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Email & Certified Mail

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, New York 10007

September 10, 2018

Re: 605 E. 9th Street (Old PS 64)
New York, NY

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

As you know, I am the managing partner of 9th & 10th Street L.L.C. the owner of the former PS 64 located at 605 East 9th Street / 350 East 10th Street in Manhattan.

I'm following up in regard to several phone calls and messages that were left for you at City Hall on August 31th, 2018, made on my behalf to you, in regard to comments you made about me at your "local media round table" in Brooklyn Borough Hall. The allegations you made stating that I am being uncooperative are not true and are belied by the record. In fact, I have never received a response nor any outreach from you in regard to the above matter. To be clear, I have yet to receive a single call or email from you or anyone in your office, despite **numerous** attempts on my end, for the past several years.

Oddly enough, while running for re-election last October, you told hundreds of local residents at a Lower East Side town hall meeting that the city was interested in "reacquiring" our building, even though it is not for sale. Taking it one step further, on August 24, 2018, even though there wasn't a single effort to contact me, you publicly and erroneously stated to multiple media outlets that I, who you have not ever contacted, have been "exceedingly uncooperative."

***Question:** Last November, when you were campaigning for re-election in a Lower East Side town hall, you said the City was interested in reacquiring the old P.S. 64 on East 9th street. The former school building that became a charter [inaudible] community center. It's been 20 years since it was sold to auction and nothing. It's still vacant.*

***Mayor:** The owner has been exceedingly uncooperative. We've tried to have a productive conversation about purchase. We've gotten nowhere so far. We're not giving up. We're working very closely with the Council member, Carlina Rivera. I'm very frustrated with that owner.*

***Question:** What will it take to get the building back?*

***Mayor:** I'd like to know that.*

Question: *Was it eminent domain?*

Mayor: *We'll look at all our options. I'm not sure if that's an immediately available option. Certainty something I want to know more about but I had hoped the best solution here would be a direct purchase. That's not off the table. It's just we're just not getting any cooperation so far.*

Question: *[Inaudible] local stakeholders about that?*

Mayor: *I talked to Carlina about it less than a year ago. We've been trying to pursue it ever since. But we're going to have to come back with it soon. <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/435-18/transcript-mayor-de-blasio-holds-local-media-roundtable>*

Unfortunately, obstruction and misrepresentation concerning the status of PS 64 is all too familiar. For the past five years, your administration has been holding up all attempts at redeveloping the property, ignoring all outreach for years from the community, educational institutions, and myself, creating certain suspicions about the obstruction you have engaged in concerning the old school building. After purchasing a derelict building in good faith from the City 20 years ago, I have weathered a perfect storm of entrenched resistance that has no basis in the true needs of the community or the Zoning Resolution.

In the past, under your time as Mayor, lease agreements for the property with Cooper Union College, Joffrey Ballet, and most recently, Adelphi University, have ended with the agreements terminated due to intentional delays created by the NYC DOB at the direction of City Hall. This is all exposed in numerous FOIL responses I have received from the City. All outreach from myself and the above mentioned educational institutions pleading for assistance, publically and in direct letters to you, went unanswered. Ironically, at the same time and apparently at your direction, the DOB issued building permits, only to later revoke them, stating that I have failed to submit sufficient proof that the building would be used as a student dormitory!

In addition to conforming to the law of what can be done with this building, there is a need for this specific use as there is an extreme shortage of available dormitories in NYC. Furthermore, the dormitory will be a huge benefit to the community, which supports the project. A neighbor and local business owner who lives a block away from the property helped gather roughly 900 signatures from locals living in the community in support of the dorm plan, asking the city to allow it to move forward. That too has gone unanswered by City Hall.

It is baffling that the City is claiming to be interested in spending hundreds of millions of dollars to return our privately-owned property to some nebulous community use or group. Is it realistic that the City would buy the building (when the building is not even for sale), for hundreds of millions of tax payer dollars, to have a building with no programs or funding in place for ongoing operations? I have been waiting to renovate the building with "state of the art" plans designed to sustainable and LEED principles.

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The local community in and around 9th and 10th Streets and Avenues B and C, have been forced to deal with an eyesore of a building that, had it been developed into the college dorm I have proposed, would have injected life and financial resources into the neighborhood and the local economy.

It is fundamental that education and the expansion of knowledge are pivotal government interests. The indisputably public purpose of education is particularly vital for New York City and the State to maintain their respective statuses as global centers of higher education and academic research. Our dormitory will promote education and academic research while providing public benefits to the local community. Indeed, the advancement of higher education is the quintessential example of a "civic purpose".

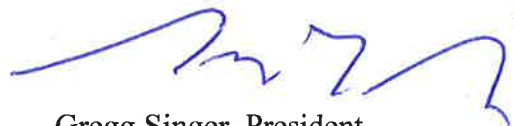
It is clear that the property is privately owned and it is within our legal right to commence the project to build a dormitory. And it is equally clear that the project poses no threat to the community. We aren't talking about a high rise building here – we are talking about renovating a building within the existing building envelope. In fact, it would be an asset to the community to have this beautiful landmarked building restored and functioning.

As you know the zoning is for a Community Facility Use. If, however, you have an alternative vision for the building of a different public use, benefit, purpose or community use that fits within the Community Facility Use zoning, it is incumbent on you to articulate that vision with a concrete plan that lays out all of the attendant costs. Without that, your public statements are at best virtue signaling, and at worst part of a conscious effort to illegally obstruct our basic Constitutional property rights. This should be disturbing to any landowner in NYC.

I am ready, willing, and able to meet with you at any time to discuss any financially viable use of this property. There has never been a moment during this entire ordeal that I wasn't willing to meet with you and your office to solve this issue.

I look forward to hearing from you about scheduling a meeting to discuss PS64 without any further delay. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,
9th & 10th Street LLC



Gregg Singer, President
Sing Fina Corp., Manager