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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Zoning and Development Committee
Tuesday, November 30, 2021
This meeting was conducted via Zoom**

Board Members Present: Elizabeth Ashby, Michele Birnbaum, Alida Camp, Anthony Cohn, Craig M. Lader, Valerie Mason, Rita Popper, Elizabeth Rose, Barry Schneider, Rami Sigal, Marco Tamayo, Adam Wald, Elaine Walsh, Sharon Weiner, Leo Yu (Public Member)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30.

Co-chair Anthony Cohn announced that representatives of Extell would be appearing at the January Committee meeting to discuss their proposals for the 79th-80th Street blockfront of First Avenue, and the large parcel at 86th and First Avenues. He then introduced Architect and Planner Tuck Edelstein who updated the committee on CB8's Special Zoning District Proposal.

Item 1: Special Zoning District Update

1. At the request of the City Planning Commission, our proposal for two districts – Yorkville and Lenox Hill – will be combined into one.
2. The three basic components remain the same
 - a. An overall height limit of 210 feet on the Eastern Avenues of CD8M (Third, Second First and York),
 - b. The preservation of the existing old and new law tenements,
 - c. Support for small local retail largely housed on the first floor of the “tenement” buildings.
3. Continued advocacy will emphasize the saving of affordable housing and of residents' homes, and the current density of CD8, the highest in the city (111,070 persons per square mile).

Subsequent questions and comments from the public and committee members:

- Next steps,
- The need for community buy-in for the specific height limit,
- Fear of the effects of increased density in what is already the densest community district,
- The current net-loss of affordable housing,
- The effects on a community the displacement of local retail, and the displacement of residents, most of whom do not return.
- The definition of “affordability”

Item 2: After Hours Permits

The committee discussed the enforcement of allowable working time regulations under building permits, as well as the issuing of after-hours permits despite complaints about noise, and traffic disruptions prior to and after “normal” work hours. CB8 staff explained the appropriate procedure, which is for the resident to complain through 311, get a complaint number, and then refer that complaint to the Board Staff, who will follow up. The Community Board's efforts to address this problem is hampered by the fact that we do not receive permit information until after permits are granted, the mechanisms for complaints are slow and unreliable, and the DOB has little interest in enforcement.

Subsequent questions and comments from the public and committee members:

- Cumbersome complaint process
- Indifference of developers and builders to disruption of “normal” activity
- Noisy work before and after “work hours”
- The current net loss of affordable housing,

Item 3: Cabaret Act – Zoning Proposal

The committee discussed the new Dancing/Cabaret zoning proposal. During the October Full Board Meeting, the representative of Councilmember Keith Powers mentioned his support for a Bill that would remove zoning restrictions on Dancing and Music Establishments city-wide. Due to large staff turnover at the Councilmember’s office, they were not able to accommodate our request to meet with us in November but would be able to attend the January meeting with information on the proposal.

Item 4: New York Blood Center/Longfellow Commercial Tower

Rachel Levy, executive director of Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, reported on the approval of the Blood Center/Longfellow tower by the City Council. Despite the best efforts of the Community and local, state, and federal elected officials, the City Council approved the proposal just before Thanksgiving.

The Public and Committee were concerned by:

- The extreme neighborhood damage that will be caused by the tower,
- The total disregard of community and Community Board input and interests,
- The terrible precedent that has been set

Item 5: Rezoning to eliminate C4 and M1 Districts in CD8M

Committee member Adam Wald introduced his suggestions for rezoning C4 and M1 districts in our community district. The purpose of this rezoning would be to eliminate the anomalous zoning pockets in an overwhelmingly residential district, and allow, in those districts, development that would include housing. As the hour was late, discussion was put off until the January meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Elizabeth Ashby and Anthony Cohn, Co-Chairs