

Subject: ELIZABETH STREET GARDEN IS SAVED

Date: Monday, June 23, 2025 at 10:16:28 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Elizabeth Street Garden

To: Nord Wennerstrom



THE GARDEN IS SAVED



Dear Neighbors,

I've spent the better part of my adult life knowing the Garden through times of uncertainty. In truth, after all these years I don't quite know what it's like to be here without the weight of a looming threat. But here I am, writing this under the Gazebo on the evening of the Summer Solstice, knowing that Elizabeth Street Garden is saved.

Surreal to write those words, but then again, that a place like this exists in the middle of Manhattan is surreal- a gift whose potential loss was always a guiding reminder of gratitude for each moment spent surrounded by such beauty. Elizabeth Street Garden has always been beyond words for me, but I still try.

The Garden has been misunderstood by those who believe it must be sacrificed to meet housing needs. But doing so perpetuates a false choice, one I hope we can now leave behind in light of what this work has affirmed. In our efforts to preserve Elizabeth Street Garden, we have always pursued a solution that provides affordable housing without any loss to the community. Thanks to Councilmember Marte's dedication and the support from Mayor Adams, we now have a resolution that delivers even more housing while preserving the Garden.

Through zoning actions at a privately owned site just two blocks away on the Bowery, a vacant city-owned property on Suffolk Street, and more affordable housing at 100 Gold Street, at least 623 new affordable units will be created in our district in addition to hundreds of more homes. With political will and community alignment, the review process for these developments could be significantly expedited. This is a rare opportunity for us to show how all of the involved parties can work together.

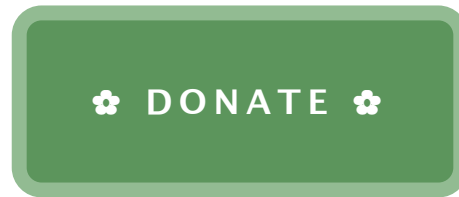
We are forever grateful to all of those who have supported the Garden over the years. To Renee Green, Barry Ranganathan, April Valencia, Poppy King, and Patricia Squillari for leading the organization. To Norman Siegel, Steve Hyman, Oliver Chernin, Gabrielle Esposito, Goutam Jois, Elliott Meisel, and Osman Dennis for upholding the legal effort for over six years. To our many wholehearted volunteers and neighbors who continued to tend to the Garden even in the most uncertain times. We simply wouldn't have made it here without you.

The value of community gardens goes far beyond what can be easily measured. They encompass wellness, resilience, and connection in ways quantification never fully seems to capture. And yet, these spaces are constantly at risk. It is my hope that our work sets a new precedent for how community gardens are valued and protected, moving beyond false choice politics toward solutions that honor all these spaces have to offer.

My father sowed the foundation of the Garden, which, even through more than a decade of duress, has grown into an iconic sanctuary treasured by people from across the city and the world. It's been a profound honor to expand upon that legacy, to trust in the path, and to listen to the Garden as my guide. With the City now embracing our proposal, we remain fully devoted to ensuring that Elizabeth Street Garden is preserved

in its entirety, with all of its enduring magic as we know and love in perpetuity.

Joseph



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Calling Everyone To The Garden

We're calling everyone to the garden [this evening at 6:30 pm!](#)

This is a moment to celebrate and give thanks to all those involved.
Wear your ESG lions and join us in the garden!



THE GARDEN IS SAVED!





A True Win-Win

In our efforts to preserve Elizabeth Street Garden, we have always pursued a solution that provides affordable housing without any loss to the community. Thanks to Councilmember Marte's dedication and the support from Mayor Adams we now have a resolution that delivers even more housing while preserving the Garden.

Through zoning actions at a privately owned site just two blocks away on the Bowery, a vacant city-owned property on Suffolk Street, and more affordable housing at 100 Gold Street, at least 623 new affordable units will be created in our district in addition to hundreds of more homes. With political will and community alignment, the review process for these developments could be significantly expedited.

Together, these sites offer a more effective and equitable solution: more housing, including for seniors, and more green space for a neighborhood already underserved by open space - achieving both without any loss to the City of New York.

156-166 Bowery



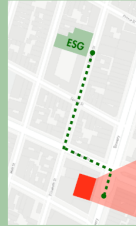
22 Suffolk Street



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156-166 Bowery



- ~15,000 sq ft lot, privately owned by Kinsmen Property Group.
- Will include **123 affordable units** made possible with rezoning from Councilmember Christopher Marte and the collaboration of Kinsmen Property Group
- Shovel-ready for fast construction
- Right in our backyard, just 2.5 blocks from the Garden

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22 Suffolk Street



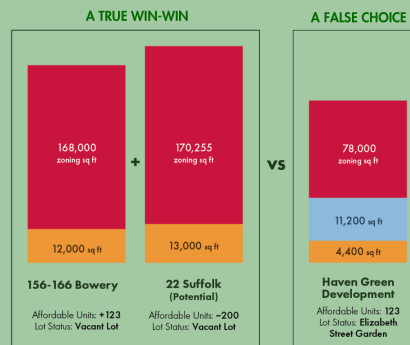
- 15,485 sq ft vacant lot, owned by the City under the Housing Department (HPD)
- Can provide **approximately 200 units of affordable housing** with a rezoning by Councilmember Marte.
- Located in the Essex Crossing area, which is the larger development that ESG was originally added to as "additional off-site housing"

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Comparing Numbers

Along with at least 300 affordable units secured at 100 Gold Street, this solution will provide a total of 623 affordable units in addition to hundreds of more homes. More housing AND more green space without any loss to the community.



Commercial Residential Office

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The Reps Who Got It Done

We commend **Councilmember Christopher Marte**'s steadfast commitment to building more affordable housing in the district while preserving Elizabeth Street Garden in its entirety.

We commend **Mayor Eric Adams** for his willingness to listen to the overwhelming public support for saving the Garden and to consider alternatives that avoided an irreversible loss.

Councilmember Marte and Mayor Adams have proven **that we can achieve a true win-win solution delivering far more housing without sacrificing any public green space.**




**Councilmember
Christopher Marte**



**Mayor
Eric Adams**



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To All Who Made This Possible

We are forever grateful to all of those who have supported the Garden over the years. To **Renee Green, Barry Ranganathan, April Valencia, Poppy King, Joseph Reiver, and Patricia Squillari** for leading the effort.

To **Norman Siegel, Steve Hyman, Oliver Chernin, Gabrielle Esposito, Goutam Jois, Elliott Meisel, and Osman Dennis** for upholding the legal effort for over six years.

To our many volunteers and neighbors who continued to tend to the Garden even in the most uncertain times. We simply wouldn't have made it here without you.

OVER 12 YEARS OF ADVOCACY & STEWARDSHIP

- +200,000 ANNUAL VISITORS
- HUNDREDS OF FREE PUBLIC PROGRAMS
- +500 CURRENT VOLUNTEERS, THOUSANDS OVER THE YEARS
- OPEN LETTER FROM +300 LOCAL BUSINESSES & ORGS
- +1, 100,000 LETTERS TO THE ADMINISTRATION
- OPEN LETTER FROM +125 LOCAL SENIORS
- LETTERS FROM LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

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What Happens Next?



With the City now embracing the Garden, we remain firmly committed to ensuring that the housing agreements are fully realized and that affordable homes are delivered as quickly as possible.

At the same time, we are devoted to ensuring that Elizabeth Street Garden is preserved in its entirety, with all of its enduring magic as we know and love in perpetuity.

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[#SaveESG](https://twitter.com/ElizabethStreetGarden)



Elizabeth Street Garden, Inc. (ESG) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization incorporated in 2016 in New York with the mission to protect & preserve the magic of Elizabeth Street Garden as a public community green space and to determine how the City together with the community can protect the Garden for generations to enjoy. Contributions made for the charitable purposes of Elizabeth Street Garden are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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