Chairperson Burden, members of the Commission, I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. My name is Mitchell Moss; I live at 100 Bleecker Street in the Silver Towers complex. I have been a member of the faculty at New York University for 39 years, since September 1973. I have lived all but eight of my 63 ½ years either on or within 9 miles of the superblock site.

I would like to highlight four aspects of the proposed rezoning under consideration today. Let me first point out that the proposed rezoning will not destroy Greenwich Village or its historic pattern of land use, as many opponents have argued. In fact, just the opposite is true. Greenwich Village is not a homogeneous community; the area located between Broadway and Washington Square Park has been filled with manufacturing structures for more than 100 years. In fact the famous Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, the site of one of the city’s worst fires, occurred in a building that has since been converted to be a center for teaching and research. This section of Greenwich Village differs considerably from the west Village, the pristine historic district west of Seventh Avenue, where Marc Jacobs has superceded Jane Jacobs as the area’s driving force.

What makes Greenwich Village such a compelling destination is the very mix of activities that occurs within its boundaries. Contrary to many local residents, NYU does not dominate Greenwich Village; in fact, the most rapidly growing sources of employment in the 10012 zip code are eating and drinking establishments and retail stores. I have prepared a chart showing that there are 327 food and
drinking establishments in the 10012 zip code, the area between Broome and West 4th Streets, from 6th Avenue to Bowery. This is one of the city’s largest concentrations of such dining and drinking establishments.

In addition, during the past two decades, the Houston Street corridor, from Broadway to 6th Avenue has witnessed a shift to retail, residential and restaurant activity, replacing auto repair shops, parking lots, and gas stations, a transformation that has occurred independently of NYU.

The obsolete, un-air conditioned Coles Gym, located at the corner of Mercer and Houston Streets, is in fact the shortest building at 23.5 feet on the entire street, and is certainly the ugliest, with an exterior of cinderblock and not one window or doorway facing a major thoroughfare. It is perhaps the most anti-urban building in the community, crying out to be replaced.

Across the nation, there is widespread agreement that environmentally sustainable planning should foster urban development in close proximity to mass transit facilities. More than ten subway lines are within about a quarter mile of the superblocks under consideration. Furthermore, students, faculty and staff who live in New Jersey can easily reach NYU via the PATH system, which has a station located at 9th Street and Sixth Avenue, a few blocks from NYU’s Washington Square campus.

Greenwich Village, especially the section from Broadway to Seventh Avenue, is one of New York City’s most transit-dense areas, as indicated on a map included in this testimony. If new high rise buildings cannot be built on the super blocks, which are accessible by the A, B, C, D, E, F, M, N, R, 1, and 6 trains, then where in the entire city of New York can we build anything.

There has also been much attention given to the noise generated by construction. Noise is a product of human activity and activity is the basis of urban life. People make noise, when they talk, shout, play music, and public agencies are responsible for some of the loudest, most invasive noise when emergency vehicles blast their sirens at all hours of the day and night. The one source of noise that we do regulate well is construction noise as a result of the municipal 2007 noise code, the first systematic noise regulations adopted by the city government in thirty years.

New York is a loud, active city that is constantly in motion; the Rudin Center for Transportation at NYU’s Wagner School has recently issued a report stating that there are 4 million people on the island of Manhattan during a typical weekday. Noise is a sign of vitality. We are not a city of the past like Williamsburg, Virginia which is filled with quiet horse-drawn carriages or Detroit, Michigan where there is no one is on the empty sidewalks or streets.
In March 2012, there were more than 10,000 calls to “311” complaining about noise; in fact, noise was the second largest source of complaints, following complaints about heat. If you want peace and tranquility, the municipal government offers Fort Tryon Park in Washington Heights and Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx. Admittedly, New York City is not as quiet as Hanover, New Hampshire or Grinnell, Iowa, but those college towns do not have 8.4 million people.

Finally, the one group to be displaced by the proposed rezoning are the four-legged creatures who rely on the Mercer-Houston Dog Run. This community-operated dog run is open to all, but requires that all dogs be inoculated to prevent the spread of illness and must not engage in aggressive, hostile behavior. It is a remarkable organization that draws upon dog owners from all parts of the city and is totally run on a volunteer basis. I urge you to maintain this valuable component of the community with an equal or better dog run on the superblock site.

Thank you for your time and attention. I will, of course, be pleased to answer any questions you may have.
Top 10 Manhattan Neighborhoods for Restaurants and Bars

- TriBeCa/Chinatown
- Union Square
- Lower East Side
- Midtown-West 50s
- Midtown-East 30s
- Midtown-West 40s
- Midtown-East 50s
- NYU-Greenwich Village
- West Village
- Chelsea

Source: 2009 Zip Code Business Patterns, U.S. Census Bureau
<table>
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<th>Rank</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Lines</th>
<th>Average Weekday Riders</th>
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<td>A, C, E, B, D, F, M</td>
<td>37,175</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Broadway-Lafayette-Bleecker</td>
<td>6, B, D, F, M</td>
<td>34,191</td>
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<td>77</td>
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**TOTAL SUBWAY RIDERS PER WEEKDAY**  
142,962

Source: Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Subway Accessibility in New York City

Data Source: Metropolitan Transportation Authority