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For Immediate Release

**PROTECT THE VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT URGES LANDMARKS
PRESERVATION COMMISSION TO REJECT THE RUDIN LUXURY CONDO/ST.
VINCENT'S TOWER PROJECT**

New York, NY, July 15, 2008—Protect the Village Historic District (PVHD), a community advocacy group with over 850 members devoted to preserving historic Greenwich Village, today urged the Landmarks Preservation Commission to reject the revised Rudin/St. Vincent's plan for luxury condos and a 300 foot hospital tower in the midst of the Greenwich Village Historic District. PVHD called upon the Commission members to stand by their May 6, 2008, determination that the O'Toole Building, which Rudin and St. Vincent's seek to demolish, makes a unique contribution to the Village Historic District. PVHD urged the Commission to reject St. Vincent's contention that continuing to operate the building subject to the terms of the New York Landmarks Law, represents a 'hardship' which prevents it from fulfilling its charitable mission.

PVHD also continues to object to the inappropriate design, height and bulk of the proposed Rudin luxury condo development and the proposed 300 foot hospital tower.

Commented Tom Molner, PVHD Steering Committee Member: 'Members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission have unanimously recognized what Village residents know—the O'Toole Building is a unique mid-century structure which plays an important role in our neighborhood. It is the embodiment of our neighborhood's maritime history and should be preserved.'

Mr. Molner continued: "Generic high-rise towers may be cost effective for real estate developers, but they would destroy the character for which Greenwich Village is recognized around the world. The only hardship here is that created by the hospital's pursuit of a plan which emphasizes profits for developers over the historic character of our neighborhood. We believe St. Vincent's is an important part of our community, and we urge them to explore the many alternatives available to them."

Commented Delia Guazzo, PVHD Steering Committee Member: "Even with the recent modifications, the current Rudin/St. Vincent's plan would do irreparable damage to the historic district. Moreover, we suspect the current proposal is short-sighted for the hospital as well. We believe that, in a few years, the hospital will seek to grow again, as it has in the past. Its current plan would leave it nowhere to go."

Ms. Guazzo continued: “The Landmarks Law wisely places a very heavy burden on those who would demolish a landmark on the basis of ‘hardship.’ The hospital has not met this burden. Indeed, claims by the hospital and the Rudin Organization that there are no feasible alternatives are hard to believe. We well remember that, until the Landmarks Commission insisted otherwise, the Rudin organization insisted that adaptive reuse of the hospital’s buildings east of Seventh Avenue was impossible. When faced with opposition from the Landmarks Commission, however, the proponents did an immediate about face and in a matter of days, produced a plan to preserve four of these buildings.”

Commented Al Butzel, counsel to PVHD: “Almost exactly 30 years ago, the United States Supreme Court saved Grand Central when it upheld the City’s Landmarks Preservation Law. The law made then not only supports but requires the same outcome as St. Vincent’s Hospital asks to demolish another historic structure – the Curran/O’Toole Building built in 1964 as the headquarters of the National Maritime Union. Designed by a student of Frank Lloyd Wright to sound a nautical theme, the building incorporates waves and portholes that reflect one of our City’s greatest seminal industries. It is all too easy to forget, which is why our heritage must be preserved. We look to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to do exactly that.”

For more information on PVHD, see www.protectthevillage.org.

Protect the Village Historic District was formed to advocate for the Greenwich Village community and its interests in the face of a massive and inappropriate development proposal from the Rudin Organization and St. Vincent's. PVHD seeks to significantly downsize and reshape this destructive proposal and to protect the Greenwich Village Historic District. PVHD does not oppose the modernization of St. Vincent's. It does, however, consider it vital that any development respect our historic neighborhood, the City Landmarks Preservation laws, and the values of our community. PVHD supports alternatives that accomplish these goals. PVHD is a sponsored project of the Citizen Action program of the Open Space Institute, Inc. (OSI). Views expressed by PVHD are not necessarily those of OSI.