LINDA B. ROSENTHAL
Assemblymember 67th District

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August 12, 2013

Mathew M. Wambua
Commissioner
New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development
100 Gold Street
New York, NY 10038

Dear Commissioner Wambua:

I am writing regarding an inclusionary housing application submitted to the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) by the Extell Development Company for 40 Riverside Boulevard in my district in Manhattan.

I am extremely concerned by Extell's proposed concentration of affordable housing units within the building, rather than dispersing them evenly throughout the building. My district sees numerous inclusionary housing applications each year, especially in the Clinton/Hell's Kitchen neighborhood, and I have never seen such a blatant attempt to segregate affordable tenants. Grouping affordable tenants together in such a manner also leaves them vulnerable to other abuses by the developer and landlord, including a less adequate provision of services to apartments or common areas in the "affordable section" of the building.

Extell has cynically called its application an off-site affordable housing plan, even though the off-site affordable housing will physically adjoin the market-rate condominiums as part of the same building. Rather than follow the spirit of the inclusionary housing program as it is practiced without issue throughout my district, Extell would prefer to make those of lower incomes feel like second-class citizens every time they come home.

Extell's affordable housing plan is only more egregious because it is so unnecessary; the cost to the developer to intersperse affordable and market-rate units throughout the full building would be, at best, negligible. It is deplorable that this company, which will turn a substantial profit by selling the additional development rights it receives by building affordable housing, will now squeeze each dollar from this project by grouping all affordable tenants in the back of the building, away from more desirable apartments with views of the Hudson River. I therefore request that HPD ensure that Extell substantially revise its affordable housing plan to equally distribute affordable and market-rate units. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Linda Rosenthal

Linda B. Rosenthal
Member of Assembly – 67 AD

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