



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1 Centre Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10007  
(212) 669-8300 p (212) 669-4306 f  
431 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027  
(212) 531-1609 p (212) 531-4615 f  
[www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov](http://www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov)

**Gale A. Brewer, Borough President**

January 7, 2019

Commissioner Lisette Camilo  
Department of Citywide Administrative Services  
1 Centre Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Fl. So.  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Camilo:

I am writing to you regarding the application for removal of a deed restriction at 142 W. 131<sup>st</sup> Street. I am strongly opposed to this action.

The property under consideration was owned by Tony Morfesis during the 1970's, until the City seized some of Mr. Morfesis' properties as a result of tax indebtedness. The City sold this property to Harlem Week, a community based non-profit, in 1992, for an appropriately small amount, and at that time placed a deed restriction on the property, likely intending for it to remain in the hands of a non-profit for perpetuity. West 131 LLC purchased the property in 2013, and clearly knew about the deed restriction.

While I understand that the current owner wishes to build a residential building, it is not evident that the owner will build housing that is affordable. I do not understand why the City, in the midst of an affordable housing and homelessness crisis, would squander the opportunity for a non-profit to build affordable, supportive housing. This site, if developed by a non-profit, could also serve as sorely needed space for an arts organization or social service provider.

I hope you will take this into consideration before approving an action that does not serve the city's best interest.

Sincerely,

Gale A. Brewer

cc: First Deputy Mayor Dean Fuleihan, City Hall, New York, NY 10007  
Deputy Mayor Vicki Been, Housing and Economic Development, City Hall, New York, NY 10007