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**Testimony by New York City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn to
the Landmarks and Preservation Commission regarding
item numbers 08-8617, 08-4934, 08-4935**

July 15, 2008

Good afternoon Chair Tierney and Commissioners, my name is Christine C. Quinn and I serve as Speaker of the New York City Council. I am also the elected Councilmember who represents the City's 3rd Council District, including the neighborhoods of Greenwich Village, SoHo, Hell's Kitchen/Clinton, Chelsea, and Murray Hill. I represent the site that the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) is reviewing today. I would first like to thank all of you who have participated in this process to review and improve the applications which bring me here today: Let me first reiterate, I support the construction of a new state of the art St Vincent's Hospital (St. Vincent's) which will provide 21st century medical care to all New Yorkers.

The time and effort which so many of you have lent to this effort has been extremely helpful. The process has included thoughtful critiques by local and citywide community and advocacy groups, as well as by all of the elected officials. As a result of the quality input you have provided the Rudin Organization (Rudins) and St. Vincent's have significantly modified their applications which will result in a project more in keeping with our community. We have shared in a long and arduous process. I believe we have made tremendous progress. While I believe that there still remains room for certain design alterations in the applications for the Certificate(s) of Appropriateness, I want to strongly voice my support for the relocation of the hospital to the O'Toole site assuming that the Commission determines that the hardship case has been made.

On May 12th St. Vincent's and the Rudins filed a hardship application for the demolition of the O'Toole building at 20 Seventh Avenue. As stated in my June 3rd letter to you, I will be deferring to the Landmark Preservation Commission's (LPC's) expertise on the hardship issue. I know that you and your commissioners have spent hours reviewing the abundant hardship documents and have been supported in those efforts by professional staff from the New York City Economic Development Corporation and the New York

City Office of Management and Budget. I am sure that a sound decision will be made and I am hopeful that, for reasons individual to this case, you can be supportive of the hardship application.

Notwithstanding my support for a new state-of-the-art St. Vincent's Hospital at the O'Toole site I do share community concerns about setting a precedent for future hardship applications. I urge the Commission to narrowly tailor any ruling to reflect St. Vincent's unique situation. For example, St. Vincent's is in the unique position of being the only New York City hospital to reside fully within a historic district, and the New York State Berger Commission report recommendations that went into law in January 2007 not only reconfirmed the need for this hospital, but increased its overall service area for emergency visits, acute care and outpatient care.

While today's hearing is on the hardship application I would like to thank LPC for graciously holding the record open until today on the Certificate of Appropriateness (C of A) applications so that local residents, Community Board 2 (CB 2) and the local elected officials would be able to evaluate and respond to the revised applications. In late 2007 St. Vincent's filed five applications spanning three tax lots to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for the demolition and construction of the St. Vincent's Hospital and the construction of housing and retail by the Rudins. The five pending applications broken down by tax lot are for: 1) the demolition of eight existing buildings on the current St. Vincent's campus (Smith and Raskob, Nurses Residence, Reiss, Coleman, Link, Spellman, Cronin) and the construction of a new residential development with retail at 1 Seventh Avenue, 2) the demolition of 20 7th Avenue (O'Toole) and the construction of a new hospital building, 3) altering 76 Greenwich Avenue and the surrounding landscape (the Triangle).

In respect to the five pending C of A applications, the revisions presented at the May 19th CB2 Omnibus Committee hearing showed significant aesthetic progress in both the St. Vincent's and the Rudin's proposals. The letter I sent June 3rd to Chair Tierney outlined my satisfaction with the adaptive reuse of the Smith, Raskob, Nurses Residence and Spellman buildings, the removal of some of the townhouses to allow this, and the significant reduction in height and bulk of the main residential building proposed by the Rudins on 7th Avenue between 11th and 12th Streets, along with the reduction in the height of the hospital. Should LPC's recommendations to the applicant be reflective of the newest suggestions brought by CB2 and local elected officials today (please see the attached memorandum), I anticipate being supportive of the Certificate of Appropriateness applications.

Should St. Vincent's receive all LPC approvals it still must submit applications through the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP) for the many zoning approvals needed from the New York City Department of City Planning. My office has not yet reviewed the proposed plans on the grounds of environmental impact (traffic, shadow studies, etc) and whether the required zoning actions (including air rights transfers that affect height and bulk) meet the required land use rationales. Naturally I reserve the right

and responsibility to thoroughly review these applications as they make their way through the ULURP process.

Thank you for letting me testify before you today.

MEMORANDUM

TO: HON. ROBERT TIERNEY, CHAIR
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

FROM: NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SPEAKER CHRISTINE C. QUINN

SUBJECT: SAINT VINCENT'S HOSPITAL'S AMMENDED LANDMARKS
PRESERVATION COMMISSION APPLICATIONS

DATE: JULY 15, 2008

Item numbers 08-8617, 08-4934, 08-4935

Design Detail Recommendations:

The following is a list of concerns outlined by CB 2 in their June 19th resolution and its July 10th letter. We urge the commission to take the following concerns into serious consideration:

Rudin Project:

Adaptive Re-use of Smith, Raskob, Nurses and Spellman:

- Excessive use of patinated copper and channeled glass as design elements
- Object to the proposed design for the stairwells because they add a vertical element that is too overwhelming
- The bronze doors should not be removed
- Object to any retail doors on side streets
- Prefer smaller windows and more fabric than glass in the rear façade
- Object to the placement of retail doors

12th St infill bldg to replace Reiss:

- Fenestration and detailing need to be reworked
- Object to the proposed set back penthouse
- Excessive use of patinated copper and channeled glass as design elements
- Prefer less obtrusive, neutral colored stucco for the penthouse
- Prefer smaller window openings and more fabric than glass in the rear façade because the back of the 12th Street infill building can be seen from 11th Street due to the height difference
- Object to the horizontal ribbon of windows
- Object to the staggered building lines and the small insets in the building facade
- Prefer the use of contextual materials and a contextual size for the garage doors in order to ensure minimum impact to the streetscape
- Object to casement windows with transoms and channeled glass in the façade

Seventh Avenue residential tower:

- Prefer smaller window openings and more fabric than glass

- Object to windows that wrap around building corners
- Balconies and cantilevered elements are out of place
- Approve retail on the street level of the Seventh Avenue façade but prefer smaller windows
- Object to any retail doors on the side streets
- Prefer smaller retail windows on side streets
- Object to the staggered building lines and the small insets in the various building facades
- Excessive use of patinated copper and channeled glass as design elements
- Object to casement windows with transoms and channeled glass in the façade
- Create more variety in fenestration on 7th Avenue

Seventh Avenue tower annex on 11th Street:

- Balconies are out of place, especially on the lower floors
- Object to the staggered building lines and the small insets in the various building facades
- Object to casement windows with transoms and channeled glass in the façade

Townhouses on 11th Street:

- Excessive use of patinated copper and channeled glass as design elements
- Object to the staggered building lines
- Prefer stronger cornice treatment
- Object to casement windows with transoms and channeled glass in the façade
- A overall revision of the façade that is reflective of the community concerns

St. Vincent's Hospital Project:

New Replacement Hospital:

- A revision of the entry way and canopy of the hospital to reflect something that is more consistent with the historic district
- Prefer a warm amber color for the terra cotta facade
- Ask that applicant rethink the 2' window insets in the base podium

Materials handling building on Triangle site:

- Consideration of the impact that the design of the materials handling building will have on the streetscape
- Request that the public space be designed in consultation with the board, elected officials and the community

In addition to the combined notes from CB 2's June 19th resolution and July 10th letter, I would like take this opportunity to weigh in on an important issue that was raised during my office's most recent meetings with community groups:

- Should the Triangle be used as open park space (which I have testified in support of) it would be ideal to in some way ensure that the open space would remain so indefinitely. The community seems open to how this would be accomplished, but some sort of restrictive declaration or donating it to the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation are two ideas that have been raised.