



Yuh-Line Niou's Statement on saving the Elizabeth Street Garden

Downtown is grossly underserved by a lack of open space and green space, and new developments are constantly putting more and more pressure on our community. Without support from the City, our community stepped up and created new open space on their own, developing the Elizabeth Street Garden into a centerpiece of this community and a jewel that benefits the entire neighborhood. Now, the City is trying to take this jewel away from us and doing it without input from the community or the residents who would be affected.

We've seen the disasters that happen when the City rams projects through without comprehensive review or adequate community input; the shady deal that destroyed Rivington House is the most obvious example but there are many more. While Lower Manhattan is desperately in need of affordable housing, we cannot pit the need for housing against the need for green space, especially when so many good alternatives are available; both are vital and both need to be protected and expanded. The best way to achieve this is by engaging the community from the start so decisions are made with a full knowledge of community sentiment and impact.

I urge the City to not make the same mistake they made with Rivington House. Step back, preserve the community-supported Elizabeth Street Garden, and move forward the right way by engaging local residents, CB2 and local leaders in a community-driven process where all voices are heard.