



**Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation**

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March 23, 2007

Michael Achenbaum
Hotel Gansevoort
18 Ninth Avenue
New York, NY 10014

Dear Mr. Achenbaum,

As you have no doubt by now been informed, the Department of Buildings has determined that the billboards erected on your property at 352 West 13th Street are in violation of zoning regulations for the site, as we have contended. They have determined that the billboards face at less than a 90 degree angle to Hudson Street, which the law requires they do.

You now have two choices regarding these billboards. You can have them removed, and end an extremely ugly chapter in this neighborhood's history which has pitted you against so many of your commercial and residential neighbors. You have stated that you regret the decision to have put these billboards up in the first place, and that if you had the opportunity to do it over again you would not. Now you have that opportunity – the signs do not conform to the zoning, and cannot stay as they are. By removing them, you would heal a terrible rift and remove an awful and universally loathed blight from this community.

Or you can seek to have the billboards moved in an attempt to make them conform with the requirement that they face Hudson Street at more than 90 degrees. To do this would not only turn the signs farther in the direction of facing (and shining into) your own hotel rooms, but it would also unfortunately give lie to your claims to want to remove the signs if you had the opportunity to do so, and would, I think, only irrevocably harden the conflict between you and your neighbors.

As you know, the Department of Buildings also continues to investigate other issues we have raised regarding their signs' violation of zoning regulations – violations which could not be cured by changing the angle of the signs and which would require their removal. I urge you to do the right thing now, and remove the signs before this goes any farther, rather than continuing to drag this out. I think that ultimately the Hotel as well as its neighbors would benefit from the signs being dismantled. With this blight upon the neighborhood removed, the terrible rift between the Hotel and its neighbors can begin to be repaired.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
State Senator Tom Duane
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Community Board #2, Manhattan
Meatpacking District Initiative
community groups