. It feels like the city wants to wipe our viable neighborhood out, as well as the history it has maintained, and turn it into just a copy of all the other avenues in the city.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Weatherford
115 Spring St.

From: [Ellen Kozak](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#); [Chin](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo rezoning plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:35:45 PM

Dear City Councilors and Councilwoman Chin,

As a resident of SoHo for thirty-six years I want to submit my concerns regarding the Mayor's plan for my upzoning in SoHo.

The first thing that the city planners need to recognize is that SoHo is a neighborhood where families live, children play and grow up. In this way it is just like any number of blocks in New York's resident neighborhoods. As a neighborhood it is also like neighborhoods everywhere. People live here. The mayor's plan is incompatible with the very basic quality of life that residents are entitled to. In recent years, as the area is marketed as a "Shopping District", new commercial development has dramatically altered our streets, congestion, noise levels and population density.

Please think of how you would feel if across the street from your home, a night club that begins having acts start at 11:00 PM and go until 3:00 or 4:00 AM. This is happening now and it is already a very very serious quality of life issue. We can not take this as it is now. People cannot sleep, residents are suffering, elderly neighbors are distraught.

We do not want our streets filled with shoppers, consumers, endless diners... you get the picture. THIS IS A NEIGHBORHOOD. FAMILIES MATTER. In my household we have a disabled family member who has trouble walking along Lafayette Street where crowds of people shopping make walking dangerous. The Mayor's plan is on the way to destroying our neighborhood. The escalation in commercial activity up to this point is already untenable and becoming unlivable.

The SoHo rezoning plan has been reasonably reviewed by Greenwich Village Society for Historical Preservation. I have attended every meeting out of deep concern for the neighborhood I've lived in for thirty-five years. This Society represents residents, they represent my family, the needs of my neighborhood and the rights of SoHo citizens. It is an honest assessment of the claims that the Mayor's plan makes.

- 1) There is no reason to fast track the Mayor's plan and ignore the residents' overwhelming rejection of it. The claims of affordable housing are specious and false. The goal of economic diversity is based on untested and faulty assumptions about development in Lower Manhattan. Actual "affordable" housing for our neighborhoods is not guaranteed. Instead there will be a massive increase in what we already have enough of: luxury dwellings.
- 2) This plan proposes nearly a 50% increase in population for the neighborhoods with

no accompanying infrastructure or improvements. How would you like this to be imposed on YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. Private property owners need to be respectful of where New York families live and need to be respectful of the quality of life this neighborhood needs, for our families and children. We will get No Parks, No Schools, No Hospitals. Why? Because there is no City-owned land here on which to build. The Mayor's Plan is dependent upon the whims of private property owners, the dismantling of reasonable regulations and an unfettered real estate market. The "end benefits" to the community don't exist, and what are labeled as such are an illusion.

3) The Mayor's Plan DOES NOT WORK. Approving this sweeping proposal, especially in the final days of the administration of Mayor de Blasio (who will soon be gone, and cannot be held responsible for its efficacy), would further impair our quality of life all across the community, and destroy these unique neighborhoods.

The Mayor's Plan encourages oversized retail development, big box destination, retail, eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size and open-air, disruptive "entertainment" installations on roof-tops.

The City dangles a false "solution" for residents (aka the "mechanism") which purports to allow coop and condo owners to convert JLWQA (Joint-live-work-quarters-for-artists) units into ordinary residential units. The city proposes this as "pathway to legalization" for residential owners, including those owning coop and condo units. They also claim this will add resale value to these units. But the details have neither been adequately examined nor clarified by the Department of Buildings.

In fact, it is nearly impossible to convert most of these buildings from manufacturing Use to residential Use, as the requirements for the building codes are different and incompatible. Even where possible, such building conversions would require a massive outlay of funds and the likely evacuation of the building as conversion work is performed.

The City's plan would impose a punitive and excessively high tax on artists who wish to sell their homes of \$100 per square foot. The City claims that money will be used as the sole financing source for a hazily-described "Artist Fund." But, as noted, **the conversion plan doesn't work**, so few will use that option. Meaning few will pay the fee. So the convoluted "Artist Fund" won't be funded. **Any implied "benefit" disappears.**

The Plan puts a target on existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood, including loft board protected tenants, providing a strong economic incentive for its demolition, and the **displacement** of its residents. The plan carelessly increases the opportunities for **tenant harassment**. Many of those who will be targeted are long-time residents who built these neighborhoods, and are now **senior citizens, aging in place.**

The Plan does not guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will be built. Rather development, construction and conversion favoring new office space is prioritized.

The Plan favors commercial property owners, providing a gift of value through the increase in Floor Area Ratio (FAR). That newly-granted FAR can be traded, transferred, borrowed against and sold, creating a casino all across and around SoHo & NoHo. The **FAR increase allows for 200+ Foot Towers to rise** within and around the historic districts, and across the neighborhoods.

The Mayor's Plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings The Plan from DCP serves the goals of political donors, especially the deep money of big real estate, by undermining and dismantling long-established NYC Landmark protections.

Yours sincerely,

Ellen Kozak, 284 Lafayette Street 

From: [Ellen Leon](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:28:56 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Ellen Leon
34 E 10th St
New York, NY 10003

About SoHo/ NoHo/Chinatown

At the very beginning the organizers and planners of the SoHo and NoHo re-zoning meetings had little to practically no idea that indeed artist live in these communities and because of them the areas are world famous. Not only do artists and their families live in SoHo and NoHo many have been living there for decades. The galleries had first brought scores of "art Lovers" and soon thereafter commercial business and real estate interests began to open stores and buy buildings. Broadway SoHo is now filled with international clothing and shoe stores, although recently some major corporations have left or gone out of business.

During my many years involved in artist housing two politicians have shown real support to the areas—they are former mayor Robert Wagner, councilwoman Miriam Freidlander, and former Commissioner, Robert Wagner, Jr.

I would also like to clear-up two misunderstandings. First, AIR only refers to two residential units in a building. At the time City officials told the artists that the TWO were for the FDNY department, because they might be unable to rescue more than TWO. At the time, the artist community went along with this nonsense not realizing that apartment building fires demand rescue of many more than TWO tenants. Subsequently, more than TWO might constitute IMD units. Ironically those landlords that allowed, at that time illegally, more than TWO came under the Loft Law in 1981.

I will agree that SoHo as an artist only community should be changed, particularly since so many non-artists live in both SoHo and NoHo. The Loft Law says, essentially artists, and others. On the other hand, real estate brokers have told potential residences that the area is zoned for live-work. One can live work anywhere particularly these

days when many people work at home. The City has ignored the SoHo/NoHo artist only registration and now NYC will be the only city in the Western World to destroy the artist communities

But, New York City lags behind other large cities in Europe and South American in providing alternative spaces for artists. Indeed, there is not a city in Europe that would disrupt an artist community. It is clear, the artist communities, visual, dance, music, and theater are the major draw of tourists and the economic viability of New York City. When artists leave New York culture dies, and the city will suffer.

The crux of this is to say that if the FAR, and Up-Zoning in SoHo and NoHo increase, and if the real estate industry begins to build over and under existing buildings, SoHo and NoHo will be no more. The communities who now suffering by noise, trucks, tourist busses, lack of sidewalk space, trees, and gardens will continue to suffer, particularly by noise and dust of new construction—Tell me where in SoHo or NoHo gardens or parks will be built?.

. The zoning of the two areas is a bit different. I live in NoHo. So where will the housing be built, and it seems obvious that they will be on top of the existing loft buildings which will bring havoc to the loft dwellers, and additional overcrowding, and tourism. The City had no idea who lived in SoHo and the first meeting about 5 years ago was held in public school in Chinatown with three seats, and several hundred people attended, mostly older artists, who were incensed over the rezoning plan. In subsequent meetings at the Municipal Building. I spoke with those who was running the meeting to ask the people who gathered when they moved into Soho; overwhelmingly most hands went up when asked how many have been living there 35 or more years. The city planner had no idea about this fact. The real estate industry has ignored this fact, that SoHo is zoned for artists only. Indeed, there are not even many trees in SoHo, it is not easy for

children to play. NoHo is zoned for artists and others. This is another long problem of enforcing zoning rules, but rather than understanding the role that the arts play positively on our economy, my belief is, the real estate industry was initially behind this rezoning, and low income was added recently.

A so-called expert on WYNC said there were 8,000 people in Soho. The two areas have more than 25,000. Do you realize how disrupted it will be to add loud and costly construction on top of existing lofts?

The amount of mis-information, at various zoom meetings is astounding. The City reps were very cool and sounded nice to be sure. They might have said in the very beginning that loft dwellers under the Loft Law residences are protected. The speakers made it sound as if the Dept. of Cultural Affairs was responsible for lack of evictions. Artists don't need to be or want to be patronized. The first meeting in a Public School in Chinatown had maybe 3 or 4 chairs. The artists were angry. We still are. While Mayor Bloomberg brought bicycles and places to sit in the City, making our town more livable; there are no parks in SoHo/NoHo and no playgrounds, yet let's make room for more people. At one meeting a few years back, I sat next to a real estate agent, she was an immigrant from Eastern Europe and wanted the City to develop new housing in Brooklyn and Queens. Several years ago, MoMA had an exhibition of needs for more housing among some of the big cities around the world. New York City has vacant 3 and 4 story buildings mostly in Brooklyn. The idea that artists when selling their lofts or non-artists must pay a \$100 per square foot is madness as is combining Chinatown.

Very truly yours,

Elliott Barowitz

330 Lafayette Street, NYC 10012

From: [Frank DeGregorie](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:03:35 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Frank DeGregorie
80 Wooster St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Frederick Doner](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please add this written testimony to public comments for today's subcommittee meeting on zoning hearing
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 7:26:15 PM

Thank you,

Frederick Doner

Testimony delivered by Fred Doner at the NYC Subcommittee on Zoning Hearing, 11/9/21

Hello, I am Fred Doner, a long-time live-work resident of SoHo. And a board member of our five-building co-op, 515 Broadway Corp, which maintains an excellent balance between, and respect for our residential and commercial co-op owners. In the late 50's/early 60's a New York developer promised Mayor Wagner that he could prove Greenwich Village was a slum in order to qualify for 80% Federal funding for "Urban Renewal." He would have knocked down most of the historic residences and stores we now know as Greenwich Village today. The visionary Jane Jacobs sent a photographer to City Hall, who took a picture of a letter from that developer to the mayor making this promise. She then released that letter to the press, and the plan died. There would be no Greenwich Village as we know it today if it weren't for Jane exposing this lie.

The current rezoning of SoHo/NoHo and Chinatown is also based on a huge lie.

The main lie, has already been well defined by many articulate speakers. It is not all about Affordable Housing, it is a land grab by the development community, and supported by organizations and individuals that are backed by large development money who have recruited and helped script some of the people who spoke for this plan today. I know, because one of my family members was called by a developer's PR firm to have her "testify."

If you want to confirm this lie, vote for it. On the other hand, if you really believe this is about creating 400-600 affordable units, which I wholeheartedly support, **there is good news:**

This year the Pritzker Prize in architecture was given to the firm Locatan & Vassal. They excel in creating affordable housing out of existing office, industrial and retail buildings. SoHo can add 400-600 affordable units without building six or more mid-to-high-end residential high rises, unlimited big box stores, hotels or dormitories that are only a gift to big developers and have nothing to do with affordable housing.

Send this plan back today and **invite the many architects who specialize in the "adaptive reuse" practice, to compete to deliver Affordable Housing in quantity via existing**

structures and new structures on empty lots...without the high-end residential high-rises that are only intended as a gift to developers and would destroy NoHo, Chinatown and SoHo....NYC's cultural and retail magnet for the world.

Please vote no, and send this plan back for one based on the truth.

Frederick Doner

94 Mercer Street, ■

New York, NY 10012

From: [Genevieve Thornton](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:39:16 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Genevieve Thornton
1 Morton St
New York, NY 10014

From: [George Stirling](#)
To: [Speaker Corey Johnson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho Rezoning
Date: Monday, November 1, 2021 8:16:09 PM

Please don't vote for the above rezoning – this is a neighborhood rich with history, retail businesses and uniqueness that attract locals and tourists from all over, as well as nightlife that make New York City a special place for all. Rezoning to allow more density in an already crowded area, along with the lack of additional drain of municipal services, would serve only to enrich hit and run developers.

Thank you for hearing me out on this, as well as your many years of service to New York City.

Sincerely,

George Stirling
77 Seventh Avenue
New York, N. Y. 10011

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Gilda Pervin](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 2:30:35 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Gilda Pervin
134 Bowery
New York, NY 10013

From: [Giorgio Bovenzi](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NoHo-SoHo Upzoning Plan — VOTE NO
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 3:41:29 PM

I urge the Councilmembers to vote NO, for the following reasons:

1. It's a giant giveaway to developers, many of whom are De Blasio donors who lobbied relentlessly for this.
2. It would allow development up to 2 1/2 times the size current rules allow.
3. The City says it will result in 3.8 mil sq ft of new development, but would actually allow well over 10 mil sq ft of new development in rezoning area, or nearly four Empire State Buildings, most of which is unaccounted for in their environmental analysis.
4. It will incentivize the demolition of many of the well over 600 units of rent regulated and loft law affordable housing, which are disproportionately occupied by lower income, artist, and Asian American residents, and disproportionately located in the areas with the greatest proposed upzonings which create the greatest incentives for demolition.
5. It will likely add pressure for "secondary displacement" of thousands more residents of rent regulated affordable units in the immediately surrounding area, which are even more disproportionately Asian American and lower income
6. The plan is likely to result in little or no new affordable housing due to multiple loopholes which have no affordable housing requirements — office, hotel, or other commercial space, retail space, and any community facility space for institutions like NYU, as well as luxury condo space of 25K sq ft or less per zoning lot are all EXEMPTED
7. The plan allows developers to build as much or more market-rate space WITHOUT affordable housing as they can if they do include affordable housing, on EVERY site where the City says

affordable housing will be built, thus making affordable housing construction highly unlikely and INCENTIVIZING building without it.

8. Even if new developments are built as the City predicts with 70-75% luxury condos and 25-30% “affordable housing,” these developments will overall actually be more expensive, and house wealthier and less diverse residents, than the current neighborhood overall, making for a less equitable, less affordable neighborhood.
9. The plan would allow unlimited NYU expansion into area, violating NYU 2031 expansion plan agreements which were supposed to limit the university’s expansion.
10. The plan would allow new construction which is more than two and a half times the size of the average existing building in the neighborhood.
11. The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings recognized as city, state, and national landmarks.
12. The plan is opposed by leading citywide and statewide housing and tenant groups, city, state, and national preservation organizations, environmental groups, and Chinatown groups.
13. It would help push out longtime artist residents of neighborhood as well as arts groups and businesses
14. It would allow the proliferation of huge big box chain stores as well as bars, pushing out longtime smaller independent businesses and destroying quality of life.
15. Three things which residents and community groups consistently said during the “public engagement” process they did not want in any plan for the neighborhood — Upzoning, Big Box Chain Stores, and allowance for NYU Expansion — are the cornerstones of this plan
16. Over a dozen community and tenant groups have offered a community alternative rezoning plan which would allow construction of true, more deeply and broadly affordable housing, without tenant displacement, out-of-scale development, and without big box chain stores forcing out local businesses.

Thank you!

Giorgio Bovenzi
25 East 4th Street
New York NY 10003

Giorgio Bovenzi

Sent from my iPad. Please excuse typos or abruptness. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender.

From: [Giorgio Bovenzi](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 4:27:28 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Giorgio Bovenzi
25 E 4th St
New York, NY 10003

From: [Glenda White](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 3:25:51 AM

To the City Council:

I beg, implore, pray and strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. This has already happened in many instances, making SoHo lose all the uniqueness it once had. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, which tourists from around the world come to see and enjoy. It will allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. PLEASE ...Vote no.

Regards,
Glenda White
31 Mercer St
New York, NY 10013

From: [GRACE YOUNG](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho/Noho Upzoning Council member hearing testimony
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 4:35:54 PM

Dear Council Memberes,
My husband Michael Wiertz and I have lived in Soho since 1990 on Thompson St.

The development plans proposed for Soho/Noho/Chinatown are a harm to the community. This plan will not increase affordable housing. It will destroy these historic neighborhoods and is intended to help real estate speculators and developers profit at the harm of our residents.

Please vote NO on this plan.
Thank you!
Best wishes,
Grace Young

From: [Gunnar Wilbert](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:13:14 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Gunnar Wilbert
101 Thompson St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Hawkins Entrekin](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho rezoning testimony
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:59:39 AM

Hello, I live very close by over in west village. The reality is NYC desperately needs more housing, and its only fair if wealthy and white areas like Soho are part of the new construction process. We need new housing built across the city, not just in LIC or Hudson Yards. New construction will reduce upward pressure on rents, and allow thousands of more families to live in Manhattan. Manhattan is one of the best places in the world for additional density - its the most transit rich part of America, and arguably also the greenest place for new construction to occur due to its densities.

If anything I think this upzoning doesn't go far enough in allowing new densities, but I'll take what I can get in terms of new construction here in Manhattan. The biggest issue with this is the allocation towards commercial space is probably too high - more residential is better as that is where people are struggling. Everyone needs to do their part to fight housing costs by encouraging more construction to occur. Thank you,

-Hawkins

From: [Helen Michalis](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:11:12 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Helen Michalis


Locust Valley, NY 11560

From: [Holly R](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposing The Mayor's plan to Up-Zone SoHo, NoHo & Chinatown
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 1:22:29 PM

Oppose this sweeping proposal. If approved it would destroy this historic neighborhood and provide **no community benefits**. Giving more leverage to developers with limited (if any) benefit to New Yorkers is not why you were voted into office. As Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer said: "While the city's need for affordable housing is massive and all neighborhoods should contribute to helping to increase it, we need to do better than this proposal."

- **The plan puts a target on existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood, including loft board protected tenants**, providing a strong economic incentive for its demolition and the displacement of its residents. The plan greatly increases incentives for, and the likelihood of, harassment of tenants.
- **The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings** recognized at the city, state, and federal level.
- **The plan would encourage and allow oversized development** in the historic district. It would allow a broad range of uses, especially **big box destination chain retail** with no community input for special permits. It would issue in **huge NYU dorms** and **eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size**.

Sincerely,
Holly Rothkopf
New York, NY

From: [Isabel Sole](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:08:54 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Isabel Sole
143 Greene St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Jack Barth](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 4:05:09 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Jack Barth
472 Broome St
New York, NY 10012

From: [James Young](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho NoHo Rezoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:20:44 AM

Council Members,

As an owner and resident of a SoHo A.I.R building since 1997, I would like to state my firm opposition to the proposed changes to SoHo zoning. Strict enforcement of the existing regulations would do far more to provide thousands of units of affordable housing than these unasked for changes.

Thank you for listening to my concerns,

James Young
523 Broadway

Sent from my iPhone

From: [jane swavely](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:46:00 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
jane swavely
280 Bowery
New York, NY 10012

From: [Janina Quint](#)
To: chin@council.nyc.gov; [District2](#); [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] JWLQ issue NOHO/SOHO
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:49:14 PM

I am not sure that the latest proposal from our councillors deals with the JWLQ issue in an adequate way.

For almost 30 years I have been living in 3 different AIR buildings. Years ago I was an independent documentary film maker, but I am not sure I would still qualify for an AIR certificate. In fact most people I know in AIR buildings today don't qualify because life is continuously evolving: couples get divorced, people change careers, or the next generation moves in and is no longer following a traditional artistic path.

Today people living in these buildings work in many creative fields: fashion, digital design, chefs, book designers, human rights lawyers, art dealers, architects, artists working on laptops (no need for studio space). How do you define an artist in this day and age?

Noho is my neighborhood, it is the home of our three children who grew up on these streets. Over the years we paid a small fortune to keep our historic building up to code and preserve it for future generations; we support the last hardware stores, restaurants and small businesses. Your proposal, such as enforcing monthly fines for non AIR residents, seems to penalize a core but vital group of residents in Soho/Noho. We might be forced to sell our homes to a so called artist — somebody an AIR committee approves as a worthy human to purchase our homes.

It seems to me that the JWLQ stipulation has become an antiquated concept and is the wrong avenue to solve the desire to create affordable housing.

Kind
Janina
27 Great Jones St

wishes,
Quint

From: [Jean Standish](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 2:01:19 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Jean Standish
308 E 6th St
New York, NY 10003

From: [Jeffrey Hannon](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:30:50 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. As an independent real estate broker I know how valuable our historic built environment is in downtown Manhattan. I also know that building more sub-par glass box high rise buildings will hurt our community and only make a few very big real estate developers a lot of money. We need more courageous electeds to regulate the rental market and then we can actually get to work building new and investing in our existing affordable housing such as rent stabilized and controlled apartments and NYCHA. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Jeffrey Hannon
125 Washington Pl
New York, NY 10014

From: [Jen Gatien](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] opposing the upzoning plan -- please vote no
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 8:39:09 AM

I am an artist who participated in Gale Brewer's study on the impact up zoning would have on Noho and Soho.

As a lifelong New Yorker in the arts, the integrity of our neighborhood is what makes it so distinct by keeping the developers from demolition of historic buildings and not having it resemble a mall.

Please know that your vote means everything to keeping Soho and Noho a place that protects artists.

thank you

Jen Gatien

<http://www.deerjen.com>

From: [John Keith](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:32:53 PM

To the City Council:

Please vote no on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan.

I have lived in SoHo for 50 years, drawn by the artistic possibilities offered by living and working in a loft space, as well as by the distinctive beauty of the architecture, and the unique, gritty quality of this industrial neighborhood. While much of that is gone now, it remains a real, palpable and valuable reminder of our common heritage, of the historical importance of the few remaining neighborhoods like Chinatown, SoHo and NoHo, and the essential importance of not smothering and burying them in new, characterless development. These neighborhoods are us! they are the heart and soul of a city, and they not only deserve, but demand to be preserved as living, vital parts of this city's cultural heritage.

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% "affordable" housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the "affordable" ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
John Keith
16 Crosby St
New York, NY 10013

From: [John Powell](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho/Chinatown/Noho "Up-zoning"
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:15:21 PM

Councilmember Chin,

I am writing as a property owner in Soho in strong opposition to the proposed "up-zoning" plan. The plan is deeply flawed and should not be passed.

The plan would dramatically change the neighborhoods for the worse. Historic buildings would be sacrificed for towers that reduce visible sky and sunlight. Greater residential density and greatly increased retail footage will swamp already stressed sidewalks and transit. Rents will rise and there will likely be a net decrease in affordable housing. The quality and diversity of life in the neighborhood will suffer... etc., etc. as well and repeatedly stated by an overwhelming majority of residents.

Somehow, monied real estate interests have convinced politicians that greater and greater density development will solve our problems. It hasn't and won't if done like this... simply layered onto infrastructure that was put in place to serve very different conditions.

Thank you,
John Powell

From: [Josh Friedman](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 4:11:26 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Josh Friedman
4003 Prescott Ave
Dallas, TX 75219

From: [joyce.p.schwartz](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [District2](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] re: I am against Soho, Noho current upzoning fiasco
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 4:44:09 PM

DEAR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS,

As a native New Yorker who has lived in three boroughs over time, raised 3 sons, 2 who still live here, and 5 grandchildren who live in Brooklyn and Manhattan with their significant others...

I have lived in Midtown Manhattan since 1974 and have seen what over-development has done to our livable midtown neighborhood, best known for world class music, dance and the visual arts for many, many years.

Importantly is the loss of affordable housing for theater, music and arts workers is GONE..

Affordable housing for doorman, housekeepers.etcetera who lived on Lexington Avenue is....GONE

Mom and Pop special businesses..GONE.

Drugstores... ALL GONE..... CVS AND DUANE READE does NOT DO IT for us as small pharmacists did!!!

MUCH NEEDED AFFORDABLE HOUSING.....ALL GONE, GONE GONE...

I WENT THROUGH THOSE YEARS WHEN BANKS AND AIRLINES TOOK OVER RETAIL MIDTOWN SHOPPING.

IT CAME BACK, BRIEFLY, DUE TO SENSIBLE MIXED USE HOUSING AND URBAN PLANNING .

.....**THEN CAME THE MEGA, MEGA DEVELOPERS MIDTOWN**

I VISIT FRIENDS AND ARTISTS, AND SHOP STORES IN SOHO AND NOHO AND DINE IN RESTAURANTS IN CHINATOWN.

DO NOT RUIN SOHO & NOHO WITH UNNECESSARY HI RISES FOR PEOPLE WHO DONOT LIVE, SHOP OR VISIT NEW YORK'S VITAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

I WILL BE HAPPY TO SHOW YOU AROUND TO SEE WHAT ABNORMAL HI-RISES

HAVE DONE TO OUR UNIQUE MIDTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD.

...SAVE SOHO. NOHO AND CHINATOWN FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN....AND SERIOUS TOURISTS AND ARTS LOVERS.

..... WITH GOOD SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND MEANINGFUL URBANISM..

WE DONOT NEED MEGA,MEGA DEVELOPMENT IN SOHO +ONLY FOR THE DEVELOPERS GAIN ...AND ABSENT OUT OF TOWNERS.....

WE NEED OUR CITY OFFICIALS TO BE GOOD SHEPHERDS OF OUR INCREDIBLE LIVABLE CITY...NOT DESTROYERS KFOR THEIR PERSONAL GAIN.

THANK YOU.

Joyce Pomeroy Schwartz
Rockefeller Apts
17 West 54th Street
New York, NY 10019
212 245 6468

jpsartwork@icloud.com

From: [juan corradi](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ZONING PROPOSAL FOR SOHO
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 7:39:09 AM

To the Honorable Council Member Chin:

As a SOHO neighbour and property owner, I strongly oppose the re-zoning proposal; before the City Council, for the following reasons:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The city proposes a false “solution”

for residents to allow coop and condo owners to convert Joint-live-work-quarters-for-artists units into ordinary residential units. Even where possible, which is doubtful, such building conversions would require a massive outlay of funds, plus total evacuation of the building during renovation, and it would be subject to contradictory codes.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The plan would impose an excessively high tax on artists who wish to sell their homes of \$100 per square foot. The City says that money will be used as the sole financing source for a hazily-described “Artist Fund.” In fact, such fund will not be funded and the benefit will disappear.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The plan puts a target on existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood,

including loft board protected tenants, providing a strong economic incentive for its demolition and the displacement of its residents. It I also a green light for the harassment of existing tenants, with the goal of demolition, as we have seen in other parts of the City.

• The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings recognized at the city, state, and federal level. For a shocking visual presentation of 29 buildings slated for demolition or construction in the SoHo National Historic District: <https://tinyurl.com/ymur44zb>

• The plan would encourage and allow oversized development in the historic district., and encourage big retail business, huge NYU dorms, and unlimited size in amenities. In short, a disaster in favor of big interests with no regard for history and community.

• It is a disastrous proposal that must be rejected.

Respectfully yours,

Juan E. Corradi

Professor Emeritus

New York Universty

juancorradi@gmail.com

From: [Judy Cacase](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:35:17 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Judy Cacase
36 E 10th St
New York, NY 10003

From: [K Webster](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony on the Soho Noho Rezoning: FOR
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 12:47:38 PM

To the NYC City Council and CM Chin and CM Rivera:

Please pass the Soho/Noho rezoning.

Reasons:

1) My Community Board 2, through gentrification, has essentially become a community segregated from most of the city by race and class. Not through evil intentions, but by the steady attrition of our low-income communities and/or communities of color and a failure to act to preserve and create affordable housing.

Citywide, All Community Board's averaged 3,040 units preserved or built - my own Manhattan Community Board 2's average was 293 units (since 2014).*

We have lost our diversity and our welcome in this historically immigrant community. We need to take big, bold efforts to change this.

2) There are sites that are prime for development right now in Soho. Even if this zoning doesn't change, something is going to get built in the many sites over the coming decades as the city changes. For example: a 20 story office tower planned for 4th and Bowery in Noho is going up as an out-of-context, very tall, glass building. There are vacant and underbuilt sites *outside* the historic district that will get built on. The issue is how best to shape the future of Soho/Noho to promote the mixed income housing, and preserve live works spaces and arts.

3) The Statistics (from Citizens Housing Planning Council)*

% White Non-Hispanic: SoHo/NoHo: 78% Manhattan: 48% NYC: 32%

%Homeowners: SoHo/NoHo: 40% Manhattan: 21% NYC: 33%

Median HH Income: SoHo/NoHo: \$144,500 Manhattan: 79,800 NYC: \$64,000

“After Gowanus, SoHo/NoHo would be only the second high-income, majority White neighborhood rezoned under the Mayor’s Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH) program, and it is still unclear if the administration will be able to complete the Gowanus rezoning in time. Critics of MIH have argued that its sole application to low-income communities of color has exacerbated gentrification within them and failed to create new housing opportunities or housing mobility for existing residents. Unlike in all the other neighborhoods rezoned under MIH, the program’s application to SoHo/ NoHo would create new opportunities for low-income households to live in a neighborhood they would otherwise be excluded from.”

Affordable Units Created & Preserved Since 2014:

Citywide Community Board Average 3,040 Units

All Manhattan CB Average: 3,982 Units

Manhattan CB2 Average: 293

Manhattan CB7 Average: 2,475

4) If possible, please add any remaining Cooper Square Committee recommendations that would give greater protection to tenants already in affordable housing.

But, *even* if imperfect, this neighborhood, in these times, has to make our own efforts to shift this issue.

- MIH with more modest upzonings ranging from 7.2 to 8.5 FAR (floor area ratio) in some sub-areas, not the 9.7 to 12.0 FAR that the city is proposing.
- CSC also believes the city must do better than the usual 80/20 income mix for market-rate and affordable housing. Income mixes ranging from 75/25 for smaller development sites up to 60/40 for the largest sites are feasible given the high market-rate rents (median of \$4,700 per month) in these two communities.
- MIH at 5.0 FAR in the Soho Historic District core (in agreement with Village Preservation about this).
- Contextual zoning districts with height limits ranging from 145 feet to 175 feet.
- **Anti-demolition and anti-harassment provisions in the zoning text.**
- **Funding for tenant-rights organizations like AAFE and CAAAV** to do outreach and organizing to prevent harassment and displacement of tenants, especially monolingual Chinese American tenants, in upzoned areas outside the historic districts. This is crucial to enforce the anti-harassment provisions.
- Implementation of a flip tax for conversions of **Joint Live Work Quarters for Artists (JLWQA)** units to residential to generate more than \$100 million to fund the arts in Soho/Noho over the next 20 years and beyond, and to provide a subsidy to residential developers willing to do better than the minimum 75/25 income mix.
- A small zoning bonus for creation of new cultural spaces.
- Ground-floor Use Group 6 retail as of right (currently not allowed by zoning) throughout Soho and Noho, with some low-impact retail uses allowed on upper floors.
- Along Broadway and Lafayette St., Use Group 10 (large-scale retail) should also be allowed as of right (on the second floor and below).

And last, personally, having experienced meetings where:

-a neighborhood's contribution to the desperate need for affordable housing was rebutted by the reasoning of the prior contribution of SoHo's Belgian Blocks to the City,

-the creation of senior (truly) affordable housing with 30% of units for formerly homeless elders and the need to reimagine/rebuild a garden was characterized as "ethnic cleansing" (to applause)

-meetings where I and others were booed to silence us.

Our neighborhood can no longer tolerate such narrowness winning the day.

Again, please pass this zoning.

With thanks,

K Webster

Steve Elson

From: [Katherine Caterisano](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 7:03:31 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Katherine Caterisano
276 Bowery
New York, NY 10012

From: [Katherine O'Sullivan](#)
To: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@HelenRosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Avala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenislandusa.com](#); [BKallos@BenKallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No to Soho/Noho/Chinatown Rezoning
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 7:47:23 PM

Dear City Council Member:

I am opposed to the proposed rezoning. It will displace current residents. It will destroy the character of all three neighborhoods. Rezoning will not help diversify this section of the city, on the contrary, it will become wealthier and whiter.

This is just a giveaway to developers for more towers the city does not need.

It will facilitate the spread of NYU dormitories southward.

Please vote NO to this.

Katherine O'Sullivan

New York, NY



To: Councilmember Chin

Re: Objections to Zoning Changes NoHo/SoHo – 11/3/21

I am a resident of 40 Great Jones St. We are a co-op on the north side of Great Jones Street in NoHo. We were organized as an Artist's co-op in August of 1974. I am an original member and officer. The building has six residential units. The ground floor is an art gallery. I am writing on behalf of our entire membership to express our unanimous opposition to the proposed zoning changes currently under consideration by the City of New York. We have attended the endless and I must say disingenuous community outreach meetings where an overwhelming majority of our neighbors have also expressed their strong opposition. With the exception of the elimination of the outdated artist certification requirement which has broad support, the rest of the proposal based on the notion of increasing the FAR to allow huge buildings that will dwarf the landmarked loft buildings that give our neighborhood its unique character and make NoHo one of the most desirable locations in the city is destructive and wrong headed.

We have been told that we have to do our share in providing affordable housing to the city. We have done that. When we moved here these old factory buildings were completely empty. With no help from the city we turned an unused bunch of derelict buildings into very affordable housing. Now our building houses old style original artist residents along side of young professionals from various disciplines and children all who contribute to the urban dynamic, now and will in the future.

If all the development that would be facilitated by the zoning change proposed were built, it would afford an additional 1081 luxury units and between only 195-288 so called affordable units. That does not impress me, it would, however, do wonders to fill the pockets of the real estate developers of the world. Those of us who pioneered this area, created a life style that has been adopted literally all over the urban world. Now the city is asking us to embrace a bunch of city planners who didn't understand its value fifty years ago and who do not understand it now. We don't want you to turn this brilliant gem of grass root urban planning in to another patch of generic New York like Hudson Yards.

Lastly, it is absolutely disgraceful that the city sees fit to sneak this by during the worst health crises in a century where meetings are impossible and a national political crisis is boiling that is endangering democracy itself. Everyone is exhausted and distracted. This ill-conceived plan should not be approved.

Kathleen Finneran, Secretary/Treasurer
40 Great Jones Corp., 40 Great Jones St., NY, NY 10012
<kathleen.finneran@gmail.com>

From: kazimira_rachfal
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upzoning Proposal of SOHO, NOHO and Chinatown
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:20:59 PM

To the City Council that represents me and my family who live in SOHO on Wooster Street: You will be voting on a proposal that will affect my neighbors, and business people: the wealthy and the middle class.

This proposal was not conceived to benefit our community. We have many problems and our needs here in SOHO, but somehow, this Mayor and our representatives have chosen to benefit others. Our street needs to be paved, bikes cannot use it and many cars are damaged because it is in ruin, Wooster Street from Houston to Canal. We have garbage everywhere. Our Streets are already crowded with people from many different places and the traffic situation is dire, streets clogged with Holland tunnel traffic during rush hours, especially on Fridays.

We do not have police protection anymore, people from other parts of the city are harassing neighbors and homeless people from all the boroughs come to SOHO. We have many drug addicted people on our streets.

We already have many luxury apartments and the few so-called "affordable housing" we can't afford. We will also lose our artist lofts because the zoning will change and our landlord wants us to leave our loft so he can charge \$7000 a month instead of the \$3000 that we can hardly afford. Will we be able to rent a \$1,000 a month apartment with studio space to work as this would be affordable housing for me and my family?

It is your responsibility to refocus, vote against this rezoning and begin to make the decisions that will improve our community. I would be willing to sit on a panel to study the needs of this community. Please vote against this rezoning.

Sincerely Yours,
Kazimira Rachfal

www.kazimira.com

[Instagram](#)
takemeonajourney.com

From: [Kenneth Louis](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written Testimony in Favor of the SoHo/NoHo rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:36:22 AM

I am a resident of Manhattan and I am submitting this written testimony in support of the SoHo/NoHo rezoning.

As a Chinese American with roots in this country stretching back to the California Gold Rush, Chinatowns are a big part of my heritage both as an American and an ethnic Chinese person. My family resided in various Chinatowns until the late 1970's. I support the rezoning as rezoning SoHo and NoHo as the rezoning will help relieve gentrification pressures in Chinatown and preserve one of the oldest Chinese communities on the East Coast.

A rezoning of SoHo which is a high opportunity area can help relieve gentrification pressures in Chinatown, as new housing in SoHo will attract buyers and renters who, in the absence of the new housing, would look in Chinatown, an adjacent, cheaper neighborhood facing immense gentrification pressure.

If we do nothing, and do not rezone SoHo, the gentrification and displacement of an immigrant community will continue, and the Chinese residents displaced from Chinatown will move uptown or to a different borough and continue the gentrification cycle by displacing residents there. Chinese people moving to a different neighborhood, displacing long time residents and being viewed as gentrifiers themselves. In this current climate of increased anti-Asian hate is far from ideal and quite harmful.

Accordingly, the rezoning's provisions relating to community preference for affordable housing should include all CB2 residents, as it gives Chinatown residents with critical housing needs an opportunity to secure new housing close to the Chinese community while alleviating de facto segregation in a very white neighborhood.

Many opponents of the Rezoning frame their opposition as "Saving Chinatown," implying that once the rezoning is approved, then developers will swoop in to displace low income immigrants at will. This cannot be further from the truth. First the rezoning area does not overlap with the historic portions of Chinatown. In fact, the only area where an overlap can even be claimed is the strip between Lafayette and Centre, which is the home to MOCA. An area that doesn't contain many Chinese residents.

Further, the community backed plan of the Chinatown Working Group, which was previously rejected, did include any area which overlaps with the SoHo/NoHo rezoning. In fact, the area between Lafayette and Centre is not included in any iteration of any rezoning map. Many rezoning opponents claim to also support the Chinatown Working Group as part of their efforts to "Save Chinatown" should be aware of CWG's plan and claiming that this rezoning "rezones Chinatown" is an argument in bad faith.

I urge the council to move forward with this rezoning.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Louis

--

cell: [REDACTED]

email: kenny.louis@gmail.com

From: [Kim Tran](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [Chin](#); [District2](#); [Li, Gigi](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SUPPORT from a District 1 resident for SoHo/NoHo rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:58:39 AM

Dear City Council members,

My name is Kim Tran and I live on East Broadway in District 1. I'm a longtime lower Manhattan resident and I am fully in support of rezoning Soho/Noho. Since I moved to New York after college, in 2009, finding housing has always been expensive and difficult. Despite always working a corporate job, I could never afford to live in Soho or Noho.

Our city desperately needs to build more housing, and this rezoning will allow more housing to be built in a district that hasn't had any significant housing increases in more than 50 years. Everyone can see that Soho/Noho has changed drastically since it was last rezoned – Councilmember Chin knows this given that she asked the city to rezone the district all the way back in 2015.

So I'm asking Councilmember Chin and Councilmember Rivera to follow through on both their overall support of the plan and a request to the city to increase the affordable housing that would be allowed in the rezoning. We desperately need more housing in New York so that everyone who wants to live here can have safe housing that they can pay for.

Unfortunately, I can't testify live because my job does not allow me to sit indefinitely in a hearing during a workday. I hope you will still consider my testimony as highly as the privileged people who have the option to wait hours to testify.

Thanks,

Kim Tran

From: [Kristin Shea](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:28:07 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Kristin Shea
70 Charlton St
New York, NY 10014

From: [Kristina Konno](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:00:05 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Kristina Konno
210 6th Ave
New York, NY 10014

From: [Lars Nordensten](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:10:00 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Lars Nordensten
539 E 12th St
New York, NY 10009

From: [LL Marshall](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us; [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo Zoning Proposal
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 11:23:52 AM

Dear Council Member Chin,

My family has lived on Crosby Street since 1978. We built our home – bathroom, kitchen, walls, electricity, plumbing, etc. We have lived here for 41 years. We raised our daughter here, worked and volunteered in the community, and were a vital part of the growth of this area. We have met at numerous events through the years.

My husband and I both worked in non-profit and the arts. My husband was part of the original Sesame Street team and went on to work at PBS and then the UN. I am an artist; my career started at PBS and I went on to produce films about art. I was on the PTA Board, the Children’s Museum of the Arts Board, The SoHo Alliance Steering Committee, and have a long-time regular shift at God’s Love We deliver.

My husband and I were able to contribute to the cultural community because we were able to live in NYC reasonable-income housing (which we developed ourselves). My husband passed away from cancer and I am now on one income, producing films for museums.

Please do not vote for the disastrous up-zoning plan for SoHo. It is an unprecedented, ill-conceived plan, being rushed through without proper thought and planning. **The way the plan is developed now, with false promises of low-income housing, will in reality place existing low-income and reasonable-income housing in SoHo and Chinatown in jeopardy. This one fact alone makes this plan hugely disastrous.**

Besides displacement of existing low-income tenants, the plan has other flaws including demolition of historic buildings. While the area would benefit from careful planning, this sweeping, rushed proposal is not right. Please vote against this plan in hopes to develop a more thoughtful and carefully constructed vision.

Thank you.
Best regards,
Laurie Marshall

From: [Lili Jackson](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 4:12:57 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
LiLi Jackson
181 India St
Brooklyn, NY 11222

From: [Linda O'Keefe](#)
To: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote NO!!!
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 1:12:20 PM

There are many other alternatives!!! You have heard it all, now please VOTE NO!!!

I am so distressed by all the new buildings going up around our neighborhood and in NYC generally with seeming total disregard for people living in the neighborhoods or the character of NYC and its architecture. Look at what happened to the Manhattan skyline with those new buildings on CPS. Do you think they have added to the city's charm? Do we really need more skyscrapers and mega-stores?

I support Community Board 2, housing and tenant leaders, environmental groups, preservationists, and studies produced by Village Preservation, and thousands of neighbors in SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown, to say that this plan should be voted down.

There are beautiful old buildings in these neighborhoods that once torn down cannot be replaced. Old Penn station? The character of the neighborhood will be destroyed. NYC residents and tourists go to these neighborhoods because of their charm.

History has shown that tenants will be harassed in many different ways making way for buildings to be sold and areas redeveloped which totally abolish the character of the neighborhood.

Please, find other locations that do not have history, or revamp the buildings that are no longer being used by businesses in Manhattan and elsewhere.

More than a dozen local groups have offered an Alternative Rezoning Plan, which would not employ any upzoning, destroy no affordable housing, require deeper and broader new affordable housing in new residential construction at a scale that matches the neighborhood, and allow reasonable-sized retail but not big-box chain stores. It would maintain the character of this neighborhood while making it more equitable, diverse, and affordable: the exact opposite of the Mayor's plan.

The Mayor's plan would also have an enormous impact on adjacent neighborhoods like Chinatown and the Lower East Side, pushing out longtime residents and businesses and making those neighborhoods less diverse and more wealthy and expensive, too.

Thank you!
Linda O'Keefe
41 West 82nd Street

From: [Linda Yowell](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:21:50 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Linda Yowell
761 Greenwich St
New York, NY 10014

Lucy Koteen
138 Lafayette Av
Brooklyn, NY 11238
lucy.koteen@gmail.com

Soho/Noho rezoning hearing
November 9, 2021

Could we stop the pretense that the rezoning has anything to do with equity. Every MIH inspired rezoning has been a catalyst for displacement and gentrification. As soon as the developers get a whiff of a rezoning, they swoop in and start buying up everything they can. Landlords with low income tenants such as the artists, and the rent control tenants begin harassing the tenants as soon as the rezoning proposal is public. They want to join the bandwagon of greed and destruction. There are many accounts of the harassment of low rent tenants.

Stop talking about the 20-30% affordable units with incomes as high as \$130,000, higher than many of the residents living in the area, and talk about the 70-80% market/luxury housing that changes the demographic of the area. Talk about the big box stores that replace the local store and take their profits out of the city to deliver them to their shareholders.

If the City wants to build real low income housing they would find a way that does not give away our tax base to big developers looking to make their next billion dollars on the back of those who pay all the taxes that make the city function.

To consider the destruction of this amazing landmark area is shameful. Do you think that tourists come to see another 50 blocks of soul-less glass, steel and cement high rises? These beautiful buildings are the soul of the city that must be preserved.

What are the real goals in this rezoning?

1. Dismantling landmarks
2. Opening up all of Chinatown to be gobbled up by the developers. That will be the next big rezoning site.

There is so much detailed information that Village Preservation and others have put together, it is they who should be giving the presentation. As always though, those with the most to gain get a lot of time and those with the most to lose get two minutes.

And as always the infrastructure-the sewers, the air, and the water resources get no place in the conversation.

This is one of the last big developer giveaways from the mayor who has taken 100s of thousands of dollars from developers and been charged with multiple ethics violations.

Let us not forget that this rezoning is his give back for those many donations.

For those who say we need more housing of any kind, remember that there are 1000s of empty market units available. There are also many units that are used as investment properties and marginally lived in by the owner.

If you care about the city, align yourself with the community board and vote no.
As so many have said, the plan can be so much better.

Please read all that Village Preservation presented to you. I hope that the message got through that the plan does not have any protection for low income tenants and has so many loopholes that it does not need to provide any affordable housing.

From: [Lynne Glasner](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 4:56:05 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Lynne Glasner
27 W 96th St
New York, NY 10025

New York 11/8/2021

Councilmembers Margareth Chin & Carlina Rivera

Re: Urge to Reject de Blasio's Land Giveaway

Dear Councilmembers, Margareth Chin & Carlina Rivera,

We, Maarten de Jong & Kendra Matthew fully oppose the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown up zoning proposal

We urge you to deny/ oppose the outgoing Mayor's SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown up zoning proposal.

To highlight just a few concerns:

- It imposes a punitive flip tax on residents to convert from current "artist living-quarters" zoning to straight residential use, but imposes no tax on commercial owners converting from manufacturing to retail use
- Where this tax money goes has never been defined
- It legalizes destination big-box retail, putting displacement pressure on small, creative businesses and local retail stores
- It allows the influx of huge restaurants, bars and nightclubs, including entertainment space outdoors and on roofs
- It encourages new construction of office towers 2-1/2 times the size of the average SoHo/NoHo building
- It is the first up zoning of an historic district since the Landmarks Preservation Commission was created in 1965
- It will encourage demolition of historic buildings
- Loopholes fail to guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will ever be built, while encouraging luxury residential construction
- Resulting gentrification will put tremendous displacement pressure on low-income, rent-stabilized, Asian-American tenants in Chinatown, as well as loft tenants in SoHo/NoHo
- It is a lame-duck giveaway to de Blasio's real-estate donors, like Edison Parking, which owns the two largest development sites in the proposal
- It will legalize the expansion of NYU into SoHo, something NYU agreed never to do
- The community has prepared a plan that will allow for affordable housing but not by permitting high-rise towers

We ask you say "NO" to the outgoing Mayor's up zoning proposal.

Sincerely,



Maarten C. De Jong & Kendra N. Matthew

476 Broadway apt [REDACTED] NY10013

From: [Marcy Gordon](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 11:01:13 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Marcy Gordon
1758 Dean St
Brooklyn, NY 11233

From: [marge othrow](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] vote NO on the NOHO-SOHO UPZONING
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 1:16:12 PM

Dear Councilperson Chin,

I am opposed to the out-going Mayor's plan to upzone Greenwich Village. Although I am a Brooklyn resident, I joined in the protest against this project at the Public Hearing on June 23rd. Our borough is having its own battles with upzoning and spot-zoning.

The laughable 'affordable housing' premise would actually displace artists and seniors who already live in affordable housing. They will be evicted by developer-plans to 're-construct' units and add luxury units to a percentage of the not-much-lower rentals.

I am also in opposition to the planned destruction of buildings in the National Historic District. This neighborhood enjoys the 'human scale' street-life of historic or landmarked buildings, making it more livable and attracting visitors.

Please vote NO.

Sincerely,
Marge Othrow
Brooklyn, N.Y.

From: [Margo S. Margolis](#)
To: [Chin, Margaret](#); [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 2:55:09 PM

Dear Councilmember Chin,

I am writing to ask you to please reject the plan to upzone SoHo, NoHo and Chinatown. I urge you to vote NO! This is an unfixable plan with no community benefit and, quite the opposite, a plan that would destroy the architectural and cultural history of this area, displace small businesses and tenants in rent regulated affordable housing. In the end, creating a less diverse, less affordable more expensive neighborhood.

I am a painter. I have lived and worked in the same loft since 1972. My own story is like many other seniors living in SoHo. I moved here after completing an M.F.A in painting. I moved into a former warehouse building where I had to construct walls, put in plumbing and electricity and do the necessary carpentry to create a live/work space. There were no city services. We had to carry our garbage to La Guardia Place for removal. SoHo was an abandoned area. At the same time NYC was going bankrupt and people were fleeing the city for the suburbs. It was artists that created a grassroots, evolving community here and it was the artists of the 1970s and 80s in SoHo that firmly established New York as the predominant cultural center of the world. SoHo is studied, emulated and visited world-wide for its example of successful adaptive re-use, its densely layered history and its cultural presence then and now. For all those reasons, SoHo has been an economic engine for the city. This could all end if SoHo is turned into just another place, a 'placeless place' with luxury towers, big box stores!!

I am afraid.

I fear that I could be forced to leave. I fear that the city does not fully understand that it is not simply a matter of paper work to convert JLWQA to Residential (UG2). This is nearly impossible as the requirements for C of Os for the two different codes are different and incompatible. Even where possible, conversions would take an exorbitant outlay of money per unit plus a total evacuation of the building. The floor plate of a manufacturing/warehouse space is specific to JLWQA. The plan also imposes a punitive tax on artists who wish

to sell their homes. This makes no sense, especially to the pioneers who created this neighborhood from nothing. But the conversion tax makes no sense as the conversion simply does not work.

I am afraid

I and other seniors will not be able to age in place.

I am afraid

the plan will displace tenants in rent regulated affordable housing. There are 635 units existing now that would be lost. The plan with increased FAR provides a strong economic incentive for landlords and developers to demolish buildings and evict residents. **The plan has so many loopholes that there is no guarantee that one unit of affordable housing would be built.**

I am afraid

The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings recognized at the city, state and federal level. There are several Federal style buildings dating back to the 1800s that are slated for demolition according to the DCP, to be replaced with out of context 200ft towers. SoHo has the largest concentration of cast-iron buildings in the world. These need to be protected. It is heartbreaking to imagine this destruction and for what; luxury towers, NYU dorms, Big Box stores. Erasing history and culture to create a big, expensive mall.

I am afraid

This plan would repeat the mistakes of past zoning changes. We know that past re-zonings in Long Island City and Downtown Brooklyn have created the opposite conditions: a whiter, wealthier neighborhood with less diversity and fewer affordable units of housing. Please look at the pattern that shows what has occurred in neighborhoods that have been rezoned. Thousands of rent regulated and non-regulated affordable housing units have been lost in these rezoned neighborhoods. In addition, inadequate assessment of infrastructure and other issues have created unforeseen problems related to changes in density. Please do not allow the same mistakes to be repeated over and over and over again! Developer driven planning is not based on what is good for the city or the neighborhood. This will bring high-end, high-rise, market-rate development.

I am afraid

That several important agencies have not been consulted regarding this plan. Many agencies were asked to participate in the process. We were told at one DCP meeting that the **Landmarks Preservation Commission** was not one of them nor was **The NYC Department of for the Aging!**

Please vote NO.

Sincerely,
Margo Margolis
16 Crosby Street
NYC 10013

From: [Matt Kleiber](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [District2](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In support of SoHo rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:31:47 AM

Good morning,

I am a resident of the East Village, and I am writing in support of the proposed SoHo rezoning. This rezoning will allow more housing- both market rate and affordable- in a wealthy, transit rich neighborhood. Adding more housing supply will help take pressure off rising rents both in SoHo and in nearby neighborhoods like the East Village. In addition, as we confront the issue of climate change, one of the best things we can do is allow more people to live in places like SoHo which offer short commutes and excellent subway access.

Thank you,
Matthew Kleiber
41 St Marks Pl, New York, NY 10003

From: [Maxi Cohen](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us; [Renee Monroe](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] STOP THE UPZONING
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 10:34:12 PM

My response to Changing the Zoning of Soho,

I am a filmmaker and artist living in Soho*. My loft cradled the genesis of video and filmmaking organizations that grew to be forces of influence, fertilizing independent filmmaking, video art, guerrilla television and the evolution of TV journalism. The same kind of renaissance in painting, conceptual art, dance, theater, and music erupted in the 1970s and 80s in this neighborhood - the birthplace of American contemporary art.

We artists planted ourselves in a dying industrial area and revitalized it and thus the city, so much that the "**Soho Effect**" has been replicated in the US and abroad. Artists did not displace people or businesses in Soho. Rather, artists were grateful for the industrial businesses that often sourced materials used. We who moved in decades ago did not have wealth. The spaces were our affordable housing and work spaces.

The city acknowledged this by creating zoning for artists-in-residence, permitting work/live spaces that due to our efforts went from not being legal to receiving certificates of occupancy. The city benefitted from these efforts, evidenced by the influx of galleries, then restaurants, stores, furniture showrooms and high-end luxury shops, all attracting people from other boroughs and beyond, including being an attraction for tourists.

When the looting occurred in Soho on June 1 and the area was boarded up, I had the thought if there ever was a time for artists to express themselves it is now. With fellow artists we began to paint, resulting by summer's end in over 700 paintings by more than 300 artists of every race, age, gender, world renown artists and first timers from Soho and beyond. The neighborhood, still thriving with artists, appreciated that art had once again sparked some soul into Soho. Out of that venture a number of artists are continuing as Soho Renaissance Factory, intending to foster art activity in many ways, paying homage to its past, revisioning its future.

Let's maintain the ethos of Soho and let's help it grow to once again be at the vanguard of what it means to revitalize a city. Why are you not asking the residents what is needed?

Let's build what is needed: high rise parking lots to get cars off the street with outdoor green spaces on top for the community, vertical urban farming to grow organic, healthy food. New spaces for creatives to live/work, by encouraging the artist-in-residency zoning (AIR) of Soho, by expanding its nature, not killing it. Give emerging artists encouragement to affordably live here in the spaces that are empty. Let's have think tanks and brainstorming sessions with landlords who own big box stores that are empty and residents to conceive of how they can become innovative, creative enterprises that serve the neighborhood. I have many ideas as I am sure others do.

I have witnessed greed taking precedent. Even this summer, landlords raised their ground floor by 300%, evicting monthly tenants and now the floors are empty. **What are the incentives for so much empty space? Let's address real issues.**

This plan from what I understand will displace people in rent control apartments so that "rent controlled" apartments can be built that are more expensive, unaffordable. **I see greed in action, not innovative city planning.**

Let's create a stellar community that NYC can be proud of, not just another bunch of big buildings in a neighborhood that has no green space and is already too crowded. No one is talking about the homeless shelter considered for Wooster Street that is a travesty and will take the neighborhood down,

by crime going up, people moving out, while giving men a horrible way to live. (I would like to meet with the developer as I have some ideas.) Who is making money while abusing residents and the homeless? **The homeless shelter and the upzoning are ill conceived. Your plan ruins the culture, architecture, scale, feel, ethos that is bringing new galleries, stores and restaurants. End it and.....**

Let's collaborate to have Soho evolve into a newly distinctive neighborhood built on the wonder of its architecture, the creativity of its forward thinking artists, the innovation of its tech companies, the new and old galleries coming to Soho (thank god) and local thought leaders. By listening and communicating, the neighborhood can insure that Soho will continue to be a destination for tourists, shoppers, and culture seekers who come and keep it alive and those who live and work here to thrive.

The pandemic has taught us that life will never be the same. Why not create affordable housing in midtown where the amount of empty office space is astronomical. Why invest in more buildings when you have landlords already suffering with vacant space. Too many people have learned how to work from anywhere in the world to refill those spaces to the same capacity.

Let's ensure Soho doesn't become more of the same.

In Gratitude,

Maxi Cohen

maxicohenstudio@gmail.com

Maxi Cohen is an award-winning film and video maker and artist. Her films have played in movie theaters, film festivals and television around the world, and have influenced two generations of filmmakers. As a media activist, her film and television work has had significant influence in creating visible social change. Her works have been exhibited internationally and are in the permanent collections of numerous museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, and the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Maxi has been supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, Annenberg Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, Karan-Weiss Foundation, and other family and government funds.

[Art2 Soho June 2020](#)

[The New Yorker](#)

[The New Yorker](#)

[Podcast Interview with Maxi Cohen, Anders Holst, host of Art Insiders New York](#)

*I have been a resident of Soho since 1972. My current loft, which was a warehouse before I purchased, was the birthplace of First Run Features, the first company to distribute American Independent Feature Films, an early gathering site for the Independent Film Project which now hosts the Gotham Awards and is now the Gotham Film and Media Institute, and a welcoming home for the early days of Women in Film and the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. As I was of the first wave of guerrilla television makers, I showed at notable Soho venues including The Kitchen, Global Village, Anthology Film Archives and had a solo show at OK Harris. I was part of the burgeoning independent film movement and the first wave of video artists and guerrilla television makers, even directing the first public access facility in New York and the country. My friends who lived in the neighborhood were innovators in performance art, painting, sculpture, dance and music.

Find Maxi:

[Facebook](#)

From: [Maxine Henryson](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:06:14 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Maxine Henryson
478 W Broadway
New York, NY 10012

From: [Melissa Krawitz](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] VOTE NO on SOHONHO REZONING
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:12:21 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I Urge the City Council members to VOTE NO on the Plan.

This plan has been fast-tracked through the Department of City Planning during the chaos and confusion of the Covid-19 pandemic, when uncertainty abounds and accurate community studies are nearly impossible. The SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan cannot be fixed with any series of modifications. Any effort to make it “less bad” than what the Mayor’s team has presented will still result in a reckless and irresponsible transformation of these two unique neighborhoods.

The stated goals will not be achieved. The goal of economic diversity is based on untested and faulty assumptions about development in Lower Manhattan. Actual “affordable” housing for our neighborhoods is not guaranteed. Instead there will be a massive increase in what we already have enough of: luxury dwellings.

The City’s Plan fails to provide actual benefits. The plan proposes nearly a 50% increase in population for the neighborhoods, but with no accompanying infrastructure or improvements. We will get No Parks, No Schools, No Hospitals. Why? Because there is no City-owned land here on which to build. The Mayor’s Plan is dependent upon the whims of private property owners, the dismantling of reasonable regulations and an unfettered real estate market. The “end benefits” to the community don’t exist, and what are labeled as such are an illusion.

The Mayor’s Plan DOES NOT WORK. Approving this sweeping proposal, especially in the final days of the administration of Mayor de Blasio (who will soon be gone, and cannot be held responsible for its efficacy), would further impair our quality of life all across the community, and destroy these unique neighborhoods.

- **The Mayor’s Plan encourages oversized retail development**, allowing a broad range of disruptive uses, especially **big box destination retail** with no community input, plus **eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size**. And it opens the door to **open-air, disruptive “entertainment” installations on roof-tops**.
- **The City dangles a false “solution” for residents** (aka the “mechanism”) which purports to allow coop and condo owners to convert JLWQA (Joint-live-work-quarters-for-artists) units into ordinary residential units. The city proposes this as “pathway to legalization” for residential owners, including those owning coop and condo units. They also claim this will add resale value to these units. But the details have neither been adequately examined nor clarified by the Department of Buildings.
- **In fact, it is nearly impossible to convert most of these buildings** from manufacturing Use to residential Use, as the requirements for the building codes are different and incompatible. Even where possible, such building conversions would require a massive outlay of funds and the likely evacuation of the building as conversion work is performed.

- **The City’s plan would impose a punitive and excessively high tax on artists** who wish to sell their homes of \$100 per square foot. The City claims that money will be used as the sole financing source for a hazily-described “Artist Fund.” But, as noted, **the conversion plan doesn’t work**, so few will use that option. Meaning few will pay the fee. So the convoluted “Artist Fund” won’t be funded. **Any implied “benefit” disappears.**
- **The Plan puts a target on existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood, including loft board protected tenants**, providing a strong economic incentive for its demolition, and the **displacement** of its residents. The plan carelessly increases the opportunities for **tenant harassment**. Many of those who will be targeted are long-time residents who built these neighborhoods, and are now **senior citizens, aging in place.**
- **The Plan does not guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will be built.** Rather development, construction and conversion favoring new office space is prioritized.
- **The Plan favors commercial property owners, providing a gift of value** through the increase in Floor Area Ratio (FAR). That newly-granted FAR can be traded, transferred, borrowed against and sold, creating a casino all across and around SoHo & NoHo. The **FAR increase allows for 200+ Foot Towers to rise** within and around the historic districts, and across the neighborhoods.
- **The Mayor’s Plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings** recognized at the city, state, and federal level. This would be the first major up-zoning For a shocking visual presentation of 29 buildings slated for demolition or construction in the SoHo National Historic District: <https://tinyurl.com/ymur44zb>
- **The Plan from DCP serves the goals of political donors, especially the deep money of big real estate, by undermining and dismantling long-established NYC Landmark protections.**

This is a slippery slope to doing this type of rezoning in other landmark neighborhoods throughout the City.

Sincerely,

Melissa Krawitz

Concerned Resident

From: [meredith bagerski](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposed to Soho Upzoning
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 3:00:51 PM

Dear Councilmember Chin,

I am writing to share my concern and opposition to the Soho Upzoning. My family has owned the bar and residences that occupy 94 Prince Street @ Mercer for over 40 years (and then Michael Fanelli before us). We are part of the history and fabric of Soho. We have worked very hard to keep our restaurant as it's always been, which is a place where everyone is welcome and can enjoy something to eat or drink within normal means. I am distraught at the number of small, historic buildings slated for demolition in our neighborhood. So many which are on Mercer Street. These buildings have importance, history and to be replaced with awful contemporary versions of themselves is wrong.

Blatantly left out of the conversation is meaningful address of loft laws and egregious property taxes. We want artists to live in Soho. We want artists to be able to afford to live in Soho. We want normal families to continue to own their buildings and their apartments in Soho. We do not want big box businesses and corporations dictating how the neighborhood changes over the next decades.

My husband and I are at a loss as to what community benefit this upzoning would have on the people who actually live here and call Soho home. My family, our business, creates community. You can walk by it on any given day and see the energy that flows out of it. You can't create that with your plan.

Councilmember Chin, I urge you to vote NO on this upzoning.

Sincerely,
Meredith Bagerski & Sasha Noë

From: [michael kramer](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fwd: SOHO/NOHO - Testimony - OPPOSED to REZONING
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:26:11 AM

My name is Michael Kramer. Forty years ago, I was a member of the steering committee of Lower Manhattan Loft Tenants and the coordinator of the New York Loft Tenants Housing Clinic. In 1980-81 I was up in Albany lobbying to pass the LOFT LAW. This law legalized the live-work status of creatives and makers who were living in former manufacturing spaces. In Soho/Noho my neighbors still reside in IMD and legalized buildings who are now aging in place. This was and still is affordable housing. NYC has benefited greatly from the creation of a unique community though the value created by these pioneers who literally built their own spaces with their own hands. They should be celebrated for their contribution to tourism and the tax rolls. They should not be forced to consider harassment from building owners looking for an up zoning windfall. Please vote NO.

From: [Miche W](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho/Noho upzoning Council member hearing testimony
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 3:18:14 PM

Dear Council Members,

My name is Michele Worst, a Thompson Street resident.

I moved to Soho in 1976 into a crumbling apartment that I (somewhat) restored with my own hands, it still needs work, but I love it.

Profit focused development plans like this one have been implemented over the detailed objections of local residents in neighborhood after neighborhood in our city.

Not long ago, in Inwood, after 3 public hearings like this one. not a single detail of the original plan was altered in response to public concerns.

I urge the City Council to seriously consider the harm to Soho, Noho and Chinatown that this plan will cause.

You need to take the extraordinary step of actually weighing the interests of the people affected against increasing the wealth of real estate speculators, no matter how generous they may have been to you.

This Plan's PR uses the hot button **housing shortage** issue to distract, but its cynical vagueness and integrated loopholes in fact, **do not guarantee ANY** affordable housing. It's a ruse to further enrich the developers and their cronies through the construction of still more luxury housing and oversized office towers, further burdening our aging infrastructures and disregarding the changes in workspace habits that

the pandemic has created.

People of lesser means will be displaced, rent stabilized housing will be lost as will architectural treasures that give the area its unique and appealing character.

To be sure, we **DO** need to create affordable housing but this is not the plan to do so.

This plan also **extracts profit** for the realtors and the vaguely allocated so called 'arts fund' from the sweat equity of long time Soho artists who made the neighborhood an international attraction, while freely allowing commercial interests to transform our unique neighborhoods' manufacturing spaces into yet more “Anywhere, USA” retail malls.

And the nod to public spaces sounds nice if you aren't aware of the impossible volumes of traffic that will be redirected to an already choked Broome Street.

NYU Agreed never to expand into Soho. But all it had to do was wait for the right scheme to break that promise; and for the right politicians to allow this expansion.

DON'T DO IT!

This scam is solely designed to benefit the developers and their puppets.

Please vote **NO** on this plan!

Respectfully,

Michele Worst

From: [Miranda Sielaff](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan: Opposed
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 3:42:45 PM

I am a resident of Brooklyn and I oppose the SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Rezoning Plan. In my own neighborhood I am seeing the tragic effects of the Gowanus Neighborhood Rezoning already, and I offer my testimony in support of the residents of SoHo, NoHo and Chinatown who have fought the SoHo Rezoning for many of the same reasons we are fighting in Gowanus.

It's a giant giveaway to developers, many of whom are De Blasio donors who lobbied relentlessly for this.

It would allow development up to 2 1/2 times the size current rules allow. The City says it will result in 3.8 mil sq ft of new development, but would actually allow well over 10 mil sq ft of new development in rezoning area, or nearly four Empire State Buildings, most of which is unaccounted for in their environmental analysis.

It will incentivize the demolition of many of the well over 600 units of rent regulated and loft law affordable housing, which are disproportionately occupied by lower income, artist, and Asian American residents, and disproportionately located in the areas with the greatest proposed upzonings which create the greatest incentives for demolition.

It will likely add pressure for "secondary displacement" of thousands more residents of rent regulated affordable units in the immediately surrounding area, which are even more disproportionately Asian American and lower income.

The plan is likely to result in little or no new affordable housing due to multiple loopholes which have no affordable housing requirements — office, hotel, or other commercial space, retail space, and any community facility space for institutions like NYU, as well as luxury condo space of 25K sq ft or less per zoning lot are all EXEMPTED.

The plan allows developers to build as much or more market-rate space WITHOUT affordable housing as they can if they do include affordable housing, on EVERY site where the City says affordable housing will be built, thus making affordable housing construction highly unlikely and INCENTIVIZING building without it.

Even if new developments are built as the City predicts with 70-75% luxury condos and 25-30% "affordable housing," these developments will overall actually be more expensive, and house wealthier and less diverse residents, than the current neighborhood overall, making for a less equitable, less affordable neighborhood.

The plan would allow unlimited NYU expansion into the area, violating NYU 2031 expansion plan agreements which were supposed to limit the university's expansion.

The plan would allow new construction which is more than two and a half times the size of the average existing building in the neighborhood.

The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings recognized as city, state, and national landmarks.

The plan is opposed by leading citywide and statewide housing and tenant groups, city, state, and national preservation organizations, environmental groups, and Chinatown groups.

It would help push out longtime artist residents of the neighborhood as well as arts groups and small businesses.

It would allow the proliferation of huge big box chain stores as well as bars, pushing out longtime smaller independent businesses and destroying quality of life.

Three things which residents and community groups consistently said during the “public engagement” process they did not want in any plan for the neighborhood — Upzoning, Big Box Chain Stores, and allowance for NYU Expansion — are the cornerstones of this plan

Over a dozen community and tenant groups have offered a community alternative rezoning plan which would allow construction of true, more deeply and broadly affordable housing, without tenant displacement, out-of-scale development, and without big box chain stores forcing out local businesses.

Miranda Sielaff
Brooklyn, NY 11231

From: [Mitchell Grubler](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us; [Drummond, Anthony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Upzoning of SOHO/NOHO & Chinatown
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 5:51:06 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Forward suspect email to phish@cyber.nyc.gov as an attachment (Click the More button, then forward as attachment).

As a resident of Chinatown I urge you to vote no on the proposed upzoning of SOHO/NOHO & Chinatown. This ill-conceived plan will cause the displacement of rent regulated tenants, the gentrification of Chinatown and little to no truly affordable new housing.

Mitchell Grubler
20 Confucius Plaza, Apt. 
New York, NY 10002

From: [Monica Rittersporn](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:09:20 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Monica Rittersporn
46 Stuyvesant St
New York, NY 10003

From: [Nicholas Oo](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I support the SoHo/NoHo rezoning. Thank you.
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:13:10 PM

Esteemed Members of the City Council

I write to support the SoHo/NoHo rezoning and am a member of the Chinese community in NYC.

We Must Build More Housing to Lower Rent and Keep NYC Affordable & Dynamic

New York City is the greatest city in the world because it grows and changes and people from all over the world come here to create better lives for themselves and become part of New York City's fabric. I myself am an immigrant who moved here for a better life. I am fortunate that I can still afford to live here, but many of my family members who came here at the same time had to leave NYC because the cost of living, especially the rent, is too high.

The only effective and long-term solution we have to lower the rent is to build more housing, both market rate and mandated affordable. In our current housing shortage, we renters have to compete for a limited amount of housing, which means landlords charge us whatever they want. However, if we build more housing, then landlords will compete for us renters, by lowering rents and increasing quality. We saw this in 2020 and we should create housing abundance to re-create the dynamic of landlords competing for renters.

Many of the opponents to the rezoning are rich SoHo/NoHo homeowners: they do not know how hard it is for us renters. When rents go up, they see their property values go up but what we renters see is being one step closer to having to move farther out (or leave NYC entirely) to afford the rent. When do you think was the last time many of these opponents actually looked for rental housing to live in?

Please think about us renters, especially the many renters who did not have the privilege to attend a daytime public hearing because their jobs do not permit it and they are working hard to earn enough to barely be able to pay the outrageous rents caused by NYC's housing shortage.

This Rezoning Will Benefit Chinatown and the Chinese Community

As a member of the Chinese community here in NYC, I also think it is inappropriate for rich white SoHo/NoHo homeowners to cynically use Chinatown and Chinese people as a pawn to justify their opposition to the rezoning. Chinatown was intentionally excluded from school District 2 because SoHo/NoHo homeowners did not want their kids to go to school with Chinatown kids. SoHo/NoHo homeowners have forfeit any right to assert they care about the interests of Chinatown & the Chinese community.

In fact, the rezoning will benefit Chinatown by reducing displacement pressure in Chinatown as higher income people are redirected to move to SoHo/NoHo instead of Chinatown and more housing reduces competition among renters for the same apartments. Furthermore, more

residents in SoHo/NoHo will bring more foot traffic to Chinatown businesses.

Also I ask you to expand the community preference to the affordable housing to include Chinatown residents so that working class and lower income families in Chinatown could move to SoHo/NoHo if they choose to and share in the benefits of SoHo/NoHo that SoHo/NoHo homeowners and the City has historically denied Chinatown families.

This Rezoning Will Provide Affordable Housing or Lower Rent for 5500 families in NYC

As you vote on this rezoning, I implore you to think about the 900 families who could move into the affordable units that would result from this rezoning.

I ask you to think also about the 2300 families who could move into the market rate units that would be built as well, in addition to how those 2300 families would free up their existing housing for another 2300 families to live in and create more competition among landlords for tenants and lower rents.

That's 5500 families, or 11000-22000 people, who could directly benefit from this rezoning.

Rezoning SoHo/NoHo is the right thing to do for New York City and its residents!

Thank you,
Nicholas Oo

From: [Nina Howes](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 1:51:34 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Nina Howes
80 E 1st St
New York, NY 10009

From: [Olive Freud](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us; [olive freud](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho, Noho, Chinatown rezoning. November 5 hearing
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 4:37:08 PM

It makes no sense to upzone an area of the city that is already overcrowded. The City needs to provide a healthy environment for its citizens. This means open spaces without shadows of oversized structures. Our priorities should be to make the city compliant with the Clean Water Act. There is far too much traffic on our streets.

Olive Freud, President, Committee for Environmentally Sound Development

From: [Pamela Morgan](#)
To: [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Cc: [Chin](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] UP ZONE proposal
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 10:15:19 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am deeply upset and concerned about this proposal.

I have lived in Soho since the early 70's. I raised my daughter here, walked my dogs, run my business here . I think it is urgent you understand this is a neighborhood not a theme park. Soho has its unique quality of cast iron buildings, shops, artist, fabricators who live and work in unison. This is what has always attracted the huge amount of tourism the neighborhood generates. Every town has huge brand name box stores. That is not what is needed here . Please concentrate on PRESERVING what we have. Encourage more independent shops, encourage more useful shops for all the many people who live here and bring the daily life to our historic, beautiful neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Pamela Morgan
87 Crosby street
NYC 10012

Sent from my iPad

From: [Patsy Ong](#)
To: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#); [Peggy Cassen](#); [Kyrie Collins](#); [Lauraine Deppe](#); [Peter Ehrman](#); [Asya Kamsky](#); [David Karlin](#); [Paul Langland](#); [Magda](#); [Lynne Mayocole](#); [Roger Newton](#); [Charles Richardson](#); [Elen Sevy](#); [Lu Stone](#); [Ezequiel Vinao](#); [Lynn Wirtz](#); [taylamor@msn.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho Noho Chinatown Upzoning
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 9:57:34 PM

Dear NYC Council members,

I am writing to urge you to VOTE DOWN UPZONING for Soho, Noho, and Chinatown for the following main reasons.

It is the first upzoning of an historic district since the Landmarks Preservation Commission was created in 1965, and it will encourage demolition of historic buildings.

It imposes a punitive flip tax on residents to convert from current "artist living-quarters" zoning to straight residential use.

Loopholes fail to guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will ever be built, while encouraging luxury residential construct.

Resulting gentrification will put tremendous displacement pressure on low-income, rent-stabilized, Asian-American tenants in Chinatown, as well as loft tenants in SoHo/NoHo.

It will legalize the expansion of NYU into SoHo, something NYU agreed never to do.

THERE IS AN ALTERNATIVE AND I URGE YOU TO EXPLORE IT -

The community has prepared a plan that will allow for affordable housing but not by permitting high-rise towers. Please give it consideration.

Thank you.

Patsy Ong
Soho resident

From: [Peter Feld](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 7:01:48 PM

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to the SoHo/NoHo Plan at today's hearing. Here is my testimony in writing:

My name is Peter Feld, East Village renter. Thank you Chair Moya and all for listening all day, and I want to appreciate my own council member, Carlina Rivera. I urge you to reject the outgoing Mayor's pro-developer plan as now drafted. Chris Marte was elected in opposition to this plan, and though it will be weeks before he's in office, I would ask for consideration of the principle of representation.

We need more truly affordable housing. But luxury developers and, honestly, free market capitalism, have nothing useful to offer our housing crisis. Half empty glass towers, for a "new investor asset class" that's been called "vertical safe deposit boxes," will make things much worse.

I support desegregating rich neighborhoods, as well as the environmental rationale for density. But we need to rethink density, since things are never going back to how they were before COVID. The shift to remote work will steeply reduce demand for NYC's commercial real estate, much of which should be repurposed for deeply affordable housing. And if many folks are not going to be commuting to jobs anymore, it's less essential that we all live on top of each other.

And before building, we must consider that within decades all lower Manhattan will have to undergo managed retreat due to climate change.

Just imagine the 1818 building at 143 Spring, the oldest in Soho, that's on the Planning Commission's "opportunity site" hit list and which they obviously don't anticipate LPC will protect -- demolished and replaced by a dark, monstrous glass tower, adding no benefit for any but the super-richest New Yorkers to afford.

We do not need to darken our skies and trash our civic architectural and cultural heritage for private gain by creating thousands of deeply unaffordable units. It will not desegregate SoHo/NoHo or house the unhoused, it will only enrich undeserving developers and investors, and will create significant gentrification pressure displacing tenants in adjacent working neighborhoods - Chinatown, LES and EV - as adding luxury housing and luxury retail always does. Affordable housing is essential, but please vote no and start over.

From: [Phyllis Rosenblatt](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: the current UpZoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 1:13:57 PM

To Margaret Chin, Councilwoman

As a resident painter and college professor in Soho since 1973 I cannot overstate the reasons for my opposition to UpZoning of Soho, Noho and Chinatown as it is currently determined. I urge you to vote **NO** for this plan as it now stands. Destruction to these neighborhoods in the name of greed and imagined wealth at the sacrifice of community and its evolving creativity will forever change the value of NYC to nothing more than a mall like any other in the USA. A neighborhood Mall of America will not bring long range attraction to the area - nor long range wealth.

First: the "solution" to convert JLWQA to ordinary residential units is incompatible between the requirements for a C of O and the condo and coops in building codes.

Second: The plan would impose a punitive and excessively high tax on artists who wish to sell their homes of **\$100 per square foot**. The City says that money will be used as the sole financing source for a hazily-described "Artist Fund." But, as noted, the conversion plan doesn't work, so few will use that option. Meaning few will pay the fee. So the convoluted "Artist Fund" won't be funded. Any implied "benefit" disappears.

-
- **Third: The plan greatly increases incentives for, and the likelihood of, harassment of tenants, by targeting existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood, including loft board protected tenants,** It provides a strong economic incentive for its demolition and the displacement of its residents.
-
- **Fourth: The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings** recognized at the city, state, and federal level. For a shocking visual presentation of 29 buildings slated for demolition or construction in the SoHo National Historic District: <https://tinyurl.com/ymur44zb>
-
- **Fifth: The plan encourages oversized development in the historic district.** It would allow a broad range of uses, especially **big box destination chain retail** with no community input for special permits. It issues in **huge NYU dorms** and **eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size.**
-

Approving this sweeping proposal, especially in the final days of the administration of Mayor de Blasio, who cannot be held responsible for its efficacy, would further impair our quality of life, destroy this historic neighborhood and provide **no community benefits**.

Numerically, we have voted you into office. In a democracy it is your duty to answer to our expressed concerns.

signed:
Phyllis Rosenblatt

From: [Piet Halberstadt](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:53:45 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan.

Continuing the real estate rape and pillage of our neighborhoods, communities and historical landmarks diminishes the city as a place to live and visit.

The current commercial economic reality has empty space putting supporting business people out of work. If you're worried about employment for construction workers some of the badly designed high rises need to be torn down and rebuilt properly or for low income housing.

This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Piet Halberstadt
305 W 13th St
New York, NY 10014

Preserve Our Brooklyn Neighborhoods

Re: SoHo/NoHo Rezoning

In Opposition

Nov 2nd, 2021

To Council Member Chin,

Preserve Our Brooklyn Neighborhoods (“POBN”), as advocates for historic preservation of streetscapes and buildings in Brooklyn, supports its neighbors and neighborhood organizations involved in the same concerns throughout Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, and throughout New York City. After carefully looking into the rationale of the purported ‘benefits’ of a community wide rezoning, we are in unanimous agreement that this rezoning must not proceed and eviscerate the treasured and unique parts of our City – Soho/NoHo and part of Chinatown which are now in harm’s way.

Encroaching and anomalous towers, which will be the result if you put the final rubberstamp vote in this ULURP ‘process’ hyped as a rationale of so-called ‘affordable housing’ fools no one. As long as the reliance on de facto bait and switch Federal criteria AMI ‘tiers’, which have incurred so much neighborhood hostage taking and displacement (substantive data now shows), the raison d’etre of handing over livable and human-scale blocks for predatory greed, is as phony as a wooden nickel. To add insult to injury, the character and context of SoHo/NoHo...the gritty exemplar of manufacturing; artists creating in their workshops and ateliers; the aesthetic raw pleasure that the cast iron buildings impart...those and more serve to invite the world –tourists and the curious to come to see who New Yorkers really are-not by the phallic size of competing luxury towers, but by the charm and history which will be sanitized if this is allowed to happen.

Would that this alleged moral imperative actually help the underserved to get a roof over their head...well- yes, that would merit an honest contrast of opinions as to whether the ends justify the means here. But, anyone not under a rock (nor those who obviously have financial or political skin in the game) will say, this up-zoning is a farce. This re-zoning and the harm it will do to a big swath of Chinatown are unconscionable. It can never be accepted as a ‘public good’ and the question is how much of this will be part of your legacy? How complicit will you be in the further emasculation of community voice and residents’ ownership of its future?

Preserve Our Brooklyn Neighborhoods, and our hundreds of members therefore urge you to reject this proposed rezoning.

Vote NO!

Sincerely,

Sandy Reiburn –President
Preserve Our Brooklyn Neighborhoods
100 South Elliott Place
Brooklyn, NY 11217

From: [michael lewyn](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho upzoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 2:02:50 PM

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Soho upzoning.

As rents have risen, the city is in desperate need of new housing. In less expensive cities like Charlotte and Houston, 10-15 percent of housing supply was built in the last decade. By contrast, in New York, only 5 percent of the city's housing supply was built in the last decade. As a result of this gap and the city's growing population, rents continue to march upwards even after COVID. The proposed rezoning will create thousands of new housing units, and thus be a small step in the right direction.

Moreover, equity demands this rezoning. For the past decade, the city has consistently upzoned poor communities of color, while leaving the zoning of rich white neighborhoods such as Soho (77% white) untouched. Allowing more housing in Soho would remedy this imbalance.

In fact, if the city refuses to allow new housing in Soho, gentrification and displacement in other neighborhoods is likely to increase, as people priced out of Soho and similar neighborhoods move to less affluent nearby areas such as Chinatown and the Lower East Side, or to the outer boroughs.

Some people priced out of affluent areas such as Soho will move to suburbs, where they are more likely to drive to work, and thus likely to increase the region's carbon footprint. Thus, environmental considerations support more housing in Soho.

One argument against the rezoning is that even new housing would be occupied by well-off whites. But in the census tract near Court Square in Long Island City, 70 percent of housing was built after a 2001 upzoning, and the area is now only 45 percent white.

Another argument against the rezoning is that it will threaten existing rent-regulated housing. Opponents claim that if new housing is allowed, developers will demolish existing affordable housing to build it. However, under current New York law, developers cannot demolish buildings without tenants' consent.

Prof. Michael Lewyn
60 W 57th Street, Apt [REDACTED]

New York, NY 10019

Sent from [Outlook](#)

From: [Ralph Appelbaum](#)
To: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Cc: [info@sohoalliance.org](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No to Upzoning Soho Soho Chinatown Plan
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 2:34:42 PM

ALL

I urge you to reject this attack on the community.

As founding and still resident of SOHO, the SOHO/NOHO/Chinatown Upzoning Plan is a clear cynical giveaway of 3 vibrant communities to real estate and anti community interests.

Here are all the reasons .

Find the ones that give you courage to back the people .

-It imposes a punitive flip tax on residents to convert from current "artist living-quarters" zoning to straight residential use, but imposes no tax on commercial owners converting from manufacturing to retail use

-Where this tax money goes has never been defined

-It legalizes destination big-box retail, putting displacement pressure on small, creative businesses and local retail stores

-It allows the influx of huge restaurants, bars and nightclubs, including entertainment space outdoors and on roofs

-It encourages new construction of office towers 2-1/2 times the size of the average SoHo/NoHo building

-It is the first upzoning of an historic district since the Landmarks Preservation Commission was created in 1965

-It will encourage demolition of historic buildings

-Loopholes fail to guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will ever be built, while encouraging luxury residential construction

-Resulting gentrification will put tremendous displacement pressure on low-income, rent-stabilized, Asian-American tenants in Chinatown, as well as loft tenants in SoHo/NoHo

-It is a lame-duck giveaway to de Blasio's real-estate donors, like Edison Parking, which owns the two largest development sites in the proposal

-It will legalize the expansion of NYU into SoHo, something NYU agreed never to do

-The community has prepared a plan that will allow for affordable housing but not by permitting high-rise towers

From: [Posey Krakowsky](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Objection to the proposed UP-ZONE in lower Manhattan
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:14:29 PM

Dear Ms. Chin,

I am a resident who lives in your district on LaGuardia Place.

I am very distressed and unhappy about the Mayor's proposed for UP-zoning in SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown. The character of the lower part of Manhattan is something to be protected, not changed. We already see too many large buildings here since we are surrounded by NYU's development. One of the reasons my husband and I moved downtown was precisely so we could enjoy more light and better visibility from our windows. It is disheartening to see the City Council planning to throw that away so that big box stores and developers for the ultra rich can come in to this neighborhood.

As an Episcopal priest, I also worry very much about who will be displaced by this new plan. It is presented as a boon to folks who rely on affordable housing, but we both know that the promises made by developers rarely actually turn out to be what they purport to be. Manhattan is already too expensive. True diversity must include economic diversity as well as other kinds of diversity. Please do not let the developers take the unique character of downtown away. And please do not let developers turn downtown into yet another ghost town location for only the very rich who have pied a terres they seldom use.

Lastly, I worry about the plan to demolish many buildings with historic roots and value. New does not always mean better.

I urge you to vote NO on this plan. Please leave downtown alone.
The developers already have too much power in this city.
Let's not give downtown to them as well.

Rev. Posey Krakowsky
552 LaGuardia Place

Sent from my iPad

From: [ROB HOUTENBOS](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [Chin](#); [District2](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SOHO Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:47:28 AM

I am a 20 year resident and owner of 27 Great Jones Street, apt [REDACTED]

The proposed rezoning plan does inadequately deal with a big group of residents / owners living in a JWLG for Artist without certification. 70% of residents in NOHO fall into this category. The present zoning is antiquated and does not hold up against the economic pressures of the day.

This issue have been brought to the attention of the planning board and city officials numerous times during the public hearings and promises were made that a proper path to legalizing would be part of the plan.

In addition the process to certify as artist would be streamlined and would include a more broader definition of artist. Only a few permits have been issued in the last years.

Hopefully this will be further discussed and a more adequate solution will be presented.

Sincerely

Rob Houtenbos

From: [Robert Seidman](#)
To: [Chin](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ill-conceived Zoning Change
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 11:56:24 AM

Dear Margaret Chin and Council-Persons:

Here is a short note from a long-term SoHo resident as to the value of artists' contributions to the community and to New York City.

We have lived in SoHo since 1978. We weren't the earliest pioneers in the neighborhood, but we arrived early enough to participate in and hugely enjoy SoHo when it was "an art slum"—when virtually all our neighbors created art works or films or theatre or danced and/or created choreography. It was a great privilege and opportunity to work in our loft, which I've done since we moved in with our newborn daughter Anna. I've written films here, mostly documentaries that appeared on PBS. I've written novels here. We have had film shoots in the loft. My wife Patti and our kids, Anna and Peter, have looked at film rough cuts when they were truly rough. I've interviewed scholars and artists in our living room. I've written articles and reviews here that appeared in the *New York Times*, *Art In America*, *The New Republic* and *Joyce Studies Annual*, among other publications. Three of my published novels were slaved over here.

Please do not let those who do not know or care about the neighborhood's history dominate the future of our small but remarkably productive world. Let the artists who built this unique environment—The live/work loft residence which has become a dominant worldwide phenomena, leading to urban renewal of the most cheering kind.—become afterthoughts. Or suffer eviction. Realistically, we'll be gone in another decade or so. Let us maintain the uniqueness we built with our brains, sensibilities and hands. Let us not be pushed out by high-rise structures and big box stores.

Thank you.

Robert J. Seidman

Novelist, Emmy-winning screenwriter and literary critic, with Don Gifford co-author of *Ulysses Annotated*, the definitive annotation of James Joyce's masterwork which has been in print since 1974.

From: [Robert Lobe](#)
To: [Speaker Corey Johnson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] REZONING
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 11:41:24 AM

Kathleen, who grew up in Brooklyn in a working class family and went to CCNY, signed the lease for her space in 1972. She and her father turned a rat infested dump into an artist live/work loft. I joined her in 1976 when my loft at 76 Jefferson Street was demolished for the last Mitchell-Lama housing project. Kathleen is a painter and I am a sculptor. We raised two children who went to public schools. Today, one is a doctor and one is a writer. We were actively involved with the Loft Law and went with many artists to lobby for it up in Albany. Our careers as artists and our ability to raise a family were possible because of rent stabilization and the Loft Law. To be manipulated and forced out of our home today would be equal to a death sentence for us now as older people. Kathy and I have had long and successful careers as artist. Kathleen just received a Pollack Krasner Award and me, a Guggenheim. As a member of the SOHO community, I went before Community Board 2 in the fall of 2018 with the Parks Department to be granted permission to install [SUPERSTORM](#) in Duarte Square Park. The building we live in is now a condominium and our loft is the last unsold unit. **Stop this giveaway!** Please don't allow the miracle of downtown Manhattan to be destroyed.

We strongly oppose the Mayor's SoHo/NoHo rezoning plan primarily because it will destroy so many lives. It's not just a giveaway to the real estate moguls but a confiscation of the artists who really pioneered downtown. My wife moved into our loft in 1972 when it was a freezing, rat infested empty space. I joined her in 1976. We raised two children. We fought for the Loft Law up in Albany. This letter is from me not her because, as older people now, this rezoning is a death sentence. My wife, Kathleen Gilje, www.kathleengilje.com and myself Robert Lobe, www.robertlobe.com continue to have active careers in the art world. We know it well. We helped build it. I recently went before Community Board 2 with NYC Parks to request permission to place an installation in Duarte Square Park [SUPERSTORM](#) Our rent stabilized loft on the corner of Broome and Greene, where we ACTUALLY live and work, is now, except for us, a condominium. Of the seven sold units, five are just pied-a-terre's/Air BNB's. It's mostly empty.

From: [Robert Lobe](#)
To: [Speaker Corey Johnson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 12:17:32 PM

We strongly oppose the Mayor's SoHo/NoHo rezoning plan primarily because it will destroy so many lives. This is just a giveaway to the real estate moguls and a death blow to the artists who pioneered SoHo. Kathleen, who grew up in Brooklyn in a working class family and went to CCNY, signed the lease for her space in 1972. She and her father turned a freezing, rat infested dump into an artist live/work space. I joined her in 1976 when my loft at 76 Jefferson Street was demolished for the last Mitchell-Lama housing project. Kathleen is a painter and I am a sculptor. We raised two children who went to public schools. Today, one is a doctor and one is a writer. We were actively involved with the Loft Law and bused up to Albany along with many to fight for it. Our careers as artists and our ability to raise a family were thanks to rent stabilization and the Loft Law. To be manipulated and forced out of our home today is *equal to a death sentence for us now as older people*. Kathy and I have had long and successful careers as artists. Kathleen just received a Pollock Krasner Award and me, a Guggenheim. As a member of the SOHO community, I went before Community Board 2 in the fall of 2018 with the Parks Department to be granted permission to install [SUPERSTORM](#) in Duarte Square Park. The building we live in is now a condominium and our loft is the last unsold unit. Of the seven sold units, five are just pied-a-terre/Airbnb. Today we live in a mostly empty building. *Please don't allow the miracle of downtown Manhattan to be destroyed!*

Kathy, [kathleengilje.com](#) and I, [robertlobe.com](#) dual members of BOBKAT LLC urge you to stop the City's rushed and reckless plan to rezone SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown.

Sincerely,
Robert Lobe
Kathleen Gilje

From: [Robert Piatkowski](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:56:22 AM

To the City Council:

Good Evening,

I am writing to you an urban planner and designer, urbanist, YIMBY, and most of all, someone who loves and is constantly inspired by, New York City. The Soho/NoHo and Chinatown neighborhoods are some of the most iconic and celebrated places in the City, so much so that on any given day, thousands upon thousands of people crowd the streets and sidewalks. These people come from across the City and world to experience these neighborhoods. In fact, many people visit these streets specifically for the cobblestones and historic buildings.

Neighborhoods like Soho/NoHo and Chinatown and the many historic districts across the city are exactly the reasons why so many people love the City and choose to make it their home or find inspiration and comfort in an increasingly disconnected, globalized, and glass box world. All of this is not to say that Soho/NoHo does not need to be rezoned or that the City does not need more housing (it does). However, the rezoning as proposed jeopardizes the very essence of what makes the neighborhood special and desirable to begin with. The City's proposed rezoning would more than double the allowed building mass across the historic districts without any additional protections on Soho's world-renowned architecture, greatly adding pressure to redevelop. It also makes no guarantee that affordable housing will be created while it does guarantee the demolition of tenement housing and historic buildings. 80 percent of the rezoning area is within a historic district, and in the City's own plan, 48 percent of projected sites and all of the potential sites for redevelopment are within a historic district. The areas the City anticipates to have the greatest amount of development also happen to be the areas with what little affordable housing does exist – and this new development could replace actual affordable housing with hotels and office.

The City can and must do better to rezone Soho/NoHo and Chinatown in a way that protects its cultural and architectural heritage while bringing affordable housing to the neighborhood. There is a lot of middle ground between the existing zoning and the City's proposal which applies the same zoning to Soho as is found in Long Island City and Midtown Manhattan. Unfortunately, the Department of City Planning is framing those who want development within Soho to remain in scale with the neighborhood as relics of the past, or people who do not want an inclusive neighborhood. The City should sit down with the community groups and develop a strategy for accommodating needed affordable housing within the context and character of the neighborhood, which are the reasons why it is such a desirable place to be to begin with.

Vienna, Austria is held up as an example of an inclusive city and consistently ranks as one of the most livable cities on earth. Yet you do not find them demolishing their historic buildings and city center. They recognize the importance of these places to the cultural and physical wellbeing of the city. They instead create new neighborhoods of choice, new desirable places to live connected to the city's transit network instead of erasing their past and building ever taller in just one location. Soho, like historic Vienna, is open to all residents and visitors who come to marvel at its beauty and shop along the lovely streets. The packed sidewalks and

people hanging out alongside the buildings clearly indicate that this is not an exclusive place closed to the masses. It is not a gated neighborhood accessible to only those residing there, its beauty and charm are shared by all. The City's plan will lead to the degradation of what makes Soho a place where so many people want to be. Adding more affordable housing is a good goal for the neighborhood, but it should be done in a manner that is consistent with this special place instead of the careless plan from the City.

As an urban planner and designer (and someone who will never be able to afford to live in Soho), I must say that the City's plan is a foolish endeavor based on politics, not sound planning or practicality. It is a way for the mayor to say that he has upzoned a wealthy neighborhood with no consideration to the potential impact on the community or one of the most well-known neighborhoods in the City. This politically driven rezoning will get the Mayor a headline while doing little to nothing to actually address affordability in the City while also setting a precedent for redeveloping other beloved historic neighborhoods.

The City needs to rethink its growth and preservation in a holistic, equitable way. More neighborhoods should be given historic protections, which when combined with the 2019 tenant laws, will help preserve affordable housing. At the same time, the City must identify underutilized and car-oriented areas for new development, such as shopping malls, parking lots and outdated industrial spaces that are near transit and transform those areas into new, walkable neighborhoods. These areas must accommodate as much housing as possible including actually affordable housing and community amenity components. Lastly, the MTA must invest and improve transit across the City. Connecting neighborhoods, and connecting people to jobs and education, is essential to accommodating a growing population.

Please do not accept the City's rezoning plan as is. Please work with the local community, preservation groups, and tenant groups to protect what makes Soho and Chinatown so great and desirable and add affordable housing, more commercial, etc., into a plan for the neighborhood that reflects its residents and cultural contribution to the City.

Thank you,
Robert Piatkowski

Regards,
Robert Piatkowski
340 3rd St
Jersey City, NJ 07302

From: [Roberta Barnett](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Soho/Noho Rezoning Comment
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:33:53 AM

My name is Bobbi Barnett, and I am a lifelong New Yorker, public servant, and live in Chelsea. I pass through Soho every day on my way to work.

I wanted to voice my support for the Soho-Noho rezoning. I am pleased that the rezoning will create nearly 1000 affordable homes in an area with almost none. With almost half of the city's tenants rent-burdened, now is the time to push for greater affordability in this rezoning. The proposed affordability scheme would allow Soho to add some badly-needed low income units to the neighborhood.

New York City needs more housing at the deepest levels of affordability, and I hope that we hold Soho and Noho responsible for helping to meet this need.

Thank you for your time.

From: [Rochelle Gurstein](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 4:04:23 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Rochelle Gurstein
472 Broome St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Ronnie Wolf](#)
To: [Ronnie Wolf](#)
Cc: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] OPPOSITION TO DCP PLAN AND CHIN'S BILL
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:32:41 AM

Hello

I'm a 42 year resident of SoHo, a certified glass artist, a Residential Representative on the SoHo Broadway Initiative and a small Broadway Commercial owner.

I speak on behalf of those I represent. We OPPOSE the DCP Plan and Councilwoman Chin's Bill.

We oppose the Plan, as there doesn't exist a CODE that will enable Coops to transition from manufacturing to residential seamlessly and without raising taxes.

DCP and DOB haven't resolved the "HOW" to convert JLWQA to UG2 Residential. Thus, any "mechanism" short of being seamless and cost free imposes unintended burdens on the residential community.

The Envision Soho/NoHo Plan sought to make non conforming residents legal and to create a pathway to legalizing buildings stuck in C of O limbo. DCP's Plan does not have a clear path on how that can be done and has the potential to destroy more rent regulated homes than build affordable ones.

The Arts Fund is insulting and despite DCP's claims, residents gain nothing from it. The Bill's misguided intention is 40 years too late. But if the zoning had been enforced, the City would have lost out on collecting 100's of millions of dollars in property taxes. Humm

Tourists, retailers, shoppers and media companies are drawn to SoHo because it's residents preserved the historic facades of their buildings and because, only in SoHo, can you experience such storied architecture with low FAR.

This diverse culturally rich neighborhood developed organically. While the DCP Plan is SOLELY a financially driven Developer's dream.

Voting FOR "AS OF RIGHT" OVERSIZED retail, is a vote AGAINST small businesses, the Quality of Life of the residents and AGAINST what made SoHo the "Go To" destination celebrated around the World.

These are rational reasons why we oppose this Plan and vote No!

Thank you

From: [Russell Ewig](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 3:28:26 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Russell Ewig
31 Mercer St
New York, NY 10013

From: [Sally Bowden](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:33:26 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Sally Bowden
41 E 1st St
New York, NY 10003

From: [Sam M](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:52:51 PM

To the City Council:

My name is Sam McGarvey and I am speaking on behalf of The Sierra Club NYC group and as a member of its Urban Sustainability Committee. The Sierra Club is the nation's largest and oldest environmental organization. We boast over 15,000 members here in New York City across the five boroughs.

The Sierra Club strongly opposes the proposed SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning. The Sierra Club supports environmentally appropriate urban infill development, as it is key to reducing our planet's carbon footprint. However, this proposed upzoning utterly fails the "environmentally appropriate" criteria outlined in the proposed rezoning.

Any zoning plan which incentivizes widespread demolition and reconstruction within such limited confines can only result in harmful, unhealthy levels and concentrations of noise, dust, and carcinogenic emissions. Following a pandemic where evidence points to greater susceptibility to contagion from the toll such elements take on pulmonary and other bodily functions, the Sierra Club finds this plan particularly detrimental to environmental and human health. At the very least, the City Council should refuse to adopt any such upzoning until the City couples it with state-of-the-art mitigation and environmental protection standards, which the City has not done.

Beyond the construction problems, the Sierra Club still finds this upzoning environmentally detrimental. Allowing the possibility of the equivalent of four Empire State Buildings within the boundaries of this upzoning plan goes against the cardinal environmental principles of reasonable density and a livable human scale.

This proposed plan fails the environmental checklist for an upzoning in the following categories:

- ~ No assurance of green space, park space, open space, and tree planting. Open space remains a precious urban need, which is especially true in SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown.
- ~ No requirement of carbon neutrality, green building requirements, and the use of green and renewable energy.
- ~ No requirement to upgrade the existing infrastructure to meet additional burdens.
- ~ No provision for direct sunlight on the sidewalks and open areas.

SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown currently constitute traffic congestion disasters, with damage to air quality and danger to health and safety. It amounts to the height of governmental irresponsibility for the City to propose any plan for these areas which not only fails to solve the traffic problem but exacerbates traffic pollution and danger from the inability of emergency vehicles to make their way in a timely manner through gridlock, especially important in the ongoing aftermath of the loss of St. Vincent's hospital. The plan's allowance for big box stores becomes particularly egregious in this regard as those stores attract private and car service vehicles.

Furthermore, this plan destroys more existing affordable housing, especially in Chinatown, than it will ever create. The community and Community Board have set forth an alternative plan which preserves and creates additional truly affordable apartments. The Sierra Club nationally has recently clarified its mission to make clear the Club's commitment to social

justice as part of its environmental commitment. We view any plan such as this, which jeopardizes existing affordable housing, as a travesty of social injustice.

For the above reasons the Sierra Club strongly urges the City Council to reject this ill-conceived upzoning proposal. The Sierra Club will be pleased to work with the community, with full community input and buy-in, which this proposal lacks, to help the City come up with an improved rezoning which achieves greater affordable housing without sacrificing the environment or the unique features which make SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown integral parts of our City's tapestry.

Regards,
Sam M
51 Prince St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Samantha Antram](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:37:28 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Samantha Antram
120 Thompson St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Sameera Kolhatkar](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 6:36:14 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Sameera Kolhatkar
25 Cornelia St
New York, NY 10014

From: [Sara Driver](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] [SUSPECTED SPAM] Up zoning. Don't destroy our quality of life
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 7:40:08 PM

Dear Margaret Chin,

Why would you want to leave this up-zone as your legacy?
This is a very unpopular and not community minded at all.

This kind of increase in population and buildings would be awful for our already over populated neighborhood. We can barely handle all the people who live and come to our neighborhood now. And we have no green space. We are currently fighting to save the Elizabeth Garden..There are no other gardens and green space in this area.. The kids play on asphalt in little playground on Spring St..And Christie street park is full of junkies and offers very little in the way of foliage.

I've lived on the Bowery and watched it over the years become a destination place. The traffic is horrible too now. The cars honk for hours, blocked in traffic. There is noise and air pollution. Really? Increase building and populations..Really? !!

Is the greed of real estate interests really more important than the quality of life for people downtown. People who supported you and voted for you. Simply stated, the downtown and our area can't handle this.

What about the Croton reservoir? Has a study been done of what will happen with this increased population downtown if we have a drought?..
It is a very old reservoir..

Please consider carefully. Don't destroy our quality of life.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sara Driver
184 Bowery
NYC 10012

From: [Sarah Gallagher](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:56:28 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Sarah Gallagher
1136 1st Ave
New York, NY 10065

From: [Sarah Rudolph](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 9:24:39 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Sarah Rudolph
155 7th Ave
Brooklyn, NY 11215

From: [Sarah Walker](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Rivera, Carlina](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz](#); [Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenislandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Emphatic NO to Margaret Chin's bill
Date: Wednesday, December 8, 2021 6:45:19 PM

Dear Councilmembers,

I write as an artist certified by the city living in a long-time artist building to strongly object to Margaret Chin's punitive, wrongheaded bill.

At the Community Board 2 meeting last Thursday I witnessed how gobsmacked the board members were as they attempted to unpack the bill and ask the young staffer Chin sent to help them understand the implications, which were in no way clear. Margaret Chin's representative was close to clueless, details of the bill had not yet been worked out, Chin didn't bother to show up to support, discuss or even elucidate the need for this bill.

Community members such as myself were left with the sickening feeling of a political move made by a councilperson on her way out the door after nearly zero dialog with the residents and CB2 representatives.

This bill does not address residents who were grandfathered in during the late 80's, who are spouses or children of deceased artists, or who engage in an artistic practice not validated by the city. The fines are obnoxiously high and there's no clarity as to who pays: the building or the individual? This rushed, vague and divisive bill is more holes than cheese!

Please choose to vote no on Margaret Chin's bill.

Sincerely,
Sarah Walker
Co-op President


From: [SaveCentralParkNYC](#)
To: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us; [Ben Kallos Council Member](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Oppose the Upzoning in SOHO, NOHO and Chinatown
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 4:08:15 PM

Outsized development in the Historic District is unconscionable. Up zoning will put all control (and \$\$\$) in the hands of the developers.

Developers have run roughshod over the existing laws as it is, elected officials have been recognizing the abuses taking place City wide (200 Amsterdam, The Blood Center, 36 West 66th Street etc.) and appealing to the DOB and the BSA to no avail.

Giving more leverage to developers with limited (if any) benefit to New Yorkers is not why you were voted into office. Today is election day, vote against this up zoning and consider your constituents and the future of a livable New York.

SaveCentralParkNYC
savecentralparknyc@gmail.com

From: [Scott Thode](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:11:39 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Scott Thode
150 Thompson St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Scott Zohlman](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 3:54:44 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Scott Zohlman
2 Horatio St
New York, NY 10014

Sherida Paulsen
4606 Independence Avenue
Bronx, NY 10471



9 November 2021

My name is Sherida Paulsen. I am an architect, past president of the AIA New York Chapter, and former Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I testify today as a design professional working on Individual Landmarks and within Historic Districts with decades of experience in dealing with special permits and the cumbersome approvals required in SoHo and NoHo to allow for retail and residential uses. That said, I am here today to speak in opposition to this proposed zoning text. The Zoning Resolution must be a tool that can be used and understood by architects, engineers, Department of Buildings' examiners – and the public. This proposal is confusing at its core in proposing to increase zoning floor area in districts where there is little to no likelihood of ever achieving these numbers. The current zoning adopted many years ago has many flaws, but it achieved its goal of preserving these special buildings AND allowing for adaptive reuse to residential and retail when the applicant did repair and restoration work.

The community spent much time and effort to reach common goals to allow for retail, commercial and residential uses to coexist in a balanced manner, retain the special character of the historic districts, and provide reasonable flexibility for future adaptive reuse without requiring multiple lengthy reviews. This zoning proposal does not address these goals. It penalizes the residents and building owners who invested in this area and adds a "flip tax," creates confusion regarding allowable development both residential and commercial, and provides no regulatory relief to code requirements that can be onerous in doing conversions and additions to historic structures.

I urge the Council to reject the proposal as presented or address the multiple critical comments from elected and appointed officials and many members of the public by reducing the FAR allowable, eliminating the "flip tax," constraining the uses allowed above the second floor, and directing the Department of Buildings to analyze our current codes for possible conflicts and develop code modifications that can address adaptive reuse in these neighborhoods.

The production of affordable housing is affected by land cost and construction cost. Land is scarce in Manhattan, and construction is expensive. Providing more units – bigger buildings - does not reduce the cost of the building – it increases it. If we want to increase housing production, we need to look at where (and how) we can build new buildings at lesser cost, and how we can limit the costs of converting smaller buildings to new uses through building code updates. This proposed zoning modification does not address these challenges and should not proceed as is.

11/9/2021

**NYC Council Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises: SoHo Broadway Initiative
Testimony**

Good Afternoon [or Morning] Chair Moya and members of the committee. My name is Mark Dicus and I'm the Executive Director of the SoHo Broadway Initiative, the not-for-profit that manages the neighborhood-focused business improvement district on Broadway from Houston to Canal.

The Initiative has advocated for long-needed zoning changes to facilitate the long-term health and success of our community. Indeed, our Board adopted a set of planning goals that has guided all of our advocacy in this regard. However, as we near the conclusion of this ULURP process, our board is divided on the zoning proposal. The vast majority of our residential board members oppose the proposal while our commercial members generally support it. Despite these diverging positions, there is general agreement on the following recommendations:

First, the Initiative strongly supports allowing the conversion of JLVQA units to residential without requiring a certified artist to occupy the unit. We firmly believe the conversion process should be efficient and inexpensive, with flexibility around code compliance. In addition, any conversion process should have a no-work approval process where appropriate to protect current residents who have occupied these buildings for decades.

We have not had an opportunity to discuss the highly impactful and troubling legislation that was added to the agenda this morning imposing thousands of dollars in fines for occupying a JLVQA unit while not being a certified artist. However, it would appear to be inconsistent with our goals of allowing residential use as-of-right and maintaining stability for long-time community residents.

Next, the Initiative believes that the proposed arts fund is an insufficient and unsustainable approach for celebrating SoHo's remarkable legacy of arts and culture. We find the proposed conversion fee to be overly burdensome on owners of JLVQA units and believe the arts fund lacks sufficient focus on SoHo and NoHo. Therefore, the provisions for creating an arts fund should be removed with a separate process for arts and culture planning undertaken when there is community and political support for doing so.

Third, the Initiative is committed to working with the City to address quality-of-life issues in our unique mixed-use district. We call on the City to make enforceable commitments to address garbage, retail lighting and signage, sidewalk and vehicular congestion, commercial deliveries, and public space. Specifically, the Initiative seeks a commitment from DSNY to pilot containerized waste solutions within the SoHo Broadway district to remove unsightly garbage from sidewalks. In addition, we look forward to collaborating with DOT to develop a freight plan to reduce traffic. SBI also supports creating a signage master plan for retail with LPC and DOB to preserve the historic look and feel of SoHo Broadway.

Finally, the Initiative strongly believes that protecting existing residents, especially those who live in affordable and rent-regulated housing, must be a priority. We urge the City to provide adequate resources to protect against displacement of these residents.

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to continuing to advocate to create a better SoHo Broadway for all residents, businesses, and visitors.

From: [STACY KAUFMAN](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Say no to Upzoning soho/noho
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 7:05:40 PM

I have four questions:

- 1) If the city is seriously interested in “affordable housing”, why not put up 100% affordable housing in the huge city-owned lot by the Hudson River which would avoid destroying a neighborhood;
- 2) will the token number of affordable tenants be required to use the back door?;
- 3) which real estate company did Margaret Chin take a job with starting in January?; and
- 4) will there be affordable housing upzoning on Fifth Ave across from the Park, on Sutton Place and on Central Park South simultaneously with this plan since there is no income housing in those fine, upscale neighborhoods and those are the really Uber-rich people?

Please vote as if you actually represent the interests of your constituents.

Thank you. I await your reply.
Stacy Kaufman

From: [Stefan Ziegler](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Rezoning of Soho
Date: Wednesday, November 3, 2021 4:20:48 PM

To whom it may concern:

I am a Swiss resident but also the owner of and part-time resident in a loft in 37 Greene Street. The prime reason that I chose this neighbourhood was the special character of Soho. As a landmarked district, it has a most unique character, appeal and charm.

This cast iron district with its lofts has no matches worldwide. This district is super special with its architecture, culture and history and as such deserves the highest protection and land marking. Soho's uniqueness draws visitors from all over the world and its sheer existence contributes so much to the beauty and appeal of New York.

To change now the landmark rules for the sake of profit and under the pretext of affordable housing is short-sighted and wrong. This will do a lot of harm with no long-term benefits at all.

I strongly urge you to not lift the landmark protection as it currently stands and to stand up for Soho and for New York with all its beauty and uniqueness.

Kind regards, Stefan Ziegler, Küsnacht (Switzerland) and New York (Soho)

From: [Stephanie Tricola](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:59:20 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Stephanie Tricola
203 Grand St
New York, NY 10013

From: [Stephen Antonakos Studio](#)
To: [Chin](#); [District2](#); [info@sohoalliance.org](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Corney, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] NO to BID Plan
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 1:22:55 PM

PLEASE STOP THIS DESTRUCTIVE COMMERCIAL PLAN.

SOHO IS BEST AS IT IS. WHY DESTROY IT?

I HAVE LIVED AND WORKED HERE SINCE 1963 IN AN ACTIVE ARTIST'S STUDIO. THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THE OLD AND THE EVOLVING MAKING A SAFE PRODUCTIVE PLACE WHERE SO MANY LIVE, WORK, AND VISIT IN PEACE.

SOHO AS IT IS REPRESENTS THE BEST OF NEW YORK:

MIXED, LIVELY, COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL, CULTURAL.

PLEASE STOP THE SOHO BROADWAY BID PLAN.

OUR LIVES DEPEND ON KEEPING SOHO AS IT IS AND AS IT WILL DEVELOP NATURALLY.

SEND THE DEVELOPERS TO A NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE THEY CAN DO SOME GOOD, INSTEAD OF DESTROYING A GOOD STRONG NEIGHBORHOOD.

THANK YOU.

Naomi S. Antonakos



STEPHEN ANTONAKOS STUDIO LLC
435 WEST BROADWAY, NYC 10012-5902
212 925 5956 | 917 650 2207
info@stephenantonakos.com | www.stephenantonakos.com



61 E. 4th Street, New York, N.Y. 10003
tel: (212) 228-8210; fax: (646) 602-2260
email: csc@coopersquare.org
website: www.coopersquare.org

I'm Steve Herrick, Executive Director of the Cooper Square Committee. We were part of the Advisory group formed in 2019 to give recommendations to the City about how to address the quality of life and affordability issues in these historic, mixed use districts. This rezoning plan does not reflect the recommendations of the advisory group, and City Planning has ignored calls for changes to the plan. The City Council has a chance to make those changes. I'm here to ask that the City Council to vote No on the ULURP application for SoHo and NoHo unless the following changes are made:

First, reduce the Proposed Residential FAR: The proposed increase in allowable Floor Area Ratio from 5.0 throughout SoHo/NoHo to as much as 12.0 in the housing opportunity zones and 9.7 along Broadway, Lafayette and Canal Street is unacceptable. The allowable building heights of 275 feet in the opportunity zones and 205 feet along Broadway/Lafayette and Canal St are wildly out of scale with the built environment. CSC proposes the following revisions:

- a) In the housing opportunity zones, reduce the R10 zoning (or 12.0 residential FAR with MIH) to R9A (or 8.5 residential FAR with MIH). Height limits should not exceed 175 feet since there are very few buildings taller than that in these areas.
- b) Along Broadway, Lafayette and Canal Streets, change the R9X zoning (9.7 residential FAR with MIH, with a 205 ft. height limit) to R8A zoning (7.2 residential FAR with MIH and impose a 125 ft. height limit). There are virtually no buildings taller than 12 stories along Broadway and Lafayette St and nothing taller than 6 stories on Canal Street other than the area between West Broadway and Sixth Avenue. The height limit on Canal St should not exceed 105 feet.
- c) Change the R7X zoning (6.0 residential FAR with MIH, and 145 ft. height limit) to R7D (5.4 residential FAR with MIH and 115 ft. height limit) in the SoHo residential core. There's very few housing opportunities in this area and an upzoning will only encourage inappropriate building enlargements.

One positive aspect of this rezoning is that it will allow for flexibility in the massing of new buildings, so that they may be built with 20 foot rear yards instead of 30 foot rear yards, and they can go up to a maximum of 145 or 155 feet with no street wall setbacks which is more in context with the built environment. If the City would adjust the density to what we've proposed, new buildings in the housing opportunity zones could be kept no taller than 145 feet in the housing opportunity zones and no taller than 125 feet in the Broadway/Lafayette corridors.

A second change we urge City Council to make is to reduce the Proposed Commercial FAR: The proposed commercial FAR was reduced slightly by the City Planning Commission to

6.0, 7.0 and 8.0 in some parts of the area being rezoned, but it is still too high. There needs to be a significant differential between the residential and commercial FAR or else developers will choose to build offices and hotels instead of mixed income buildings. The plan currently allows a commercial FAR of 10.0 in the southwest SoHo sub-area, and 8.0 in the southeast SoHo sub-area, where the majority of the affordable housing opportunity exists. The commercial FAR should be no higher than 5.0 in any part of SoHo/NoHo. Increasing it above this will undermine the central goal of this rezoning – to promote up to 900 units of low income housing.

We urge you to look at Cooper Square Committee's alternative recommendations of more appropriate MIH densities to create about 600 low income units, and which we think will create more low income housing than the current City Planning proposal, which will end up incentivizing office and hotel development. The City could still achieve 800 - 900 low income units with our plan if affordable housing funds are used to acquire some additional sites and built 100% low income housing on them.

The third recommendation we urge is that City Council minimize the risk of building enlargements in the Historic Districts: The proposed upzoning will create massive new development rights and encourage enlargements in the historic districts. This can be prevented by not allowing enlargements of buildings that exceed the 80% maximum lot coverage on interior lots. 97% of buildings in SoHo and NoHo exceed these maximum lot area coverage requirements, while 67% of NoHo buildings do. The City Council could allow the BSA to waive its requirement for buildings outside the historic districts if the developer plans to add mixed-income units.

If the City fails to place limits on building enlargements, we will see the historic districts marred by many inappropriate rooftop additions with no affordable housing included. Roughly half of the buildings in SoHo and NoHo are on lots that are 3,000 sq. ft. or less according to PLUTO data, and allowing enlargements of up to 12,500 sq. ft. with no on-site affordability requirement would enable developers to add several additional floors without having to create any low income housing or even have to pay into an affordable housing fund. The City Council must not gift developers with additional development rights without ensuring that SoHo and NoHo receive the benefits of the zoning action.

Fourth, Stronger Anti-Harassment and Anti-Demolition Protections are needed: Our understanding is that SoHo and NoHo will be included in the recently renewed certificate of no harassment program. However, DCP does not propose to include any language in the zoning text amendment to prohibit demolition of structurally sound rent regulated buildings as was done with the West Clinton rezoning among others. DCP should follow well established precedent and apply these anti-demolition provisions in the SoHo and NoHo rezoning. If these provisions are included, it will greatly reduce the risk of tenants being harassed out of their homes, and an underbuilt rent regulated building ultimately being demolished and replaced with a new building at more than twice the floor area of the previous building. These zoning text provisions are essential to prevent a net loss of affordable, rent regulated housing.

Cooper Square Committee supports the recommendations by Zella Jones' of the NoHo Bowery Stakeholders regarding creating a pathway to conversion of JLVQA units to JLVQ as an additional option in addition to conversions to residential. The C of O issues related to residential conversion will make it very expensive and time consuming for buildings to go that route. We also support the Art Fund but believe the payment amount upon resale should be reduced and based on the capital gain, not based on the square footage. Otherwise owners will simply rent out their units indefinitely rather than sell.

With regard to the proposed retail changes, we support allowing retail in SoHo and NoHo on the first 2 floors and cellars, with community review of any retail above a 20,000 sq. ft. threshold, and with some restrictions based on use groups.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

From: [Steven Issley](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to SOHO/NOHO/Chinatown Up-zoning Proposal
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 9:06:25 AM

Dear Council Member Chin:

I am a resident of 542 Broadway in your jurisdiction, and am writing to voice my strong opposition to the upcoming SOHO/NOHO/Chinatown up-zoning proposal by the DeBlasio government.

The reasoning behind my opposition includes the following:

- **Most significant to me is that the city dangles a false “solution” for residents** (aka the “mechanism”) which purports to allow coop and condo owners to convert JLWQA (Joint-live-work-quarters-for-artists) units into ordinary residential units. The city proposes this as “pathway to legalization” for residential owners, including those owning coop and condo units. They also claim this will add resale value to these units. In fact, it is nearly impossible to covert most of these buildings to residential as the requirements for C of Os for the two different codes are different and incompatible. Even where possible, such building conversions would require a **massive outlay of funds — upwards of 500,000 per unit — plus total evacuation of the building during renovation**. This amount of money is a significant fraction of the value of most units - 25-50% (at a rate of \$100/sq ft) - and will be impossible for most residents to pay, especially considering the residents in question are artists, and may have inconsistent income streams.
- **The plan would impose a punitive and excessively high tax on artists** who wish to sell their homes of **\$100 per square foot**. The City says that money will be used as the sole financing source for a hazily-described “Artist Fund.” But, as noted, the conversion plan doesn’t work, so few will use that option. Meaning few will pay the fee. So the convoluted “Artist Fund” won’t be funded. Any implied “benefit” disappears.
- **The plan puts a target on existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood, including loft board protected tenants**, providing a strong economic incentive for its demolition and the displacement of its residents. The plan greatly increases incentives for, and the likelihood of, harassment of tenants.
- **The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings** recognized at the city, state, and federal level. For a shocking visual presentation of 29 buildings slated for demolition or construction in the SoHo National Historic District: <https://tinyurl.com/ymur44zb>
- **The plan would encourage and allow oversized development** in the historic district. It would allow a broad range of uses, especially **big box destination chain retail** with

no community input for special permits. It would issue in **huge NYU dorms and eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size.**

Council Member Chin, it seems like the overwhelming majority of residents in the area oppose this plan, which will undoubtedly be more harmful than beneficial to us. I urge you to support and protect your constituents, rather than corporate interests, and vote against the upcoming up-zoning law.

Thank you for your attention,

Steven Issley
542 Broadway

From: [Susan Keith](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Cc: [Chin](#); [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@HelenRosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Cornegy, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@BenKallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Soho/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 4:29:39 PM

To Council Members:

We are long time resident shareholders of 16 Crosby Street Owners Corporation and are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed rezoning in the SoHo –NoHo-Chinatown Neighborhood Plan. One of us is an artist, who came to 16 Crosby in 1972 and worked along with other artists to transform an empty warehouse into living and work spaces for artists.

We participated in several of the meetings in the Envision process that occurred pre-Covid shutdown, and have continued to be engaged and were stunned at the announcement of the rezoning plan in September 2020, while we were still in the ongoing city shutdown with no clear picture of what the post pandemic city and in particular our SoHo/NoHo neighborhood would look like. .

The Mayor’s plan was rushed out and it is clear that the neighborhoods continue to evolve with the impact of the pandemic. The plan does not provide any benefit to the community and actually would lead to the destruction of the unique historic neighborhood that was revitalized by artists back in the late 60’s and early 70’s who transformed empty factory buildings into living/working quarters and led to SoHo becoming an Art center known around the world and an economic boon for the city.

The Department of City planning claims that the main purpose of this plan is to create more affordable housing in the SoHo, NoHo, and adjacent Chinatown area but this is a sham and the prime beneficiaries of this rezoning are the real estate developers who have been pushing the present city administration for this.

To be specific:

1. We fully support having more affordable housing in our community and the whole city but this plan will create a minimum if any. There are so many loopholes that developers can utilize that there is no guarantee that any affordable housing units will come out of it. The rezonings that have transpired in Downtown Brooklyn and Long Island city have in fact resulted in those neighborhoods becoming wealthier and less diverse. The SoHo/NoHo rezoning which includes Chinatown will potentially most hurt lower and moderate income tenants in rent regulated apartments who are disproportionately senior citizens and Asian American, and live in the area that is targeted for the largest upzoning. Rather than create more affordable units, the proposed plan gives an incentive for demolition of existing low income housing and displacement of those who live there, and will result in less diversity.
2. The proposed mechanism of the DCP for the issues around Joint Living Work Quarters for artists and selling to non artists does not resolve anything. It does not preserve JLWQA units but instead penalizes present owners with a \$100 per sq. ft. “conversion fee” to become a residential unit. The older long time artist residents who were instrumental in creating the Soho art mecca are not in the same economic strata as many of the newer wealthier owners and could be forced out. It does not seem fair, and in fact seems discriminatory, that long time seniors and artists would have to pay this fee while big pocketed developers will be able to change spaces and uses with no fees

attached.

3. Similarly, changing the zoning from JLWQA codes for C of O's to UG2 codes would force out many coop and condo owners due to the daunting, and extremely expensive task of bringing buildings up to compliance with the UG2 codes. There are many seniors and artists in older Soho buildings living on fixed incomes who could not remain and this would leave only the very wealthy, thus a less diverse community.
4. The plan which could increase the population density does not have any details about preserving and protecting the quality of life in the community. There is no discussion of green space, schools, waste management, health care, transportation, and safety concerns and apparently this will be left to the next City Council to work on and legislate.
5. The plan would lift restrictions on the size of retail and eating and drinking establishments and allow Big Box stores, with many more delivery trucks, noise, air pollution, congestion, increased garbage. With the proposed increase in FAR, the increased height of buildings on the Broadway corridor as well as Mercer Street, Crosby Street, and some of Lafayette Street will destroy what was the historic character of the neighborhood. The Landmarks Preservation Commission was not included by the DCP in this proposed upzoning plan of this historic district.
6. We have concerns about whether the geology of the Soho area can safely support the construction of many more high rise towers and whether studies have been done to investigate this. We also have concerns about demolition, jack hammering, shaking and vibrations on sites next to so many century old buildings which could lead to damage and destabilizing of these adjacent buildings (cracking of adjacent walls, undermining of foundations.) We all have heard of such incidents throughout the city.
7. The plan supports the development of high rise luxury coops and condos, with no guaranteed affordable housing. There are empty stores, lots, and existing buildings that could be considered instead for adaptive re-use to create affordable housing units. SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown have so many vacant storefronts and Broadway south of Canal street similarly has so many spaces, some of them quite large in newly developed condo buildings. It is very difficult to understand the need to add more such buildings to our area.

We support having affordable housing and understand the need for SoHo and NoHo to evolve but in a thoughtful way that sustains its character and does not destroy it.

The Mayor's present plan does not achieve this, and we urge you to say "NO" to this proposal.

Sincerely,
Susan and John Keith
16 Crosby Street – [REDACTED]
New York, NY 10013

From: [SN/GL](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#); gbrewer@manhattanbp.nyc.gov
Cc: [Chin](#); [District2](#); info@sohoalliance.org; [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us; Helen@helenrosenthal.com; [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Cornegy, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); joddo@statenilandusa.com; BKallos@benkallos.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] DE BLASIO UPZONING
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:20:01 AM

Hi,

As a resident of the East River Housing Cooperative, I am appalled at the lack of community input or consideration as to the disastrous effect of our outgoing Mayor's plan to upzone the downtown area. This plan does not consider affordable housing nor the needs of the community, many low-income and elderly. This will not only continue to aggravate the existing homeless problem that De Blasio has failed to address during his 8 year tenure. Furthermore, he now wants to add to it.

Please stop the blatant greed and hijacking of our community!!!

Thank you.

Sy



**SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Proposed Upzoning
New York City Council
Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises
November 9, 2021**

Testimony of Michael McKee, Treasurer, Tenants PAC

The de Blasio administration's proposed upzoning of SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown is a disaster in the making. We urge that you vote it down.

There are many things wrong with this bad plan. Supposedly about affordable housing, the reality is that it is a giveaway to the real estate lobby. And so many wrong-headed provisions! The plan allows hotels and office buildings, which should be prohibited; it incorporates loopholes that would allow developers to avoid building a single unit of affordable housing; it allows big box stores; and it allow expansionist institutions such as NYU to cross Houston Street and take over another neighborhood.

My testimony will focus on another feature, one of the worst, which is the danger the upzoning presents to the tenants living in rent-regulated or loft apartments, and to the preservation of this scarce affordable housing stock. In short, if you approve this plan, you will be planting a bullseye on the backs of these tenants and apartments. Predatory investors will inevitably swoop up these properties with an eye to demolition.

The City Planning Commission argues that demolition is unlikely because of strengthened rent laws and landmarks protections. But as we have seen, the Landmarks Preservation Commission has frequently allowed demolition of landmarked buildings as long as the façade is preserved. And after the rent law reforms of two years ago, proposed demolition is the only mechanism that remains for developers to remove an

entire building of rent-controlled and rent-stabilized apartments from the regulated universe.

According to the City Planning Commission there are 185 buildings containing rent-protected apartments in the upzoning district. Through research and legwork, Village Preservation has identified some 635 rent-regulated units in 108 buildings. Given that there are another 77 buildings that are still unidentified, it is probable that there are close to 1,000 units. We don't know for sure because CPC has refused to release the addresses. Whatever the number, the tenants are at risk, and the City risks losing the housing.

These buildings tend to be on the small size, typically between four and seven stories tall. Under current zoning there is little incentive for demolition, as any replacement building could not be substantially larger than the existing ones. But the mayor's plan increases the allowable Floor Area Ratio for all these properties, in some cases to 6.5 FAR, in others to 9.7 FAR and in others to 12 FAR, the largest allowed for residential buildings in the five boroughs. These changes represent an increase in FAR of 30 percent, 94 percent, and 140 percent, respectively.

The Village Preservation research found that 90 percent of the buildings with rent-regulated units they identified would be underbuilt under the rezoning, and 100 percent of those in Chinatown and outside of historic districts would be underbuilt, creating strong incentives for demolition. It should be noted that 30 percent of the rent-regulated units Village Preservation identified are located outside historic districts or are within historic districts but designated as "no style" buildings, and therefore do not have even that modicum of landmark protection.

The Housing Stability and Tenant Protection Act of 2019 repealed Vacancy Decontrol and other weakening amendments that were inserted into the rent control and rent stabilization laws by the state legislature in 1993, 1997 and 2003, and by the New York City Council in 1994. In the 25 years Vacancy Decontrol was in effect, the City lost at least 300,000 apartments which were converted to market rate status (and which unfortunately were not restored to regulation by HSTPA). Since these 2019 reforms, landlords can no longer remove a rent-controlled or rent-stabilized apartment from regulation on turnover, and a stabilized apartment must be re-rented as a stabilized unit, essentially at the same rent the prior tenant was paying.

These 2019 amendments represent a sea change. The state legislature ended or sharply reduced all the mechanisms that landlords could use in the past to deregulate units or jack rents up more than what is required to allow them to maintain their properties. The

one exception is demolition: HSTPA left intact all the provisions that allow landlords to evict rent-controlled or rent-stabilized tenants when they plan to demolish the building.

When regulated tenants are in occupancy, landlords must obtain permission from the Office of Rent Administration, a unit of the NYS Division of Housing and Community Renewal, to terminate tenancies for purposes of demolition. These proceedings are difficult, time-consuming, and costly for developers but ultimately winnable; where the developer is determined there is not much tenant attorneys can do to prevent the inevitable outcome. All the developer must prove to the agency is that it has filed the necessary plans with appropriate government agencies, and that it has the economic wherewithal to complete the project. If the application is successful, the remaining tenants are entitled to woefully inadequate relocation stipends.

But it is much more common for demolition to occur outside the parameters of the rent laws. If the developer can empty the building by harassment, curtailment of services, filing of holdover cases, and/or buyouts, no approval from DHCR is required, as there are no controlled or stabilized tenants left.

The increases in FAR contained in the proposed upzoning would represent an irresistible incentive for developers. The financial rewards would far outweigh any difficulties in achieving demolition, and over time many of these low-rise properties would be replaced by something bigger – likely luxury condos, office buildings, or even NYU dorms.

Nor would the addition of anti-eviction and anti-harassment protections to the plan, or funds to hire organizers or lawyers to represent tenants threatened with displacement, be sufficient to fight the market forces that this upzoning would unleash. It is useful for such protective measures to be incorporated into any upzoning plan, but they are no match for greedy speculators. Not in the third hottest real estate market in New York City, according to Property Shark, second only to Hudson Yards and Tribeca.

When I testified at the Borough President's hearing and the CPC hearing, I suggested that if the plan goes forward, it should be amended to incorporate a "demapping" of all addresses within the rezoning area that contain rent-controlled, rent-stabilized, Loft Law IMD or JLWQA units. Any increase in FAR at these addresses will lead to loss of this affordable housing. The most vulnerable tenants, with a proposed 12 FAR, seem to be in the southeast corner of the rezoning area; this is in Chinatown, but CPC has dishonestly labeled it "SoHo East."

When I was in Chinatown a few months ago, I noticed that every Canal Street storefront between Baxter and Lafayette Streets (the southern edge of this so-called SoHo East Opportunity Area) had signage in Chinese. Below is a photograph of the building at the corner of Canal Street and Centre Street, one block from the easternmost edge of what the City Planning Commission has dubbed “SoHo East.” And yet Margaret Chin recently said that the mayor’s plan does not involve Chinatown. This is Alice in Wonderland double-speak.



Let me state unequivocally that Tenants PAC believes that all neighborhoods in the five boroughs of New York City, including more affluent communities, need to accommodate greater density to increase the supply of affordable housing. If this proposal by the de Blasio administration were truly designed to accomplish that in SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown, we would support it.

These neighborhoods need updated zoning, and they need affordable housing. But not this plan, which is so wrong in so many ways.

It is time to send this plan back to the drawing board. Among other needed changes, any upzoning should be limited to parking lots and garages, plus perhaps sites in the housing opportunity zones with a built FAR of less than 2.0 which would include some one- and two-story commercial buildings. While you are at it, take out office buildings and hotels, eliminate the 25,000 square foot loophole, remove the ability of NYU to take over another neighborhood, eliminate big box stores, make affordable housing mandatory, and increase the percentage of below-market units to 50 percent.

From: [Thomas PORTIER](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 11:22:19 AM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Thomas PORTIER
80 Thompson St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Timothy Allen](#)
To: [Speaker Corey Johnson](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); [glickd@assembly.state.ny.us](#); [Helen@helenrosenthal.com](#); [District7](#); [Ayala, Diana](#); [D09Perkins](#); [Rodriguez, Ydanis](#); [Dinowitz, Gjonaj, Mark](#); [Cabrera, Fernando](#); [District16Bronx](#); [Diaz, Ruben](#); [District19](#); [Koo, Peter](#); [Costa Constantinides](#); [Grodenschik, Barry S.](#); [Dromm, CM](#); [Van Bramer, Jimmy](#); [Adams](#); [Koslowitz, CM](#); [District30](#); [Ulrich, Eric](#); [Levin, Stephen](#); [Reynoso, Antonio](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#); [Cornegy, Robert](#); [District37](#); [info38](#); [Council Member Lander](#); [Eugene, Mathieu](#); [District41](#); [Barron, Inez](#); [AskKalman](#); [District45](#); [Maisel, Alan](#); [Treyger, Mark](#); [Deutsch, Chaim](#); [Rose, Deborah](#); [Matteo, Steven](#); [Joseph Borelli](#); [joddo@statenilandusa.com](#); [BKallos@benkallos.com](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please reject the Soho/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 5:27:16 PM

Dear Council Speaker Johnson,

I am a born and bred New Yorker and long time resident in Soho. I urge you to vote no on the current upzoning plan for Soho/NoHo/Chinatown.

Please listen to Community Board 2 in their rejection of this plan as it stands. Please listen to the concerns voiced by Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer in her opposition to the plan as it is currently formulated.

I have attended all the hearings and listened to countless testimony from long time residents like myself who feel ignored and dismissed by this process.

I support Community Board 2's resolution in a 36-1 vote against the plan for the following reasons:

- This plan imposes a punitive flip tax on residents to convert from current "artist living-quarters" zoning to straight residential use, but imposes no tax on commercial owners converting from manufacturing to retail use. This is unfair.
- How this would be implemented and where this tax money would go has not been defined.
- Property tax assesment in Soho has increased far above elsewhere in the city and property tax payments made by residents have significantly increased, cumulatively over several years easily exceeding \$100/SF. We do not see why this assessment, on top of annual property tax assent, should be paid by present residents. If someone builds an additional 20,000 SF in residential space in the Up-zone area will they also be required to pay \$2,000,000 tax for the construction of this space in a location where previously on Artist Live Work status was permitted? If not, why not? If there is any new tax at all it should only be levied on the construction of new market rate residential space.
- The plan legalizes destination big-box retail putting displacement pressure on small, creative business and local retail stores. It allows the influx of huge restaurants, bars and nightclubs, including entertainment space outdoors and on roofs as well as an expansion of NYU dorms. It encourages new construction of office towers 2-1/2 times the size of the average SoHo/NoHo building. It is the first upzoning of an historic district since the Landmarks Preservation Commission was created in 1965. It creates market incentives that will encourage the demolition of historic buildings.
- The plan does not guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will ever be built, while encouraging luxury residential construction. The plan's housing calculations are spurious - the upzoning will authorize several categories of development, only one of which (New Residential larger than 12,500 SF) includes guaranteed affordable housing. Given that SoHo and NoHo are world-renowned shopping destinations, developers are most likely to opt for mixed-use zoning, which is not subject to Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH).

- Resulting gentrification will put tremendous displacement pressure on low-income, rent-stabilized, Asian-American tenants in Chinatown, as well as loft tenants in SoHo/NoHo.
- The community has prepared a plan that will allow for affordable housing but not by permitting high-rise towers. This a neighborhood of narrow sidewalks with no local parks.
- Yes the city needs affordable housing but we also need to respect historical districts and the people who live in them. And the historical districts are for everyone. On any given day the neighborhood is full of visitors and shoppers and the traffic congestion is the worst I've seen in thirty years. We need to think about environmentally sound ways to address the housing crisis. Vacant or under occupied office buildings can be repurposed to house people.
- I believe that the SoHo, NoHo and Chinatown upzoning proposal must be rejected, so that we can devise a plan that prioritizes the construction of truly affordable housing.

Please reject this plan

- Thank you,
- Tim Allen, Soho resident

On Sun, Nov 7, 2021 at 4:42 PM Erica Baum <erica.baum8@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Council Member Rivera,

I am a born and bred New Yorker and long time artist resident in Soho. I urge you to vote no on the current upzoning plan for Soho/NoHo/Chinatown.

Please listen to Community Board 2 in their rejection of this plan as it stands. Please listen to the concerns voiced by Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer in her opposition to the plan as it is currently formulated.

I have attended all the hearings and listened to countless testimony from long time residents like myself who feel ignored and dismissed by this process.

I support Community Board 2's resolution in a 36-1 vote against the plan for the following reasons:

- This plan imposes a punitive flip tax on residents to convert from current "artist living-quarters" zoning to straight residential use, but imposes no tax on commercial owners converting from manufacturing to retail use. This is unfair.
- How this would be implemented and where this tax money would go has not been defined.
- Property values in Soho have increased far above those elsewhere in the city and property tax payments made by residents have significantly increased, cumulatively over several years easily exceeding \$100/SF. We do not see why this assessment, on top of annual property tax assent, should be paid by present residents. If someone builds an additional 20,000 SF in residential space in the Up-zone area will they also be required to pay \$2,000,000 tax for the construction of this space in a location where previously on Artist Live Work status was permitted? If not, why not? If there is any new tax at all it should only be levied on the construction of new market rate residential space.
- The plan legalizes destination big-box retail putting displacement pressure on small, creative business and local retail stores. It allows the influx of huge restaurants, bars and nightclubs, including entertainment space outdoors and on roofs as well as an expansion of NYU dorms. It encourages new construction of office towers 2-1/2 times the size of the average SoHo/NoHo building. It is the first upzoning of an historic district since the Landmarks Preservation Commission was created in 1965. It creates market incentives that will encourage the demolition of historic buildings.
- Loopholes fail to guarantee that a single unit of affordable housing will ever be built, while encouraging luxury residential construction. The plan's housing calculations are spurious - the

upzoning will authorize several categories of development, only one of which (New Residential larger than 12,500 SF) includes guaranteed affordable housing. Given that SoHo and NoHo are world-renowned shopping destinations, developers are likely to opt for mixed-use zoning, which is not subject to Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH).

- Resulting gentrification will put tremendous displacement pressure on low-income, rent-stabilized, Asian-American tenants in Chinatown, as well as loft tenants in SoHo/NoHo.
- The community has prepared a plan that will allow for affordable housing but not by permitting high-rise towers. This a neighborhood of narrow sidewalks with no local parks.
- Yes the city needs affordable housing but we also need to respect historical districts and the people who live in them. And the historical districts are for everyone. On any given day the neighborhood is full of visitors and shoppers and the traffic congestion is the worst I've seen in thirty years. We need to think about environmentally sound ways to address the housing crisis. Vacant or under occupied office buildings can be repurposed to house people.
- I believe that the SoHo, NoHo and Chinatown upzoning proposal must be rejected, so that we can devise a plan that prioritizes the construction of deeply affordable housing.

Please reject this plan

- Thank you,
- Erica Baum, Soho resident

--



From: [Tim Burke](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] I support Soho Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 8:46:34 PM

Good evening,

I wasn't able to speak in the meeting today since I was at work. I work for an affordable housing property management company in Jamaica, Queens. Our building has a couple hundred units and received over 55,000 applications (not just 55,000 people but 55,000 households). Our city desperately needs more housing. The lack of housing impacts every New Yorker but especially the lowest income people who are often left homeless or in overcrowded living situations.

One recent day at work, I called an applicant and told him he was approved for a unit in our building. He cried for five minutes before being able to speak. Housing changes lives. We need housing, especially in the city's wealthiest neighborhood.

With appreciation,

Timothy Burke

45-15 Colden Street
Apt. [REDACTED]
Flushing, NY 11355

From: [Tomo Kimura](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 1:27:12 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Tomo Kimura
65 Spring St
New York, NY 10012

From: [Valerie Bradley](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:17:28 PM

To the City Council:

Save Harlem Now! strongly urges the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Valerie Bradley
144 W 120th St
New York, NY 10027

From: [Vera Beren](#)
To: [Speaker Corey Johnson](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] City Council Must Vote Down the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 7:00:26 AM

Dear Council Member Johnson,

I urge you to reject the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan. It will threaten and destroy much existing rent-regulated affordable housing, displacing lower-income, senior, and Chinatown residents, and create little or no affordable housing due to multiple loopholes. The window-dressing changes made by the City Planning Commission didn't address these very serious flaws in the plan in any meaningful way.

SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown neighborhood groups and tenant organizations have put forward a community alternative rezoning plan that won't threaten tenants and won't offer huge loopholes to developers to avoid including affordable housing, and also excludes the giant big-box chain stores, NYU dorms, and massive developer giveaways in the Mayor's plan. I urge you to support that and not this shameful gift to the Mayor's friends in real estate.

The local community board, city and statewide housing and tenant groups like TenantsPAC and the Met Council on Housing, environmental groups like the Sierra Club NYC, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the incoming Councilmember for District 1 Christopher Marte, and every local SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown community group opposes this plan. You should too. Don't believe the Mayor and Department of City Planning's shameful lies about this plan, which will make these neighborhoods and New York City richer, more expensive to live in, and less diverse and equitable. VOTE NO!

Regards,
Vera Beren
56 7th Ave
New York, NY 10011

From: [Weiran Shang](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Reasons We Oppose the SoHo Neighborhood Plan
Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 2:30:38 AM

Dear Margaret Chin,

I am writing to let you know that we strongly oppose the up-zoning proposal.

As a student living in the upper west side, SoHo's artistic atmosphere and rich historic relics have been a great source for me and other students in NYC to learn and nurture ourselves. And your plan is clearly damaging the culture and economy there. More importantly, I believe what's happening in SoHo could possibly happen anywhere in NYC. And that's what we do not want to see in this beloved city.

The reasons it most directly affects coop shareholders, condo owners and rents-stabilized tenants are listed below:

- **The city dangles a false “solution” for residents** (aka the “mechanism”) which purports to allow coop and condo owners to convert JLWQA (Joint-live-work-quarters-for-artists) units into ordinary residential units. The city proposes this as “pathway to legalization” for residential owners, including those owning coop and condo units. They also claim this will add resale value to these units. In fact, it is nearly impossible to convert most of these buildings to residential as the requirements for C of Os for the two different codes are different and incompatible. Even where possible, such building conversions would require a **massive outlay of funds — upwards of 500,000 per unit — plus total evacuation of the building during renovation.**
- **The plan would impose a punitive and excessively high tax on artists** who wish to sell their homes of **\$100 per square foot**. The City says that money will be used as the sole financing source for a hazily-described “Artist Fund.” But, as noted, the conversion plan doesn’t work, so few will use that option. Meaning few will pay the fee. So the convoluted “Artist Fund” won’t be funded. Any implied “benefit” disappears.
- **The plan puts a target on existing rent regulated affordable housing in the neighborhood, including loft board protected tenants**, providing a strong economic incentive for its demolition and the displacement of its residents. The plan greatly increases

incentives for, and the likelihood of, harassment of tenants.

- **The plan would encourage the demolition of historic buildings** recognized at the city, state, and federal level. For a shocking visual presentation of 29 buildings slated for demolition or construction in the SoHo National Historic District: <https://tinyurl.com/ymur44zb>
- **The plan would encourage and allow oversized development** in the historic district. It would allow a broad range of uses, especially **big box destination chain retail** with no community input for special permits. It would issue in **huge NYU dorms** and **eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size.**

Approving this sweeping proposal, especially in the final days of the administration of Mayor de Blasio, who cannot be held responsible for its efficacy, would further impair our quality of life, destroy this historic neighborhood and provide **no community benefits.**

Hope you truly consider these before making the final decision.

**Sincerely,
Vera Shang**

From: [Victoria Lau](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vote No on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:35:32 PM

To the City Council:

I strongly urge the City Council to vote no on the disastrous SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown upzoning plan. This proposal would fulfill none of its affordable-housing promises, as it actually makes it more profitable to build without affordable housing than with. It will create huge incentives for destroying the hundreds of existing units of rent-regulated and loft-law affordable housing in the neighborhood, disproportionately occupied by lower-income, senior, artist, and Asian American residents, many of whom would be displaced. It will push out arts and any other small businesses with its allowance for giant big-box retail of unlimited size. It will encourage grossly oversized development up to 2.5 times the size current rules allow, and more than 2.5 times the size of average buildings here now. It will encourage the destruction of historic buildings, and allow developers to add luxury condos and apartments with no affordable housing so long as they don't exceed 25,000 sq ft per zoning lot. Even in this relatively wealthy neighborhood, new development even with the 25–30% “affordable” housing will still overall make the neighborhood richer, less diverse, and more expensive, as the new market-rate units would be so expensive and the “affordable” ones unaffordable to even a significant share of residents here.

The City has consistently lied about the impact the rezoning would have and who would be hurt by it. It's the lower-income tenant-renters, artists, seniors, and Chinatown residents who will be most hurt. Neighbors support an alternative plan for real affordable housing without displacement, oversized development, and big-box chain stores. Vote no.

Regards,
Victoria Lau
105 Bowery
New York, NY 10002



November 8, 2021

Members of the New York City Council
via landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov

Re: Opposition to the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Rezoning Proposal

Dear Councilmembers:

Village Preservation represents thousands of residents and small businesses in Lower Manhattan, and is the largest neighborhood preservation organization in New York City. I urge you on its behalf to vote against the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown rezoning proposal for the reasons outlined below.

The proposed rezoning would have terrible consequences for SoHo, NoHo, and Chinatown, surrounding neighborhoods like the Lower East Side and East Village, and New York City as a whole. An objective analysis shows it would not live up to any of its promises regarding affordable housing or invigorating the retail environment of these neighborhoods, and in fact would do considerably more harm than good. That is why it is strongly opposed by groups as diverse as the Met Council on Housing and TenantsPAC; the Sierra Club NYC; the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Preservation League of NYS; the Chinatown Working Group; NYC Loft Tenants and Lower Manhattan Loft Tenants; the Municipal Art Society and the City Club; Community Board #2, Manhattan; and Congressmembers Jerrold Nadler and Carolyn Maloney and incoming District 1 City Councilmember Christopher Marte.

Specifically, I urge you to consider that the rezoning proposal would:

- **Result in the creation of little if any affordable housing, due to the numerous competing profitable uses which would be allowed under the plan with no affordable housing requirements, including office, hotel, retail, and private university development, and market-rate residential developments of 25,000 sq ft or less per zoning lot ([data here](#) and [here](#)).** The very minor changes made by the City Planning Commission do not change the fact that on every single lot where the city predicts affordable housing will be built, the rezoning plan actually allows more market rate space to be developed when affordable housing isn't included than when it is, thus strongly disincentivizing the creation of any affordable housing ([data here](#)).
- **Create tremendous economic incentive and pressure for demolishing hundreds of units of existing rent regulated affordable housing in the rezoning area, and displacing its predominantly lower income and**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Andrew Berman

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PRESIDENT
Trevor Stewart

VICE PRESIDENTS
Kyung Choi Bordes
Jessica Davis

SECRETARY / TREASURER
Allan G. Sperling

TRUSTEES
Mary Ann Arisman
Tom Birchard
Richard Blodgett
Blaine Birchby
David Hottenroth
Anita Isola
Jeanne Krier
John Lamb
Justine Leguizamo
Arthur Levin
Leslie Mason
Ruth McCoy
Katherine Schoonover
Marilyn Sobel
Judith Stonehill
Linda Yowell
F. Anthony Zunino

**232 EAST 11TH STREET
NEW YORK NY 10003
212-475-9585
VILLAGEPRESERVATION.ORG**

disproportionately senior, artist, and Asian American residents, even in the areas of the rezoning which are landmarked, but especially in those which are not ([data here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).

- **Threaten via secondary displacement hundreds more rent regulated affordable housing units and its largely lower income, Asian American residents in neighboring areas of Chinatown and the Lower East Side** ([data here](#)).
- **Make the neighborhoods subject to the rezoning richer, more expensive, and less diverse, even if new developments include the 25-30% “affordable” housing the city claims it will.** That is because the 70-75% of such new residential developments that are market rate will house residents wealthier than all but the top 5-10% of the current neighborhood, while the 25-30% “affordable” units will require incomes higher than the least well-off 25-30% of current residents of these neighborhoods, so both the market rate and the affordable units would skew the neighborhood wealthier, and its housing more expensive ([data here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)).
- **Disproportionately affect and displace Asian American residents of the neighborhood**, particularly in the Chinatown section of the rezoning, which is targeted for the largest upzoning ([data here](#)).
- **Make it virtually impossible for any small, independent, arts-related, or locally-oriented business to survive here, unless they are lucky enough to own their space.** This is because the plan’s allowance for retail and eating and drinking establishments of unlimited size will make it virtually impossible for anything but big box destination chain retail and mega-bars and restaurants to survive and compete for space here ([more here](#)).
- **Allow gigantic oversized retail on the more than 90% of streets in the rezoning area that are considered narrow streets**, in contradiction to sound planning principles.
- **Allow grossly oversized new development up to 12 FAR, which is the highest legally allowable density for residential development in New York State, and 20% denser than allowed on Billionaire’s Row in Midtown.** That’s two and a half times denser than current rules allow for new development (5 FAR) and than the average existing building in the rezoning area (approx. 4.8 FAR). The proposed upzoning allows a minimum of a 30% increase as compared to existing zoning (6.5 FAR in the “historic core” vs. the current 5 FAR) and up to a 97% increase along Broadway, Lafayette, and Canal Streets (9.4 FAR vs. 5 FAR -- all within historic districts) and a 140% increase in the “opportunity zones” (12 FAR vs. 5 FAR), which include all of the Chinatown rezoning area and other areas with high concentrations of buildings with rent-regulated units, and parts of historic districts ([data here](#)).
- **Incentivize the demolition of buildings recognized as city, state, and federal landmarks** ([data here](#)).
- **Encourage scores of vertical enlargements of existing buildings for luxury condos**, which as long as limited to no more than 25,000 sq ft would not be required to include a single unit of affordable housing, and could easily result in the addition of a million square feet of unaccounted for luxury housing with no commensurate affordable housing ([data here](#)).
- **Add new allowances for NYU and other private universities to expand at very high densities in the area without any affordable housing requirements**, violating promises made previously by

the City Council and City Planning Commission, and creating additional means by which sites are likely to be developed without affordable housing ([data here](#)).

It should be noted that the Department of City Planning has been dishonest in its presentation of data as it relates to the rezoning area and its impacts, including:

- **Misrepresenting the demographic data for the area**, to hide the number of lower income and Asian American residents ([info here](#)).
- **Misrepresenting the location of existing rent regulated housing and the impact the rezoning would have upon it** (by far the majority of such housing would be made vulnerable to demolition by the proposed upzoning, even by the Department of City Planning's own including of vulnerability, including 100% of units located in Chinatown – [info and data here](#) and [here](#)).

Beyond this, the Department of City Planning (DCP) has a miserable track record of accurately predicting the outcomes or impacts of its rezonings, particularly as it relates to the very rationales for their rezoning proposals. A comparison of DCP projections and actual outcomes for a dozen rezonings over the past twenty years shows that the Department's projections are typically substantially less accurate than one would get from tossing a coin – a random formula which will be correct on average 50% of the time. Instead, the Department has been wildly off target in their predictions about the amount of commercial vs. residential development their rezonings will create, the amount of affordable housing they will create, their impact upon retail uses, the degree and location of new development, and much more – [read our full report and analysis here](#).

It should also be noted that more than a dozen local community groups have laid out [the parameters of a rezoning which they would wholeheartedly support](#) (also [here](#)), which the Department of City Planning has refused to consider, and which this plan ignores, including:

- **Allowing as-of-right residential development up to 5 FAR (current allowable FAR for residential development is 0) with affordable housing requirements**, including deeper and broader affordable housing than proposed by the City and without the generous exemptions offered.
- **Allowing as-of-right retail uses of up to 10,000 sq ft** (5,000 sq ft for eating and drinking establishments) with special permit approvals for larger sizes.
- **Allowing for legalization of existing residential uses that do not conform** to current Joint Living and Work Quarters for Artists (JLWQA) requirements.

Village Preservation has also strongly suggested that the following as an alternative means to address the need for affordable housing in the area, which the City and this plan ignore:

- **Developing the multiple vacant lots, parking lots, and sites with 1-3 story underutilized commercial buildings in the rezoning area with 100% (or as close to 100% as possible) affordable housing** at or near the currently allowable FAR of 5 (allowed currently for commercial/manufacturing uses only).

- **Segregate sites or blocks in the rezoning area to be zoned to encourage residential or commercial development, but not both.** This eliminates the competition between uses of the city's plan which reduces the likelihood of affordable housing development, and eliminates the need for zoning substantially higher than the currently allowable FAR for commercial/manufacturing in order to incentivize affordable housing development.

The rezoning proposal is actually considerably worse than maintaining the status quo as it regards affordability, helping small businesses, and neighborhood character, and thus should be rejected. We and other opponents are more than willing to work with elected officials, the Department of City Planning, and all stakeholders to arrive at a plan which would address these issues and make other reasonable and necessary updates to the neighborhood's zoning. The current administration has refused to do so and consider alternatives that would, unlike the current plan, actually address these issues.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman
Executive Director

From: [Vincentcao2000](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Testimony to against Soho/Noho Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 12:59:38 PM

我是Vincent Cao，83-85包厘街住客委员会的代表，我代表我们所有83-85包厘街住客委员会的住客们反对Soho/Noho的土改计划，该计划主要是帮助一些大业主和地产开发商赚钱，鼓励地产投机买卖，该土改计划包括其中所谓的“可负担房屋”将令到地税、租金物价飞涨而造成大幅逼迁。所有的住客都可能面临逼迁无论你是住在租金稳定的楼宇或普通的楼宇，我们包厘街住客就是最好的例子，我们是历经千辛万苦才得以留在我们的社区。市府应该想办法帮助社区从疫情中恢复，而不是在这种情况下还在想着帮助大业主和地产开发商赚钱！

40 Great Jones Corporation
40 Great Jones St. No.6, NY, NY 10012
bill.finneran@gmail.com

November 3, 2021

To: Councilmember Chin

I am the president of the 40 Great Jones Corp. We have been a Live/Work Co-op in NoHo since 1974. We received our C of O in 1989. I am writing on behalf of my fellow shareholders to inform you that we are opposed to the proposed zoning change for our neighborhood because it does much harm and little good. We agree that there needs to be a zoning change and we are in no way opposed to doing our share to provide more affordable housing. Clearly the current artist exclusive residential restriction is out of date and frankly was never necessary or effective when it was implemented years ago. The process defined 'artist' in a far too restricted way and in so doing made many legitimate live work residents ineligible.

The zoning needs to be changed to reflect the actual situation that has existed for decades by letting the residents decide if they want and need to live in a joint living/working environment, not the City of New York. This should be done with no punitive exorbitant municipal fee. Extortion is a crime whether done by individuals, the mob or the city government.

New construction in the area should be encouraged but in a manner and scale that complements the existing stock of low-rise landmark buildings. Retail space as well should be encouraged at a reasonable size and scale not giant overwhelming structures conceived with no regard for the character of existing buildings. SoHo and NoHo belong to the residents and the people of New York not to the real estate developers that donate heavily to political campaigns in hope of gaining preferential treatment.

Sincerely,

William J. Finneran, President
40 Great Jones Corp.

From: [William Meehan](#)
To: [Land Use Testimony](#); [Cumbo, Laurie](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SoHo/NoHo Rezoning
Date: Tuesday, November 9, 2021 10:16:06 AM

To the City Council:

As a New York resident who works in NoHo, I ask that you please approve the rezoning. This is an incredibly unaffordable neighborhood due to decades of exclusionary zoning policy. New housing with MIH units would go a long way towards integrating the neighborhood and relieving gentrification pressure in Chinatown.

Sadly, because Manhattan CB2 has so little affordable housing to begin with, the community preference will not reach those who will really need it. For this reason, I ask that you expand community preference to CB3 as well, so that residents of the Lower East Side and Chinatown have access to affordable apartments in the rezoning area.

Finally, I urge you to maximize this rezoning for housing. With office workers racing back into the city, there is a risk that this rezoning would lead to office rather than housing development, especially in the M1-6 areas. I implore you to reduce the allowed office density to ensure that new development provides the housing that this area desperately needs.

Thank you,
William Meehan

From: [Yukie Ohta](#)
To: [Chin](#)
Cc: [Drummond, Anthony](#); [Fung, Cora](#); [District2](#); [Cehonski, Irak](#); [Speaker Corey Johnson](#); [Bottcher, Erik](#); [Comerford, Patrice](#); [Office of Council Member Powers](#); [Levine, Mark](#); [Lander, Brad](#); [AskJB](#); [Salamanca, Rafael](#); [Moya, Francisco](#); glickd@assembly.state.ny.us
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please Reject the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan
Date: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 1:50:46 PM

Dear NYC City Council Member Margaret Chin-

As a lifelong resident of SoHo and Founder of SoHo Memory Project, a nonprofit organization that celebrates and preserves the history of SoHo, I urge you to reject the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan.

Contrary to what developers and commercial property owners assert, SoHo is still a neighborhood populated by working artists who contribute greatly to our city's cultural life. Tourists and businesses alike are drawn to SoHo by its reputation as a creative hub AND by its historic architecture.

This plan will help push out longtime artist residents of SoHo and NoHo, as well as arts groups and businesses AND it will encourage the demolition of historic buildings recognized as city, state, and national landmarks.

It will also likely add pressure for "secondary displacement" of thousands more residents of rent regulated affordable units in the immediately surrounding area, which are even more disproportionately Asian American and lower income

The plan is opposed by leading citywide and statewide housing and tenant groups, city, state, and national preservation organizations, environmental groups, and Chinatown groups. Furthermore, over a dozen community and tenant groups have offered a community alternative rezoning plan which would allow construction of true, more deeply and broadly affordable housing, without tenant displacement, out-of-scale development, and without big box chain stores forcing out local businesses.

Approving this sweeping proposal, especially in the final days of the administration of Mayor de Blasio, who cannot be held responsible for its efficacy, would impair our quality of life and provide no community benefits. Moreover, it would destroy this historic neighborhood and everything that draws people to SoHo to the detriment of all stakeholders.

I urge you to say "yes" to our communities by VOTING NO on the SoHo/NoHo/Chinatown Upzoning Plan.

Sincerely,
Yukie Ohta

Yukie Ohta
Founder and Director
[The SoHo Memory Project](#)

[Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)
[Subscribe to our Newsletter](#)

SoHo/NoHo Testimony, City Planning Commission Hearing, 11/7/2021, Zeke Luger

Hi, thank you for letting me speak.

DCP has one main “community partner” for this rezoning, Open New York. Almost all pro-rezoning testimonies today came from members of Open New York. So who are they?

I first met Open New York last December. I was asked to help fight a rezoning in Flushing, a lively and unique neighborhood near my school, Queens College. Like many New York neighborhoods, much of Flushing is now demolished after rezonings allowed enormous glass condo and hotel towers, displacing thousands of longtime residents living in rent stabilized housing.

I published an [opinion piece](#) criticizing the Flushing developers. Just hours later, I was disturbed to find I had more than 60 comments calling me stupid, a liar, pro-homelessness, a climate denier, or a “[NIMBY](#)”. SoHo activists I’ve talked to say they’ve been similarly bullied and gaslit.

Open New York is a pro-developer, pro-displacement, alt-right [astroturf](#) organization, created to cyberbully tenant activists into silence across all neighborhoods of New York. Their paid leaders recruit young people on transit Twitter who fear climate change, and bombard them with hyper-aggressive messaging demonizing anyone who stands up to the developer agenda until they imitate this bullying.

They self-describe as “grassroots”, but Open New York does not do street outreach in their targeted neighborhoods. But they do have a “[project submission form](#)” on their [homepage](#) “intended for submissions both from the general public *as well as developers*,” “[i]f you would like Open New York to consider advocating for a project you are involved with”.

Open New York was founded by a [quantitative real estate investor](#), who makes money betting on these rezonings he’s influencing, and [still directs](#) their every move. In August, he [tweeted](#), “Had drinks in NoHo tonight and am walking back downtown through SoHo and fantasizing about how this is all gonna look like post war Dresden come January.”

What’s scary is he’s right. After all the demolitions, upzoned neighborhoods like Flushing and [Downtown Brooklyn](#) look like they’ve been bombed. Flushing’s streets are filled with people living there after their affordable homes were destroyed.

What is DCP doing with these people? Is it that our city government has been actively destroying people’s homes for two decades now?

Open New York is a highly inappropriate community partner, and is an example of how DCP has been wildly irresponsible throughout this entire process. This plan will not create affordable housing, and does nothing to bring justice to the unique New York neighborhoods DCP has displaced and destroyed. Please vote no on this destructive rezoning. Thank you.