

**Land Use Committee, Richard Asche and Page Cowley, Co-Chairpersons**

**2. Re: Super-tall buildings.**

Community Board 7/Manhattan reiterates our concern-- bordering on alarm-- about the recent trend toward building super-tall structures, grossly out of scale to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. This trend renders sites throughout Manhattan previously thought to be safe from further development "soft sites" which may host super-tall structures. We have already seen several such examples in Community Board 1, 7 and 8. In March of this year, Community Board 7 passed a resolution detailing the loopholes employed by developers which have enabled them to build or plan super-talls (see attached). For the most part, these loopholes arise from the Zoning Resolution's focus (except in contextual districts) on density (FAR) rather than height. Using FAR as the guiding principle does not take into account the construction of buildings with extremely high ceilings (in some cases up to 20 feet); or "void" spaces designed primarily to boost the height of a building, or newly developed construction techniques which make such buildings economical to construct. Exacerbating the problem is the creative use of zoning lot mergers.

It is certainly feasible to write amendments to the Zoning Resolution which take into account the loopholes employed to this point. But there is no certainty that other creative devices will not be developed to circumvent any amendments which are passed. A far more satisfactory solution would be to address the problem of building height directly, either by expanding the use of contextual zoning (with height limits) or providing that buildings in excess of a specified height (which may vary from district to district) require a special permit and BSA approval.

We cannot afford the luxury of wait-and-see. The time to be proactive is now, before any more super-talls advance beyond the planning stage.

**3. Re: 21 West End Avenue, d/b/a Central Rock Gym (West 61<sup>st</sup> Street.) Application #2018-102-BZ to the Board of Standards and Appeals for a special permit to allow a Physical Culture and Health Establishment for the operation of a rock climbing gym to be located on a portion of the first and cellar level.**

- Central Rock Gym has applied for a special permit pursuant to 73-36 of the Zoning Resolution to operate a rock-climbing facility at 21 West End Avenue.
- The applicant is operating several other such facilities.
- The proposed use is unlikely to result in excessive noise or traffic.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **approves** application #2018-102-BZ of Central Rock Gym pursuant to ZR 73-36 to operate a rock climbing facility at 21 West End Avenue.

*Committee: 7-0-0-0.*

**Preservation Committee, Jay Adolf and Gabrielle Palitz, Co-Chairpersons**

**4. Re: 242 West 76<sup>th</sup> Street (Broadway – West End Avenue.) Application #LPC-19-22433 to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for a new rooftop AC equipment.**

The following facts and concerns were taken into account in arriving at our conclusion:

- Previously existing rooftop air conditioning units were removed and have already been replaced with a number of condensing units near the perimeter of the lower roof.
- Seven additional condensers are proposed to be installed on the upper roof.
- Condensers will be 4 feet tall, set on metal stands one foot above the roof, so five high overall.
- Units to be encased in light beige metal enclosures
- Units are partially visible only from a distance - from 78<sup>th</sup> Street and West End Avenue, and from 74<sup>th</sup> Street on Broadway. Within the broader context of other rooftop elements and the building's water tower, their visibility is insignificant.

The Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan believes that the installation of new AC equipment on the upper roof is minimally appropriate to the historic character of the building and the Historic District.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **approves** the new rooftop AC equipment.

*Committee: 4-0-1-0.*

**5. Re: 2309 Broadway, d/b/a Maison Pickle (West 83<sup>rd</sup> – 84<sup>th</sup> Streets.) Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for new storefront and signage.**

The following facts and concerns were taken into account in arriving at our conclusion:

- The existing storefront will be replaced with a new metal and glass storefront, five panes high, including transoms.
- The entry door will remain to the north, and a bifold door will replace the fixed glazing to the south, allowing the restaurant interior to open out into the sidewalk café.
- The metal frame will be painted black.
- The glazing will be a combination of clear panes in the central section, with fluted glass at the lower panes and in the transoms above.
- Regarding the sign, paying homage to Ouest (this restaurant's predecessor), the existing horizontal bands at the sides, and the former mounting locations of the old "Ouest" sign will be retained, with the "Maison Pickle" lettering installed in white neon over the ghosted impression of the "Ouest" letters.

The Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan believes that the proposed design of the new storefront and signage is reasonably appropriate to the historic character of the building and the Historic District.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **approves** the new storefront and signage.

*Committee: 5-0-0-0. Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.*

**6. Re: 271 Central Park West (West 87<sup>th</sup> Street.) Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for two roof-level bulkheads for mechanical purposes.**

The following facts and concerns were taken into account in arriving at our conclusion:

- The existing access to the elevator machine room is through a ceiling hatch in a tenant's penthouse apartment.
- The existing water tank valves are also accessed from the penthouse apartment below.
- To improve access for servicing the elevator machine room and the water valves, and to eliminate the inconvenience of having to access rooftop mechanicals from a tenant's apartment, two new rooftop structures are proposed.
- A new enclosure will be constructed next to the existing elevator overrun bulkhead, to house the elevator machinery in a room accessible from the roof. The new structure will be constructed of masonry, painted white, with a pyramidal skylight, to match the existing adjacent elevator overrun. The new structure will be slightly shorter than the elevator overrun.
- A new heated enclosure encased in beige corrugated metal will be constructed beneath the existing water tower, to provide access to the water valves from the rooftop as well.
- The elevator machine room bulkhead is partially visible from a distance, in Central Park. As it is seen within the context of the other, more visually dominant roof structures, the impact of their visibility is insignificant.

The Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan believes that the proposed design of the elevator machine room bulkhead the water valve enclosure bulkhead are both reasonably appropriate to the historic character of the building and the Historic District.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **approves** the two roof-level bulkheads.

*Committee: 5-0-0-0. Non-Committee Board Members: 1-0-0-0.*

**7. Re: 325 West 93<sup>rd</sup> Street (Riverside Drive.) Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for a Canvas canopy at main entrance, painted steel window bars over ground floor windows facing West 93<sup>rd</sup> Street and Handrail at steps either side of the main entrance.**

The following facts and concerns were taken into account in arriving at our conclusion:

- The proposed awning will be black canvas, with an arched shape. It will project two and a half feet out from the building.

- New black metal handrails will be installed on either side of the entry recess, secured to the building façade.
- New metal window bars are proposed for all the first floor windows. They will be a combination of outward curving profiles (to enclose projecting air conditioner units) and flat bars over the other windows. At most windows, the vertical bars will be fixed. However, at two windows, the bars must be installed as operable gates to provide egress from the apartments.
- The spacing of the vertical bars is narrower at these operable units than at all the fixed bars.
- The Committee urges the applicant to widen the spacing of the vertical bars on the two operable window gates in order to be the same as or as close as possible to the spacing of the vertical bars at the fixed window gates.

The Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan believes that the proposed canopy, side-mounted handrails and metal window bars (with bar spacing widened at the operable units as possible) are all reasonably appropriate to the historic character of the building and the Historic District.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **approves** the new canopy, window bars and handrails.

*Committee: 5-0-0-0. Non-Committee Board Member: 2-0-0-0.*