



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING
CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

September 25, 2007

Honorable Scott Stringer
Manhattan Borough President
One Centre Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Borough President Stringer:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott", written over a decorative flourish that extends from the word "Stringer" in the previous block.

I have had the opportunity to review your proposal for a West Harlem Special District. The proposal recognizes the need to revisit the zoning that has been in place largely without change since 1961. We share your central goal of creating a long-term plan for the growth of West Harlem in a manner consistent with its special character, based on community input.

The Department of City Planning is pleased to confirm that it will work with you and the community to develop and implement a plan that meets this objective. We will examine how best to employ zoning tools, as well as non-zoning policy initiatives, in this effort. Most significantly, these should include the basic elements at the heart of your proposal: use of contextual zoning to regulate the height and massing of new development as well as to equalize FARs for residential and community facility uses; and implementation of the Inclusionary Housing Program regulations in areas of West Harlem to facilitate the creation of permanently affordable housing. DCP will consider how to adapt these and other tools to the special needs and opportunities presented by West Harlem. We will also evaluate other zoning mechanisms -- such as a Special District framework -- with the choice of mechanisms based on what can best achieve our common objectives consistent with sound planning practice. Given recent community comment, we are prepared to extend this planning process to a larger area than originally proposed by you reaching to Community District 9's northern boundary at 155th Street.

The work done by your office is an important start and can be used as a basis for further analysis. We will work closely with your office, Community Board 9, the area's elected officials, and affected stakeholders during the study period as we examine the issues, identify zoning options, and develop a rezoning proposal. This would be followed by

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environmental review, preparation of land use applications, and certification for ULURP consideration. We can begin work this Fall with the goal of developing a West Harlem rezoning proposal by the end of June with environmental review and certification to follow.

The Department of City Planning and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development and Rebuilding will work together to ensure that appropriate resources are made available for the development of the proposal.

We look forward to working with you on this critical initiative.

Very sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amanda M. Burden