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For Immediate Release

PRESERVATION AND COMMUNITY GROUPS SPEAK OUT ON RUDIN LUXURY CONDO/ST. VINCENT'S TOWER PROJECT

New York, NY, July 15, 2008—A wide range of preservation and community advocacy groups expressed opposition and concern regarding the revised Rudin/St. Vincent's Plan for luxury condominiums and a 300 foot hospital tower in the Greenwich Village Historic District. In over four hours of public testimony, speakers opposing the project vastly outnumbered supporters.

A wide range of preservation groups, community advocates and individual citizens have issued statements expressing concern or opposing the Rudin/St. Vincent's plan, including the following:

Historic Districts Council (citywide advocate for New York's designated historic districts):

Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director, commented: "Although St. Vincent's Hospital is a definite boon to the community and New York City, HDC feels strongly that grounds for a hardship exemption to the Landmarks Law have been not met in this case."

Contact: Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director, sbankoff@hdc.org; 212-614-9107

Docomomo US-New York/Tristate (a local chapter of the international organization focused on identifying and protecting buildings and sites of Modern Movement architecture):

The Advocacy Committee commented: "We urge [the Landmarks Preservation Commission] to deny St. Vincent's Hardship Application to demolish the O'Toole Building as we believe there are options that have not been considered. In a city with limited real estate, any development has to consider a broad spectrum of options of which St. Vincent's has many. The claim that there is only one site for a new hospital in the whole of the downtown area is difficult to imagine. Any development must consider a broad spectrum of options."

Contact: info@docomomo-nytri.org

Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (dedicated to preserving the architectural history and cultural heritage of the Village):

Andrew Berman, Executive Director, commented: "It is the strongly held belief of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation that [hardship applications under the

landmarks law] must remain rare, and that all applicants be held to firm, fair, and clear standards so these exemptions are granted in only the most exceptional of circumstances, and only when a clear test has been met.” The Society noted that St. Vincent’s purchased the O’Toole property with historic district restrictions already in place and thus New York State case law would seem to indicate that this prevents a finding of hardship. Further, the Society noted that hardship should not be granted unless all reasonable alternatives have been exhausted and the burden for proving that all reasonable alternatives have been exhausted falls upon St. Vincent’s as the applicant.

Contact: Andrew Berman, Executive Director: aberman@gvshp.org; 212-475-9585;
www.gvshp.org

Council of Chelsea Block Associations:

Bill Borock, President, commented: "The Council of Chelsea Block Associations is very concerned about the St. Vincent's Hardship Application. We feel it is inappropriate and would set a very bad precedent."

Contact: Bill Borock, President, wborock@hotmail.com

Friends of NoHo (preservationist group):

Jeanne Wilcke, Board Member, stated: "The project is drastically above and beyond a scale that protects the neighborhood’s integrity and character."

Contact: rednyc@mac.com

Landmark West! (a not-for-profit community organization committed to the preservation of the architectural heritage of the Upper West Side):

Kate Wood, Executive Director commented: "There is no demonstrated constitutional or pragmatic basis to support St. Vincent’s hardship claim. A hardship finding in this case would set a major precedent that would endanger landmark-protected buildings and communities in all five boroughs."

Contact Kate Wood at katewood@landmarkwest.org; www.landmarkwest.org; 212-496-8110.

Carol Greitzer, Co-Chair, W. 12th St. Block Assn., former NY City Councilwoman:

Ms. Greitzer stated: “I do not believe that St. Vincent’s has demonstrated hardship, since they have not been entirely forthcoming in exploring alternatives, such as the use of other properties they own, the purchase of new sites, or the re-use of such buildings as Coleman/Link on the present campus....[T]he small O’Toole footprint would box St. Vincent’s in, and would prevent it from being able to keep up with scientific changes. We urge [the Landmarks Preservation Commission] to reject the hardship application, secure in the knowledge that there is a better

solution for St. Vincent's, for the historical district, and for the broader community in the hospital catchment area.”

Save Chelsea (preservation group)

Mary Swartz, President, commented: “Save Chelsea opposes the granting of a Hardship Application to St. Vincent's because to do so would be precedent setting. It would pave the way for other institutions to try to infringe upon and violate other Historic Districts which communities/residents worked very hard and for many years to establish.”

Contact: Mary Swartz, President; mis@nyc.rr.com

Greenwich Village Block Associations

Marilyn Dorato commented: “It is the job of our elected officials, not to cite regulations and restrictions that limit the options as a rationale to support two projects that the community does not want, but to navigate through and legally alter any roadblocks so that a new hospital is built where it should be, not necessarily where it is today.”

Contact: Marilyn Dorato; gvba10014@nyc.rr.com

Protect the Village Historic District (preservation and advocacy for the Village Historic District):

Tom Molner, Steering Committee Member, commented: "The Landmarks Law rightly places a very high burden on anyone who would demolish a protected structure on the grounds of 'hardship.' That burden has not been met by St. Vincent's. We believe St. Vincent's has made a mistake in seeking to sell the seven parcels on which it has operated the hospital and to construct a 30-story tower by demolishing the protected O'Toole building which it has used and could continue to use for clinics and offices. We hope the Landmarks Preservation Commission will reject this application. We further hope that the hospital will finally explore the many practical alternatives available to them."

Tom Molner, Steering Committee Member, protectthevillage@gmail.com; 917-855-3752,

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This summary has been provided by Protect the Village Historic District, a community advocacy group with over 900 members devoted to preserving historic Greenwich Village. 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.