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February 17, 2016

Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
NYC Landmarks Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: 46-74 Gansevoort Street, Manhattan

Dear Chair Srinivasan, *Meenakshi*

We were disappointed with the Commission's support for the demolition of 70-74 Gansevoort Street, and its replacement with a significantly larger and differently scaled building, as well as with the allowance for large additions to 60-68 Gansevoort Street. We were encouraged by and agree with the concerns the Commission expressed over the proposed height for 50 Gansevoort Street, and hope that will lead to retention of the existing structure. Further, we appreciated your call for historic honesty in the argument for the additions to 60-68 and 70-74 Gansevoort Street in terms of size and scale. To that end, we wish to point out relevant historic precedents both on Gansevoort Street and in the district to consider in the Commission's review of any future revisions to this proposal.

In looking at historic permits for the buildings at 60-68 Gansevoort Street between their construction in 1880-81 and subsequent alterations to 1916, heights for the buildings ranged from 50 to 55 feet, including the cornice. Therefore, in keeping with the precedent and looking to it as a guide, the proposed street wall height for this site should also remain within that range. Further, and as addressed by members of the Commission, penthouse additions are not appropriate here.

At 70-74 Gansevoort Street the height of the buildings at this site prior to 1942 were also listed as between 55 and 50 feet, using historic permits as reference. However, if the recommendation is to not look at the height of the historic structure on the site but rather the size and scale of other loft buildings in the district, the loft buildings identified in the district by the designation report range from 39 feet to 74 feet (including 53-61 Gansevoort Street across the street from this site), thus making an average loft building in the district 56.5 feet tall.

We still maintain that the loss of the one to two story market buildings on this street is a loss to the district. However, if these alterations are permitted, we urge that the Commission ensure that the massing of the additions be guided by historic precedent.

Sincerely,
Andrew Berman

Andrew Berman
Executive Director