



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

JESSE BODINE
District Manager

May 20, 2015

Margaret Forgione
Manhattan Borough Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor
New York, NY 10038

Re: Request for Revocable Consent for landing extension and railing at the emergency exit of 336 West 37th Street

Dear Commissioner Forgione:

Manhattan Community Board #4 opposes the proposed Revocable Consent for a landing extension and railing at the emergency exit of 336 West 37th Street unless the plans are modified to reduce the length of the landing to no more than 36 inches (from proposed 44 inches) and the railing is reduced to 6" (from 12") beyond the landing. We believe the proposed length of the landing and railing are an unnecessary impingement on the pedestrian sidewalk access and blocks the flow otherwise created by the surrounding 2' building line planters.

The requirement for the landing and railing is related to the owner's effort to meet Building Department requirements to legalize its conversion of this 1928 built factory building into Commercial Offices. Their proposal for the conversion was approved by BSA on 9/11/2012 pending required modifications. Adding the additional landing space and railing outside the emergency exit doorway is a required modification to make conforming this otherwise non-conforming stairway.

The two regulations that the owner is seeking to comply with are Section 27-375d of the 1968 NYC Building Code, which requires the length of stairway must be at least the width of the stairway, which is 44" (which includes 18" that already exists inside the exit doors and 26" outside the door on the sidewalk) and American with Disability Act section 505.10.1, which requires a 12" railing beyond the step down for a non-ramped stairwell landing.

While we appreciate these requirements in most instances, we feel they are excessive when the stairwell landing includes space on a sidewalk, which creates a

landing immediately adjacent to and from the stairwell landing. The 6" additional length for the railing is also easily sufficient to enable a mobility impaired (but with ability to use the interior stairs that lead to this landing) individual sufficient support to enable safe sidewalk landing. We also note that, the current design would only leave 8'3" sidewalk clearance to the curb (in essence further reduced to 7'6" when taking into an account a sidewalk lamp post and street sign immediately adjacent at the curbside to a parallel line to the proposed landing/railing), which seems insufficient given the extensive residential development immediately to the west along 10th Avenue and the West 37th Street. The proposed modification would enable a more appropriate 9'6" sidewalk access.

We additionally note that the proposal includes placing 2' by 2' planters on either side of the landing along the building line consistent with planters currently along the building line, which we support pending the landing/railing modifications.

We hope that DOT and the owner would request the Building Department enable a waiver of the above landing and railing requirements to reflect the flexibility appropriate when a stairwell landing is on sidewalk space.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee



Ernest Modarelli
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee

cc: Martin Rebholz, RA, Manhattan Borough Commissioner, Building Department
Jason Gross, Zaskorski & Notaro Architects
IGS Realty Company