

February 26, 2009

BP MARKOWITZ RECOMMENDS REDUCING DUMBO DOCK STREET PROJECT BY 35,000 SQ. FT.

Recommendations call for thinner tower and reconfiguration of project for preservation of public views and respect for open “bowl” effect around Brooklyn Bridge anchorage

“Yesterday, I made my recommendations regarding the applications submitted by Two Trees Management Company for the Dock Street DUMBO project.

After listening to more than 100 Brooklynites over the course of four-and-a-half hours at our public hearing, as well as taking into account all letters, emails, and other communications both pro and con, I believe I have heard the community loud and clear. I share community concerns that the iconic views of the Brooklyn Bridge, and the open feeling created by what is described, in a term coined by community members, as the ‘bowl’—the geographic dip and current size of the manmade structures surrounding the bridge’s Brooklyn anchorage—must be protected.

I also agree with the developer that residential development and parking would be appropriate usage. The developer also presented its plan, and my staff spent weeks conducting digital modeling and simulation and personally visiting the site to calculate views and spatial considerations.

As you may know, the developer would be able, under current zoning, to build a very tall hotel on this site ‘as of right.’ After reviewing the applications and public testimony on the project, I am recommending that the City Planning Commission and the City Council support the concept of residential, retail and parking at this site as proposed by Two Trees Management—however, I reject the building as currently configured and seek modifications based on certain conditions.

My recommendations reduce the project by more than 35,000 square feet. In order to respect the iconic Brooklyn Bridge by not allowing a ‘rival’ structure to rise too close to it, preserve public views and geographic open ‘bowl’ effect, and ensure a continued smooth transition from Fulton Ferry Landing to DUMBO, I advocate that:

- **The tower be made more slender**—reducing it to 57 percent of its proposed girth—this will preserve public views. The developer would have the option, according to what is allowed by zoning, to recoup some loss of square footage by increasing the thinner tower from 18 to 25 stories.

- **The tower be set back 70 feet from Front Street**—increasing the distance from the Brooklyn Bridge from 98 feet to 150 feet.
- **The building’s wing along Water Street be reduced by two floors** (which is consistent with my 2004 recommendation that the buildings along Water Street not be higher than 80 feet) and that the section along Front Street be lowered to 85 feet.

I have also recommended that a legal mechanism be put in place to lock in the 20 percent affordable housing units the developer has promised.

Regarding the developer’s pledge to include a middle school at the site, this was not part of the official application before my office. I certainly applaud their willingness to build a school, and I have recommended that the Department of Education consult with Community Education Council 13, Community Board 2, and local elected officials to analyze the current capacity levels of surrounding elementary and middle schools in order to ascertain which grade configuration will best serve the needs of the community two years prior to the projected occupancy of school space within the Dock Street project, as well as investigate other available spaces for the location of a school.

I believe my recommendation provides a balanced and respectful solution for all of these concerns, and I urge Two Trees Management to accept my modifications.”

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