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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

June 6, 2017

**Testimony of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer
to the Landmarks Preservation Commission
on Item No. 13: LPC 19-4744 Certificate of Appropriateness
for 312-322 Canal Street, Tribeca East Historic District**

Good afternoon Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners.

I am Andrew Chang, Community Liaison, and am here on behalf of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer to express our grave concerns with the Certificate of Appropriateness application to demolish, alter, and construct new buildings at 312-322 Canal Street in the Tribeca East Historic District, Manhattan Community Board 1.

We feel that a dangerous precedent will be set with the wholesale demolition of five structures on the boundaries on this district. Specifically, 312-318 Canal Street represents a contiguous line of row houses built at the end of residential development for the Tribeca neighborhood, and is the only such structure on the southern blocks of Canal. When this office has seen appropriate infill development in our historic districts, it is for vacant lots or as sensitive additions to existing built fabric. This proposal clears neither bar. In addition, when faced with the outsized structure that seeks to replace the existing collection of buildings, our concerns are amplified that this proposal will neither contribute to the mixed architectural history nor contextual qualities that are distinctive to the Tribeca East Historic District.

Our opposition is shared by Manhattan Community Board 1, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, and members of the community. These individuals and groups care deeply about maintaining the historic integrity of the neighborhood and wish to preserve one of the last remaining low-rise blocks of Canal Street. While we recognize the neighborhood has changed, the proposal for a large, brick red residential and retail building is out of context for the historic district. Furthermore, rather than being demolished, this row of five contiguous, early 19th century structures can be adapted for new uses over time through additions or enlargements. The development history of the block and the structural integrity of this collection of residential row houses would allow for that.

For these reasons, we urge you to reject the proposed redevelopment of 312-322 Canal Street. Given the important nature of this block, if the LPC proposes changes to this proposal, we ask that the applicant must go back to present to the community and an additional LPC hearing be held.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.