



**Melanie E. La Rocca**  
Commissioner

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January 21, 2021

Honorable Gale Brewer  
Borough President  
Manhattan

Honorable Robert Jackson  
New York State Senator  
31st District

Honorable Al Taylor  
New York State Assembly  
71st District

Honorable Mark Levine  
New York City Council  
7th District

Mr. Eleazar Bueno  
Chair, Manhattan Community Board  
12th District

Dear Borough President Brewer, State Senator Jackson, Assembly Member Taylor, Council Member Levine, and Mr. Bueno:

Thank you for your letter dated October 26, 2020, to the Department of Buildings ("Department") regarding 857 Riverside Drive.

To date, there have been several applications related to this property submitted and we are currently reviewing these documents.

A demolition application (Job No: 123923219) has been filed, processed, and now resides with our Construction Safety Compliance unit. Additional steps remain before a permit can be issued. At this time, demolition plans were reviewed and approved. The next step requires the applicant to request a pre-demolition inspection, which to date, has not been requested by the applicant. This inspection must be completed and passed prior to issuance of a demolition permit.

We recognize the community's concern surrounding communication of the proposed work and want to confirm that a required item of any demolition permit is notification to the neighboring properties and the Community Board. The applicant is required to send a "Notice of Anticipated Work" delivered via Certified Mail to property owners not less than ten days prior to the scheduled start date of demolition. Additionally, any member of the public can sign up to receive weekly email notifications about specific changes on construction projects by going to our website and clicking on "Sign-up for Job Status Updates" link. You can subscribe for job specific updates or updates on an address' Building Identification Number.

With regards to the proposed new building application (Job No: 121208503) the application is currently disapproved based on the drawings that were submitted, and we



have asked the applicant to provide addition clarification on their required documents. The Department will continue to assess this filing as part of our standard review process.

In response to your zoning questions, the Department has followed the applicable zoning regulations and based on an official zoning map of the area, we consider the street location of 857 Riverside Drive a wide street. Additionally, a 2019 analysis by the Department concluded that the park, which separates the east and west side of Riverside Drive, is not designated with an individual tax lot number, this was further supported by documentation held by the Department of Finance (DOF). As such, the street shall be considered a wide street. A separate analysis regarding the applicability of the Sliver Law (section 23-692) was conducted and the conclusions were that provisions of Section 23-692 of the Zoning Resolution, which places a height limitation for narrow buildings, would not be applied to this location as the street wall facing Riverside Drive is over 45 feet, measuring 51-4 ¼ feet wide.

Finally, 857 Riverside Drive does not currently hold a landmarked building designation; thus, it is not subject to the New York City Landmark Preservation Commission ("LPC") guidelines. The Department defers to the LPC to evaluate the building's historical significance as we enforce regulatory compliance.

We will continue to monitor this location as we examine the applications and proposed scope of work. Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 212-393-2001. I hope this information has been helpful to you and thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melanie E. La Rocca".

Melanie E. La Rocca  
Commissioner