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February 22, 2023

New York City Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr.
Chair, Committee on Land Use
250 Broadway Suite 1747
New York, NY 10007

Chairman Salamanca Jr and members of the Committee on Land use:

The New York Building Congress' is a broad-based membership organization that consists of more than 550 constituent organizations and 250,000 skilled tradespeople and professionals, including architects, engineers, contractors, and labor. We write today to express our support for the proposed zoning text amendments to the Special West Chelsea District (ZR 98-242 and ZR 98-423) for the Otis Elevator Building at 260 Eleventh Avenue.

The proposed text amendments would revise the minimum street wall base height requirements, so they match the enlargement plans for the Otis Elevator Building approved by Landmarks and would clarify that the increase in the permitted floor area ratio available under that section may be applied to an enlarged zoning lot.

The proposal is a great opportunity to increase office space and integrate new construction into the district, bringing more activity to the west side and resulting in around \$2 million for the highline fund, an important step in the continued efforts to revitalize New York post-COVID. The proposed development would be a great addition to the neighborhood, fitting the character and context of West Chelsea by preserving a historic building.

Given the previously approved design by LPC and Community Board 4, the New York Building Congress supports the approval of the technical adjustments to the Zoning Resolution necessary to facilitate the building of the Otis Elevator Building.

Very Truly Yours,

Carlo A. Scissura, Esq.
President and CEO

REBNY Testimony | February 28, 2023

The Real Estate Board of New York to The New York City Council Subcommittee on Zoning & Franchises concerning ZR 98-423- Otis Elevator Building

The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) is the City’s leading real estate trade association representing commercial, residential, and institutional property owners, builders, managers, investors, brokers, salespeople, and other organizations and individuals active in New York City real estate.

The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) is the City’s leading real estate trade association representing commercial, residential, and institutional property owners, builders, managers, investors, brokers, salespeople, and other organizations and individuals active in New York City real estate. REBNY thanks the New York City Council’s Subcommittee on Zoning and Franchises for the opportunity to provide testimony today on ZR 98-423, otherwise known as the Otis Elevator Building – 260 Eleventh Avenue.

The applicant proposes the enlargement of the existing Otis Elevator Building located at 260 Eleventh Avenue and the conversion of the adjacent property located at 549 West 26th Street (the “Proposed Development”), within Community District 4 in Manhattan. The addition to the Otis Elevator Building would necessitate a zoning lot merger and transfer 69,125 square feet of unused development rights from Lot 10. The building on Lot 6 would be renovated and incorporated as part of the Otis Elevator Building and the surface parking along West 27th Street would be improved with a 9-story structure. The building on Lot 6 and the new structure would result in a renovated, ten-story building with an overall height of approximately 135 feet. The proposed project would include 342,203 square feet of commercial office space and ground-floor retail space with a FAR of 6.03.

The stated purpose of the Special West Chelsea District is to facilitate development of a dynamic mixed residential and commercial area. The district contains regulations to facilitate the enjoyment of the High Line including a floor area transfer mechanism to preserve light, air, and views, as well as floor area bonuses related to access and open space development. In 2008, the West Chelsea Historic District was designated by Landmarks Preservation Commission, which includes 30

industrial structures dating from 188 to 1930, including the aforementioned Otis Elevator Company. The historic district seeks to protect these structures within 7 blocks between 12th and 10th Avenues, and 24th and 28th Streets. The purposes of the West Chelsea Historic District include encouraging and guiding the development of West Chelsea as a “dynamic mixed-use neighborhood,” as well as ensuring “that the form of new buildings relate to and enhance the neighborhood character and the High Line Open Space.”

The proposed Zoning text amendment to the ZR 98-423 would revise the minimum street wall base height requirements so they match the enlargement plans for the Otis Elevator Building approved by New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and deemed to be consistent with maintaining the character of the West Chelsea Historic District. In 2009, the CPC approved ZR 98-242 to allow the permitted FAR in C6-3 District to be adjusted to 6.33 by paying into the High Line Improvement Fund, applying to zoning lots “existing prior to June 23, 2005.” The additional text amendment would strike the provision in ZR 98-242 that only allows zoning lots in C6-3 districts that existed prior to 2005, clarifying that the increase in permitted FAR available may be applied to an enlarged zoning lot, as the proposed development relies on the creation of a new zoning lot.

REBNY joins other stakeholders, including Community Board 4 and the local Councilmember, in support of the approval of the zoning text amendments to ensure that the proposed new, enlarged zoning lot can receive a floor area increase and to modify the base height requirements for building enlargements. The proposed text amendment will allow for the appropriate reuse of this significant contributing structure in accordance with its LPC approval to continue the economic vitality of this area while simultaneously protecting the historic context of the building and neighborhood. As a result, we encourage the Council to support of this text amendment.

Thank you for the consideration of these points.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 2/23/23

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Man Rayan

Address: 488 7th Ave, New York, NY 10019

I represent: Vornado Realty Trust

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Eugene Travers

Address: 1177 Sixth Avenue

I represent: Circle 1 LLC

Address: 260 Eleventh Ave.

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms