



DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING  
CITY OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

July 19, 2019

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Dear Advocacy Groups:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding zoning. As you are aware, the Department of City Planning (DCP) has made several commitments to examine some of the issues discussed in your letter, including the expansion of the mechanical voids text, unenclosed voids, and zoning lot sizes.

We have examined zoning districts in areas of the city where excessive mechanical voids could be used to raise residential tower heights inappropriately. Residential buildings generally have consistent and limited mechanical needs, unlike commercial or community facility buildings, whose needs can vary considerably. The citywide Residential Tower Mechanical Voids Text Amendment, approved by City Council in May 2019, addressed the potential for abuse of this floor area exemption while accommodating the needs of buildings and retaining flexibility for design excellence.

DCP is now assessing the issue of mechanical voids in residential buildings located in central business districts (Lower Manhattan, Hudson Yards, Midtown, Downtown Brooklyn, and Long Island City). Central business districts had been excluded from the previous zoning amendment proposal due to their unique built context and more complicated special district regulations, which required further study. We anticipate that a

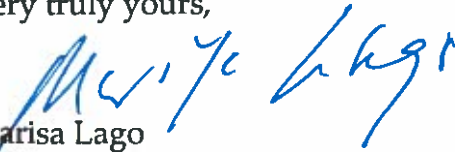
follow up action will apply the principles of the current mechanical voids text with appropriate modifications to address the local conditions of these central business districts. This proposal is planned to be presented to the City Planning Commission in September, 2019.

DCP is also studying the advisability of establishing of a minimum lot size for nonresidential zoning lots. Specifically, we are exploring whether the purposes of our zoning resolution are being evaded by the creation of small, otherwise unusable zoning lots. We anticipate that this study will be completed in the summer of 2019.

Finally, DCP is studying unenclosed voids in residential buildings, exploring potential misuses of the zoning resolution while considering the many desirable architectural and functional uses of unenclosed space. This study is expected to be completed in the summer of 2020.

We appreciate your interest and continued engagement in these important land use matters.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marisa Lago", is written over the typed name.

Marisa Lago