

Utterly Out of Proportion: *The Very Un-Contextual Development the SoHo/NoHo Rezoning Is Designed to Create*

SoHo and NoHo consist of historic districts and individual landmarks, recognized at the local, state, and federal levels. For more than a half century, their architecture has inspired artists, investment, and visitors from around the country and world.

A combination of landmark designation and appropriate zoning has helped maintain that unique and historic sense of place. But the proposed SoHo/NoHo Upzoning threatens to undo all of that.

While the City has claimed that new development allowed under the rezoning would fit the context of the neighborhood, **the facts say otherwise.**

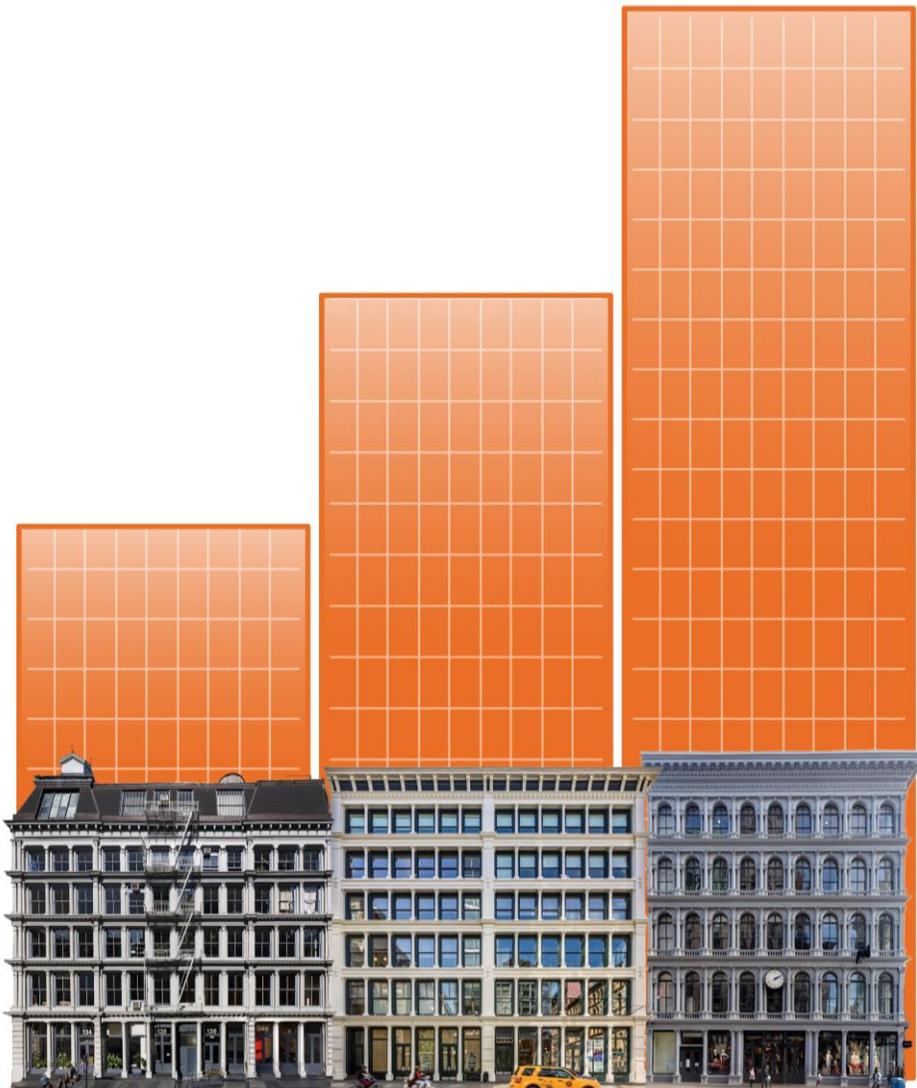
NYC PLUTO data shows that the average FAR (floor area ratio) of buildings within both the SoHo and NoHo sections of the rezoning are about 4.8 – 4.9. That typically translates to an approximately 6-story building. Current zoning, which for all practical purposes allows a maximum FAR of 5 for new development, has helped ensure that new development, for the most part, has remained in context for the neighborhood (more than 60 new buildings have been constructed in SoHo and NoHo over the last 20 years).

Under the rezoning, allowable FAR would increase to 6.5, 9.7, and 12, depending upon the location – a 30%, 94%, and 140% increase. Allowable heights for new development would be 145, 205, and 275 feet, respectively, within those zones.

Below at left are three buildings located within the rezoning area, each approximately 4.8 FAR, and between 80 and 85 feet in height. Next to them are graphic representations showing the relative height and size of new developments which would be allowed under the proposed rezoning:



Here they are with the new buildings located directly behind the current buildings which are of average size for the rezoning area, to show the relationship of the proportions even more directly:



The new buildings clearly dwarf the existing ones, changing the entire nature of the relationship of the built environment here.

It should be noted that in an absolute best-case scenario, less than* 25%-30% of the space in these new very out-of-scale buildings would contain “affordable” housing, [reserved for residents considerably wealthier than the least well-off 25-30% of current residents of the neighborhood](#). The greater likelihood, however, is that [these buildings will contain high-end offices or hotel space, big box chain retail, luxury condos or rentals, and/or space for private universities like NYU, with little or no affordable housing included whatsoever.](#)

* Under the rezoning proposal, all new developments are required to have ground floor retail, which does not count against affordable housing requirements. Thus even an otherwise fully residential development which includes 25%-30% of residential space as “affordable” would have less than 25%-30% of its floor area dedicated to affordable housing.