



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas K. Duane

Opposing NYU's Bid to Acquire Public Land South of Washington Square

THOMAS K. DUANE December 6, 2010



On December 5, I joined Manhattan Community Board 2 (CB2), the Community Action Alliance on NYU Plan 2031 (CAAN), other elected officials and hundreds of Greenwich Village residents in a rally calling on New York University (NYU) to withdraw its application to acquire more than two acres of City-owned land along Mercer, LaGuardia, Bleecker and West 3rd Streets between Washington Square South and Houston Street.

These strips of land, which are the property of the New York City Department of

Transportation (DOT), contain rare open space in our park-starved community – and they rightfully belong to the people of New York City. Not only do they contain a community garden, dog run, plaza and playground, but, as we made clear by assembling in protest on a very chilly Sunday afternoon, they provide a public gathering place for demonstrations, which are a cornerstone of our democracy.

In order to ensure that these spaces remain truly public and open in perpetuity, DOT should transfer them to the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, as CB2 recommended in its [resolution strongly opposing NYU's bid to annex the land](#).

I have long opposed relinquishing public spaces to private entities and I will continue to stand with my colleagues in government, CB2, CAAN and many other concerned constituents to oppose NYU's effort to remove this open space from the public domain.