



May 26, 2020

Dear Friends,

Collectively, we are the 70 Mulberry Street tenants comprised of the Chinatown Manpower Project, Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc., H.T. Chen & Dancers, Museum of Chinese in America, and United East Athletics Association (the “70 Mulberry Tenants”).

How we arrived at our current situation is known and recent history. How we pick ourselves up and where we go from here to rebuild our organizations is vital and paramount to the thousands of individuals that we serve each day. We write to present one unified 70 Mulberry Tenants’ voice regarding the future of 70 Mulberry especially in light of our shared concern that there may be an escalating conversation regarding the 70 Mulberry Street site as witnessed at the Community Board 3 Land Use meeting on May 14, 2020. We share the broader community’s sentiment that the 70 Mulberry Tenants must return as soon as possible to 70 Mulberry to continue serving the community. Our services are needed now more than ever.

On January 23, 2020, the 5-alarm fire at 70 Mulberry Street placed into jeopardy the livelihood, work, and mission of the 70 Mulberry Tenants. In partnership with New York City agencies and commissions, each of the 70 Mulberry Tenants has worked quickly to: 1) re-start administrative functions; 2) secure temporary workspaces; and (3) extract and repair belongings and archives from 70 Mulberry. The 70 Mulberry Tenants have also met routinely with New York City agencies to understand the situation of the building in a real-time fashion. The 70 Mulberry Tenants have met regularly with the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (“DCAS”) to extract belongings and archives, understand the structure of the building post-fire, provide tenant and community voice regarding the love for 70 Mulberry as the iconic and representative center of the Chinatown community, and suggest pathways forward to re-envision 70 Mulberry as the future home of the 70 Mulberry Tenants.

While it remains to be seen how Chinatown and the neighborhoods around it will change after the stay-at-home orders expire, the 70 Mulberry Tenants believe that it is important that we present clearly our united voice on the priorities regarding the future of 70 Mulberry Street. The 70 Mulberry Tenants represent so much of the needs of the Chinatown community, well beyond the thousands we collectively serve. The 70 Mulberry Tenants underscore the important role that 70 Mulberry plays as a future home for children to dance and learn their culture, youth to gain leadership and volunteer skills, artists to create and perform, adults to learn skills, seniors to socialize, associations to gather, and histories to be recorded.

As a collective voice, the 70 Mulberry Tenants request the following:

1. full demolition of 70 Mulberry continue without delay as we are anxious to return home as expediently as possible;

2. throughout the full demolition process, priority is placed on preserving elements of the lobby, façade, historic signage, and cast-iron columns with the goal to memorialize the history of 70 Mulberry in the new building;
3. engagement of the 70 Mulberry Tenants for active input in all aspects of the design and planning process for the new 70 Mulberry Street building;
4. design prioritization based on the historic design of 70 Mulberry Street, including height of ceilings over 15 feet; and
5. maintenance of FY2020 rental rates for the 70 Mulberry Tenants for space no less than held at present.

The 70 Mulberry Tenants believe that it is imperative to maintain and incorporate aspects of the history of 70 Mulberry in the new design and outfitting.

Thank you for prioritizing the 70 Mulberry Tenants in this process.

Sincerely,

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