

Re: St. Vincent's/Rudin Proposed Development - A Bridge to Sustainable Living?

Dear Mr Amoroso & Mr. Rudin,

I am writing to you as a 24-year resident of Greenwich Village, a PS 41 father and a public member of the CB2 Omnibus team. I also own a business in the neighborhood and teach as adjunct faculty at Parsons the New School of Design. I have invested my life in this neighborhood and care deeply about how it grows going forward. That said, I have very serious concerns about the plans proposed by St. Vincent's Hospital and the Rudin Company.

My hope is for a case study in urban renewal, not in mega-development. To get there, I believe we all have to synchronize our needs--St. Vincent's, Rudin Company and the community at large. We all have a lot to lose and a lot to gain through this process. Let it be a process that we all can be proud of in years to come. The result should be a Village that we can proudly return to our children. Will the new buildings continue the narrative of Greenwich Village or will they be an abrupt interruption announcing the end of the Village as we know it?

Once the buildings are built and functioning, both sides will be looking to each other for support. That calls for a community relationship. The Village has historically been based on community, and for a long time St. Vincent's has enjoyed being part of that spirit. We would expect St. Vincent's to work with us, not sell us out.

A project of such unusual scope in such a unique and distinct area requires unusual measures to assure that it helps and not hurts the neighborhood. This is about more than any one building, but rather the impact of the project as a whole and its integration into the fabric of the Greenwich Village community.

For the past 14 years, I have lived on W. 11th St. between Sixth and Seventh Aves. Not too long after we moved in, St. Vincent's financial troubles began and we became witness to some of the choices they had to make to help themselves. Many of those choices rippled negatively throughout the community creating an "us vs. them" situation with the hospital. When the 11th Street entrance was closed, for example, the safety of the block was compromised and the public amenity of green space on the triangle bounded by Greenwich Avenue, West 12th Street, and 7th Avenue never came to fruition.

Going forward, there's a chance to heal, reconcile and begin a collaboration with the community that keeps us all evolving together.

1. **Building Scale.** Work with the community to bring the buildings more into the scale of their surrounding edifices. Without question, the proposed new tower goes well-beyond the standard scale of height in the hospital development.

2. **Public Green Space.** Allow the entire St. Vincent's triangle to function as a public amenity and green space. Do not build on it. Open up the definition of green space. Mayor Bloomberg is talking about creating 800 more green triangles at street inter-sections; 80 a year for 10 years. We see a lot of private green space within the Rudin plan, but none that is accessible to the community.

3. **Mulry Square.** As an act of good faith, reclaim the Mulry Square triangle to mirror the St. Vincent's triangle as green space. The MTA-owned property sits in the shadow of the proposed new structures and is named in honor of one of St. Vincent's original benefactor Thomas Mulry and is the site of the famous Edward Hopper painting *Nighthawks*. Reclaiming it for public green space would save the neighborhood from being doubly impacted by another major construction project by the MTA in the same area. It would also integrate the dedicated square back into the shared St. Vincent's/Greenwich Village narrative.

4. **Noise, Pollution and Safety.** Consider the environmental impact (air/noise) on the delicate buildings in this historic area. I live in the Unadilla building that faces Cronin. The building was erected in 1898 and is subject to Landmarks for any modifications to the façade. Our windows will not protect from noise or pollution. Consider a proposal to give surrounding buildings money to install new landmark-approved windows to block out noise and air pollutants. Port Authority has recently given in to this with the buildings around the WTC site. Also develop a proactive plan to manage potential damage to structures and foundations in the surrounding area before construction is underway.

5. **Retail.** Involve the community in the decisions regarding the use of retail space. The community wants retail that supports the needs of the community. Involve us in a visioning process regarding retail and allow us to review and provide input.

6. **Education Funds.** Facilitate a Tax Revenue Study on the Rudin property to earmark funds for education. According to the city's statistics, enrollment in our district, District 2, is projected to increase 24.7 percent between 2004 and 2014, yet the DOE has not shown us any plans for commensurate increases in classroom space. Our children are already feeling the crunch in the shortage of places in kindergarten, increased class size, and scarcity of appropriate placements for middle and high school.

I hope that we can come together in achieving a sustainable community that we all enjoy living and working in. With your cooperation and attention to the special needs of this unique and vital historic district, we can move together into a new chapter in our history that still honors and nurtures the meaning of Greenwich Village.

Sincerely,
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