

ALBANY OFFICE:
Room 744
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
518-455-5676
FAX: 518-455-5282
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1485 York Avenue
New York, New York 10075
212-288-4607
FAX: 212-288-4369
EMAIL:
seawright@nyassembly.gov

REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT
76th District



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK

CHAIR
Majority Steering
COMMITTEES
Banks
Codes
Corporations, Authorities
and Commissions
Education
Judiciary
Ways and Means
MEMBER
Legislative Women's Caucus

November 23, 2021

Honorable Corey Johnson
Speaker
NYC Council
City Hall Office
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Johnson,

As the year comes to an end, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your leadership of the City Council. I write to you urgently as a last minute appeal on behalf of neighbors from my legislative district representing Yorkville, the Upper East Side, and Roosevelt Island in strong opposition to City Council Res 1815-2021 LU 864- Zoning, New York Blood Center, Manhattan (C210351 ZMM), the approval of the Blood Center project. As you are someone who has been known to support the community as the former Chair of your local community board and understanding the importance of local community input, I implore you to do everything in your power to act against the Blood Center project.

There are a multitude of reasons not to move forward with this ill-advised, out-of-scale land grab by the Boston Developer Longfellow. Our own city and its leadership are betraying constituents who fought for the existence of R8B residential zoning restrictions. We are deeply disturbed to know that our City has brokered deals through its Industrial Development Agency to subsidize the Blood Center with a staggering \$450 million subsidy over 25 years without the consent of its community.

The applicant's paltry concessions hardly make up for the irreparable harm to our community that will be subject to further out-of-scale overdevelopment and safety hazard bringing thousands more people to the area, limiting access to light and air, and having the potential safety threats of a biosafety level 3 lab with dangerous pathogens.

I support the Blood Center's mission, but this proposal is antithetical to the needs of a residential neighborhood. The Upper East Side does not need commercial real estate especially given the city's commercial vacancy rate of 15%. Furthermore, this project could move forward in a part of the city under appropriate zoning, all while maintaining important union jobs.

It is distressing that for the first time in our city's land-use history, our local Council Member was not given "member deference," and the Council bypassed his objections setting a dangerous precedent. This last defense we had against powerful interests, to maintain accountability and ensure that local communities in every part of New York City are heard. Please consider the objections of a constituency who will have to live with the day-to-day consequences of this overdevelopment. The building of this behemoth tower will mean the breakdown of trust between New Yorkers and City Hall.

I urge you to restore the balance of power for constituents against powerful interests, and act to stop the Blood Center project.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rebecca A. Seawright". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'R' and a long, sweeping tail.

REBECCA A. SEAWRIGHT |