

HELEN ROSENTHAL

Council Member, District 6
Manhattan

DISTRICT OFFICE

563 COLUMBUS AVENUE, AT 87TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10024
(212) 873-0282

CITY HALL OFFICE

250 BROADWAY, ROOM 1744
NEW YORK, NY 10007
(212) 788-6975

www.council.nyc.gov



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Contact: Stephanie Buhle
Director of Communications
sbuhle@council.nyc.gov

Land Use Committee Approves TF Cornerstone Proposal for 606 West 57th Street

Today the New York City Council Land Use Committee approved developer TF Cornerstone's proposal to build a high-rise apartment building at 606 West 57th Street.

The most significant "wins" for the community were found in the common ground shared by the developer and the community. Rosenthal secured a new public school pre-K with the build-out paid for by the developer and a confirmed lease with the Department of Education. Rosenthal also secured permanent middle income apartments built for families. "We found a way for a two income family with 2-3 children, for example public school teachers, to live on the upper west side of Manhattan."

In explaining her support, Rosenthal emphasized the fact that when she took office in January there was already a strong wind in the sails of the project with support from community and elected officials. Starting in June 2013, Community Board 4, then-Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer and current Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer all approved the project with stipulations for permanent affordable housing and parking restrictions before its approval at City Planning Commission in March 2014.

In negotiations with TF Cornerstone, Rosenthal secured the items requested by Community Board 4 and MBP's Stringer and Brewer, including twenty percent low and moderate inclusionary affordable housing guaranteed into perpetuity, distributed throughout 80 % of the building, with equal access to all amenities, and a smaller garage with fewer parking spaces. In addition she addressed the concerns of labor when TF Cornerstone agreed to only employ union builders and staff with 32BJ employees. TF

Cornerstone also agreed to apply for a Special Permit should they decide to build a hotel on their property, which is important to the Hotel Trades Union.

Rosenthal recognized the issues raised by the proposal's opponents: "I hear the project's detractors loud and clear: I understand why the residents who live along West 57th street do not like this development. It takes away their light and air, 57th Street is overrun with overdevelopment and there are common sense questions about the wisdom of building so close to the water's edge, in light of the impact of Superstorm Sandy and climate change."

Rosenthal committed to working with the community to accommodate the influx of residents due to the new construction and to working with her fellow council members on a more holistic planning process, "I will also work with my colleagues in the Council and across the hall in the Mayor's office about important, necessary changes to the EIS to make it more responsible in addressing legitimate planning concerns."

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