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CONTACT:

Rachaele Raynoff, Press Secretary -- (212) 720-3471

STATEMENT BY CITY PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR AMANDA M. BURDEN AT THE COMMISSION VOTE ON THE CITY'S EAST VILLAGE AND LOWER EAST SIDE REZONING

October 7, 2008 – City Planning Commission (CPC) Chair Amanda M. Burden made the following remarks at today's unanimous CPC vote to approve the City's 111-block proposal for the [East Village and Lower East Side](#):

"After more than three years of extensive collaboration with Community Board 3, local community groups and elected officials, today is a major milestone in moving this extremely important proposal towards final adoption. The East Village and Lower East Side are two very special and diverse neighborhoods celebrated in New York and around the world as incubators of the arts, historic gateways for immigrants and as the birthplace of New York's counterculture. The 47 year-old zoning we are seeking to replace allows significantly taller construction than the neighborhoods' distinctive tenement scale buildings and threatens to undermine the area's unique building stock and established streetscapes."

"Our balanced plan will protect the area's low-rise character by establishing height limits for the first time while creating opportunities for new and affordable housing where appropriate."

"The East Village and Lower East Side rezoning has benefited from informed and active community and public participation that helped craft and shape the proposal we have before us today. As a result of input from the community and elected officials, important modifications were made before and during the land use review process. Most recently, the Department strengthened the rezoning proposal in direct response to community concerns to include additional affordable housing opportunities on Chrystie Street and wide avenues above East Houston Street as well as regulations to reinforce and maintain established land use patterns on selected residential side streets."

"I want to thank Council Members Mendez and Gerson as well as the community and HPD for their partnership and I want to particularly thank our Manhattan Office Director Edith Hsu-Chen and Project Manager Arthur Huh for their leadership in shaping this proposal. I am also pleased to note that the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit has established a working group representing a broad range of Chinatown interests. The working group, now community led has been meeting monthly to determine consensus over leading issues, and a general framework by which to address them, zoning or otherwise."

"When people walk the streets of these two neighborhoods that loom large in the evolution of our city, we can be proud to know that we helped preserve their built fabric and created a sensitive framework for them to continue to play a role in the City's dynamic future. I am especially proud to vote yes on this proposal."

Department of City Planning

The Department of City Planning is responsible for the City's physical and socioeconomic planning, including land use and environmental review; preparation of plans and policies; and provision of technical assistance and planning information to government agencies, public officials, and community boards.