



**STATEMENT BY ALAN KERSH, PRESIDENT, EAST RIVER FIFTIES ALLIANCE  
11-30-17**

The New York City Council cast their votes for the people today and approved 45 – 0 (with one abstention) a re-zoning measure preserving the context and character of Sutton Place’s quiet residential side streets. This is an unprecedented victory for a community led effort.

This action represents the fulfillment of a years-long effort by the East River Fifties Alliance (ERFA) and our elected officials, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Council members Ben Kallos and Daniel Garodnick, and State Senator Liz Krueger, to correct an aberration of the 1961-era zoning law that allows buildings of unlimited height on residential side streets in the district, roughly the area between 51st and 59th Streets east of First Avenue.

Until now, every other residential community in New York City has had legal protections in the form of lower-density zoning or contextual regulations that prevent the construction of supertall towers. The new zoning language imposes “tower on a base” standards in the area, which means that 45 to 50 percent of a building would need to be built below 150 feet.

For us, this was never about just one building. It was a district-wide application to prevent megatowers on soft sites. It was a successful effort to deter assemblages of parcels containing low-rise, often rent-stabilized, housing to be demolished for the construction of megatowers.

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