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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EAST RIVER 50s ALLIANCE ANTI-SUPERSCRAPER ZONING CHANGE PROPOSAL
WINS UNANIMOUS APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY BOARD 6**

Residents' campaign to stop supertall mid-block towers and
to create affordable housing clears its first stage in public review process

Co-applicants Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Councilmember Daniel Garodnick,
Councilmember Ben Kallos, and State Senator Liz Krueger hail CB6 decision

New York, June 28, 2017 – A coalition of Manhattan residents and elected officials announced today that their unprecedented citizens' application to the City of New York for a zoning change to prevent the construction of supertall residential towers in the East River Fifties area and to encourage community diversity has been officially approved by the full board of Community Board 6.

At a public meeting last night, the full board voted unanimously to approve a resolution in support of the zoning change proposed by the non-profit residents' coalition, the East River Fifties Alliance (ERFA). As a significant procedural milestone in a formal public review process, the resolution is expected to be presented in the form of CB6 comments to the City Planning Commission early next month.

Co-applicants Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Councilmember Daniel Garodnick, Councilmember Ben Kallos, and State Senator Liz Krueger hailed the decision as a victory for the community at large. The Borough President is also expected to provide official comments in support early next month.

Councilmember Kallos said, "This is victory for thousands of residents from hundreds of buildings in and out of the neighborhood who have organized a grassroots application that would use height as an incentive to include affordable housing in any new building. Thank you to Community Board 6 for their support every step of the way and unanimously passing this rezoning. Now we look to the Mayor and City Planning to choose affordable housing over buildings for billionaires."

Alan Kersh, ERFA President, said, "We have been working with the Department of City Planning for almost two years in order to get this far. Now, we are more energized than ever. We hope to move this initiative to completion with a 'yes' vote from the City Planning Commission and then final approval from the full City Council."

The East River Fifties – roughly the area between 52nd and 58th/59th Streets east of First Avenue -- is the only residential neighborhood in New York City zoned R10 (the City's highest-density zoning

category) without any type of contextual protection for its residential side streets. For this reason, it is uniquely vulnerable to the development of supertall towers, a building form that was neither contemplated nor feasible when the local zoning district was created in 1961.

A large merged zoning lot has been assembled on East 58th Street and has been marketed as the future site of an 850 to 1,000-foot-tall tower, more than four times the height of the predominant built context. And sites in other locations within the proposed rezoning area are a real risk.

The ERFA coalition's specific goal is to rezone the East River Fifties area to establish a contextual residential zone for this area and to advance the City's affordable housing goals by increasing the number of affordable units required of developers seeking bonus floor area for new developments in the district.

ERFA, founded in 2015 by residents of the East River Fifties community, has seen a steady growth of widespread interest and support for its goals, which now comes from 2176 supporters in 347 buildings within and beyond the rezoning area. Its allied civic groups include the Municipal Art Society, Friends of Upper East Side Historic Districts, CIVITAS, and New Yorkers for a Human Scale City.

The City Planning Commission recently certified the application, allowing it to enter a months-long review and decision process involving Community Board 6, the Borough President, the City Planning Commission and the City Council. Approvals by the City Planning Commission and City Council are necessary for the re-zoning to take effect.

Robert Shepler, Co-chairman of the ERFA Leadership Committee, said, "The coalition's proposal embraces the City's goals of planned growth, increased affordability and contextual protection for residential neighborhoods. It is among the first, if not the first, proposal from a neighborhood coalition to combine these goals."

In the ERFA proposal, new building heights in the East River Fifties would be capped at 260 feet. The height of more than 91% of the existing buildings in the proposed Rezoning Area is equal to or less than the proposed 260-foot maximum limit, a statistic that has supported contextual rezoning approved by the Commission for other neighborhoods. (To be sure, there are taller existing buildings in the area, but they are largely located on or close to the wide commercial corridors of First Avenue or 59th Street, which are expressly excluded from the proposal in keeping with the City's practice of allowing more height and density on such corridors.)

The ERFA proposal is expected to generate 823 units of new housing, almost as many as projected under the existing R10 zoning (888 units) using the Planning Commission's required assumptions. If the 888-unit projection is adjusted to reflect the ACTUAL plan filed by the developer for the 58th Street site (which provides for luxury-sized apartments), only 708 units would be projected for the Rezoning Area under the existing zoning – which is actually LESS than the amount projected under ERFA's proposal.

About ERFA

ERFA is a nonprofit corporation which represents 45 member buildings, numerous civic groups, and more than 2,100 individual supporters residing in 347 buildings within and beyond the proposed rezoning area -- all dedicated to preserving community character and affordable housing. Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Councilman Dan Garodnick, Councilman Ben Kallos and N.Y.S. Senator Liz Krueger have provided, and continue to provide, guidance and leadership to the rezoning effort.

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