

CB 10 RESOLUTION: MOUNT SINAI DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
160 West 124th Street, New York, New York 10027

RESOLUTION: To rescind the CB 10 vote held May 2018 to support the development of a Mount Sinai health facility at 160 West 124th Street and to determine the best health services solutions (if any) that is in the best interest of the Community.

WHEREAS, The developer first appeared before the CB10 Land Use Committee in November 2017 to request relief from setback requirements to build a health facility. Specifically, the developer sought to have full lot coverage on an additional three stories to accommodate proposed programming. At that time, the Committee expressed concern regarding the oversaturation and duplication of services; and,

WHEREAS, The West 124 Street block (between Lenox and Seventh avenue) already has a disproportionately large cluster of health and human service organizations, including facilities that serve Methadone and HIV/AIDS clients and a 60-room residence for men with chronic health disabilities. The block is the unofficial corridor for drug sales and addicts and a venue for prostitution ; these facts can be substantiated by the local 28th Police Precinct; and,

WHEREAS, The Land Use Committee clearly expressed several conditions to issuance of a letter of support, including Mount Sinai's outreach to existing agencies, residents, and business owners on the block and the neighborhood at-large ; and,

WHEREAS, The Land Use Committee were told very little regarding the use of the facility and the direct impact the proposed services would have on the Community. Further research and analyses were requested (e.g., Environmental Impact Study – EIS) from the developer. The Land Use Committee asked Mount Sinai to meet with the CB 10 Health Committee to discuss the proposed uses of the facility but again failed to reveal the full scope of the intended services. Throughout the process, it seems as though Mount Sinai had not taken our concerns seriously; and,

WHEREAS, There were several missteps on the part of the developer and their Mount Sinai partner with respect to transparency, lack of adequate follow through with the Community requests, poor communication, insufficient data and/or a planning process to erect a health facility that could have such a significant impact on our district; and,

WHEREAS, The CB10 Health Committee publicly adopted a moratorium in 2007 germane to the Mount Sinai expansion proposal, which resurfaced during this review process and was presented to the project team in the Spring of 2018; and,

WHEREAS, These missteps have led to mistrust and outrage within the community at large making it difficult to communicate much less collaborate with Mount Sinai as a Community partner. These circumstances are particularly problematic given the sensitive nature of substance abuse and HIV in the community at-large and, the pre-existing illicit behavior (prostitution, drug selling etc.) on the block of which the developer does not have to contend with daily and which affect the emotional and mental well being of residents; and,

WHEREAS, Mount Sinai's proposed facility prioritizes the hospital's institutional needs but does not reflect a comprehensive assessment of the health and wellness needs of our Community; and,

WHEREAS, The public safety concerns about the Mount Sinai expansion are apparent. Specifically, the pedestrian and vehicular traffic both during and after construction and the overall quality of life on the block and the surrounding neighborhood. Increased vehicular and pedestrian traffic will negatively impact West 124 Street, which is already used as an alternative vehicular route to 125 Street, a major Central Harlem commercial thoroughfare; and,

WHEREAS, The NYC Board of Standards and Appeals in their public meeting held on September 12th 2018 directed Mount Sinai to redraft their proposal to address many items including both the specific need for the architectural relief relative to the proposed use and, more importantly, to address Community concerns; and,

WHEREAS, despite our extreme concern regarding this project and the grave shortcomings with respect to the process followed by the developer, **construction is nonetheless underway**; and,

WHEREAS, To date, Mount Sinai has presented no relevant research or studies regarding these issues of impact this project may have on our community; and,

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT, After a series of meetings including a meeting with Mount Sinai staff and Mount Sinai St. Luke's President Arthur A. Gianelli (9/6/18), the BSA hearing (9/12/18) at which seven members of the community testified, and a Town Hall meeting (9/25/18) hosted by the Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association (MMPCIA) where Mount Sinai staff were present along with nearly 100 community attendees, the CB 10 Executive Committee decided to rescind the vote and to determine the best health services solution (if any) that is in the best interest of the Community; and,

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Given the various social problems and illicit behavior cited on the West 124th Street block and a pre-existing moratorium on health related services in the district, a careful and thoughtful series of action steps needs to be considered with regards to the districts relationship with Mount Sinai, the proposed facility and the services offered, if any. A conversation that involves our elected officials, health agencies/hospitals that operate within the district needs to be held. There needs to be a dialogue concerning the health needs of our community and the pre-existing problems that exist with oversaturation and duplication of services currently. We must demand services that are truly needed for our Community's emotional and mental well being as opposed to services that are defined and dictated for our Community by others.

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT It is imperative that we as members of Community Board 10 operate from the same play book with regards to health services in the district moving forward.

At the September 26th 2018 Executive Committee meeting of Community Board 10 the members voted unanimously to rescind the CB vote taken at the General Board meeting in May 2018 allowing Mount Sinai to erect a health facility at 160 West 124th Street New York, New York 10027.