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\$1 beyond the greater New York metropolitan area

Don't Allow Megastores Near Neighborhoods

To the Editor:

Re "Save the Harlem Fairway"
(editorial, Feb. 15):

You assume that Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani's proposed zoning changes for New York City that would allow megastores into manufacturing districts target only underutilized industrial areas.

But a great deal of manufacturing space is within or abutting residential communities.

The initiative would allow developers to cluster megastores in areas that would destroy quality of life for homeowners. Why should a toy store be allowed to build a large unit where a supermarket can't? Why should a Home Depot be characterized as a hardware store so that it can build a 150,000-square-foot

store without community oversight?

The answer to these inconsistencies is not to scrap the zoning text. The Mayor and the City Council should make changes that subject all large stores to the same review. The real issue involved in the zoning of megastores is the threat that mayoral changes pose to the review process.

The law protects communities and empowers local officials to oversee large, often intrusive, projects in the city's neighborhoods. Your support for comprehensive zoning changes would disenfranchise communities and hurt the small-business owners that form the backbone of the city's economy.

RICHARD LIPSKY

Executive Director

Neighborhood Small Business Assn.

Bellerose, Queens, Feb. 16, 1996