

**Alan D. Sugarman, Esq.**  
Attorney-At-Law

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sugarman@sugarlaw.com

June 26, 2003

Via fax 212-669-7960 and e-mail at [rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov)

Robert B. Tierney -  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

RE: Certificate of Appropriateness  
03-2628- Block 36, 37, lot 1122-  
8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - Individual  
Landmark,  
Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

Dear Commissioner Tierney:

I am writing concerning a number of matters relating to the hearing I have heard was scheduled for July 1, 2003 relating to Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - proposed W. 70th Street luxury condominium. Yet, of this moment, there is no notice for the hearing posted on the Commission's web site. I also question why a hearing is being held during the July 4th Week.

And, as discussed below, the Commission has made no opportunity for the public to review the latest application.

Moreover, from my understanding, the Commission intends to allocate as much as 75% of the time of the hearing to presentations by the Congregation including the members of the Congregation and the attorneys, architects, and officers of the Congregation. Each member of the Congregation has a substantial financial interest in the outcome of this hearing -- they are not members of the general public or community at large and the time allocated to comments from the general public should not be diverted to the applicants.

I also raise below other significant issues as to the standards being applied to the determination, the status of the record, and the real possibility of extensive ex parte contacts with the Synagogue.

As you are a lawyer, I am sure you share my concern as to the importance of fair and impartial procedures as it relates to the operation of the Commission, especially with respect to a matter as significant as this. I do not believe that the practices of the Commission promote a fair and balanced review and determination of the issues.

I. Availability of Information To The Public Prior to Hearings:

It is difficult if not impossible for a member of the general public to obtain copies of submissions to the Commission in support of applications. On February 27, 2003, I filed a request for information with the Commission asking for, among other things, copies of the applications filed on behalf of the synagogue in this matter. This information has not been made available to me. I have never seen an administrative agency or court that is so unwilling to share written information with members of the public. Your web site as of today at 2:43 PM states:

Presentation materials for each item on the Public Hearing agenda are available for review on the Friday before the Public Hearing from 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Commission's Hearing Room on the ninth floor of the Municipal Building, 1 Centre Street. This month, the viewing day will be Friday, July 18th.

Thus, the Commission is making available the materials for the July 1 meeting 17 days AFTER the meeting. Moreover, the Commission staff seems to be unwilling to make the entire file open for review. This is truly extraordinary. The public is entirely cut-off from information, and, as is discussed later, has to glean information at a public hearing and then must respond in a limited presentation.<sup>1</sup>

I would very much appreciate receiving a copy as soon as possible of ALL previous and current filings made by the Synagogue to the Landmarks Commission on this matter.

This would to me seem to be the very minimum obligation of the Commission, and, I should not have to beg, scream, or shout to obtain this information.

II. Ex Parte Contacts

In my request of February 27, 2003, I also asked for a list of contacts between Commission members and staff on one hand and the Synagogue and its lawyers, architects, and members on the other hand. The Commission has not responded to this request. I made this request because it seemed that the Commissioners might have made up their minds prior to the February meeting, which, to me indicated substantial prior discussions with the Congregation and its advisors. I think it is important for a fair process that the nature of these contacts be revealed. I must say that whereas Commission members and staff have had tours and meetings at the Synagogue, on the

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps as well, the Commission should consider requiring that all applications be submitted in a digital format such as Acrobat together with digital photos of all large exhibits. Thus, information could be made easily available to the public. This is a simple matter - and this would facilitate making information available to the public.

other side, I am not aware of similar quality time with neighbors and those opposed to the Synagogue's request.

I respectfully request that each Commissioner disclose in writing all contacts had with the Synagogue and its representatives.

### III. Transcripts

In my February 27, 2003 request, I also asked for transcripts of hearings because there was a court stenographer at the last hearing. I have received no response to this request.

If a transcript was prepared and made available to the Commission or any member or staff of the Commission, then I would like to have a copy of that transcript. At the same time, I would also advise you that I would wish to bring a stenographer to the next hearing.

### IV. Standards Before the Board

As a lawyer, it is confusing to me as to what standards and procedures are being applied by the Commission. Although there may be Commission rules, these rules and procedures, oddly enough, are not posted on the Commission's web site.

I am most troubled by the Commission's willingness to consider testimony considering the "economic engine" that this project is supposed to represent, without regard to any facts relating to the costs of the project, the surplus income generated, building assets to be made available at no cost to the congregation, and the ability of the congregation to make necessary repairs to the landmark. Unless the Congregation comes clean with the economic facts, the Commission should not entertain any argument by the Congregation as to the so-called economic engine.

I would ask you under what authority can the Landmark Commission even consider the economic engine argument as to the funding of interior repairs, new educational and social feasibilities, and private condominiums.

While at the same time that the Commission is considering factors that are outside of its purview, it is ignoring and not requiring information as to factors that are relevant on what we will know will be the ultimate determination by the City Planning Commission. These factors included:

- (b) In order to grant a special permit, the City Planning Commission shall find that:
  - (1) such *bulk* modifications shall have minimal adverse effects on the structures or *open space* in the vicinity in terms of scale, location and access to light and air; and

**It would be highly improper for the Landmarks Commission, by approving the Synagogue's luxury condominium, to suggest thereby to the City Planning Commission that the Landmarks Commission has reviewed these factors as to the Synagogue condominium project.** Quite clearly, the Landmarks Commission has relied primarily on distorted presentations by the applicant and has not required a study of the effect of sunlight that the building will have on the surrounding area including Central Park. Moreover, the Landmarks Commission has relied on elevation drawings with a perspective of hundreds of feet in the air, drawings that have no relevance to light and air impact at the street level on W. 70th Street. Indeed, at the last hearing, one Commissioner was not even aware that 70th Street was a narrow street - this is troubling and suggests among other things that the Commission members have entertained ex parte contacts with the Synagogue including tours, but have not shown similarly openness to the opponents.. Thus, unless the Landmarks Commission creates an identifiable record that it has reviewed light and air, then the City Planning Commission may not rely upon the Landmarks Commission in making the determination required above.

Thus, I ask that the Landmarks Commission require the applicant to prepare a complete and fair presentation on the light and air issues and perspective drawings showing the present situation and the proposal from the viewpoint of someone standing on the street, not hanging from a helicopter..

## V. FAIRNESS TO ALL VIEWS AT THE HEARINGS

At the prior Landmarks (and Community Board hearings), a pattern was established whereby the Congregation's President, Lawyers, and Architects would expound at length over matters we believe were already discussed with individual Commission members, and would repeat claims and provide comments unrelated to the legal issues before the boards. Then, having effectively utilized most of the time available, the hearing would be thrown open to the public who were told to limit their comments to 2 minutes. Even persons of great experience in these issues were basically shut down and confined to short statements and no one was able to rebut in any effective manner the carefully and lengthy presentations of the Congregation. Thus, no opponent or opponent group is able to mount a cogent opposition.

Then, the Congregation members -- whose elected and paid spokespeople had already spoken and dominated the hearing -- were considered part of the "public" and "community", further limiting the opportunity of opponents to completely express their views. This is also important, because each and every member of the Congregation stands to benefit personally from the income from the sale of the condominiums. Assuming a Congregation with 500 members, then each member would benefit to the amount of \$2000 for each million of income derived from the condominium sales, and, the profit after the cost of the condominium segment of the building is considered, will be in the tens of millions of dollars. The Congregation members will stand to benefit in the free construction of a multi-story private club building. Although designated a "Community Building", the Community being served are the members of the



"Congregation Community," who may or may not be a member of the community who live and work in the area.

Thus, at the next hearing, I request that the Congregation members who wish to speak have their time included in the time allocated to the applicant , and that opponents of the project have time allocated to their presentations and objections that equal the combined time made available to the Congregation through its officers, lawyers, architect, and members.

I hope that as a new chairman of the Commission that you will endeavor to make the Commission proceedings more transparent, to make Commission documents truly available to the public, to assure that the Commission keeps an appropriate record of all information considered by the Commission, that Commission contacts with applicants be made public, that the Commission not consider issues which are beyond its authority, and that the hearings be conducted in a manner to promote fair and equitable airing of the issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Alan D. Sugarman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alan" and last name "Sugarman" clearly distinguishable.

Alan D. Sugarman

Michael Bloomberg – Mayor  
City Hall, NYC 10007  
<http://nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html> (link to an e-mail form)  
phone: 212-788-9600 fax: 212-788-2460

Gale Brewer - City Council Member  
2374 Broadway, NYC 10024  
[gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us](mailto:gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us)  
phone: 212-788-6975 fax: 212-513-7717

Amanda Burden - City Planning Commission Chair  
22 Reade Street, NYC 10007  
(do not email) phone: 212-720-3200 fax: 212-720-3219

C. Virginia Fields - Manhattan Borough President  
1 Centre Street, 19<sup>th</sup> Fl., NYC 10007  
[bp@manhattanbp.org](mailto:bp@manhattanbp.org)  
phone: 212-669-8155 fax: 212-669-4306

Richard Gottfried - New York State Assemblyman  
250 Broadway, Rm. 2232, NYC 10007  
[gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us)  
phone: 212-312-1492 fax: 212-312-1494

Scott Stringer - New York State Assemblyman  
230 West 72nd Street, NYC 10023  
[strings@assembly.state.ny.us](mailto:strings@assembly.state.ny.us)  
phone: 212-873-6368 fax: 212-873-6520

Tom Duane - New York State Senator  
494 Eighth Avenue, Ste. 503, NYC 10001  
[duane@senate.state.ny.us](mailto:duane@senate.state.ny.us)  
phone: 212-268-1049 fax: 212-564-1003

Eric Schneiderman - New York State Senator  
1841 Broadway, Rm. 608, NYC 10023  
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phone: 212-397-5913 fax: 212-397-3201

Jerrold Nadler - Congressman  
[jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov](mailto:jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov)  
phone: 212-367-7350 fax: 212-367-7356



## Thank You For Filling Out This Form

Shown below is your submission to **NYC.gov** on Thursday, February 27, 2003 at 22:12:40

This form resides at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/mail/html/maillpc.html>

Name of Fields	Data
<b>Message Type:</b>	Request for Information
<b>Topic:</b>	Other
<b>Contact Info:</b>	Yes
<b>M/M:</b>	Mr.
<b>First Name:</b>	Alan
<b>Middle Name:</b>	D
<b>Last Name:</b>	Sugarman
<b>Street Address:</b>	17 W. 70 St.
<b>Address Number:</b>	4
<b>City:</b>	New York
<b>State:</b>	NY
<b>Postal Code:</b>	10023
<b>Country:</b>	United States
<b>Work Phone #:</b>	212-873-1371
<b>Email Address:</b>	sugarman@sugarlaw.com
	RE: 8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - Applications for MODIFICATION OF USE AND BULK and CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS Please provide to me, or make available to me for my inspection and or copying, as soon as possible the following: 1. All written submissions of any type by the

**Message:**

Congregation and its lawyers, architects, and members to the Commission or to any Members of the Commission concerning the application. 2. The written transcripts of the November 26, 2002, and the February 11, 2003 meetings relating thereto. 3. A listing with dates and nature of contact of all contacts between any of the Commissioners and the Synagogue and/or its lawyers, architects, and members or agents of the Synagogue concerning the application of the Synagogue above. This may be considered to be a request for ordinary review of public files as well as a Freedom of Information Request.

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# THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 10007

TEL: (212) 669- 7700 FAX: (212) 669-7960

## APPLICATION FORM

F-2

### FOR WORK ON DESIGNATED PROPERTIES

This application will not be deemed complete until it is so certified by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. An application consists of an application form and the materials necessary to describe the project fully. If being submitted in response to a **Warning Letter** or **Notice of Violation**, please enter the number below.

Please print or type all items. If not applicable, mark N.A.

03-2653		10/25		Start Use Only	
PC DOCKET #	DATE RECD	DATE CERT AS COMPLETE	BEG. DEPT # & DATE	STAFF	
<input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL <input type="checkbox"/> SCENIC <input type="checkbox"/> INTERIOR		HISTORIC DISTRICT			
TYPE OF DESIGNATION					
<input type="checkbox"/> PMW ACTION <input type="checkbox"/> CNL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COA <input type="checkbox"/> REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		WORK TYPE			

### DESIGNATED PROPERTY

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK

Use back of form if necessary

8 West 70th Street (in part)

N/A

ADDRESS

FLOOR OF APARTMENT

Manhattan

1122

36, 37

R10/R8B

BOROUGH

BLOCK

LOT

ZONING

This application accompanies an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a 14-story building on the zoning lot of the designated landmark. Application is herein made for the Commission to join the applicant in submitting an application to the City Planning Commission for a special permit pursuant to Section 74-711 of the New York City Zoning Resolution. A special permit is being requested to permit the transfer of zoning floor area from an R10 district to an R8B district (and thereby transferring development rights off the designated landmark) and for associated waivers of streetwall and height and setback for the building and partial rear yard (floors 2 - 4) regulations.

### COST OF PROJECT

WARNING LETTER / NOV # N/A

### TENANT/LESSEE/CO-OP SHAREHOLDER

N/A

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

ADDRESS

APT #

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Platt Byard Dovell White

212-691-2440

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

19 Union Square West

New York, NY 10003

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

N/A

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Shelly S. Friedman, Esq.  
c/o Friedman & Gotbaum, LLP

212-925-4545

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

568 Broadway - Suite 505

New York, NY 10012

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

### ARCHITECT/ENGINEER

If applicable

### CONTRACTOR

If applicable

### PERSON FILING APPLICATION

e.g. Expeditor, Attorney, Managing Agent, etc

### ARE YOU APPLYING TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

☒ Buildings Department ☒ City Planning Commission ☐ Board of Standards & Appeals

I am the owner of the above listed property. I am familiar with the work proposed to be carried out on my property and give my permission for this application to be filed. The information entered is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

### OWNER

For applications for work on or in a cooperative or condominium building, the "owner" is the Co-op Board or Condominium Association. An officer of the Co-op Board or Condominium Association must sign this application. Please consult the Instructions for Filing for additional information.

The Congregation Shearith Israel in the City of New York

212-873-0200

OWNER'S NAME and TITLE (please type or print)

PHONE (day)

COMPANY, CORPORATION, ORGANIZATION (if applicable)

8 West 70th Street

New York, NY 10023

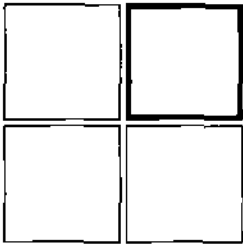
ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

### SIGNATURE

Dr. Alan Singer, Executive Director

DATE

**FRIEDMAN & GOTBAUM LLP**

568 BROADWAY SUITE 505  
NEW YORK NEW YORK 10012  
TEL 212 925 4545  
FAX 212 925 5199  
ZONING@FRIGOT.COM

October 24, 2002

**BY HAND**

Hon. Sherida E. Paulsen, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street - 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
Block 1122 Lots 36 & 37  
Manhattan**

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

Please find enclosed two applications in connection with the development of a 14-story building on a zoning lot consisting of the two subject tax lots, on which is built the Synagogue used by The Congregation of Shearith Israel in the City of New York, a designated New York City landmark. In addition, the Synagogue and the remainder of the zoning lot, which is improved with a four-story parsonage facing Central Park West (together constituting Tax Lot 36) and the existing community house adjacent to the Synagogue on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street and an unimproved vacant lot adjacent to the community house on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street (together constituting Tax Lot 37), is located within the boundaries of the Upper West Side Historic District. As more fully described below, one application requests a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed development. The second application requests that the Commission join with the applicant in applying to the City Planning Commission for a special permit pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York to waive certain bulk provisions applicable to the zoning lot. The combined effect of the approval of these applications will be to assure the long-term preservation of the designated landmark.

The proposal is further described in the architectural material prepared by the firms of Platt Byard Dovell White and Stephen Tilly Architects, which is being submitted with this letter.

The Congregation has embarked on a comprehensive effort to inform its neighbors and the community of these applications. It will take any additional steps recommended by the Commission to assure that the public is fully informed prior to the public hearing on this application.

*The Certificate of Appropriateness*

A Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission is necessary with regard to three actions:

1. Demolition of the Congregation's community house which currently occupies a portion of Tax Lot 37. This four-story building was built in the 1950's and contains no elements of significance in relation to either the designated landmark Synagogue or the historic district. It contains office space for the Congregation's administration and its educational and cultural programs. It has long since stopped serving any of those functions suitably. It lends nothing to the historic character of the District and, in combination with the useless vacant lot to its west, physically detracts from the character of the remainder of the block.

2. Construction of the 14-story building to provide both new sub-grade space and replacement of the four stories of new community house space above grade. The space designed for community service will be considerably more efficient, modern and functional. Above the community house will be developed ten floors of residential space that the Congregation intends to sell in order to raise the funds necessary to finance construction of the new community facilities and to fund the continued preservation efforts on the Synagogue and its adjacent Parsonage. The new building has been designed to provide what the Congregation believes to be the minimum amount of residential space necessary to assure the long-term viability of the zoning lot for its use by the Congregation. Its design will respect the individual landmark and provide greater harmony with the character of the historic district than the current community house and vacant lot.

3. The current community house is built directly against the west wall of the landmarked Synagogue. Accordingly, the protective measures that must be taken to demolish the existing community house and construct the new building must be approved by the Commission so that they will not jeopardize the significant historic architectural elements of the landmark.

*The Section 74-711 Special Permit*

In those rare cases in which the Commission finds that a suitable preservation purpose is being served by an application, and that the resulting proposal does not comply with the provisions of the New York City Zoning Resolution, the Commission may serve as a co-applicant to the City Planning Commission to secure waivers from the provisions of the Zoning Resolution which would interfere with that preservation purpose. In this case, the zoning lot is located partially within the boundaries of the R10 district running parallel to Central Park West and partially within the boundaries of the R8B zoning district located on the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. Because the Synagogue contains relatively little zoning floor area, a substantial amount of unused but available zoning floor area remains over it in the R10 portion of the zoning lot. This proposal requires moving a significant amount of this available zoning floor area off of the footprint of the landmark and incorporating it into the development of the new building. However, because the utilization of that floor area

requires that it be transferred across the R10/R8B zoning district boundary bisecting the zoning lot. the transfer cannot be executed as a matter of right. Thus, the Special Permit will be used to permit the transfer of zoning floor area across the zoning district boundary, thereby securing an important preservation objective by removing available development rights from over the landmarked Synagogue. In addition, the Congregation will enter into a declaration, under the guidance of the Commission's staff, establishing a Program for Continuing Maintenance for the landmarked Synagogue. to become effective upon the actual construction of the new building.

The transfer of zoning floor area from the R10 portion of the zoning lot to the R8B portion of the zoning lot will result in the use of more floor area than permitted as a matter of right in the R8B portion of the zoning lot. As a result of this transfer, the new building fails to comply with certain zoning regulations governing bulk. The Section 74-711 Special Permit will therefore also need to address the following waivers:

*In the R8B portion of the Zoning Lot:*

- ☐ A waiver of the maximum zoning floor area and the minimum lot coverage (community facility floors 2 through 4 only) in Z.R. Section 24-11 is required. It should be noted that the proposal does not require more zoning floor area than the Zoning Resolution currently permits on the zoning lot. This waiver effectuates the transfer of existing floor area from one portion of the zoning lot to another.
- ☐ A waiver of the base height and building height requirements in Z.R. Section 23-633 is required. It should be noted that the resulting building remains under the building heights of both 91 and 101 Central Park West. This waiver will permit the streetwall façade of the building to rise without setback, which is consistent with the multifamily architecture found within this area of the Historic District.
- ☐ A partial waiver of the rear yard requirements in Z.R. Section 24-36 for community facility floors 2 through 4 is required. It should be noted that the residential portion of the new building provides a fully complying 30 ft. rear yard. This waiver will permit a 20 ft. rear yard for the community house floors below the height of the existing landmark.

*In the R10 portion of the Zoning Lot:*

- ☐ A waiver of the height and setback requirements in Z.R. 24-522 is required. This waiver, and its associated waiver for the R8B portion of the zoning lot described above, will permit the streetwall façade of the building to rise without setback, which is consistent with multifamily architecture found within this area of the Historic District.




*Precedents*

This request for the Commission's participation in a Section 74-711 Special Permit has a very close precedent in the development of the office tower by the Swiss Bank Corporation behind Saks Fifth Avenue, which is a designated landmark. The primary purpose of the special permit in that application was to permit zoning floor area over the designated landmark to be transferred across the zoning district boundary from the avenue portion of its zoning lot to the midblock portion of the zoning lot, which had been assembled for the construction of the office building. The resulting building thus effectively removed the floor area from over the landmark and was so deemed to serve a preservation purpose. It also was deemed to have served a preservation purpose by re-directing the development footprint away from Fifth Avenue, thereby respecting the low-rise buildings of Rockefeller Center immediately across the street, and preserving both the open space and southerly sight lines for St. Patrick's Cathedral. It also resulted in the creation of a Program for Continuing Maintenance for the Saks Fifth Avenue façades. These applications embody similar preservation goals.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of these applications. We look forward to working with you as they progress.

Very truly yours,



Shelly S. Friedman

cc: Hon. Amanda Burden  
Peter Neustadt  
Dr. Alan Singer  
Charles Platt  
Sam White



26 M

**Date:** Wednesday, November 20, 2002

**Re:** Congregation Shearith Israel

**From:** Sam White for Platt Byard Dovell White Architects LLP

**To:** Meisha Hunter, Landmarks Preservation Commission

**Cc:** Shelly Friedman

We are sending you the following materials by hand. Documents identified as "Not included in this Package" will be available for the Community Board and LPC public hearings. All drawings are hand stamped today.

1. **Exist. site plan -**
2. **Proposed site plan-**
3. **sub-basement-**
4. **basement-**
5. **first floor plan-**
6. **second floor plan-**
7. **third floor plan-**
8. **fourth floor plan-**
9. **fifth floor plan-**
10. **typ apt. (6-14) -**
11. **roof plan-**
12. **section A -**
13. **section B-**
14. **Exist. East context elev.-**
15. **Proposed east context elev.-**
16. **Exist. north context elevation-**
17. **proposed north context elevation-**
18. **Proposed north elev.-**
19. **proposed east elevation-**
20. **Exist. South elev.-**
21. **Proposed south elev.-**
22. **proposed west elevation-**
23. **Exist. West elevation @ synagogue and proposed west elev. @ synagogue-**
24. **enlarged elevation & section at base - Not included in this package**
25. **enlarged elevation & section at top- Not included in this package**
26. **zoning envelope 1 - Not included in this package**
27. **zoning envelope 2 - Not included in this package**
28. **FAR summary -**
29. **zoning summary -: 2 pages 8 ½ x 11**
30. **color rendering north elev. Not included in this package**
31. **color rendering east elev. Not included in this package**
32. **pencil perspective - 11 x 17 printout only Larger version not included in this package**
33. **CPW context photos - Not included in this package**
34. **W. 70th context photos- Not included in this package**
35. **rear yard context photos- Not included in this package**
36. **design precedents photos- Not included in this package**
37. **Materials board- Not included in this package**
37. **Context model at 1/32" scale: Not included in this package**
38. **Building model @ 1/8" scale: Not included in this package**

Congregation Shearith Israel  
November 20, 2002

Zoning Summary - Bulk Calculation

Existing Floor Area To Remain (sf.) See Note 1	R10A	36,400
Permitted Floor Area (sf.) See Note 2		105,186
Proposed Floor Area (sf.) See Note 3		49,732
Excess (Shortage) (sf.)		55,454

Note 1:  
Note 2:  
Note 3:

Existing building to be removed: 11,012 sf  
Permitted FAR @ 8.38 based on averaging for divide  
New Building: 62,487 square feet.

... 17  
... main r  
... arner  
... pending verificatio

... SITE INFO\2 07 REG ENTITIE

**Platt Byard Dovell White**  
Architects LLP

**Transmittal**

19 Union Square West  
New York NY 10003  
212 691 2440  
212 633 0144 fax

<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
Brian Hogg	10-30-02
<i>From</i>	
Landmarks Preservation Commission	Samuel G. White
<i>Project</i>	
One Centre Street, 9 <sup>th</sup> Floor North	Congregation Shearith Israel
<i>Subject</i>	
New York, NY 10007	Drawings

*We are sending the following to you via:*

☐ Under Separate Cover   
 ☐ Mail   
 ☒ Messenger via Vanessa Paulsen  
☐ Fax   
 ☐ FedEx   
 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
10-30-02	One set (21 sheets) of 30x42" drawings of 10 West 70 <sup>th</sup> Street
10-30-02	One 11x17" color rendering of the north elevation

*Remarks*

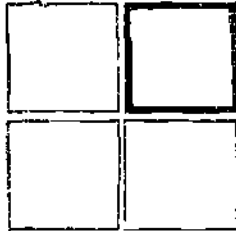
For staff review.

*Copy To*

Shelly Friedman (w/o enclosures)

*Design information contained herein may not be used or modified without the expressed written consent of Platt Byard Dovell White Architects.*

*If Enclosures are not as noted, please notify sender at the address above.*

**FRIEDMAN & GOTBAUM LLP**

56 BRADY STREET  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10012  
TEL 212 421 3545  
FAX 212 421 3196

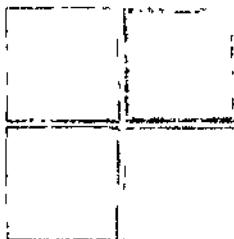
**FACSIMILE COVER PAGE**

NAME	ORGANIZATION	FAX NO
Hon. Sherida Paulsen	Landmarks Preservation Commission	669-7955
Richard Barth	Department of City Planning	720-3488
Brian Hogg	Landmarks Preservation Commission	669-7780
Mark Silberman Esq	Landmarks Preservation Commission	669-7797
Penny Ryan	Community Board No. 7	595-9317
Sam White	Platt Byard Dovell White	629-3749

FROM	Shelly S. Friedman	
MATTER NO	4196.0001	
SENT	10/31/02 (2:30PM)	NO PAGES 2 (including cover page)

**MESSAGE**

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**FRIEDMAN & GOTBAUM LLP**

505 BROADWAY, 4TH FLOOR  
 NEW YORK, N.Y. 10013  
 TEL 212 225-5555  
 FAX 212 225-5179  
 ZONING@FRGOT.COM

October 31, 2002

**BY HAND AND TELEFAX**

Hon. Sherida F. Paulsen, Chair  
 Landmarks Preservation Commission  
 One Centre Street - 9th Floor  
 New York, NY 10007

**Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
 Block 1122 Lots 36 & 37  
Manhattan**

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I have just learned of a typographical error on both of the pending application forms filed in connection with the subject properties. Please note that the correct zoning district identification for the avenue portion of the property lot is R10A and not R10 as set forth on the applications. The zoning waivers necessary for the development of the application that are set forth in my transmittal letter of October 24, 2002 remain the same.

I would greatly appreciate making this letter a part of the Commission's files. Thank you for your assistance.

Very truly yours,

Shelly S. Friedman

cc: Richard Barth  
 Brian Hogg  
 Mark Silbermann, Esq.  
 Penny Ryan  
 Sam White

**Platt Byard Dovell White**  
Architects LLP

www.protectwest70.org  
**Transmittal**

19 Union Square West  
New York NY 10003  
212 691 2440  
212 633 0144 fax

<i>To</i>	<i>Date</i>
Brian Hogg	10-30-02
<i>From</i>	
Landmarks Preservation Commission	Samuel G. White
<i>Project</i>	
One Centre Street, 9 <sup>th</sup> Floor North	Congregation Shearith Israel
<i>Subject</i>	
New York, NY 10007	Drawings

*We are sending the following to you via:*

☐ Under Separate Cover   
 ☐ Mail   
 ☒ Messenger via Vanessa Paulsen  
☐ Fax   
 ☐ FedEx   
 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
10-30-02	One set (21 sheets) of 30x42" drawings of 10 West 70 <sup>th</sup> Street
10-30-02	One 11x17" color rendering of the north elevation

*Remarks*

For staff review.

*Copy To*

Shelly Friedman (w/o enclosures)

*Design information contained herein may not be used or modified without the expressed written consent of Platt Byard Dovell White Architects.*

*If Enclosures are not as noted, please notify sender at the address above.*



Congregation Shearith Israel  
November 20, 2002

Zoning Summary - Bulk Calculation

---

	R10A	R8B	Combined
Existing Floor Area To Remain (sf.) See Note 1	36,400	0	36,400
Permitted Floor Area (sf.) See Note 2	105,186	39,554	144,740
Proposed Floor Area (sf.) See Note 3	49,732	49,155	98,887
<i>Excess (Shortage) (sf.)</i>	<i>55,454</i>	<i>(9,601)</i>	<i>45,853</i>

Note 1: Existing building to be removed: 11,012 sf

Note 2: Permitted FAR @ 8.38 based on averaging for divided lots per ZR 77-22.

Note 3: New Building: 62,487 square feet.

10 WEST 70TH STREET  
ZONING SUMMARY  
20-Nov-02

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>R10A Portion</b>	<b>R8B Portion</b>
<b>FLOOR AREA</b> <i>Notes (1)</i>	a.o.r.	<b>Special Permit</b> Additional 9,601 sf required per ZR 77-22
<b>BUILDING HEIGHT</b> <i>Notes (2)</i>	a.o.r.	<b>Special Permit</b> Permitted height: 75'; Proposed height 157'-2"
<b>STREETWALL HEIGHT (MAXIMUM)</b> <i>Notes (2)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 125'; proposed at 157'-2"	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 60'; proposed at 157'-2"
<b>REAR WALL HEIGHT (MAXIMUM)</b> <i>Notes (2)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 125'; proposed at 157'-2"	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 60'; proposed at 157'-2"
<b>REAR YARD</b> <i>Notes (3)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> 30' required; 20' proposed at floors 2, 3 & 4	<b>Special Permit</b> 30' required; 20' proposed at floors 2, 3 & 4
<b>LOT COVERAGE OVER 23'</b> <i>Notes (4)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> 70% required; 78% proposed	<b>Special Permit</b> 70% required; 80% proposed

**NOTES**

- (1) 8.38 FAR permitted on divided zoning lot by ZR 77-22
- (2) Building heights and setbacks measured to main roof. Add 3'-8" to top of parapet or 15'-0" to top of mechanical equipment
- (3) No rear yard required within 100' of corner
- (4) All calculations are approximate pending verification by survey and final plans



# THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NEW YORK, 10007

TEL. (212) 669-7700 FAX. (212) 669-7960

## APPLICATION FORM

f 2

### FOR WORK ON DESIGNATED PROPERTIES

This application will not be deemed complete until it is so certified by the Landmarks Preservation Commission. An application consists of an application form and the materials necessary to describe the project fully. If being submitted in response to a **Warning Letter** or **Notice of Violation**, please enter the number below.

Please print or type all items. If not applicable, mark N/A.

03-2628	10-25-02	STAFF USE ONLY		
PROJECT #	DATE REC'D	DATE CERT. AS COMPLETE	BKG. DEPT. # & DATE	STAFF
<input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL	<input type="checkbox"/> SCENIC	<input type="checkbox"/> INTERIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORIC DISTRICT	
TYPE OF DESIGNATION				
<input type="checkbox"/> PMW ACTION	<input type="checkbox"/> CNE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COLLOA	<input type="checkbox"/> REPORT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER
				WORK TYPE

8 West 70th Street (in part)

N/A

ADDRESS

FLOOR OF APARTMENT

Manhattan

1122

36, 37

R10/R8B

BOROUGH

BLOCK

LOT

ZONING

### DESIGNATED PROPERTY

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORK

Use back of form if necessary

Replacement of the existing community house by construction of a fourteen (14) story building on the site of the community house and an adjacent vacant lot. The building will be connected below the fifth floor to the landmarked synagogue. Four floors and subgrade space are to be used by the synagogue as community facility space. The upper ten (10) floors are to be developed as residential apartments.

### COST OF PROJECT

WARNING LETTER / NOV # N/A

### TENANT/LESSEE/CO-OP SHAREHOLDER

N/A

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

ADDRESS

APT. #

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Platt Byard Dovell White

212-691-2440

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

19 Union Square West

New York, NY 10003

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

N/A

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

Shelly S. Friedman, Esq.  
c/o Friedman & Gotbaum, LLP

212-925-4545

NAME, TITLE &amp; FIRM (if applicable)

PHONE (day)

568 Broadway - Suite 505

New York, NY 10012

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

### ARCHITECT/ENGINEER

If applicable

### CONTRACTOR

If applicable

### PERSON FILING APPLICATION

e.g. Expeditor Attorney, Managing Agent, etc.

### ARE YOU APPLYING TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

☒ Buildings Department ☒ City Planning Commission ☐ Board of Standards & Appeals

I am the owner of the above listed property. I am familiar with the work proposed to be carried out on my property and give my permission for this application to be filed. The information entered is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

### OWNER

For applications for work on or in a cooperative or condominium building, the "owner" is the Co-op Board or Condominium Association. An officer of the Co-op Board or Condominium Association must sign this application. Please consult the instructions for filing for additional information.

The Congregation Shearith Israel in the City of New York

212-873-0200

OWNER'S NAME AND TITLE (please type or print)

PHONE (day)

COMPANY, CORPORATION, ORGANIZATION (if applicable)

8 West 70th Street

New York, NY 10023

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

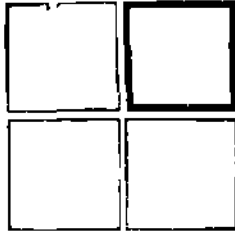
### SIGNATURE

SIGNATURE OF OWNER

Dr. Alan Singer  
Executive Director

October 18, 2002

DATE

**FRIEDMAN & GOTBAUM LLP**

369 BRITANNIA BLVD  
NEW YORK NEW YORK 10012  
TEL 212 925 4345  
FAX 212 925 5359

To: DJ

**FACSIMILE COVER PAGE**

NAME	ORGANIZATION	FAX NO
Hon. Sherida Paulsen	Landmarks Preservation Commission	669-7955
Brian Hogg	Landmarks Preservation Commission	669-7780
MATTER NO 4196.0001		
FROM Shelly S. Friedman		
DATE October 20, 2002 2:00PM	NO PAGES 2 (including cover)	

**MESSAGE**

FYI.



SSF

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PLEASE RETURN YOUR IMMEDIATELY. THANK YOU.

# **DON'T LET IT HAPPEN!**

**CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL'S  
PROPOSED 14-STORY TOWER WOULD  
DESTROY THE CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF  
THIS HISTORIC DISTRICT!**

**SHOW UP! SPEAK UP! AT THESE UPCOMING HEARINGS**

**Community Board 7 Landmarks Committee**

250 West 87th Street

Thursday, November 21

7:00 p.m.

**Landmarks Preservation Committee**

Municipal Building, One Centre Street

Ninth Floor

Tuesday, November 26

Time to be announced

(Bus service available from the neighborhood)

**WRITE YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS & ATTEND THE HEARINGS!**

**GET the INFO to GET INVOLVED.**

**Call Landmark West!**

**496-8110**

**or e-mail [landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org](mailto:landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org)**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9 Transcript of the Public Hearing  
10 before the  
11 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
12 on Tuesday, November 26, 2002  
13 at  
14 One Centre Street, 9th floor  
15 New York, New York  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22

ORIGINAL

23 AR-TI RECORDING COMPANY, INC.  
24 305 Madison Avenue 142 Willis Avenue  
Suite 449 P.O. Box 347  
New York, N.Y. 10165 Mineola, N.Y. 11501  
25 (212) 349-9692 (516) 741-5235

1       Hearing convened at 4:00 p.m.

2       P R E S E N T

3               SHERIDA PAULSEN, Chair

4               JAN POKORNY, Commissioner

5               MEREDITH KANE, Commissioner

6               CHRISTOPHER MOORE, Commissioner

7               RICHARD OLCOTT, Commissioner

8               JOHN WEISS, ESQ., Deputy Counsel

9               BRIAN HOGG, Director of Preservation

10              JENNIFER FIELD, First Deputy Director of  
                    Preservation

11

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. HOGG: The next two items will be heard together, Items 9 and 10, Commissioners.

The first, Item 9, is an application for a Modification of Use and Bulk in Manhattan. Docket 032-2653, lot 122, Block 36 and 37, 8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel - an individual landmark also located in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts style synagogue, designed by Brunner & Tyron and built in 1896-'97, the application is a request that the Landmark Preservation Committee issue a report to the City Planning Commission relating to an application for a special permit pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

Item 10 is an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness in Manhattan. Docket 03-2628, block 1122, lot 36 and 37, 8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel - an individual landmark located in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts style synagogue designed by Brunner & Tryon and built in 1896-'97. Application is to demolish the



1 existing community house and construct a new  
2 14-story building.

3 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Meisha?

4 MS. HUNTER: Good afternoon,  
5 Commissioners. Meisha Hunter preservation staff.

6 This is an application for alterations at  
7 the site of Congregation Shearith Israel as well as  
8 complex community house and vacant lot adjacent to  
9 the community --

10 AUDIENCE: Could you speak louder?

11 MS. HUNTER: Yes. Is that better?

12 And there is a large team to present  
13 today so I am not going to be speaking too long. We  
14 will begin with the counsel for the team.

15 MR. FRIEDMAN: Good afternoon,  
16 Commissioners, Shelly Friedman, Friedman & Gotbaum.

17 You have before you the applications on  
18 behalf of the 450 families of Congregation Shearith  
19 Israel for a 14-story building adjacent to its  
20 landmark. It is interesting to note that if you do  
21 a research of the literature, you will find several  
22 references, none of them attributable to the  
23 congregation, referring to the congregation as,  
24 quote, "The Mother Congregation of American Jewery."

25 This is an odd statement and it is at

1 odds with Jewish tradition as there is no hierarchy  
2 among its houses of worship as with other religions.  
3 Yet, for what it represents, both in the  
4 congregation's historic role as the pre  
5 Revolutionary War birthplace of the American Jewish  
6 experience and its equally historic role of the  
7 centuries old migration of the Jewish people into  
8 the New World, the building at 70th and Central Park  
9 West was already an international landmark long  
10 before its designation by the Commission in the  
11 1970s.

12 Each succeeding generation of congregants  
13 has taken it as a matter of pride that they are the  
14 stewards of the world-renowned physical icon of  
15 faith, liberty, perseverance and history. The  
16 continuing preservation of the synagogue for what it  
17 represents to its past and its future is to this  
18 congregation already an article of faith.

19 With that in mind, the congregants come  
20 before you today fully supportive of your mission  
21 and view it as identical to their own.

22 This generation of congregants needs your  
23 assistance. Not once in its 350-year history on  
24 Manhattan has it asked for such assistance from the  
25 City of New York. It needs to produce a modest

1 economic engine, 10 or 11 apartments, to further its  
2 preservation program for the landmark; to restore  
3 adjacent parsonage, which is, in fact, one of the  
4 true remaining single-family, built as a home on  
5 Central Park West; and to replace a dysfunctional  
6 and utterly unattractive community house located in  
7 the historic district.

8 We are requesting a Certificate of  
9 Appropriateness and for a report one exception  
10 74-711 special permit is essential to these needs.  
11 Our presentation today will hopefully demonstrate to  
12 you the care with which the congregants have  
13 approached this request. The formal presentation  
14 will consist of remarks by Rabbi Marc Angel  
15 following myself. He will be followed by Peter  
16 Neustater, who is the president of the board of  
17 trustees. They will discuss the commitment to  
18 preservation purpose that the synagogue has long  
19 adhered to and is certainly willing to adhere to as  
20 we move forward through this process.

21 They will be followed by Steve Tilly.  
22 Steve Tilly has been a preservation architect since  
23 1999, has been working on the synagogue itself, and  
24 will talk to you about the steps which have already  
25 been taken to stabilize it, but for the important

1 work that remains especially to maintain the  
2 building and to bring it up to first class  
3 condition.

4 He will be followed by Elise Quasebarth,  
5 Elisa Quasebarth, who will speak about the context  
6 of building in the historic district, as an  
7 individual landmark and as across the street from a  
8 scenic landmark. And, then, she will be followed by  
9 Charles Platt and Paul Byard who will take you  
10 through the building.

11 Then, if you wish, I can return to talk  
12 about some of the zoning aspects that are being  
13 requested in the Section 74-711 application. And,  
14 of course, we are all here to respond to your  
15 questions.

16 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

17 RABBI ANGEL: Thank you for very much  
18 for giving us this opportunity to make our  
19 presentation. My name is Marc Angel, I am the Rabbi  
20 of the congregation. I began serving Congregation  
21 Shearith Israel in 1969. I was a young kid in those  
22 days. When I first came to the synagogue and sat at  
23 the reader's desk, the person immediately to my  
24 right then Rabbi Emeritus, David Sol Pool. Dr. Pool  
25 began Shearith Israel in 1907. Dr. Pool's

1 predecessor began in 1877. To make a long story  
2 short, since 1768, I am the eighth rabbi in the  
3 congregation's history. This is a sense of history.

4 When one comes into this congregation one  
5 has a sense of generations holding hands with  
6 generations. When I said that to Dr. Pool, I was  
7 talking about the members all the way back to the  
8 days of the American Revolution. Our little  
9 synagogue that we pray in every morning is a replica  
10 of the first building that was built in 1730. We  
11 pray at the same reader's desk and sit on the same  
12 furniture that our ancestors sat on in 1730 and all  
13 the generations since. In our main sanctuary, the  
14 reader's desk where our prayers are recited, the  
15 floors are the same floors as our synagogue building  
16 in 1730. We literally walk in the footsteps of our  
17 ancestors.

18 I tell you all of this to give you a  
19 sense of the culture of the congregation of which I  
20 am honored to be a Rabbi. This is a congregation  
21 that respects its history, that respects its  
22 connectedness from one generation to the next. This  
23 is a congregation which does everything slowly,  
24 carefully, very thoughtfully. When I was a young  
25 Rabbi, I thought it was too slow, now I think it is

1 just right. But the congregation is based very much  
2 in its history.

3 This congregation has played a part in  
4 American life since day one. In the early days, our  
5 members fought in the American Revolution. Each  
6 year on Memorial Day we go to our cemetery downtown  
7 and put flags on the graves of those of our  
8 congregants who fought in the American Revolution.  
9 In 1671, a member, Asher Levy, contributed to the  
10 establishment of the first Lutheran Church in New  
11 York.

12 In 1695, 34 members of Shearith Israel  
13 contributed to establishing Trinity Church on 7th  
14 and 11th, building the steeple of Trinity Church.  
15 In 1847 they had a special service for Irish famine  
16 relief. In the late 1800s, when tremendous numbers  
17 of immigrants were coming into the United States,  
18 they found a great voice in one of our members,  
19 Emma Lazarus, who formed the words for the Statute  
20 of Liberty.

21 In early 1930 a great voice for justice  
22 in America was our member United States Supreme  
23 Court Justice Benjamin Nathan Cardozo. In more  
24 recent history, and certainly well-known to all of  
25 you, is our illustrious member Alvin Henry

1 Goldstein, who was not only a great architect but a  
2 person very dedicated to the historic preservation  
3 of the City of New York.

4 So this is congregation of Shearith  
5 Israel is a congregation rooted in history,  
6 conscious of who we are, conscious of a tremendous  
7 responsibility to society at large and to our own  
8 immediate community as well.

9 In the 1920s -- I found a document in our  
10 archives written by our previous Rabbi, Dr. David  
11 Sol Pool. Dr. Pool thought that the west side was  
12 going down the drain and there was no future there.  
13 He made a recommendation to the board of trustees to  
14 move to the east side, that's where the future was.  
15 The board, in its infinite wisdom, decided to stay  
16 where it is, the synagogue on Central Park West.

17 When I first came to the synagogue in  
18 1969, there were a lot of people moving out of New  
19 York. We first lived on 85th Street and Central  
20 Park West, and we were warned, this block you can  
21 walk on, that block you can't because this one is  
22 dangerous. You didn't walk down Columbus Avenue.  
23 It has changed since then, but there were times not  
24 that long ago when the situation on the west side  
25 was very vulnerable and deteriorating.

1 I had a conversation as a young rabbi  
2 with our President Edgar J. Nathan III. I said,  
3 "Edgar, we have no future here. We should be  
4 looking someplace else. The demographics are not  
5 with us." It shows how wrong a rabbi can be,  
6 especially when he is young.

7 Edgar, who was wiser, said, "You know  
8 what, We are part of the demographics here. When  
9 our synagogue stays here, that's a vote for this  
10 neighborhood, that's a vote for stability. That we  
11 are committed to the future of this neighborhood, of  
12 this congregation, of this area. When we stay here,  
13 our families stay here and the neighborhood resumes  
14 its stability."

15 This is the kind of commitment that  
16 Shearith Israel had, and the one word that comes to  
17 mind is stewardship. We have, it sounds a little  
18 bit too proud, but I am proud, very proud, proud of  
19 our members and proud of our history. We have a  
20 very beautiful and wonderful building that we treat  
21 with ultimate respect. We respect it not just  
22 because it is a building and a sanctuary to God, but  
23 because it is a visible symbol of our history and  
24 our traditions and our generations.

25 In the last five or six years, our



1 congregation has spent a lot of time and effort  
2 raising funds, repairing the building, doing a hole  
3 lot of work that had to be done. The incredible  
4 devotion of our board and of our committees is  
5 something that is absolutely a wonder. They did  
6 this not for self-gain, not because they thought  
7 they would get anything out of it, but just for the  
8 love of the building, love of the congregation and  
9 love of the community.

10 As the Rabbi of this congregation, I can  
11 say the following: We have pushed ourselves, we  
12 have taxed ourselves mercilessly. And every dollar  
13 that we invest in the building is a dollar we are  
14 not investing in youth programs, in programs for the  
15 elderly, in social action commitments, and programs  
16 of a community important to us and to our community  
17 at large.

18 The synagogue doesn't exist for the  
19 building, the building exists for the congregation.  
20 And right now, the financial burden of the running  
21 this building is so high and future commitments are  
22 so high, that I believe, speaking as a Rabbi, that  
23 this imperils our mission as a religious institution  
24 and as a civic institution.

25 In 1897 when we built our building on

1 Central Park West, this was a duck farm. The only  
2 building in the area, I believe, was the Dakota at  
3 on West 107th Street. All the other buildings in  
4 the neighborhood since 1897 blocked our views,  
5 interrupted our lives, caused all kinds of  
6 commotion, but you know what, this is a growing city  
7 and we are part of it and we did our best to adapt  
8 and to be a very good neighbor.

9 In sum, Shearith Israel has proven over  
10 the years its seriousness, its integrity and its  
11 commitment to New York and its commitment to the  
12 West Side. We have invested time, we have invested  
13 money. This building, this area is not only our  
14 past, we believe it is also our future. We ask you  
15 to help us maintain the standards for which this  
16 congregation is famous. We owe this respect and  
17 reverence to the generations that have come before  
18 us, and perhaps, more importantly for this evening,  
19 we owe this standard of commitment and reverence to  
20 the generations yet to come.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

23 MR. NEUSTATER: My name is Peter  
24 Neustater. I am the "Pinna" (ph) of Congregation  
25 Shearith Israel Spanish and Portugese synagogue in

1 the City of New York.

2 In 1654, 23 Sephardic Jews claimed a  
3 position in Portuguese Brazil. They were making  
4 their way back to Amsterdam when they were captured  
5 by pirates, rescued by a French ship and dropped off  
6 destitute two weeks before Rosh Hashana here in New  
7 Amsterdam. That Rosh Hashana service, held  
8 September 1654, marked the beginning of Jewish life  
9 in North America. Even at that time, they had the  
10 historic foresight to name their newly formed  
11 congregation Shearith Israel, remnant of Israel.

12 Congregation Shearith Israel, the subject  
13 of this application, residing in its fifth synagogue  
14 building on 70th and Central Park, is not only the  
15 oldest Jewish congregation in North America, but  
16 also the oldest in the English- speaking world.  
17 These Jews from the beginning fought not to be  
18 tolerated, but to be equal citizens. They fought  
19 with the Dutch against the British. They fought  
20 with the British against the Indians and with George  
21 Washington for the independence of the United  
22 States.

23 On exactly this date, November 26, 1789,  
24 President George Washington declared a national day  
25 of Thanksgiving. Our congregation 213 years ago

1 celebrated this first Thanksgiving ever in the City  
2 of New York. The 1730 synagogue that this  
3 Thanksgiving was celebrated in still exists today  
4 next to our main sanctuary. It has been carefully  
5 preserved and restored and is used every morning and  
6 evening for services.

7 We sit on the original 1730 benches. The  
8 Torah scrolls are kept in the 18th Century Ark, lit  
9 by 270 year old eternal light. Pre Revolutionary  
10 War era bells crown the Torah scrolls. One set of  
11 these bells in the main sanctuary was made by the  
12 famous colonial silversmith Ron Myers, a  
13 contemporary of Paul Revere and the "Pinnaas" (sic)  
14 of this congregation during the colonial period.

15 In the Ark there are Torah scrolls that  
16 were slashed by British soldiers when they entered  
17 the synagogue during the war. The Chazan would read  
18 on the 1730 reader's platform surrounded by the  
19 Milano style candlesticks. In the main sanctuary  
20 the loose floor boards under the reader's platform  
21 were taken from the 1730 synagogue building.

22 This Friday afternoon we will be lighting  
23 a Chanukah Menorah that predates Christopher  
24 Columbus. As you can see, Shearith Israel's mission  
25 is about preserving the past and carefully handing

1 it down to the next generation. For hundreds of  
2 years we acted as a landmark and preservation group  
3 before this concept was popular.

4 During the early 19th Century, the  
5 Congregation of Turo Synagogue, the oldest building  
6 in the United States, dwindled and could not main  
7 their synagogue building. It was Shearith Israel  
8 that took over the building, maintained it until the  
9 congregation was revitalized at the end of the 19th  
10 century. Today Turo Synagogue, still owned  
11 Congregation Shearith Israel, was the first  
12 religious institution to join the National Trust.

13 Shearith Israel, throughout its 348-year  
14 history has always been at the forefront of historic  
15 preservation. To think that we are going to do less  
16 is inconceivable. Our goal today is still the same,  
17 preserve the past through the landmark, hand it down  
18 to the next generation restored, and provide the  
19 means for future generations to maintain it. Even  
20 before the fire at the Central Synagogue, the  
21 trustees of the congregation ordered an engineering  
22 study of our 100-year old building.

23 The engineers reported that the south  
24 wall and parts of the ceiling were in danger of  
25 collapse. The turn of the century electrical wiring

1 with a staple installation was a fire hazard and  
2 there was, in fact, evidence of earlier electrical  
3 fires that, thank God, did not spread. Water  
4 leakage from the roof and walls were causing damage  
5 to the magnificent scagliola. Tiffany glass was  
6 falling out of its frames, and limestone masonry was  
7 in danger of falling off the building.

8 It was obvious to the trustees that we  
9 could not wait to go through this lengthy procedure  
10 to start the repairs. Our historic building had to  
11 be protected and stabilized immediately. We did the  
12 responsible thing, we started a major capital  
13 campaign and spared no expense to protect the  
14 landmark. New electrical systems, state of the art  
15 fire detection and suppression systems were  
16 installed.

17 The first mist suppression system in the  
18 City of New York was put in place. Leaks were  
19 fixed, walls were reinforced and fire-retardant  
20 materials pumped in. During the restoration, our  
21 architects discovered that not only did Louis  
22 Tiffany design the windows, but, also, Tiffany did  
23 the entire interior. I think you will find of  
24 interest the original list of invoices presented to  
25 the trustees in 1898 that were found by architects

1 in our archives, if you would pass that around.

2 We have restored the interior to the  
3 original 1897 Louis Tiffany color scheme. We all  
4 knew that our synagogue was magnificent, but when  
5 the interior scaffolding came down, it was beyond  
6 expectations. New York City has one of the greatest  
7 synagogues in the world.

8 While we have stabilized and protected  
9 the landmark, much work is still left to be done.  
10 Our restoration architect, Steve Tilly, will give a  
11 detailed report on the extensive work that remains  
12 undone on the exterior of the landmark and the  
13 parsonage.

14 In addition, the community house next to  
15 the landmark on 70th Street is in terrible condition  
16 and has to be torn down and rebuilt. The trustees  
17 of the congregation have decided not to proceed with  
18 the developer for this application. We wanted to  
19 take control over the process. We are the ones that  
20 are going to be here years after the developer has  
21 left. The goal of the developer would not  
22 necessarily coincide with the needs of the landmark  
23 in this community.

24 To achieve this, we have interviewed  
25 architects and consultants that have a reputation

1 for historic conservation and preservation. We  
2 asked them to design the minimum size building that  
3 could become the economic engine for us to finish  
4 the restoration, rebuild the community house and  
5 provide the endowment for continued maintenance of  
6 the landmark.

7 We feel our proposal is responsible, one  
8 that highlights and supports the landmark building,  
9 enhances the skyline of Central Park West, and  
10 complements the neighborhood. Many people have  
11 asked why don't we just raise the money from the  
12 congregation and finish the restoration and rebuild  
13 the community house? Before we submitted this  
14 application, I met with our budget finance and  
15 campaign committee, the main supporters of the  
16 congregation. In today's world where there is such  
17 great demand on every dollar, both here in New York  
18 and abroad, I can tell you definitively that it  
19 would be impossible to raise the sum of money  
20 required from the congregation. There is no chance  
21 that the congregation will be able to finish the  
22 restoration of the landmark, continue the  
23 maintenance of the landmark, and rebuild the  
24 community house without the economic engine that  
25 this process provides.



1           We will not be able to finish our task  
2       without this approval. 100 years from now when our  
3       grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be  
4       sitting on the same benches that our ancestors sat  
5       on during the first Thanksgiving in 1789, we hope  
6       that they, at that time, will thank this generation  
7       of congregants, this generation of New Yorkers, and  
8       especially this landmark committee for providing us  
9       with the ability to pass this precious heritage to  
10      them in a condition that will make us all proud.

11           Thank you.

12           CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

13           MR. TILLY: My name is Steve Tilly. My  
14      architectural team has been shepherding the master  
15      planning and restoration process to this point.

16           As you can see, the time frame of  
17      Shearith Israel is long, looking back as well as  
18      looking ahead, and it is has been a thrill for us to  
19      join this for the last tiny segment and to try to  
20      help look ahead for the next several hundred years.

21           When we arrived and started working with  
22      Peter and Rabbi Angel and the committee trying to  
23      develop a preservation-based master plan, we looked  
24      at obvious riches that we needed to preserve and  
25      restore. We also saw obvious problems, an abundance

1 of problems that had to be dealt with immediately.  
2 With the object lesson of Central Synagogue firmly  
3 in mind, we saw a set of baseline improvements that  
4 needed to be started to make it possible for us to  
5 then continue with the restoration process safely.

6 Those problems were problems with the  
7 infrastructure, problems with the building envelope,  
8 water was pouring in through the structure, problems  
9 with the decorative finishes that resulted from the  
10 water migrating through the building, and also  
11 problems with the basic circulation on the site.

12 Shearith Israel actually consists of  
13 three -- it appears to be three independent  
14 buildings: The parsonage, the synagogue and the  
15 sanctuary, which faces Central Park West. Those are  
16 the original composition from 1897 of Arnold  
17 Brunner. And then the community house, which is  
18 actually a couple of brownstones which had a facade  
19 pasted on them in the 1950s. But, in fact, it is an  
20 interconnected whole -- a single complex that's  
21 interconnected on several levels so that the  
22 mechanical systems and all of the circulation is  
23 really of a piece.

24 Our work in phase one -- our master  
25 planning dealt with this entire property, but our

1 work in phase one is really concentrated on the  
2 individual landmark, the sanctuary. And that is  
3 really the masterpiece of the site. We have done an  
4 ambitious phase one. We have arrested the water  
5 migrating from the building, we have dealt with a  
6 lot of the basic building systems and we have laid  
7 the foundation for the future, but there is a lot of  
8 work remaining to be done on the structure.

9 The magenta, if you see that, gives you  
10 an idea of the quantity of work on the exterior that  
11 you see in the plan and in the elevations. This is  
12 the elevation, obviously, facing Central Park West,  
13 70th Street, the community house; the south  
14 elevation with the parsonage blocking part of it;  
15 and then looking from the west at the back of the  
16 parsonage.

17 You can see, if you think of the three  
18 buildings or the three portions, having dealt with  
19 the synagogue we have not dealt with this rare  
20 commodity, the townhouse on Central Park west. That  
21 really is lingering, it needs immediate work. There  
22 are a lot of issues to be addressed in that  
23 structure, and ,of course, we haven't dealt with the  
24 community house.

25 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Before you go on, the

1 areas shaded in purple represent the entire scope of  
2 preservation work that you need?

3 MR. TILLY: The areas in purple  
4 represent those areas that need to be addressed in  
5 the continuing preservation work.

6 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: How much of this has  
7 already been accomplished?

8 MR. TILLY: The purple is what remains.

9 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: The purple is the  
10 what remains?

11 MR. TILLY: Right. The gray tone area  
12 indicates the surfaces we have dealt with to this  
13 point, but the purple hasn't been dealt with.  
14 Which, again, there are quibbles on that, because,  
15 for example, the largest piece of purple that you  
16 are seeing here is the roof of the sanctuary, and  
17 that we have put a temporary roof on, we put a  
18 membrane roof on, and that we have done in a way  
19 sitting on plywood which will allow to restore the  
20 standing seam metal roof which we found underneath  
21 the asphalt.

22 So there is a major expensive piece of  
23 work that needs to be done, that roof is actually  
24 visible up and down Central Park West. That is,  
25 restoring that roof. The entire roof of the

1 parsonage needs to be replaced. If we look at the  
2 photographs, over here it shows the parsonage. The  
3 mansard roof on the parsonage, which is both a  
4 decorative finish and a building envelope, it is  
5 actually beyond the end of its useful life so that  
6 needs to be completely redone.

7 We have serious limestone staining that  
8 remains on the parsonage from copper and other kinds  
9 of growth, that we actually will need to replace the  
10 limestone. The front steps of the parsonage need  
11 to be replaced. There are Tiffany windows that  
12 haven't been dealt with. There was a program on the  
13 major Tiffany windows four or five years ago, the  
14 windows that they could not reach and that the  
15 budget would not stretch to, which are in back.  
16 These windows are in the back of the small synagogue  
17 which is adjacent to the large synagogue. These are  
18 on the south wall. Those are beginning to show  
19 signs of buckling, so we need to begin restoration  
20 and protect those windows in the back.

21 These pictures show you the parsonage  
22 roof. This shows you the membrane of the roof on  
23 the sanctuary which is being installed in copper  
24 hatch. We have done penetration for the future for  
25 ACHV systems, and that is awaiting the copper. This

1 is the detail of the copper maynard that needs  
2 preservation.

3 On the sanctuary, there is an  
4 inappropriate railing. The front steps are really  
5 -- we deferred -- the scope of work that we done was  
6 really everything that we did not need scaffolding  
7 for. So we scaffolded the exterior and we  
8 scaffolded the interior, just the work that could be  
9 done from ladders on the ground. The front of the  
10 synagogue facing Central Park West has seriously  
11 deteriorated limestone steps, inappropriate  
12 railings, a set of grades which do not meet access  
13 codes, so we are in the process of restoring those.

14 A set of railings in front of the  
15 parsonage and the parsonage steps which is in need  
16 of repair. The areaway around the sanctuary, we  
17 still have water, the potential for water to migrate  
18 in at the foundation. We arrested the water that  
19 was moving through the rest of the structure, but  
20 that needs to be attended to. The hen house was  
21 recently removed by the MTA, so that leaves the  
22 railings leading down and the stairways leading down  
23 to that areaway also remaining to be done.

24 So those are really the symptomatic  
25 highlights of the degree of deterioration on the

1 exterior.

2 At the end of our master plan, we return  
3 to issues of, as I said, there were circulation  
4 issues, there also were the substandard issues in  
5 the community house itself. So that we turned to  
6 the notion of the new building on the community  
7 house site for those three reasons, in order to  
8 replace the substandard facilities in a building  
9 that was, again, beyond the end of its useful life,  
10 to solve the interior circulation problems, and also  
11 to act as an economic engine for the rest of the  
12 preservation program that we have mapped out.

13 Now I think Elise will talk about the  
14 concept of the new building.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Stephen, do you have  
17 a full scope of work regarding the preservation that  
18 you are proposing for the historic building?

19 MR. TILLY: Yes.

20 MS. QUASEBARTH: Good afternoon,  
21 Commissioners. My name is Elise Quasebarth,  
22 preservation consultant for this project.

23 We have worked with the team to take a  
24 look --

25 AUDIENCE: Can you speak up, please.

1 MS. QUASEBARTH: Certainly.

2 My firm, Higgins & Quasebarth, has worked  
3 with the team, particularly after Stephen Tilly  
4 worked on the master plan, to take a look at the  
5 context for the proposed new building and to see  
6 what might be possible and appropriate to the site.  
7 Just so that we are clear, Central Park West is here  
8 and the synagogue is here, the parsonage is just to  
9 the south facing Central Park West, and the existing  
10 community house faces 70th Street. There is an  
11 adjacent empty lot which is part of the site  
12 directly to the west of the community house. The  
13 existing synagogue is the individual landmark and  
14 rest of the site is in the historic district.

15 The story of the development of the site  
16 is interesting and helps illustrate the iterative  
17 and thoughtful process that the congregation has  
18 gone through over generations to accommodate the  
19 space that they need for their community facilities  
20 and educational purposes.

21 The synagogue as a congregation started  
22 in Mill Street downtown and moved uptown in several  
23 stages, from Mill Street to Crosby Street (ph), then  
24 to 19th Street, and in 1895 they purchased six lots  
25 at the corner of 70th Street and Central Park West.



1 They hired Arnold Brunner to design the classical  
2 building for them and a residence next door. That  
3 construction was completed in 1896. They had two  
4 additional lots where the community house is now to  
5 the west. They didn't use them and sold them in  
6 1897 and these two buildings we see in the 1940s  
7 photograph were constructed shortly after the sale.

8 Early in the history of the congregation  
9 on this site, they needed new space and in 1902  
10 constructed a mansard roof and an addition to the  
11 back of the residence on Central Park West. This is  
12 a 1900 photograph of the site showing the buildings  
13 as they were constructed originally. And this photo  
14 here, 1928, shows the view from the south with its  
15 mansard roof on it and some of the construction in  
16 the back.

17 In the 1940s, the congregation again  
18 considered needing new space and went through a  
19 whole planning process which resulted in their  
20 repurchasing the buildings to the west of the  
21 synagogue, these two small apartment buildings. And  
22 they actually filed a building permit for a new  
23 building in 1949 but then did not build the  
24 building. They went through a whole new process of  
25 evaluating what kind of space they could work with

1 and hired an architect in the 1950s to reconfigure  
2 this building, take off the top floor and put this  
3 face on the building. So the building you are  
4 looking at here was constructed in 1953. This is  
5 the place where the new building will be  
6 constructed.

7 The adjacent lot was acquired in the '60s  
8 and the building that was constructed there was  
9 demolished in 1970. So this gives you some clarity  
10 on how the site developed over time.

11 As the congregation went forward, you may  
12 remember the proposal from the mid 1980s where the  
13 congregation actually worked with a developer for a  
14 proposal that was a 42-story building that came  
15 forward to the Landmark Commission. That was  
16 procedure to the designation of the historic  
17 district.

18 In looking at the site and what might be  
19 possible, we looked first at the individual landmark  
20 itself. Actually, I want to show one other thing on  
21 this board. These historic photos show not only  
22 what was happening with the site itself, it also  
23 shows how the city grew up around the building and  
24 around the site.

25 This photo from 1900 shows a view down

1 70th Street with two very small apartment buildings  
2 and a row of brownstones, and on Central Park West a  
3 smaller apartment building. This photo from 1928  
4 shows an excavation site, this building on Central  
5 Park West was demolished to make way for the  
6 16-story apartment building which exists today. The  
7 apartment building here, just to the north of our  
8 site, was demolished to make room for the building  
9 that exists today at 101 Central Park West. So as  
10 you can see, the city started to grow up around the  
11 institution. Indeed, these views from the 1940s  
12 down 70th Street also show apartment buildings where  
13 there had been row houses.

14 This board shows different views of the  
15 synagogue itself. This is from the northeast  
16 showing the landmark in conjunction with the  
17 apartment building to the south, and on this one  
18 from the southeast showing a clearer modern-day view  
19 and another view down 70th Street. We also looked  
20 at widening the scope a little bit, what west 70th  
21 Street looks like today. And this context map,  
22 which you will be able to appreciate in the board  
23 but when you have opportunity to get up and really  
24 look at the model, this really tells the story most  
25 graphically.

1           In our context here, this is right here  
2           on 70th Street, we have the taller buildings along  
3           Central Park West and interspersed with the row the  
4           houses along the side of the street are, indeed,  
5           apartment buildings: Two on West 70th Street and  
6           one immediately adjacent to the site and one a few  
7           doors down. And on 69th Street as well, three  
8           apartment buildings there, so there is also a mixed  
9           context; it is not simply a brownstone context on  
10          the side streets.

11           And you will also note over here that the  
12          Central Park West apartment building which is  
13          directly north of the site is quite deep into the  
14          side street. That's true also of the building on  
15          West 69th Street, so that this is really directly  
16          across the street from our site. These are just  
17          photographs of buildings on 70th and 69th Streets  
18          adjacent to the synagogue.

19           Finally, we looked at the Congregation  
20          Shearith Israel synagogue in company with B'nai  
21          Brith on Central Park West, it is the other  
22          institution. And we have illustrated here the  
23          eloquent institutions that line Central Park West  
24          from 63rd Street up to 96th Street: The Society for  
25          Ethical Culture, Holy Trinity, the Second Church of

1 Christ Scientists, 68th Street; this is Congregation  
2 Shearith Israel synagogue, the New York Historical  
3 Society, 76th Street; the New York Choral Society,  
4 Museum of Natural History and the First Church of  
5 Christ Scientists at 96th Street.

6 Many of these buildings are individual  
7 landmarks, most are in the historic district with  
8 the exception of the First Christ Scientists, which  
9 is 96th, just north of the district. What we note  
10 is the monumentality of the individual institutions  
11 and their very special design, but we also note that  
12 they are all within the context of an urban  
13 environment and there are tall buildings around  
14 them. This is particularly -- well, it is noted in  
15 almost every case, what we do see is that the taller  
16 buildings as they juxtapose with the institutions  
17 generally have their side walls overlooking the  
18 institution. And this is very clear at the First  
19 Church of Christ Scientists, particularly the  
20 Historical Society.

21 Our thought in looking at these two  
22 contexts, particularly the West 70th Street context  
23 as well as the Central Park West context, is that  
24 there is a place here in this particular site for an  
25 apartment building, scale building. And as I said

1 before, when you have an opportunity to look at the  
2 model, it will really show that very clearly.

3 I think Paul Byard and Charles, the  
4 architects, will describe it.

5 MR. BYARD: Thank you. I am Paul Byard  
6 --

7 MR. PLATT: And I am Charles Platt.

8 MR. BYARD: And we will talk about the  
9 architecture.

10 MR. PLATT: But before we do, I just  
11 want to point out what a seasonal model this is.  
12 This was entirely green when we started the project  
13 and the trees have changed now and if you look  
14 closely you will see that the leaves are now all  
15 over Central Park West, and by tomorrow, there will  
16 be snow on the model.

17 Let me see if I can simply frame the  
18 discussion of the architecture a little bit. Our  
19 job, as I think you appreciate, is to produce  
20 essentially a work of art that will work with the  
21 other works of art that it is charged to bring  
22 together. There are at least three pieces that have  
23 to be brought together: The synagogue, the Central  
24 Park West Streetscape and the historic district  
25 itself.

1           It is not just any building that can  
2           bring these together. It has to have a certain  
3           strength and that is what we've tried to give it  
4           while working with the things that we need to  
5           reconcile. This one is, of course, crucial. This  
6           is the whole site, as has been pointed out, this is  
7           the existing building and this is the portion, the  
8           community house, that we get to work with to build  
9           the building. It is a block of space. You can see  
10          it there.

11           One of the wonderful things about dealing  
12          with a landmark is that the zoning resolution allows  
13          you to model the placement of the bulk in a way that  
14          will work best for the landmark so that we get the  
15          chance to concentrate what we want to do on that  
16          particular site as a single block of space that then  
17          relates to the landmark.

18           Let me put, first of all, the context by  
19          itself with nothing in it where we started. And the  
20          pieces, again, are the landmark itself, the Central  
21          Park West skyline, which is what the Rabbi pointed  
22          out, nearly drove Shearith Israel away when these  
23          buildings were first built. Now we all love them  
24          with a passion and you can see it in relationship to  
25          them.

1                   This is the first illustration of the  
2 size of the block that we are working with, and you  
3 see it particularly vividly in the context model.  
4 It is a deliberately reduced size of the volume of  
5 space, concentrated in a block at a height with  
6 relationship to the --

7                   MR. PLATT: I just want to interject  
8 there. When we first came on the project, it was my  
9 feeling, if not that of all of my colleagues, that  
10 from an urban design and sculptural, compositional  
11 point of view, this was too low, but it was made  
12 very clear to us -- this is not a self-serving  
13 argument, I made this right away, that from a  
14 compositional point of view, it would be better if  
15 this were higher -- it was made very clear, however,  
16 that the needs of the synagogue limited and that  
17 they wanted very much to limit it to the absolute  
18 necessities which they had to support their project.

19                  MR. BYARD: So that's the sources of the  
20 block and you can see the way it fits here.

21                  You can also begin to see, which will be  
22 more vivid when we get the bigger renderings up, how  
23 we have chosen to relate the block in this direct  
24 juxtaposition with the old building. And when you  
25 join one piece to another, you have lots of choices.



1 You can basically seal it up with some kind of a  
2 joiner or you can pull it apart with some kind of a  
3 reveal. And the way we have chosen to do it, you  
4 will see it more vividly on the other, is to set it  
5 10 feet off the back of the old building, in the  
6 classic version of a reveal to set one off from  
7 another. We'll come back here, but it is a single  
8 block against the synagogue.

9 Now what we might start with and then go  
10 on with other aspects is to start principally with  
11 the synagogue. In working out an expression for the  
12 apartment block, we have been trying to think of all  
13 three contexts. We have to have a presence of our  
14 own and we have to find a way to make all of the  
15 parts work together in the combined work of art  
16 which we will get when we succeed in bringing them  
17 together.

18 The synagogue itself is a very strong,  
19 small block of masonry, and it is very strongly  
20 organized. Outside, edges symmetrically are edged  
21 around the middle. The middle -- the solid outside  
22 holds the glass middle. The glass middle is what  
23 goes into the synagogue, which allows light in and  
24 allows, obviously, the synagogue to appear outward,  
25 and it is divided in an order of three, which is

1 perfectly stable. The same order is done on the  
2 side. In fact, it is a rather longer expanse, but  
3 two side pieces, three pieces in the middle, a very  
4 important glass surface which is modeled between and  
5 held in the shadow of the columns and its  
6 surrounding masonry.

7 What we felt we needed to do was to think  
8 about issues of masonry being next to a masonry  
9 building to be sure that what we did gave them the  
10 sense of masonry, a texture, a richness. Because,  
11 remember, we want to participate with these  
12 buildings, we want to have the strength to  
13 participate with them. And then we thought we would  
14 work particularly on the conjunction as you see it  
15 on this elevation.

16 Here the matter is the centering of our  
17 apparent facade on the Central Park West side.  
18 There is another landmark in all of this, probably  
19 most important of all, that is to say, Central Park.  
20 And we have a very important relationship  
21 addressing, as it were. Central Park across the top  
22 of the synagogue, and that relationship calls for a  
23 certain strength in this building, which even though  
24 it is a hundred and so many feet back still has some  
25 kind of relationship and dialogue with the park.

1           You see the three-part division, the  
2           centering of that facade so that it works with the  
3           old facade below. Here the issues become more  
4           richer and more complicated. The reveal is fairly  
5           clear, the ten feet seems about right to us. The  
6           tower, then, if you can even call it that, the  
7           apartment building then is independent here and it  
8           is locked together with a piece that relates to the  
9           community uses.

10           In section, this building is four stories  
11           of community uses. Just to be absolutely sure  
12           that's what was going on here, here is the  
13           synagogue, here is the sanctuary, this is the  
14           community portion of the new building, spaces for  
15           synagogue uses, and the apartments begin one, two,  
16           three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten  
17           apartments, in fact, eleven because one is two. But  
18           the community spaces are different uses within the  
19           building and they are culled out by the glass facade  
20           of the lower portion which is in the three parts of  
21           glass but handled differently and brought across the  
22           reveal to tie them all together. Then the building  
23           itself goes up and resolves itself at the top with  
24           three large glass studio windows.

25           Now, you all know the windows of the

1 neighborhood include the extraordinary studio  
2 windows, particularly on 65th Street where you will  
3 have, in some instances, art glass on the top and  
4 clear glass on the bottom, and they are two-story  
5 studio rooms that are used by artists. And that, we  
6 thought we would take that idea and use it as a  
7 device to resolve the building at the top and, once  
8 again, using the rhythm of three, the form of three  
9 to pull it together and end the building clearly at  
10 the top.

11 So those are the basic givens of the  
12 idea; it is masonry, glass and composed as you see  
13 it.

14 MR. PLATT: It is more than that,  
15 actually. It is a classically composed building of  
16 base shaft and capital here. And we have used, as  
17 Paul pointed out, devices that are used elsewhere in  
18 the historic district; the great double height  
19 windows that are so famous on the artist buildings.

20 The way we composed this, again, is to  
21 place this tripartite frame, really, on the building  
22 with the corners revealed as they are so prominently  
23 in other parts of Central Park West within the  
24 district. Here you see some rather typical examples  
25 of how the window at the corner takes on a

1 particular importance. And we have done that as  
2 well.

3 This is definitely a building in the  
4 round here. It is not in the usual sense simply  
5 just a corner building with party walls with a  
6 secondary facade. Our only secondary facade is  
7 facing west on the property line. We have looked  
8 very carefully at this and there is no question but  
9 that from the Park and, in fact, right across  
10 Central Park West you can see the south facade. You  
11 can see this facade around the corner.

12 We have not done a colored rendering of  
13 it, but it is treated the same way. We have a black  
14 and white which I will show you, but the three  
15 facades here are very important to us and the  
16 expression of those going with this expression,  
17 which we believe is very complimentary and works  
18 with the plastic qualities of the existing  
19 synagogue.

20 The materials are very simply this is a  
21 type of limestone which is represented here, which  
22 if you look at this model, this is the 70th Street  
23 facade, Central Park West, only showing a portion of  
24 the synagogue and the sanctuary, and here the  
25 interior court, which is built up, and this

1 represents the community facility. There is an  
2 extension of some of the facilities below out into  
3 the existing yard here, all below the 23 feet  
4 permitted by zoning.

5 And you can see it, if you will look at  
6 this later you will see it very clearly here in this  
7 small model. The materials are again this  
8 limestone, which is shown rather pinker here than it  
9 actually is. There is a good deal of zinc which is  
10 here, which is on the area between, the piece  
11 joining the linking here is zinc; the metal of the  
12 windows and here, which you see, is painted metal,  
13 not zinc. There is a distinction, although in this  
14 light it is very hard to tell, this is darker, this  
15 is lighter, and has a lot more reflective quality  
16 than shows here.

17 The base on 70th Street, which is here,  
18 does have bronze on it. I should point out that the  
19 apartment tower descends to 70th Street at this  
20 point, so that the expression comes down here this  
21 way, and the community facility is shifted slightly  
22 this way and it relates then back to the synagogue  
23 itself. But the tower, as it were, comes down to  
24 street at this point and is expressed in bronze  
25 which exists in the synagogue. This is a wood door,

1 but there are bronze elements elsewhere.

2 What wasn't said by Steve Tilly is that  
3 this solves a lot circulation problems, among them  
4 the entrance to the synagogue itself which now takes  
5 place through this door, not through the front  
6 runner at the front door here, but because of  
7 liturgical and functional reasons, it is through  
8 here, but it is not handicap accessible now. The  
9 sanctuary level is up about five feet from the  
10 street level, and there are all sorts of problems  
11 dealing with that, which we now solve by being able  
12 to enter here two elevators that serve only this,  
13 the lower portion, the two below grade here as well,  
14 and then can take people to any of the levels in the  
15 sanctuary itself, if necessary.

16 The elevators for the residential tower  
17 are exclusively in this portion of the building over  
18 here. If I can find a plan, I will show you a  
19 typical floor, which is very simple. These, of  
20 course, are very early plans, but it is a very  
21 straightforward building with, again, these glass  
22 corners, the masonry portion on the three facades,  
23 the north, east and south, and the party wall  
24 conforming to code requirements with limited  
25 percentage of glass overlooking the apartment

1 building to the west.

2 This is brick here and I think it is  
3 actually best seen in the model as to the feeling  
4 and coloring. This is brick, and brick  
5 complementary to the stone, this is the brick we are  
6 planning to use here. There is also in the windows  
7 of the tower and in the lower portions here a bit of  
8 corrugated glass which doesn't even show as  
9 corrugation here, but there it is. That also  
10 relates to, again, where the arts building has -- or  
11 had, rather, I should say when it was constructed,  
12 portions of this were frosted and corrugated glass.  
13 So we picked that up and used it.

14 There is also a relationship, it is not  
15 supposed to be a direct relationship but let's call  
16 it a happy coincidence with the windows that are in  
17 the synagogue sanctuary itself, which are bordered,  
18 as are we here, by the different expressions.

19 MR. BYARD: They are really very strong,  
20 these windows, as part of the composition and the  
21 texture is very important.

22 MR. FRIEDMAN: Commissioners, I want to  
23 briefly conclude by talking about the 74-711  
24 application which we have requested. Obviously,  
25 part of our request is for a certificate of



1       appropriateness, the standards, which you well know  
2       well. Under 74-711, there is really only one  
3       finding that you make, and that is a plan of  
4       continuing maintenance that has been derived from  
5       the preservation of the building and that the design  
6       and modifications that are being requested address  
7       those preservation purposes.

8               And in that case, we believe that we have  
9       made that primary finding. The principal part of  
10      this application, the principal effect of the zoning  
11      modifications is to move the floor area back off the  
12      top of the synagogue and onto the developing site.  
13      This is a single zoning lot and has been one for  
14      several decades, this is not about transfers of  
15      floor area, this is about transferring across the  
16      zoning district boundary as a result of moving  
17      approximately 9,000 square feet more than we would  
18      be permitted from the R-10A to the RAB portion of  
19      the lot.

20             The previous application is, in and of  
21      itself, is going to be an adequate preservation  
22      purpose. You did that in the case of Saks Fifth  
23      Avenue, the Swiss Bank building, in order to  
24      preserve the strong facade of Saks Fifth Avenue, the  
25      view to the south of St. Patrick's Cathedral and in

1 order to relate more harmoniously to the smaller  
2 buildings of Rockefeller Center directly across the  
3 street, that preservation purpose was deemed served  
4 by moving it into the mid Plaza zoning district.  
5 This is on that precedent.

6 The other, as a result of moving that  
7 floor area across the district boundary, certain  
8 other aspects of the zoning resolution need to be  
9 made. As Elise just told you, there is a very  
10 strong street wall sense in this historic district  
11 where there are mid-block street walls for apartment  
12 buildings, and in fact, this application requests  
13 that the remainder of the street wall apartments we  
14 would like to make between R and B, so that those  
15 street walls would be retained to their height of  
16 157 feet to the parapet and the building immediately  
17 to its east. Also the RAP is already 100 feet to  
18 the parapet.

19 The other zoning action required in the  
20 rear yard for the residential portion of the  
21 building, the top ten floors, we are respecting the  
22 30-foot rear yard requirement. As you know, the  
23 first floor we get a 23-foot full lot coverage, no  
24 rear yard requirement there. With floors two, three  
25 and four, the zoning would require a 30-foot rear

1 yard for the community facility, we are providing a  
2 20 foot rear yard for the programmatic needs of the  
3 community facility space right now. So for those  
4 ten feet, floors two, three and four, we are  
5 requesting a waiver of the rear-yard requirement.  
6 Those are behind the synagogue and that aspect will  
7 never be seen, but it is a programmatic requirement  
8 of the synagogue.

9 In addition to that, when you trip across  
10 the rear-yard requirement, you get a lot coverage  
11 issue as well for those three floors, so we are also  
12 asking for a waiver on those three levels of lot  
13 coverage.

14 Those are the zoning actions that bring  
15 us to you with a request for a report under 74-711  
16 so that we can go to City Planning and seek the  
17 waivers. Of course, none of that happens unless and  
18 until you approve the certificate of appropriateness  
19 in the first place. That is also an issue.

20 So that concludes our presentation. We  
21 are very grateful for your time and happy to answer  
22 any questions that you may have.

23 Questions?

24 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: We will begin taking  
25 public testimony. Before we begin, I want to make

1 very clear that this is the first public hearing for  
2 this project, that there will be many public  
3 hearings for this project. I am sure it is  
4 extremely complicated, there is much public  
5 interest, and today is the first time that the  
6 Commissioners, including myself, have seen a full  
7 presentation of this project in its totality.

8 The question before us, as articulated by  
9 counsel, is to find, first, if this new building  
10 that is being proposed is appropriate to this  
11 historic district. This is a new building in the  
12 district, this is not an addition to an individual  
13 landmark. So it is very important in your comments  
14 that you evaluate the appropriateness of this  
15 building within this district; is it harmonious in  
16 its scale, materials and relationship to the other  
17 buildings in this district?

18 The Commission has frequently evaluated  
19 the immediate content in making those determinations  
20 and your comments, hopefully, would be focused on  
21 that. The Commission does not have jurisdiction  
22 over issues of traffic, construction and the other  
23 jurisdictions that are the subject of the City  
24 Planning Commission, so we will not be reviewing  
25 those kinds of impacts heres. The applicants have

1 offered, I understand, to do a shadow study on the  
2 scenic landmark of Central Park, so we will await  
3 that information when it is available.

4 So those are the basic issues of the  
5 certificate of appropriateness. If we were to find  
6 this building appropriate, then the request is for  
7 us to make an application, or support a report for  
8 an application for a 74-711 modification of bulk  
9 regulations if a preservation purpose is achieved.  
10 That preservation purpose could be achieved through  
11 the movement of the bulk and massing, if it is found  
12 to be appropriate within the historic district, but  
13 also the preservation purpose must be achieved by  
14 undertaking restoration work and establishing a  
15 continuing maintenance program that will preserve  
16 the landmark building in perpetuity.

17 It would require that that restoration  
18 work bring each building up to a first-class  
19 condition in order for the Commission to support  
20 that modification. Some buildings do, obviously,  
21 require more restoration than others, but each must  
22 ultimately be in a first-class condition as a result  
23 of the restoration work.

24 The restricted declaration that each  
25 applicant must sign spells out not only the

1 restoration work that is required to bring the  
2 building up to a first-class condition, but also  
3 what has to be done, presumably, a cyclical  
4 maintenance program that is required by the  
5 restricted dec. We are currently requiring that the  
6 inspections be performed every five years. The  
7 inspections include not only the exterior elements  
8 of the building, but also portions of the interior  
9 that have an effect on the exterior, such as  
10 mechanical systems. And the building owner is  
11 required to correct any problems that are identified  
12 in the inspection.

13 And that restrictive declaration, I  
14 believe many of you know, is filed with the  
15 property's file at the County Clerk's office amid  
16 the binding obligations that rest in perpetuity with  
17 the property. So I think it is important if you are  
18 going to comment on the preservation purpose aspects  
19 of this, the two issues before us are: (A) Is the  
20 bulk appropriate, and does the relocation of the  
21 bulk serve the preservation's purpose?

22 Secondly, does the preservation work  
23 proposed for this project rise to the level, and in  
24 most cases it is to restore the building to a  
25 first-class condition and enter into the cyclical

1 maintenance agreement?

2 Those are the main issues before us. We  
3 look forward to your comments. We are going to  
4 alternating, we will be calling five people for,  
5 five people against. I am willing to sit here as  
6 long as possible, but I would again stress that you  
7 will have many, many opportunities to comment and  
8 that we have received I think almost 80 to 90  
9 letters regarding this project, either by snail  
10 mail, e-mail, and all varieties. So we are very  
11 interested in hearing your comments.

12 I will first call Jack Rudin, and then  
13 Leon Levy, and then Dr. Michael Feldberg.

14 MR. RUDIN: Good evening, ladies and  
15 gentlemen of the Commission.

16 I come as a lifetime neighbor in the  
17 upper west side between 86th Street, Central Park  
18 West and 84th Street where I live now. I come as a  
19 thirty-plus year member of the board of trustees of  
20 the synagogue. I come as somebody who found this  
21 building in its earliest stages, many years ago, not  
22 to my liking, it was too high. I come as somebody  
23 who sees a need to develop architecturally and  
24 economically this building to support the synagogue,  
25 to support the void in the neighborhood

1 architecturally.

2 I urge the Commission to take a favorable  
3 look because of the sensitivity of the architects  
4 and the congregation. This synagogue, somebody  
5 alluded to the fact that 30 years ago the  
6 neighborhoods were changing. My father and I  
7 prevailed upon the leadership of the synagogue not  
8 to sell and move to the east side, that the west  
9 side was the future of this city. So it is with  
10 strong feelings that I urge that you approve this  
11 design.

12 I am not the developer of this property,  
13 of this building, but I represent a family that has  
14 ten apartment houses between 67th Street and 86th  
15 Street on the west side. We have great faith in  
16 these properties as rental real estate, as rental  
17 property that is needed, and we have not gone into  
18 condo or cooperatives because there is a need for  
19 less expensive -- in the long run, less expensive  
20 rental property.

21 I think the architects have produced an  
22 example of sensitivity and good taste that  
23 complements the historic synagogue, that does not  
24 demean in any way the neighbors, the properties of  
25 the neighborhood, and I hope that you will look upon



1 this application as appropriate and favorable.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

4 Mr. Levy?

5 MR. LEVY: Good evening, my name is Leon  
6 Levy. I am a past chairman of the Conference of the  
7 Presidents of American Jewish Organizations. I am  
8 presently a long-time president of the American  
9 Sephardic Federation.

10 I took very seriously your comments about  
11 preservation, long-time preservation. As a  
12 Sephardic Jew, I see the need and the necessity of  
13 planning properly and doing it in good taste that  
14 the synagogue be forever enshrined in this  
15 neighborhood, as it has been here already for 105  
16 years, and that it serves, I can tell you on an  
17 international scale, as a beacon of light. There is  
18 not a Sephardic Jew in the world that does not know  
19 about this historic synagogue.

20 When dignitaries come to the United  
21 States, they know that the one place that they will  
22 be accepted warmly and where they will come will be  
23 at this synagogue, so it is important that we  
24 continue with the tradition of Sephardic Jewery as  
25 that began over 500 years ago when my ancestors, and

1 many of the ancestors of the people in this room  
2 were expelled from Spain and continued on with their  
3 historic tradition.

4 It is important that this preservation be  
5 done, and I believe that by following along this  
6 quite modest approach of creating the necessary  
7 underpinnings to guarantee that the synagogue will  
8 continue for many, many generations to come, that I  
9 would ask that you approve the project so that we  
10 can look forward for many, many years, for a long  
11 time, that this part of the west side will be  
12 preserved.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

15 Dr. Feldberg and then David Nathan.

16 DR. FELDBERG: I am Michael Feldberg,  
17 the Executive Director of the American Jewish  
18 Historical Society. The society was founded in 1892  
19 and it is one of the oldest Jewish organizations in  
20 the United States, but it is not nearly so old as  
21 this congregation. In fact, in the archives of the  
22 society are some of the first records of the  
23 congregation, the founders of the congregation who  
24 pledged themselves to each other and to the Jewish  
25 community of North America. They signed some

1 founding papers that sit in our archives on 16th  
2 Street, so it gives me some sense of the long-term  
3 commitment that this congregation has had to serve,  
4 as Mr. Levy said, as a beacon not only for Sephardic  
5 Jewery, but, really, for the Jewish community of the  
6 United States.

7 In 2004 it will mark 350 years from the  
8 landing of the first 23 Jews who came here and who  
9 have been meeting continuously as a congregation  
10 that is now the owner of this building, so I have  
11 great faith that in dealing with this organization  
12 you are dealing with an organization that not only  
13 has a sense of its history, but has kept a careful  
14 record of its history, has maintained its archives  
15 through hundreds of years, and that has a real  
16 understanding of what the obligation of historic  
17 preservation means, what historical continuity  
18 means.

19 Sephardic Jews -- I guess I can say this  
20 because I am not one, I am an Ashkenazic Jew, my  
21 family is from the Ukraine and eventually the lower  
22 east side -- they are known to have a sense of  
23 worldliness, sophistication, good taste, good  
24 judgment, and ability to live well with their  
25 non-Jewish neighbors. And I think that is a fair

1        thing to say, that I have every confidence that if  
2        the congregation feels that this building is an  
3        appropriate neighbor, that the congregation has  
4        thought long and hard about not offending, not  
5        intruding and not getting into conflict with their  
6        neighbors. That has been the tradition of Sephardic  
7        Jewery which has lived in Moorish countries, Arab  
8        countries, which has lived all over the world and  
9        has been an ambassador of Jewish people all over the  
10       world. I don't think this congregation, knowing  
11       that tradition, would violate that sense of being a  
12       good neighbor.

13                I am also very pleased as somebody who  
14       just completed the development of a rather large  
15       facility called the Center for Jewish History down  
16       on 16th Street in New York to know that the  
17       congregation is willing to sign a covenant with the  
18       city saying that it will maintain -- that it will  
19       create a preservation endowment, an endowment to  
20       assure that not only will this current renovation  
21       get done, but the resources will be there then to  
22       maintain it and to live up to standards every five  
23       years.

24                I hadn't known that until I sat at this  
25       hearing, but it is a very wise program for the city

1 to have and it is very wise of the congregation, I  
2 think, to want to sign such a covenant and maintain  
3 it forever. I think that nonprofit institutions  
4 that have programmatic needs have a well-established  
5 history, and I am guilty of it myself, of putting  
6 money into programs rather than facilities and to  
7 spend money on human needs rather than maintenance  
8 of their facilities. But this is such an important  
9 building, this synagogue and this congregation, so  
10 historically important, that if they are committing  
11 to a preservation plan long-term, the entire Jewish  
12 community of the United States and of the City of  
13 New York should be grateful to have this kind of  
14 commitment.

15 With that, I thank you. I hope you will  
16 permit this.

17 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: David Nathan and then  
18 Lloyd Zuckenberg.

19 MR. NATHAN: Thank you.

20 I am a vice president of the  
21 congregation. I happen to be a member of the family  
22 that was among the founders of our congregation, but  
23 I stand here today as one of the many young families  
24 that are very much a part of this very active,  
25 vibrant and growing community. If I can observe,

1       there is a reason that this congregation is still  
2       here and is still vibrant,     and I think that is  
3       because I think always, we have always looked to the  
4       future and always planned well and always tried to  
5       make sure that we were taking steps to ensure that  
6       we would be true to our mission of preservation, and  
7       at the same time true to our mission in the  
8       community, and in terms of staying active, young,  
9       vibrant and growing.

10               We have many, many young families today.  
11       We stand ready and we ask for the Commissioners'  
12       help in this next stage of planning for the future  
13       and we are prepared to do our part.

14               CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:     Thank you.

15               Lloyd, and then Jennifer Hoppa.

16               MR. ZUCKENBERG:     My name is Lloyd  
17       Zuckenberg. I am a member of the congregation since  
18       1994 and I care deeply about the built environment,  
19       as does everyone probably in the room today.

20               I also care about the future of this  
21       congregation. I am not, however, willing to place  
22       the interests of my spiritual home above the  
23       interests of the community, and that is why I have  
24       been involved in this effort since 1996 when David  
25       invited me to do so, and why I speak with great

1 pride in support of the building before you.

2 What we are asking for is reasonable and  
3 appropriate. If it wasn't appropriate, I would not  
4 be standing here today asking for your approval. In  
5 its bulk and its massing, our objective is not to  
6 maximize our profit. It is to do what is reasonable  
7 and appropriate and contextual and still permit us  
8 to create an endowment to maintain our landmark  
9 sanctuary.

10 Seven weeks ago I held my newborn son at  
11 the ceremony of the circumcision, or brit milah, as  
12 we call it, in the newly restored sanctuary, nearly  
13 completely restored but not completely restored. I  
14 report proudly that this was the first ceremony of  
15 its kind in the sanctuary since it reopened after  
16 its partial restoration.

17 I look forward, with my wife and my three  
18 children to celebrating generations of happy  
19 occasions in this unique spiritual home, unique in a  
20 way that I have never seen in any other Jewish  
21 congregation I have ever been involved in because I  
22 had not been in this congregation prior to 1994.  
23 And I am confident that this building will provide  
24 us with the resources that we need to be careful and  
25 appropriate stewards of our landmark for generations

1 to come.

2 Thank you very much.

3 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you. Jennifer  
4 and then Kate Wood.

5 MS. HOPPA: Good afternoon, Chair Paulsen  
6 and Commissioners. My name is Jennifer Hoppa, and I  
7 am here to read the testimony of the Manhattan  
8 Borough President C. Virginia Fields.

9 "Thank you for the opportunity to express  
10 my concerns regarding the  
11 modification of use and bulk and  
12 the certificate of appropriateness  
13 application for the venerable  
14 Congregation Shearith Israel  
15 Synagogue.

16 "An academic classical and Mozart styled  
17 synagogue designed by Brunner &  
18 Tryon and built in 1896 and '97,  
19 this individual landmark graces  
20 Central Park West at West 70th  
21 Street and has influenced the  
22 design of an abundance of  
23 synagogues nationwide. The  
24 synagogue is also within the  
25 Central Park West Historic



1 District, known in part for its  
2 residential side streets and  
3 Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne and  
4 near Renaissance row houses.

5 "Congregation Shearith Israel now intends  
6 to transfer unused development  
7 rights to this property blessed  
8 with a synagogue to construct a  
9 14-story residential community  
10 services building. The transfer  
11 of development rights, proposed  
12 demolition of the community house  
13 and the extensive changes to the  
14 site's zoning results in an  
15 inappropriate 157-foot building.  
16 This high structure radically  
17 compromises the individual  
18 landmark and immensely detracts  
19 from it at numerous vantage  
20 points.

21 "As proposed, it jeopardizes the  
22 integrity of the Central Park  
23 Historic District with its slow  
24 rise of roof houses on both the  
25 north and south side of West 70th

1 Street. Given the extent of  
2 alterations to the site zoning the  
3 synagogue to secure and facilitate  
4 the development, the preservation  
5 purpose of this application is of  
6 particular importance.

7 Unfortunately, up to this point,  
8 the applicant has not been  
9 adequately clear on this point.

10 "I urge the Commission to secure a firm  
11 commitment from the synagogue to  
12 direct resources gained from any  
13 development for the preservation  
14 of the individual landmark  
15 synagogue, in addition to ensuring  
16 that any unused development rights  
17 are retained by the synagogue  
18 site. The proposal before the  
19 Landmark Preservation Commission  
20 today raises considerable concerns  
21 about the precedent this project  
22 will set for other institutions  
23 along Central Park West.

24 Residents, preservationists and  
25 the Landmarks Preservation

1 Commission have worked diligently  
2 to bring about Central Park West's  
3 Historic District designation.  
4 Institutions should be directed to  
5 preserve its character and its  
6 iconic skyline.

7 "Thank you for the opportunity to  
8 testify. I am hopeful that under  
9 the Commission's leadership a  
10 lower-scaled, contextual and  
11 historically appropriate project  
12 can be brought to fruition that  
13 aids the synagogue in their  
14 on-site restoration work and helps  
15 meet their needs for a community  
16 facility."

17 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

18 Kate Wood.

19 MS. WOOD: I would like to make my  
20 statement after Norman Marcus and Mark Lebow. It  
21 will make more sense after their presentation, if  
22 that's all right with the Chair.

23 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Mark was third from  
24 now, but if that's the order in which you want to  
25 proceed.

1 MR. MARCUS: Good evening, members of  
2 the Commission. I appreciate the opportunity of  
3 this preliminary meeting on this application to give  
4 you the benefit of some insights that I have had  
5 both as a land-use lawyer for the City Planning  
6 Commission going back to 1963, and, as well, when I  
7 left the Commission in '85, I did participate in the  
8 zoning study which was a building study of the area  
9 that was subsequently designated as the Upper West  
10 Side Central Park West District.

11 And just to recall, and we have this in  
12 the record, the facts which showed three  
13 prototypical kinds of buildings within this historic  
14 district, the Central Park West street wall  
15 buildings, which were street wall when they were  
16 built to bulk --

17 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Norman, I am sorry,  
18 can you state your name for the record.

19 MR. MARCUS: Sorry. Norman Marcus, I  
20 live at 91 Central Park West and I am a land-use  
21 lawyer.

22 I think the three types of buildings are  
23 very much at the heart of the issue before you,  
24 which is an issue of appropriateness. If this is an  
25 inappropriate application of building, then it seems

1 to me the zoning questions beyond it fall away. Is  
2 a 14-story building in a mid block an appropriate  
3 building?

4 I would argue no. The study of all of  
5 the buildings in this district which was used and  
6 relied on when the historic district was adopted  
7 here, which I believe is one of the largest in the  
8 city if not the largest, showed three types of  
9 buildings. The Central Park West iconic built to  
10 bulk wall buildings similar to 91 and 101, where  
11 there were such buildings, but Central Park West  
12 also had the individual contributing or landmark  
13 institutional buildings. This Central Park West  
14 wall is a highly idiosyncratic wall, it is not  
15 really a complete wall, it goes up and down. If you  
16 remember the old planetarium, you could see it from  
17 the planetarium and you could see it going up and  
18 down, up and down. It is a classical New York  
19 Central Park West skyline.

20 This proposal, although it is set back  
21 over 100 feet, would read as a wall from the park  
22 itself, which is a historic landmark. The other  
23 buildings, they were avenue buildings, Columbus and  
24 Amsterdam Avenue buildings, and were lower than the  
25 Central Park West buildings. And then there were

1 the mid blocks, and the study found that an  
2 unusually high survival rate occurred in the mid  
3 blocks at the time this historic district was  
4 designated. More than 85 percent of those buildings  
5 were row house type, 55 to 60 feet high.

6 Ultimately, that style -- it contained, of course,  
7 exceptions, and there are two exceptions to the west  
8 of the site, but those were nine-story prewar  
9 buildings, built without setback and were within the  
10 district when it was designated.

11 Were they the new wave of the mid block?  
12 I doubt it. Certainly, those two nine-story  
13 buildings would not be any kind of context for the  
14 proposal. The context, I would argue, is the north  
15 side of 70th Street which has the perfect rows,  
16 which is where the shadow of this proposal would  
17 fall, and the south side which is predominantly row  
18 house but does have two prewar nine-story buildings.

19 These are the types of buildings we have  
20 in the district. I heard someone say that because  
21 this application is only 14 stories, it is,  
22 therefore, contextual. I think what the speaker  
23 meant to say was that it was more contextual than  
24 the earlier application which was 42 stories. But  
25 14 stories does not fit within the historic mid

1 block, and when one looks at the other institutions  
2 on Central Park West and one grapples with the idea  
3 here, which is that it is necessary to allow an  
4 inappropriate building to serve as an economic  
5 engine to preserve landmarks, I suspect that this  
6 Commission is at the threshold of a very slippery  
7 slope and a slope that will really lead, I think, to  
8 severe depredations within the historic district,  
9 which is, after all, about preservation, not about  
10 economic engines.

11 As far as expectations, I think a  
12 religious institution, a charitable institution,  
13 they have purposes for which they are chartered  
14 which have to do basically with morality, goodness,  
15 the state of the soul, these are all terribly  
16 important. The properties were acquired in 1895, we  
17 heard. I think those properties were acquired in  
18 pursuit of the synagogue's incredibly moving  
19 history, namely, to provide a place for worship.

20 These properties were never intended to  
21 support real estate development, albeit dedicated to  
22 the religious purpose. This Commission was a party  
23 to a litigation over 20 years ago involving the  
24 Society of Ethical Culture where Ethical Culture  
25 attempted to get the right to build residentially

1 and use the development rights that were under the  
2 zoning resolution to support their institution.  
3 They claimed it was a taking of their property not  
4 to be able to do that, but the courts did not accept  
5 that argument. In fact, the court said this is not  
6 the expectation of a charitable or religious  
7 institution.

8 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Norman, with all due  
9 respect, the synagogue had made many presentation  
10 statements regarding the endowments and other  
11 things, but the first structural question is, of  
12 course: Is this building appropriate?

13 MR. MARCUS: Yes, I understand.

14 I think on that score, when you see the  
15 model, it sort of looks like it is from another  
16 planet. It is a Central Park West building that has  
17 been moved around the corner. That's really all I  
18 can say here.

19 I just -- I find it hard because I have  
20 prayed in this synagogue on mornings when dominion  
21 was lacking and I have been in that old synagogue,  
22 it is a wonderful. And I will continue to do that,  
23 I hope. I live next door and I hope they will be  
24 with us for a long time to come. And I suspect that  
25 if this building is found inappropriate, the



1 Commission will stay and perhaps come back another  
2 day with a better proposal.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

5 Mark, and then Kate Wood.

6 MR. LEBOW: My name is Mark Lebow,  
7 together with my brother, Norman Marcus, we are the  
8 lawyers for the neighborhood and the surrounding  
9 buildings and, naturally, we are opposed to this  
10 application.

11 I think as your Chair announced, the  
12 basic is, is this building appropriate? If I could  
13 meander just a little bit --

14 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: I am sorry. You have  
15 to speak from the lectern.

16 MR. LEBOW: Okay, I will point long.

17 Take a look at that model, folks. This  
18 model and this particular proposed building has been  
19 called a work of art. You and I have been around  
20 long enough to see works of art and know what a work  
21 of art is. That is not a work of art.

22 What it is, it is a 14-story luxury  
23 condominium building that, as my brother Norman  
24 Marcus said, meandered from another planet into a  
25 mid block on one of the most beautiful streets in

1 the city.

2 Now, I know that many of you have seen  
3 the particular site, and if I were up there, I would  
4 point to that building all the way on the right,  
5 which is what Norman has described as somewhat out  
6 of context, a building from a long time ago. But on  
7 the entire south side of the street, we have a row  
8 of four to six-story brownstones and the same thing  
9 is true across the street, as it is in most of the  
10 streets between 68th Street north between Central  
11 Park West and Columbus Avenue.

12 Here is what the City Planning Commission  
13 wrote about this neighborhood and what is  
14 appropriate for it, way back on April 9, 1984, way  
15 prior to the creation of this historic district.  
16 The City Planning Commission said it was concerned  
17 about the effect of new construction there. It  
18 described the mid block area around West 70th Street  
19 in the following language: "The typical mid block  
20 building is the three to six story, 55 to 60 foot  
21 high brownstone, limestone or less frequently  
22 tenant, usually not built to the street line but  
23 forming a wall of varying length with repeated  
24 setback and rear yard lines."

25 The report continues: "The consistency

1 with which these building sites north of 68th Street  
2 repeat themselves is the key to the strength and  
3 clarity of the image of the west side. Over 85  
4 percent of the structures in the mid blocks,"  
5 talking about this mid block in particular, "conform  
6 to this mid block type. New development will weaken  
7 the quality and intactness of the existing context  
8 by introducing buildings that are out of place."

9 That is what is appropriate to this  
10 neighborhood. That work of art is not.

11 Now, as you know, the neighborhood is  
12 hysterically against this particular building. They  
13 all appeared at Community Board Number 7 at the  
14 Landmarks Committee Meeting, and I was sort of proud  
15 of Community Board Number 7 because it unanimously  
16 found that this building was inappropriate after a  
17 session that lasted practically until breakfast.

18 Now, as some of you know, I am a former  
19 chairman of the Community Board, but I have a sort  
20 of healthy regard for Community Boards, sometimes  
21 they make the right recommendations and sometimes  
22 they don't. But this one listens very, very  
23 carefully, whenever it comes to what is appropriate,  
24 that points to a particular block, a particular part  
25 of a block, and even a particular building in a

1 block. So if you ever listen to a Community Board,  
2 if any of its decisions make any sense, this is one  
3 that makes sense.

4 I can hardly ever remember, at least in  
5 my Community Board, a unanimous recommendation for  
6 anything. I suppose that they have an occasional  
7 certificate of appropriateness, but they are very  
8 rare, at least in my experience.

9 Now none of us means any disrespect to  
10 the Congregation Shearith Israel. They have been  
11 around since 1654; they will be around in 2254, I  
12 hope. I wish my congregation had Jack Rubin and  
13 Leon Levy and the Nathan family. Don't worry about  
14 them, they will do fine. They just spent \$6 million  
15 to fix up this landmark. It is a work of art.

16 The landmark is a work of art. As I  
17 understand it, it is in better shape than it has  
18 been since about 1890. It is certainly in better  
19 shape than I have ever seen it in at least 25 years.  
20 Ladies and gentlemen, I have a dream about  
21 Congregation Shearith Israel; it has had a  
22 magnificent history, it has taken care of a new  
23 Trinity Church and everything else in the  
24 neighborhood and it will continue to do that, and a  
25 100 years from now, the grandchildren of Jack Rudin

1 and the Nathan family will walk out on 70th Street,  
2 out of Congregation Shearith Israel, and they will  
3 say to themselves, because this inappropriate  
4 addition will not be there, "We have continued our  
5 tradition of being good neighbors. There is no  
6 luxury condominium behind our beautiful synagogue.  
7 We have not caused a virus that has affected every  
8 similar building up and down Central Park to  
9 happen." And they will say with great pride that  
10 they have continued their tradition since 1654 of  
11 serving the community and at the same time being a  
12 good neighbor there.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

15 Kate?

16 MS. WOOD: Thank you, Commissioners.

17 Kate Wood speaking on behalf of Landmark  
18 West, the Committee to Preserve the Upper West Side.  
19 Landmark West does oppose Congregation Shearith  
20 Israel's proposal to build a 14-story 167-foot tower  
21 in the mid block of West 70th Street between Central  
22 Park West and Columbus Avenue.

23 I just want to put something on the table  
24 which -- I am not able to hear very well so I am not  
25 sure if it has been mentioned before, but a lot of

1 people in this room have very long memories and they  
2 remember a proposal that was put forward by the  
3 synagogue back in the '80s, it was a 42-story  
4 building, I think with a 440/480 foot tower. That  
5 was something that I just want to get out there,  
6 because it was raised at previous presentations. It  
7 was printed in the New York Times. It is something  
8 that people have in the back of their minds.

9 And I just want to up front dispel any  
10 notion that had proposed that the building is modest  
11 or harmonious or reasonable or appropriate, even by  
12 comparison to that building. I do want to point  
13 out, and this is just to reiterate what was  
14 presented by Mark Lebow and Norman Marcus, about the  
15 fact that the historic district designation in 1990,  
16 and the creation of a contextual RAB zoning district  
17 in 1984, that tower proceeded both of those  
18 districts.

19 Back then, the only relationship that was  
20 under Consideration really was the relationship  
21 between the proposed tower and the individual  
22 landmark. Today the Landmarks Commission has the  
23 opportunity and the responsibility to insure that  
24 new construction on this site not only relates  
25 appropriately to the landmark, but also reinforces

1 the character of the surrounding historic district.  
2 Both tests must be met in order to find that this  
3 proposal is appropriate.

4 The proposed tower, we feel, meets  
5 neither test. I just want to, first of all, focus  
6 on the impact of the proposed tower on the landmark  
7 synagogue. While it is not the sliver tower of  
8 years past, the 157-foot building would,  
9 nevertheless, overshadow the synagogue, eight floors  
10 of approximately 3,500 square feet each not  
11 including mechanicals, would rise up beyond the  
12 cornice lines of the synagogue and create an  
13 overbearing presence that would compete visually  
14 with the landmark as part of the Central Park West  
15 streetscape and sever its relationship with the  
16 predominantly low rise mid block.

17 Now, as significant as the individual  
18 landmark is, it is only one building. The historic  
19 district, on the other hand, is a total environment  
20 with a strong identity and sense of place. This,  
21 too, or perhaps above all, must be respected. The  
22 proposed building is incompatible with the dominant  
23 character of the West 70th Street mid block, a  
24 quintessential brownstone block in the upper west  
25 side in Central Park West Historic District.

1                    Preservationists have long urged the  
2                    Landmarks and City Planning Commissions to work  
3                    together to ensure that zoning matches the existing  
4                    built fabric within historic districts in order to  
5                    reinforce neighborhood character and prevent  
6                    avid-right blockbusters, so-called, from destroying  
7                    the contextual integrity of landmark protected  
8                    areas. In fact, this was one of the four planks of  
9                    the preservation platform which was spearheaded by  
10                   Landmark West, the Historic Districts Council, The  
11                   Municipal Art Society, New York Landmarks  
12                   Conservancy, and was supported by over 125 groups  
13                   citywide.

14                   A unique and enviable situation exists on  
15                   the mid blocks of the upper west side where landmark  
16                   protection and zoning really do go hand in hand.  
17                   Here the zoning is perfectly in line with the goals  
18                   of the historic district and vice versa, and I would  
19                   just like to quote a couple of excerpts from the  
20                   Historic District Designation Report which describes  
21                   the neighborhood as follows: "This district evokes  
22                   the distinctive qualities of the Upper West Side  
23                   from the powerful iconography of the twin towers  
24                   along Central Park West, to its active commerce  
25                   along Columbus Avenue, to its residential side



1 streets. On most of the side streets, the  
2 district's scattered maynard apartment buildings  
3 have interrupted the original roads. But in  
4 general, the surviving row houses present a strong  
5 coherency and are the major element in creating a  
6 special sense of place, particular to this district  
7 on Manhattan's Upper West Side. The interplay  
8 between the low scale character of the row house  
9 groups which dominate the side streets and the large  
10 scale character of the taller buildings that  
11 terminate these blocks on Central Park West  
12 reinforces that role of the avenue as an eastern  
13 frame of the district."

14 I just want to turn for a moment to the  
15 City Planning Commission's 1984 report which Mark  
16 Lebow has already quoted from, but it does say that  
17 a major concern raised by the study would be the  
18 effect of new construction on the scale and urban  
19 design characteristics of the west side. The study  
20 area offers a special resource in the city. Its low  
21 rise townhouse mid block, its residential boulevard,  
22 and its highly identifiable profile on Central Park  
23 West.

24 It says, "Even structures of lesser  
25 individual value reinforce the human scale and

1 identifiable urban design characteristics with  
2 notable consistency." So, as I said, we have an  
3 enviable situation where these two, the zoning  
4 resolution as well as the historic district  
5 designation, really do reinforce one another. They  
6 are beautifully in sync, but only, only if we adhere  
7 to the sound principles that were established in the  
8 landmark and zoning regulatory scheme.

9 If we falter, if we surrender on a  
10 case-by-case basis to the particular pressure of a  
11 particular developer, the soundness of the  
12 principled approach is diminished and so is the  
13 landmark and so is the historic district. So I urge  
14 you to deny both the application for the certificate  
15 of appropriateness and for a 74-711.

16 Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

18 Lisa Kersavage.

19 MS. KERSAVAGE: Lisa Kersavage, with  
20 Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts.

21 Friends is testifying on this issue today  
22 because both the east and west sides share a common  
23 pressure characteristic, low rise mid block  
24 residential buildings. This building pattern is  
25 essential to preserve in order to maintain a sense

1 of place in both neighborhoods. This proposal to  
2 build a 14-story building on a mid block is very  
3 inappropriate.

4 In order to receive a modification of the  
5 use and bulk regulations under Section 74-711, the  
6 Commission must find that the bulk of the  
7 modifications relate harmoniously to the landmark  
8 building or buildings in the historic district. It  
9 is eminently clear that the proposed 14-story  
10 building is not harmonious to the landmark synagogue  
11 itself, nor to the dominant character of the mid  
12 blocks on the Upper West Side Central Park West  
13 Historic District.

14 The character of that district is of low  
15 rise buildings on the mid blocks and taller on the  
16 avenues. And this proposal is contrary to that  
17 pattern. Because the proposed building would be a  
18 domineering presence over the synagogue and contrary  
19 to that building pattern, it would destroy it and  
20 should not be approved.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

23 Dr. Altchek and then Marian Weston.

24 DR. ALTCHER: My name is Edgar Altchek,  
25 I am a trustee of Congregation Shearith Israel. My

1 family and I have a long history with the synagogue.  
2 My parents were married in the chapel you saw before  
3 in 1938.

4 I am familiar with the project and I find  
5 it entirely appropriate. I believe it is in keeping  
6 with the history, the values and the tradition of  
7 the our synagogue, and at the same time, it is  
8 considerate and respectful of the needs and  
9 interests and concerns of our neighboring community.

10 I thank you for this opportunity to  
11 speak.

12 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you very much.  
13 Marian Weston and then Jeffrey Mosseri.

14 MR. SOLOMON: I have been asked to take  
15 her place. My name is Lou Solomon, and I am a  
16 resident of the upper west side and a member of the  
17 congregation.

18 I speak in favor of the proposal. I  
19 think when you have preeminent architects and  
20 preeminent preservation people coming and trying  
21 their best to find something appropriate, if it is  
22 not appropriate for the synagogue which needs the  
23 funds to be arguing in favor of their preservation  
24 use at this time, then I don't think it is  
25 appropriate for the Commission to hear that the

1 synagogue has lots of rich members so the Commission  
2 shouldn't really care.

3 This is an appropriate building because  
4 people who know a lot about it and who are more  
5 sensitive to these issues believe that it is an  
6 appropriate building, and I speak in favor of it.

7 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

8 Jeffrey Mosseri -- is Mr. Mosseri here?

9 AUDIENCE: No.

10 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Lucienne Bulow.

11 MR. BULOW: I am George Bulow. Lucienne  
12 stepped out for a moment, if I may.

13 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: You were next.

14 MR. BULOW: So I will speak and she will  
15 be back by then.

16 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Go ahead.

17 MR. BULOW: I am George Bulow, I am a 30  
18 year or more resident of the Upper West Side and I  
19 am a member of Congregation Shearith Israel, and  
20 very proud of it. I do not live at 91 Central Park  
21 West, as do some of the speakers. I do not live at  
22 101 Central Park West, nor do I live at 18 West 70th  
23 Street, the three buildings which adjoin the site we  
24 are talking about today.

25 There are in this audience, however,

1 members of the cooperative corporations which  
2 constitute those buildings who are also members of  
3 this congregation who are in this room, and I have  
4 not heard one of them stand up and say that they  
5 agreed automatically that all the people who live in  
6 those buildings are all against it. So this is  
7 something you also need to bear in mind.

8           These are members of our congregation and  
9 they feel, as do I, that it is appropriate. This  
10 building is a frame, and it should be looked at as a  
11 frame. It is a method of focusing one's eye,  
12 whether it is from the park or from the adjoining  
13 catty-corner to the beauty of the jewel that lies  
14 before you, a landmark. This building has done a  
15 great deal to frame that jewel in a way which will  
16 draw the eye to the bulk, to the limestone front of  
17 that building, and to give you a sense which is  
18 quite important.

19           As the architects have said in speaking  
20 about the themes which Brunner brought forward -- I  
21 might add, I am not an architect, nor am I a lawyer,  
22 but I can speak to the artistic merits of this. The  
23 three windows then, which one sees carried forward  
24 both on the 70th Street side as well as on the  
25 Central Park side, are echoed in the building which

1 lies behind it.

2 To characterize the 14-story building as  
3 a tower, particularly in the context of New York and  
4 even in the context of this historic district,  
5 strikes me as a bit of an anomaly. Yes, it is an  
6 apartment house and, yes, it is not five stories  
7 tall, but it would hardly be a tower around the  
8 context of any of the other apartment towers we are  
9 seeing built of late.

10 In addition, if there is to be a  
11 complaint on the part of the building, I think it is  
12 very difficult for someone in a building which is  
13 200 feet or more high, which constitutes the solid  
14 block front on Central Park West to complain about a  
15 157 and a half foot building. There are people who  
16 live at 18 West 70th Street, which, again, is not a  
17 brownstone and people have made the statement, well,  
18 since it is not a brownstone, but it was  
19 grandfathered, it should not be part of this  
20 context. And they have attempted to describe the  
21 building.

22 Our congregation stands and is asking to  
23 allow it to be built as an appropriate facility with  
24 the necessary changes, as one which, in fact,  
25 matches and carries on the site lines that that

1 building at 18 West 70th Street constitutes. So to  
2 describe us as either a mid block building, which it  
3 clearly is not -- yes, it is not on the avenue, that  
4 is very clear, but that does not necessarily mean it  
5 is a mid block building -- and to constitute it as  
6 something which casts a shadow throughout the  
7 neighborhood, as if the 200-foot buildings alongside  
8 it do not have or have not, or that a 125-foot  
9 building to its west has not, is, I think, a bit  
10 disingenuous.

11 I hope that you will consider this to be  
12 an appropriate structure. I hope that you will bear  
13 in mind what has been said so eloquently by the  
14 other speakers who have come before me on behalf of  
15 the synagogue in the sense that we are members of  
16 this community, we want very much to stay there and  
17 continue to be part of it. We all live there and we  
18 are all your neighbors, but at the same time, we  
19 have an obligation which we take quite seriously,  
20 and this is the first time in our history we come to  
21 ask the city's agencies and governmental bodies to  
22 support us in our ability to continue to keep that  
23 landmark, the jewel that it is, on the Upper West  
24 Side.

25 Thank you very much.



1 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

2 Is Lucienne here?

3 MS. BULOW: My name is Lucienne Bulow, I  
4 live on the west side. I am a neighbor and I have  
5 been a member of the Congregation for the past 30  
6 years. This Congregation has been at the corner of  
7 Central Park West and 70th Street for more than a  
8 hundred years, and for all our hundred years it had  
9 the right to expand to fulfill its needs, but it did  
10 not. It chose to only consolidate two brownstones  
11 to use as its community house, to have its office,  
12 its school -- and if you look at it, it is pretty  
13 unattractive anyway.

14 The passage of time should not take away  
15 the right that the Congregation has to build an  
16 appropriate building. And what you have as a  
17 proposal is definitely an appropriate building. It  
18 is a modest proposal, I would say, and it is  
19 sensitive to its neighbors and to the neighborhood,  
20 and as you have heard, it is needed to continue to  
21 have the Congregation maintain its landmark status  
22 with its landmark building. It is very expensive to  
23 maintain, and maintaining it is also a credit and an  
24 asset to the neighbors of the congregation.

25 So I would really ask you to accept the

1 proposal.

2 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

3 Dr. Alan Singer and then James Greer.

4 DR. SINGER: My name is Alan Singer, I  
5 am the Executive Director of Congregation Shearith  
6 Israel.

7 I believe that the proposed building is  
8 not only appropriate, but it is a necessity. I  
9 would like to explain several ways that Congregation  
10 Shearith Israel serves the community since it is the  
11 community house that we now seek permission to  
12 replace.

13 First and foremost, our religious  
14 services are open to the public twice daily, 365  
15 days a year, even on the high holidays we go out of  
16 our way to accommodate visitors who make prior  
17 arrangements with our security department. We  
18 provide many classes and lectures open to the  
19 public.

20 Second, tour groups. Thousands of  
21 individuals per year from across the United States  
22 of all ages, of all religions, participate in guided  
23 tours of our historic landmark. In addition to  
24 taking great pride in showing others our beautiful  
25 sanctuaries, we proudly fulfill our responsibility

1 to explain the history of America's first Jewish  
2 congregation. Our one of a kind archives are made  
3 accessible to scholars and museums worldwide. In  
4 fact, the new space that we are proposing will allow  
5 us to better serve the academic community by  
6 returning 50 percent of our historic documents back  
7 to our facility from the off-site warehouse on 110th  
8 Street where we currently rent space.

9 Throughout our history, we have been  
10 asked by communal and governmental bodies to host  
11 community-wide events which we were always happy to  
12 accommodate. In June 2002 at the request of the  
13 Manhattan Borough President, C. Virginia Fields,  
14 Shearith Israel hosted an evening of Jewish Heritage  
15 Commemoration, which was attended by over 200 people  
16 and the general public was invited.

17 In March of 1997, having just completed  
18 the restoration of our Tiffany glass windows, our  
19 synagogue hosted a workshop in stain glass  
20 restoration at the request of the New York Landmarks  
21 Conservancy which was attended by 185 individuals.  
22 This past May, at the request of the New York  
23 Landmarks Conservancy, Shearith Israel for the first  
24 time in anyone's memory opened its historic West  
25 21st Street cemetery to the general public to

1 provide hands-on experience in a program titled  
2 "Preserving Historic Burial Grounds." 50  
3 reservations were received in advance of the  
4 workshop and over 180 people actually participated.

5 And this coming January, Shearith Israel  
6 has gladly agreed to host another program of the New  
7 York Landmarks Conservancy which is a forum on  
8 decorative paint finishes to which we will, again,  
9 be happy to invite the entire community.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

12 Mr. Greer, and then Jonathan Baker.

13 MR. GREER: Members of the Committee, my  
14 name is Jay Greer. I reside at 101 Central Park  
15 West, where I am a director of the  
16 board of directors and immediate past president.

17 I am under a considerable disadvantage,  
18 both I and my directors. Our first notice of this,  
19 as far as I can tell, came about five weeks ago.  
20 Our first board meeting came before the first  
21 meeting. That board, having heard the information  
22 that was in the press and some that we gleaned from  
23 our friends at 91, took the unanimous view that this  
24 was not an appropriate building to be put in across  
25 the street on 70th Street, for all the reasons that

1 I think have been amply laid out, they really have,  
2 before this gathering this evening.

3 I happen to share those. I might say  
4 only one of the directors has a view that will be  
5 affected by this. Mine will not. There is nothing  
6 personal in this.

7 Responding to Mr. Bulow's comment, I am  
8 sure that there are members of the congregation who  
9 live at 101 Central Park West who support this.  
10 There are, however, a great many people who have  
11 made it very, very clear to us that they do not  
12 support this. This is not a popularity contest, but  
13 there is a very, very serious outcry about this.

14 I also met yesterday with Rabbi Angel,  
15 Dr. Neustater, Mr. Friedman, six out of the nine  
16 directors, to hear their story face to face for the  
17 first time. We said at that meeting -- first of  
18 all, we tried to make it very, very clear that we  
19 respect enormously their incredible tradition, which  
20 was brilliantly laid out this evening. We  
21 understand -- and I want to say this from a personal  
22 standpoint, I understand the importance of landmarks  
23 in general and this landmark in particular. It is a  
24 very pivotal piece of a wonderful neighborhood.

25 I also think that it was said in the

1 testimony, and I say that as a now retired lawyer,  
2 that there was no other way to finance the  
3 preservation work, some of which clearly has to be  
4 done, the roof you have to fix or it will leak all  
5 over the gorgeous interior. Rabbi Angel very  
6 graciously took us through it yesterday. That would  
7 be a crime.

8 We also tried to make it clear that we do  
9 not have any problem with tearing down the very  
10 ugly, I will call it the social hall, it is not a  
11 community house. It may serve the community of the  
12 congregation and I have to say that we do hold our  
13 annual meetings in the basement sometimes, but it is  
14 hideous, and undoubtedly, for all the reasons that  
15 were laid out here, needs work.

16 The thing that we left with them, that we  
17 are not persuaded that there is, as was testified  
18 earlier, there is no other way of financing the  
19 necessary work. My mother came from Missouri and  
20 she would say, "Show me." And we offered to meet  
21 with them after this hearing, which is our first  
22 opportunity to hear the full presentation, and see  
23 whether they could persuade us, so we in turn can  
24 persuade the unhappy members of our household that  
25 this is not a bad thing. Our offer, I will now say

1 on the record, still stands. Absent that, however,  
2 I think that you will find our board will continue  
3 with its unanimous opposition to this proposal as  
4 quite inappropriate.

5 Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

7 Jonathan Baker and then Sandra Levine.

8 MR. BAKER: My name is Jonathan Baker, I  
9 live at 31 West 69th Street where I have lived for  
10 31 years.

11 You have asked a very direct question,  
12 you have asked us whether this is compatible with  
13 the Code. Our answer is dramatically no, it is  
14 visibly out of character. It is rather like the old  
15 fable of the Emperor with no clothes, you are asked  
16 to believe that this disproportionately tall  
17 building is proportionate. We can see it is not.

18 That's really not the argument that has  
19 been presented. The argument that has been  
20 presented is that this building is necessary for the  
21 economic vitality of the synagogue in order to  
22 propel itself forward as a preservationist. I would  
23 propose this is a false dilemma. What we have is a  
24 middle to upper class prosperous synagogue of  
25 650-plus families that has been able to afford to

1 keep this building, the temple itself, in condition.

2 What this building does, it is 14 stories  
3 and it is not perhaps limited to 14 stories, by the  
4 way, is that it denigrates the character of this  
5 historic block. You will see that we residents, we  
6 who really live there, are highly protective of that  
7 character.

8 What has been presented here is a kind of  
9 blackmail, if you don't give us this 14-story  
10 building, well, we are not going to do these  
11 renovations. It is not said directly, it is  
12 implied, but it is a very strong implication. We  
13 reject this quid pro quo. It is a false  
14 proposition. Therefore, what is the basis of this  
15 building? It is visibly out of character,  
16 dramatically so. The only argument is that the  
17 money is needed.

18 I will conclude with just an anecdote  
19 that really pins this down. As a full-time  
20 liturgical musician for churches and synagogues,  
21 full time for more than 30 years, I have been all  
22 over these monkey bars for decades. The problem is  
23 that you take an example that was presented up on  
24 the board of the churches and the various  
25 institutions along Central Park West that are



1       protected. I have been at those institutions, both  
2       of the Christian Science churches I have been  
3       director of in my capacity. With far smaller  
4       congregations and far smaller budgets, they have  
5       been able to maintain the architectural integrity of  
6       their buildings.

7               A very dramatic case, and I will probably  
8       have to present this again at a further hearing,  
9       when I was at 96th Street and Central Park West as  
10      the director of the First Church Christian Science  
11      Church, I can tell you if you go in there on any  
12      Sunday morning or Wednesday evening, you will see 30  
13      active members in that congregation, never more. It  
14      is tiny. When I was there, they had a portfolio of  
15      just over \$200,000; yet, they were totally dedicated  
16      to maintaining that building and they do.  
17      Therefore, I am astounded that a 14-story tower is  
18      necessary for this congregation, which is already  
19      quite prosperous, to function.

20             What they have proposed, in their own  
21      words, as an economic engine, is really a cash cow  
22      that is not necessary, and for us who live in the  
23      neighborhood, this cash cow is a white elephant. It  
24      is out of proportion.

25             Thank you for the time.

1 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

2 Sandy, and then Bob Mattson.

3 MS. LEVINE: Sandra Levine, Historic  
4 District's counsel.

5 HDC does not support this proposal.  
6 Shearith Israel synagogue is an individual landmark  
7 that is also in the Upper West Side Central Park  
8 West Historic District. The proposed new building  
9 affects both the distinguished individual landmark  
10 and the historic district in which it is located.  
11 Regrettably, the effect on both is negative.

12 Putting aside all reasons and focusing  
13 instead on the esthetics, a 14-story building that  
14 might be appropriate at that height on an avenue, is  
15 being proposed for mid block. The designation  
16 report for the district notes that row houses on the  
17 side streets that form the heart of the district are  
18 the predominant residential building type.  
19 Eighty-five percent of the buildings in the district  
20 are row houses.

21 The character of the Upper West Side  
22 Central Park West Historic District is defined by  
23 rows of brownstones on the side streets. The  
24 contextual zone district, RAB, in which the proposed  
25 building is located, reflects the low rise character

1 of the mid blocks that both the zoning and the  
2 historic district are supposed to protect. To the  
3 extent that the north side of West 70th Street,  
4 between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, looks  
5 almost exactly like the illustration for RAB  
6 districts in the zoning handbook, if this building  
7 were proposed for a site, say, two lots farther  
8 towards Columbus Avenue, there would be no question  
9 about its inappropriateness.

10 The building proposed is an avenue  
11 building on a mid block. On that basis alone, it  
12 should not receive a permit. Rising above the  
13 synagogue, the 14-story tower will disrupt the  
14 iconic skyline of Central Park West by looming over  
15 the synagogue itself. In very general terms, the  
16 design of the proposed building, as well as its  
17 height, raises additional concerns about its  
18 appropriateness.

19 Its orientation is problematic. The  
20 entrance to the building is on West 70th Street;  
21 yet, the structure reads as a Central Park West  
22 building. The east facade faces Central Park West,  
23 is actually the side facade, not the front, and it  
24 is designed as such. The west facade, equivalent of  
25 the rear facade, is at a right angle to West 70th

1 Street, and at a right angle to West 70th Street is  
2 very visible along West 70th Street. This is a  
3 facade of the building that would normally face the  
4 garden core.

5 More specifically, the design shows  
6 insufficient deference to the landmark and to the  
7 major avenue of the historic district. It is unlike  
8 any other building on Central Park West in terms of  
9 ornamental massing or gold detailing such as a  
10 pediment at the roof that characterizes buildings on  
11 that avenue. Neither is it a bold modern design  
12 that would afford a lively contrast to other  
13 buildings in the historic district. With its open  
14 glass corners, neither does it relate well to the  
15 streetscape.

16 On 70th Street, we question the choice of  
17 exterior grilles rather than interior blinds for the  
18 privacy of the offices. The asymmetrical treatment  
19 below the floors of the facade do not relate to the  
20 brownstones on the street. A more carefully thought  
21 out design that would allow the building to make a  
22 contribution to the historic district is needed.

23 As for the special permit being sought  
24 under 74-711 of the zoning resolution, the  
25 preservation purpose remains unclear. The

1 Congregation has been a wonderful steward of this  
2 extraordinary building and has substantially  
3 restored the building.

4 To conclude, applying out of the zoning  
5 to the side street will result in an erosion of the  
6 character of the Upper West Side Central Park West  
7 Historic District that the Landmarks Preservation  
8 Commission is supposed to protect. The applicant  
9 has tried to orient the building to Central Park  
10 West, but in fact, its entrance is on West 70th  
11 Street. When the character of West 70th Street is  
12 considered, everything that is inappropriate about  
13 the design becomes clear.

14 Without any waivers or variances, the  
15 synagogue could construct a six-story building. If  
16 the design were appropriate, a building of that  
17 height would be supportable. This one is not. We  
18 ask the Commission to deny the application.

19 Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Bob Mattson and then  
21 Deborah Platt.

22 MR. MATTSON: My name is Bob Mattson, I  
23 live at 300 Central Park West, the El Dorado, which  
24 itself is an individual landmark building. I happen  
25 to be on board of that building, but I am not

1 appearing in that context. Another, I also belong  
2 to a synagogue, an upper west side historic  
3 synagogue that has similar needs to this synagogue.  
4 I would like to make only two points.

5 One, with regard to the skyline, not  
6 speaking as a neighbor on the blocks adjoining this  
7 temple, the southern skyline would clearly be  
8 unalterably affected by this building, and I think  
9 that's inappropriate.

10 The second point is, we are working on a  
11 major project, preservation project, as you probably  
12 know, at the El Dorado, and there are also reasons,  
13 economic, personal, major reasons of tenants and  
14 others who would like to have variances and thank  
15 God for the Commission. You hold us to standards  
16 that I think are appropriate. This is not one of  
17 those applications that should be approved. As a  
18 precedent, it would be a terrible precedent.

19 The synagogue that I belong to right now  
20 has a terrible roof problem. We have space that we  
21 would love to build and I guess to build eight or  
22 ten million dollar apartments and have all revenue  
23 from that, that would help us to meet our needs,  
24 reasonable needs as well; however, it would be  
25 destructive of the neighbor.

1                   Again, I hope you oppose this  
2                   application.

3                   CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:    Thank you.  
4                   Deborah Platt and Angelo Abdela?  
5                   Is Deborah Snyder Platt here?  
6                   (No response.)

7                   Angelo Abdela?

8                   AUDIENCE:    He's not here.

9                   CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:    Florie Algranti  
10                  Charles and then Myron Smith?

11                  MS. CHARLES:    I am Florie Algranti  
12                  Charles. I am a member of the congregation and I  
13                  don't live on the Upper West Side, I live up in  
14                  Inwood. I have been a member of this congregation  
15                  for 26 years, and the reason was that I was raised  
16                  Sephardic and 26 years ago, when it was time to  
17                  raise my son in the tradition I was raised, my  
18                  choice was here was here or Co-Op City, so I chose  
19                  here. They have been extremely welcoming.

20                  I am not a Central Park West person.  
21                  When they asked for contributions for the  
22                  refurbishing of the synagogue, I sent them a couple  
23                  of hundred dollars, because that's all I could  
24                  afford; however, when they started a homeless  
25                  program years ago and they asked us to be part of

1 it, we used the Town House in Manhattan. The men  
2 came and they were our guests for the evening. We  
3 welcomed them, and the synagogue is a welcoming  
4 place.

5 I looked at The New York Times article  
6 that was talking about what they were building and  
7 the level of how high it was seemed to be the same  
8 size as the buildings around it. I feel that the  
9 synagogue goes out of its way to be part of the  
10 community. They did a blood program, but I couldn't  
11 be part of that because I can't give blood, but they  
12 have been involved in community affairs and have  
13 always tried to reach out.

14 They welcomed my son and I when I went  
15 there 26 years ago, and it wasn't like, "Well, can  
16 you afford this and can you afford that?" It wasn't  
17 like that at all. So when we characterize our  
18 congregation as it's very wealthy, maybe some people  
19 are, but not all of us; and there are people who  
20 come from all over. I found out about this  
21 synagogue, I didn't really know much about it, when  
22 I was in Lauderdale Road in London, 27 years ago. I  
23 said, "This is like what I remember from when I was  
24 being raised on Allen Street downtown, the synagogue  
25 I went to. And they said, "Well, there's one just



1 like this in New York," and I went there. I knew  
2 nobody and I was very welcomed and I have been  
3 welcomed for 26 years.

4 I think if the synagogue feels that they  
5 can do this now, and they have lowered their scale  
6 and lowered their scale. I notice when they did  
7 their restorations -- in fact, we didn't have the  
8 main sanctuary for about a year until this past Rosh  
9 Hashana -- it was so beautiful. My son said  
10 something to me. He's living in Chicago, he was in  
11 Germany in the U.S. Army for a few years, he said,  
12 "Mom, how could you take me to that synagogue?"

13 I said, "What did I do wrong?"

14 He said, "You spoiled me for every other  
15 synagogue I have ever gone to since."

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

18 Myron Smith and then Naomi Sutton.

19 MR. SMITH: I am Myron Smith. I am a  
20 resident of the West Side for 44 years and I reside  
21 in Majestic Apartments. I have seen many changes on  
22 the West Side, other buildings going up and all for  
23 the good. I think this building is entirely  
24 appropriate. It is not a mid block building, it is  
25 more towards the corner, and I appeal to the

1 Commission to approve this project because it will  
2 enhance the entire neighborhood and will also  
3 enhance 70th Street.

4 Thank you very much.

5 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

6 Naomi Sutton and then Colonel Jonathan de  
7 Sula Mendes.

8 MR. KELLER: No, I don't look like Naomi  
9 Sutton, she has asked me to speak in her stead. My  
10 name is James Keller (ph), I am a trustee of  
11 Congregation Shearith Israel. My wife and two  
12 children are members. My wife and I have been  
13 members since we have been married at the  
14 congregation in 1985.

15 I would like to speak very briefly talk  
16 about the preservation that has been debated today.

17 History is littered with fallen giants,  
18 so as much as I am cheered by my proposed confidence  
19 that our grandchildren of will walk out of  
20 Congregation Shearith Israel in I think the Year is  
21 2254, regardless of the decision which you will  
22 make, I think it would not behoove us to imagine  
23 that depressions and especially the good fortune  
24 which has kept our synagogue building standing and  
25 in reasonably good repair for a hundred years will

1       endure forever.

2               Congregation Shearith Israel is at its  
3       core a community of families, not very different  
4       from those who have spoken up against this building.  
5       Families like mine, with mortgages to pay, with  
6       children to education. Musicians, librarians,  
7       museum curators, school teachers -- we're not all  
8       lawyers and doctors -- all of whom have reached deep  
9       into their pocket to fund the restoration that has  
10      been affected today, but we cannot continue to do so  
11      indefinitely.

12              We are indeed fortunate to have generous  
13      members like Messrs. Rudin and Levy, but these  
14      gentlemen are not regrettably eternal. The  
15      congregation needs your approval to in order to  
16      create a trust which will ensure its future and  
17      transcend that commitment to its benefactors.

18              Thank you.

19              CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:   Colonel Mendes -- is  
20      Colonel Mendes here?

21              AUDIENCE:   He just stepped out.

22              CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:   Gilda Angel, is she  
23      here?

24              MS. ANGEL:   Ladies and gentlemen, I've  
25      lived on the West side --

1 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: State your name,  
2 please.

3 MS. ANGEL: I'm sorry, Gilda Angel.

4 I've lived on the West Side with my  
5 family for 30 years. As a matter of fact, for 27-  
6 and-a-half of those years we lived on West 70th  
7 Street, on the same block as the synagogue. It was  
8 our neighborhood, it is still our neighborhood, and  
9 the synagogue was so central to the lives of so many  
10 people who hoped for many, many years that it would  
11 be able to maintain itself. The building proposal  
12 that you have heard today will give us the means to  
13 do so.

14 We feel that the building is appropriate.  
15 I feel that the building is appropriate for the  
16 neighborhood. There are many different styles of  
17 buildings along Central Park West, some modern, some  
18 not so modern. There's a variety of styles to be  
19 contended with. There is certainly no uniformity  
20 along Central Park West, and this building which  
21 backs up the synagogue certainly acts as a beautiful  
22 back drop to set off the synagogue as the jewel that  
23 it is.

24 We feel that the proposed building will  
25 serve not only the congregation but also the

1 community at large with the dignity and distinction  
2 which is the hallmark of all Congregation Shearith  
3 Israel projects and activities. We hope that you  
4 will approve the proposal for this project.

5 Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

7 Is Gloria Mosseri still here?

8 No. Then James Platt.

9 AUDIENCE: I think they had to go.

10 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Okay. Marc Daniel?

11 MR. DANIELS: Sorry. Thank you very  
12 much. I was just telling my wife that I was going  
13 to be late for an event at my daughter's school,  
14 sorry for walking in late.

15 My name is Marc Daniel. First, I wanted  
16 to thank the Chair for their understanding in  
17 agreeing to continue the hearing and to hear  
18 additional testimony at a later date. I would ask  
19 that I and the other speakers tonight be allowed to  
20 speak again at other moments, should the committee  
21 members not present today be present at future  
22 events.

23 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: If I could respond to  
24 that request. We have a stenographer present today  
25 who is making the transcript that will be available

1 to all Commissioners. Because of the great number  
2 of people who we anticipated would be here, we do  
3 want to provide that written record to all  
4 Commissioners who are not present today. At future  
5 meetings and hearings, we will open the record  
6 obviously for testimony. We will ask people to  
7 speak to issues that are different or if they have  
8 further thoughts at the next meeting.

9 MR. DANIELS: But people may speak  
10 again if there is additional testimony?

11 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: If there is  
12 additional information, they will obviously be able  
13 to come and offer additional information.

14 MR. DANIELS: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: You're welcome.

16 MR. DANIELS: In the interests of time, I  
17 will speak briefly and very briefly reiterate some  
18 things people have said.

19 I am a long time West Sider. I am  
20 Treasurer of the Board at 18 West 70th Street and my  
21 son has attended school at Shearith Israel, so we  
22 have many ties to both the community and to the  
23 synagogue.

24 There are two preservation goals and only  
25 one is agruably supported by this proposed building.

1 Equally important is the goal that some of the  
2 people in the community have spoken about today,  
3 which is the preservation of the West Side historic  
4 district as represented by 70th Street, and the  
5 precedent this sets for historic districts  
6 throughout the city.

7 One speaker, a couple of speakers have  
8 actually said that this is not a mid block building.  
9 That reminds me of saying it depends on what the  
10 definition of "is," is. The building would be in  
11 the middle of block; it is a mid block building.

12 The first gentleman who made that  
13 reference also talked about the size of other  
14 buildings in the neighborhood, including my own  
15 building, Number 18 and Number 30, all of which, I  
16 would argue, is irrelevant to the appropriateness  
17 question before the Commission, because these  
18 buildings have existed since the 1920s.

19 I would also like to agree with Rabbi  
20 Angel. He noted earlier today, way back in the  
21 beginning, how wrong a rabbi can be. The community  
22 -- what he did not hear is the speakers who came  
23 after him and he did not hear the testimony given  
24 before the Community Board Landmark Committee last  
25 week, but it was very clear that there is broad and

1 wide spread community opposition to this.

2 The Community Board, as you are aware,  
3 Community Board Landmarks Committee and other  
4 Community Board members were present there last  
5 Thursday, and unanimously voted that this tower is  
6 not appropriate and is too big for the site. Dozens  
7 of people from the community spoke against this  
8 proposal, and as far as I am aware, no non-member of  
9 the synagogue tonight or then spoke in favor of the  
10 proposal, or President or Assemblyman, or Councilman  
11 and other representatives and political figures also  
12 oppose this.

13 Over 100 residents of my building, Number  
14 18, some of them are members of the synagogue, many  
15 of them have lived here for decades, have asked me  
16 to speak on their behalf, and they strongly feel  
17 that this tower is inappropriate, and I share that  
18 with all the Commission members here and I thank you  
19 for the time.

20 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you very much.  
21 Myles Weintraub, then Dana Miller.

22 MR. WEINTRAUB: Good evening. My name  
23 is Myles Weintraub. I'm a resident of 18 West 70th  
24 Street. I am an architect, and I was co-founder of  
25 the urban design group of the New York City Planning



1 Commission in the late 60s.

2 I will try to be very brief. The issue  
3 to speak to is the question of appropriateness in  
4 the historic district, and I urge you to turn the  
5 models around so you can see the models from the  
6 west, and then answer that question. Is the  
7 proposal appropriate to the historic district?

8 On another point, it was said before that  
9 74-711 allows this proposal. 74-711 allows the  
10 application. 74-711 is a special permit proceeding,  
11 not an as-of-right proceeding.

12 We first saw drawings of the proposal on  
13 November 6th. We have started our own analyses of  
14 the impact of the building on surrounding buildings  
15 with drawings. We are not complete. We are cheered  
16 to hear that the hearing will be extended, and we  
17 will present our information graphically at that  
18 point.

19 Even though we aren't complete, last  
20 Thursday night, without the benefit of presentations  
21 like the applicant, the Landmarks Committee,  
22 Planning Board 7, each member expressed clearly his  
23 and her decision as to the inappropriateness of the  
24 project.

25 Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you. Dana  
2 Miller and then Ron Prince.

3 MS. MILLER: Hi. My name is Dana Miller  
4 and I live at 110 West 90th Street, so I am not a  
5 person who would be directly affected if the  
6 building went up; however, for the last 18 years the  
7 Upper West Side has been my home. My first  
8 apartment rental after graduating college was on the  
9 Upper West Side. When we were married we purchased  
10 our condominium on the Upper West Side. My husband  
11 opened two restaurants on the Upper West Side, and  
12 our son goes to school on the Upper West Side.

13 When I had my son Marco eight years ago  
14 and would take him out in the stroller, I started  
15 developing a new appreciation for the beautiful  
16 blocks on the Upper West Side, in the Central Park  
17 West Historic District. As Marco grew older,  
18 pushing to stroller gave way to walks and even field  
19 trips through those same blocks. You could say that  
20 I inadvertently developed a lay person's interest in  
21 preservation.

22 There are favorite blocks that were  
23 regularly ventured down. Many are in the lower 70s  
24 and 70th Street is one of them. When I turn east on  
25 70th from Columbus and take a few steps, I feel like

1 I could be in a time decades ago. The north side of  
2 the street in an uninterrupted line of houses. The  
3 south side is largely brownstones, some with  
4 dramatic stairways leading up to the entrances.  
5 There are a couple of taller buildings, but all  
6 prewar and none taller than 10 stories.

7 A 14 story, nearly 160 foot tower would  
8 loom over this block. Anyone approaching from  
9 Columbus Avenue would have an entirely changed  
10 experience of this block. Turning on to 70th Street  
11 wouldn't be transporting any more, it would be  
12 saddening. I am not an architect, I'm not a lawyer,  
13 but shouldn't I be able to enjoy the feeling of  
14 history in our historic district? And shouldn't I  
15 also be able to trust that my son will be able to  
16 when he is taking his children to the park?

17 In my own synagogue we are asked to dig  
18 in deep for buildings funds and special drives, and  
19 yes, we grumble, but the money gets raised. Here we  
20 are asked to believe that the only way this  
21 established, successful congregation can finance its  
22 new facility is through a high rise luxury condo? I  
23 don't understand it and I promise you, no one in New  
24 York will understand it either.

25 Congregation Shearith Israel is the

1 going to go up, it didn't. We now have this  
2 incredible offer to build a short tower. So much is  
3 in the telling of the story. Everything is in the  
4 telling of the story. The other day Kelly Friedman  
5 was asked over at 91, she said, "I have been meeting  
6 with community groups three times a week." Somebody  
7 said, "For how long?" She said, "For one week".

8 So which way is it? Is it in the middle  
9 of the block? Is it Central Park West? It is tied  
10 together, it's referential, all this is bogus. This  
11 is a condominium tower. The only honest word is  
12 "tower." If you walk down the block, it is a block  
13 that doesn't want a tower. If you go stand on the  
14 block -- I am not an architect and I am not a zoning  
15 specialist, but I am a walker and I love the  
16 historic district, it has a kind of social  
17 conscience.

18 Mr. Rudin referred to an architectural  
19 void on the Upper West Side; I don't think so, and I  
20 don't think the historic district is about an  
21 architectural void. My friends in Texas say, "If  
22 you want to see old buildings go to Europe." I am a  
23 New Yorker, and I think we can do better. I think  
24 we can take care of what we have got. We don't have  
25 to build this thing.

1 oldest established synagogue in the U.S. It should  
2 be a voice of treasuring history not a threat to it.  
3 If the congregation will not play the role that it  
4 should, then this Commission must. This building  
5 plan will be a major blow to the historic district  
6 and it seems a nasty precedent to establish. Please  
7 do the right thing on this important issue.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you. Ron Price  
10 and then Michael Marsh.

11 MR. PRINCE: I am going to make my  
12 remarks at a later meeting. Thank you very much.

13 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you. Michael  
14 Marsh?

15 MR. MARSH: I am Michael Marsh. I am a  
16 resident of 101 Central Park West. If I crane my  
17 neck around I would see this new building. I live  
18 in New York City out of choice. I grew up in the  
19 Texas Panhandle, I came to New York when I was 19, I  
20 love New York. A friend of mine from Texas and I,  
21 we walked to the mid 60s, we walked almost every  
22 street of Manhattan, every week we walked and walked  
23 and walked. I moved to the Upper West Side in 1967,  
24 I love it. I am still a walker.

25 I lived in 101 when the big tower was

1 I got married recently. My wife had a  
2 baby. I would like to add on to my apartment, I  
3 need more space, and I can make a really good case  
4 that I need more space, so what? I have got to live  
5 with what I've got, I've got to live within my means  
6 with what I have got. So I am not a pro, but I love  
7 my neighborhood and I love the streets, I love  
8 walking the streets of the Upper West Side, and we  
9 don't need more, we don't need more.

10 I agree with Marc, these institutions, if  
11 they have survived, will continue to. I have been  
12 there for 25 years, it seems to be doing just fine.  
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you. Alvin  
15 Deutsch?

16 MR. DEUTSCH: Thank you, Madam Chairman  
17 and members of the Commission. I am Alvin Deutsch.  
18 I was formally President of the congregation until  
19 my retirement in April, and I was the president at  
20 the time that we did this extraordinary fund-raising  
21 to preserve our congregation, to preserve our  
22 sanctuary.

23 I just want to tell you it was not easy.  
24 It is the first time in the history of this 105 year  
25 old building that we went to our members asking for

1 direct contributions for this kind of work. Indeed,  
2 we do have some people of means in our congregation,  
3 but as Ms. Charles told you, we have an abundance of  
4 people not in that category. That's why I am here  
5 today. We are not a museum, we are a living body.

6 We have members of our congregation who  
7 are struggling, as my co-trustee said, to raise  
8 their kids, to pay for apartments adjacent to our  
9 synagogue; many of them have to walk to attend  
10 Sabbath services and, therefore, they have to be in  
11 the immediate neighborhood. We rely on those people  
12 for our future.

13 We must look ahead to who is going to  
14 fill the social needs of our synagogue. Community  
15 house can not do it. We need better classroom. We  
16 need a library. We need facilities for our historic  
17 documents, and the only way that this is going to be  
18 achieved is by your approving this program, which is  
19 within the needs of the congregation and neighbors.  
20 Let us not become a relic. Let's not depend upon  
21 what has gone on before. We must look ahead to  
22 those members who in the future will be supporting  
23 this, and at the present cannot do so because their  
24 own economic needs yet need the services of our  
25 congregation as a house of worship, not a museum.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Pedro Gonzalez?

3 MR. GOLDSTEIN: I am Gabriel Goldstein.

4 I am the curator of Yeshiva University Museum. I am  
5 an art historian and specialize in Jewish visual  
6 culture. I am also married to a trustee of the  
7 congregation. She takes great pride to be a trustee  
8 of the congregation.

9 Addressing the building in terms of its  
10 architectural content, firstly, the building, I  
11 think, is conceptual, not only in terms of its  
12 presence by 518, which is not a traditional  
13 brownstone; the block does not contain merely  
14 traditional brownstones, there are obviously larger  
15 buildings. It's obviously very close to Central  
16 Park West, that is mid block or not, it is  
17 relatively eastward on the block, and, therefore,  
18 conceptualized with the larger buildings on the  
19 south side.

20 Treatment of the facade, in terms of the  
21 use of materials, in terms of echoing architectural  
22 elements based on the treatment of other Central  
23 Park West landmark buildings -- and we checked this  
24 with our own congregational building, but also with  
25 67th Street larger studio windows. That places it



1       firmly within an architectural content.

2               The synagogue is a landmark. It's a  
3       landmark technically and it is a landmark also  
4       conceptually. It's a landmark for the multicultural  
5       nature of New York City, being a Jewish house of  
6       worship which was established in New Amsterdam, and  
7       there's a continuity then of the multiculturalism of  
8       various communities from that point onward through  
9       today and into the future.

10              We were able to afford to preserve our  
11       sanctuary partially. In order to be able to  
12       preserve our congregation, we must go elsewhere. As  
13       a museum professional, I am very aware of the cost  
14       of preservation activities, and it is unfortunately  
15       impossible for a relatively small community, a  
16       community which contains members of means, as was  
17       said, and many members who have to struggle to live  
18       in Manhattan, to afford to preserve such an  
19       important landmark, landmark in terms of historic  
20       import, in terms of beauty, in terms of aesthetics,  
21       and in terms of a faith community. We must look to  
22       another source of income for this purpose.

23              I think as a community which recognizes  
24       the importance of preservation as part of an  
25       historical community recognizing historical

1 legacies, we must look to how not to profits will be  
2 able to find money to preserve their heritage,  
3 architectural heritage, conceptual heritage and  
4 faith heritage. They do not have a source of  
5 income.

6 The congregation is proposing a  
7 relatively modest and sensitive architectural  
8 enterprise to be able to continue forward. We must  
9 continue forward with this legacy for our  
10 congregation and for all New Yorkers.

11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you Barbara  
13 Smith. Is Ms. Smith here? And then Saul Laniato  
14 (ph).

15 MS. SMITH: Thank you for this  
16 opportunity. My name is Barbara Haran Smith and I  
17 am very proud to lend my support to this project.  
18 I'm a life-long West Sider and part of a family,  
19 devoted congregants of Shearith Israel.

20 I consider the proposed project  
21 appropriate, tasteful, and an enhancement of our  
22 West Side Historic District. I most respectfully  
23 urge you to approve it.

24 Thank you again.

25 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

1                   Saul Laniato (ph), and then Naomi  
2           Dovdavany.

3                   AUDIENCE:     She left.

4                   MR. LANIATO:   Ladies and Gentlemen, my  
5           name is Saul Laniato. I have been a member of the  
6           congregation for the past 56 years. I'm just  
7           concerned that other people in this audience have no  
8           idea of the inner workings of our congregation, of  
9           the financial structure; what the cost to our  
10          congregation was to come this far in the restoration  
11          of our building, of our historic building, and I  
12          would urge you that this building is both  
13          appropriate and necessary for the community. I  
14          would urge you to support it.

15                   Thank you.

16                   CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:   Thank you.

17                   Cornell Mendez?

18                   COLONEL MENDEZ:   I am John Mendez and I  
19           am a retired trustee of Congregation Shearith  
20           Israel. My family's roots go back to the colonies  
21           before the American Revolution, and we have been  
22           here for all these years. Because our footsteps are  
23           deep in the sands of time of the history of the  
24           congregation, I feel a responsibility to think about  
25           its future, and to speak out about its future.

1           It is clear to the current trustees and  
2 past trustees like myself that the congregation has  
3 outgrown its present facilities. We don't have the  
4 facilities to do the things that we are responsible  
5 for doing to enhance the Jewish life of our  
6 congregants. We are blessed with having the  
7 remnants of Israel -- Shearith Israel in Hebrew is  
8 the remnants of the seed, the remnants of the  
9 departing of all the Sephardim from all over world  
10 to come to New York, and come to worship with us.  
11 We have to provide for them the framework that they  
12 left abroad in the Mediterranean countries. They  
13 come here not as wealthy people, they come here  
14 tired and the poor, those who were expelled, and it  
15 is our responsibility to provide the framework for  
16 these people to worship appropriately.

17           We are not a rich congregation as has  
18 been suggested by a number of people who oppose the  
19 project. That is a fiction. We are not a rich  
20 Congregation. We struggled to raise the money to  
21 renovate our hundred year old synagogue building,  
22 and it wasn't easy and we are not finished yet.

23           The word "appropriate" or  
24 "inappropriate," I am not competent to judge  
25 appropriateness or inappropriateness with respect to

1 the standards that you have before you and that you  
2 must make a judgment on, but I do want to say this:  
3 You will recall our famous Senator Daniel Webster.  
4 He argued a case before the Supreme Court, a  
5 Dartmouth College case in the State of New  
6 Hampshire, and his closing words before the Supreme  
7 Court were, "It is a small school, but there are  
8 those of us who love it." Congregation Shearith  
9 Israel is a small congregation but there are those  
10 of us who love it.

11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you very much.

13 Ruth Schulson, is Ms. Schulson here?

14 MS. SCHULSON: Yes.

15 I am Ruth Schulson, and I want to say  
16 that I am for this proposal. Shearith Israel has  
17 always contributed to New York City, to the  
18 community since they first came here. So I feel  
19 that it should -- and we need a community house with  
20 more space.

21 My family has been here since the very  
22 beginning so I don't know what has gone on over  
23 there, but I heard about it.

24 MS. PAULSON: Thank you.

25 Steven Neuwirth?

1 MR. NEUWIRTH: Good evening. My name is  
2 Steven Neuwirth and I would like to address, as you  
3 requested, the appropriateness of the building.

4 I think it is important, just by looking  
5 at the drawings that are up on board, to think about  
6 both 91 and 101 Central Park West when judging the  
7 appropriateness of this building. Compared to those  
8 two buildings, this is a modest contribution to both  
9 the Central Park West skyline and to West 70th  
10 Street. I invite you to come to West 70th Street,  
11 to look how far into the mid block 101 Central Park  
12 West actually goes, and then to go to 69th Street  
13 and to look at 91 Central Park West. This is not an  
14 intrusion into the mid block, but it is a contextual  
15 contribution that will support the synagogue and how  
16 it looks on Central Park West.

17 I am not an expert in city planning or in  
18 landmarks preservation, but I did have the good  
19 opportunity in the early 1980s to work with Con Tou  
20 (ph), who was then head of the Manhattan Office of  
21 the City Planning Department on the work that that  
22 office did on mid blocks and addressing the problem  
23 of sliver buildings, which you will recall was a  
24 major problem at that time. And I got to work with  
25 Con on the City Planning Department's report, which

1 ultimately led to the rules that the City Planning  
2 Commission adopted to deal with sliver buildings.

3 I believe that this building which has  
4 been proposed is fully consistent with the  
5 principles that were behind that work by the City  
6 Planning Commission. First, not to disrupt mid  
7 blocks. Second, to preserve the integrity of street  
8 walls. Third, to create a graceful transition from  
9 mid blocks to avenues. And, fourth, to maximize the  
10 beneficial use of air rights that exist on historic  
11 buildings like Congregation Shearith Israel.

12 I think that what has been proposed here  
13 makes a contribution to the skyline, makes a  
14 contribution to the block. It is a wonderful thing  
15 about the Upper West Side that people walk on the  
16 mid blocks. I walk down West 70th Street almost  
17 every morning to pray at our synagogue, and I can  
18 tell you that if you come and walk from Columbus  
19 Avenue to Central Park West, consider the existence  
20 today of 101 Central Park West on that block; I  
21 think you will easily be able to see that this  
22 building is consistent with and contributes to the  
23 integrity of that street, and the suggestion that  
24 only a six-story building should be built is  
25 absolutely inconsistent with the other buildings

1 that would be adjacent to the lot that is now  
2 standing.

3 So I strongly support the proposal.  
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Michael Katz.

7 MR. KATZ: My name is Michael Katz, I am  
8 a trustee of Congregation Shearith Israel and  
9 resident of the Upper West Side at 86th Street.

10 I would like to speak to some personal  
11 experience that I have with the maintenance of the  
12 building. It has been my privilege as a trustee  
13 over the past six or seven years to be intimately  
14 engaged in the renovation of the stained glass  
15 windows, as well as having the responsibility of  
16 maintaining the building.

17 With respect to what Norman Marcus said,  
18 for 25 years, the building was not well maintained.  
19 And when a group of us took on the trusteeship, we  
20 began to examine the infrastructure of the building,  
21 and we were shocked that despite the appearance, the  
22 real infrastructure was in serious decay, and we  
23 began -- without a fund-raising program, simply  
24 because it had to begin -- we began a project of  
25 maintaining and upgrading the existing building,



1 utilities and, as I mentioned, the window.

2 We have experienced -- I used to come to  
3 the budget meetings and see the administrator, who  
4 was treasurer at the time, and he said, "Here's the  
5 biggest item in the budget," because even more than  
6 salaries and any other item, the cost of maintaining  
7 the building and bringing it up to what were minimal  
8 standards were the largest capital expenses out of  
9 our operating budget that we had for many, many  
10 years. I can assure you that without the endowment  
11 that the economic funds from this new building will  
12 provide us, we will not be able to maintain the  
13 building on a five- year cycle.

14 Up until when we began the project six or  
15 seven years ago, it hadn't been maintained on a  
16 five-year cycle probably forever, but we realized  
17 what the cost of it was. It is our sincere dream  
18 that this building will enable us to do that on a  
19 regular basis and will enable us to protect the  
20 building the way the building really needs to be  
21 protected.

22 Like Steve, it is my privilege also to  
23 walk to 70th Street every morning. I begin my  
24 morning by leaving 86th Street and Central Park West  
25 and walking down to 70th Street. I see different

1 degrees of sunlight, different degrees of shade, and  
2 I have really learned to enjoy the various  
3 distinctions as Central Park West changes. I can  
4 say that, number one, there is no uniformity.  
5 Certainly 101 and San Remo are so looming that they  
6 are a little frightening to these eyes, but when I  
7 turn the corner and see our building, it gives me  
8 great pride that we have presented a true landmark,  
9 something that is appropriate and sensitive,  
10 appropriate for the context and also a project that  
11 we have struggled so hard for so many years to  
12 develop that it will serve the needs of our landmark  
13 and will enable us to use our funds for our  
14 programming, which is the most appropriate use of  
15 our funds, and will also be within the context of  
16 the West Side historic district.

17 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Israel Goldstein.

18 AUDIENCE: He's left.

19 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Suzanne Stern?

20 Dennis Freilich?

21 MR. FREILICH: Members of the  
22 Commission, my name is Dennis Freilich. I am  
23 speaking as a supporter of this proposal. I have  
24 been a member of the Congregation Shearith Israel  
25 for 40 years. I have raised my children here, all

1 four of which are now members and have growing young  
2 families and are struggling like everybody else to  
3 be able to live in Manhattan.

4 I think that I don't want to repeat a lot  
5 of things that have already been said, but I am a  
6 former President of the congregation. I know the  
7 problems that the congregation had in trying to  
8 raise the funds to do what we have already done, and  
9 I think that, as you have heard, there are some  
10 members of means and there are also many members  
11 struggling, who are struggling, who cannot afford to  
12 finance a complete and ongoing renovation without  
13 help from the City Commission dealing with this  
14 question.

15 I want to just express my opinion that I  
16 think to a city that is full of large towers, a 14  
17 story building, to say that this is a tower, is a  
18 little bit disingenuous, and I would just like to  
19 urge the Commission to approve this proposal.

20 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

21 Stan Towne?

22 MR. TOWNE: Good evening. My name is  
23 Stan Towne. I am resident of Manhattan and a member  
24 of Shearith Israel. I am here to speak in favor of  
25 the proposal.

1 I have looked at the drawings and seen  
2 the models and it seems to me, although I am not an  
3 architect, that a 14-story building, immediately to  
4 the north is another 14-story building, immediately  
5 to the south is another 14-story building, it is  
6 contextual and will present a very nice arrangement  
7 at the end of West 70th Street.

8 I don't think that a person walking along  
9 the street considers this mid block. You would  
10 consider this an extension of the end of the block.  
11 So I urge you to find it is an appropriate building.

12 Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Are there any other  
14 people who wish to speak this evening? If so --  
15 yes?

16 AUDIENCE: For some reason I signed up  
17 and my name didn't pop up, so ...

18 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: There were a number  
19 of people whose names I called who had left the  
20 room.

21 MR. WRIGHT: I am Peter Wright of Six  
22 West 77th Street, so, no, I don't live on the  
23 adjacent block. I am a long-time West Side activist  
24 with significant involvement in projects relevant to  
25 this, and I want to speak to them. I am also a

1 former vestrman and Chairman of the capital  
2 campaign at Christ and Saint Stevens Episcopal  
3 Church, which is just two blocks west of this  
4 particular synagogue.

5 In thinking of this synagogue's long and  
6 distinguished history, and moving up from downtown  
7 as did Christ and Saint Stevens, I think we have  
8 many such institutions on the West Side and,  
9 unfortunately, if we took every single one of them  
10 which have a leaky roof, as mine did, and we had a  
11 capital campaign and successfully raised the money  
12 to replace it, if every single leaking roof  
13 sanctuary problem, problematic, not for profit on  
14 the West Side were able to build whatever it wanted  
15 to, wherever it wanted, I wonder what the West Side  
16 would look like?

17 I think we are addressing two issues and  
18 I want to address the second one: The first is: Is  
19 this in context appropriate physically? It  
20 certainly isn't. It's a simple building, 100 feet  
21 off Central Park West, but I want to address this  
22 whole business of preservation purpose. It seems to  
23 me the reason this thing is being considered is the  
24 idea that economically somehow it's going to pay for  
25 what needs to be done to keep this hallmark in great

1 shape and keep the institution moving forward. I  
2 went through this at Christ and Saint Stevens, a  
3 little church, 150 families, we raised some money,  
4 solved the problem.

5 I was a founding Director, and all of you  
6 around remember this one, the Fourth Universalist  
7 Church -- "Save our Universalist landmark's soul,"  
8 remember that one -- where that thing was a slam  
9 dunk hardship because all religious sanctuaries are  
10 uneconomic. They aren't office buildings, they  
11 aren't rentals set up by Jack Rudin, they aren't  
12 economic. That's not why they are built. So the  
13 Universalist was a slam dunk for hardship, if you  
14 remember, and it almost became an apartment building  
15 in the Horace Mann School, by that much.

16 The neighborhood got involved and raised  
17 the money, non-Unitarians, some were Episcopalian,  
18 and it is still there and it is doing just fine, and  
19 there's no tower.

20 Last, and certainly not least, is the  
21 building right next to where I live, the New York  
22 Historical Society, which is the other celebrated  
23 74-711. We all remember, and I remember oh so well  
24 -- by the way, I'm a former Director of Landmark  
25 West, and I am on the New York Historical Society

1       Advisory Committee, currently dormant and so forth.  
2       I have been around. I was on the Riverside South  
3       Planning Board with Donald Trump too. I remember  
4       that whole story and the hardship almost and the  
5       this and the that.

6               We were going to have this big tower --  
7       remember the Hough Hardie tower -- and the closer we  
8       got to the Historical Society, and the closer we got  
9       to the real numbers and to the tower, the more we  
10      saw, in that case -- and I am not saying in this  
11      one, we don't know, this my final point -- that the  
12      money wasn't going to solve their problems. Then  
13      The New York Times broke some stuff and you all  
14      remember what happened.

15             The real problem I have here is that  
16      aside from the red herring of this wonderful  
17      institution's history, Christ and Saint Stevens has  
18      a long history too.

19             CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Mr. Wright, I'm  
20      sorry, try to speak to us. We are the ones that  
21      want to hear what you have to say.

22             MR. WRIGHT: I'm sorry.

23             The thing to me that is critical to  
24      discover, which may in fact make this thing more  
25      viable, is we talk about the economic engine that

1 the Rabbi earlier referred to, of selling, I gather,  
2 eight or nine or eleven park view condominiums of  
3 3500 square feet for four or five million dollars or  
4 whatever, and to me, if you are going to consider  
5 what is, I think on the surface it is plainly  
6 inappropriate if not contextual, then the question  
7 of hardship, which has been kind of skirted this  
8 evening, is, "Okay, what is your endowment now?  
9 What is your cash flow?"

10 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: I'm sorry, Mr.  
11 Wright, this is not a hardship application. We have  
12 to first review this building in terms of, A, is it  
13 appropriate? And, then, B, is there a preservation  
14 purpose to be served by approving this application?

15 So I appreciate your comments, but please  
16 try to stick to those two points.

17 MR. WRIGHT: How do you know that there  
18 is a preservation process being served without  
19 seeing numbers? In the case of the three things  
20 that I mentioned, Christ and Saint Stevens, the  
21 Universalist Church --

22 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Mr. Wright, if you  
23 weren't here earlier, I outlined the issues that we  
24 must find in order to approve this project, in order  
25 to approve this project and prepare a report that we



1 would issue to the City Planning Commission.

2 MR. WRIGHT: Thank you, I understand.

3 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you, Mr.  
4 Wright.

5 Is there anyone else who wishes to speak  
6 this evening?

7 This hearing is going to be continued, I  
8 wanted to stress that again. Please come forward.

9 MS. WRIGHT: I am Carol Wright. I live  
10 at 91 Central Park West. I live next door to the  
11 synagogue, and I feel very fortunate to live next to  
12 it because I think it is a, beautiful magnificent  
13 building, but I also loved Penn Station, and we lost  
14 Penn Station. Penn Station was what moved everybody  
15 to get into landmarking, preserving neighborhoods.  
16 We finally managed to that, we do not want to chip  
17 away what we have gained.

18 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you very much.

19 I want to thank everybody for your  
20 patience, for your respect and for the very, very  
21 high quality of the comments that you have made this  
22 evening. I look forward to hearing from you again,  
23 as well as all the Commissioners, and I will move  
24 that we continue to a date that will be set as  
25 notified in the City Record, and we will be reaching

1 out to all of you to let you know when that is.

2 Could I have a second to that motion?

3 (The Commissioners all say "aye.")

4 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: All in favor?

5 (Chorus of "Ayes.")

6 (Time Noted: 7:30 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, MARGARET EUSTACE, a Shorthand Reporter  
and a Notary Public, do hereby certify that the  
foregoing is a true and accurate transcription of my  
stenographic notes.

I further certify that I am not employed  
by nor related to any party to this action.

  
MARGARET EUSTACE,  
Shorthand Reporter

1 THE NEW YORK CITY  
2 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
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3  
4 PUBLIC HEARING  
5 -----

6 Municipal Building  
7 1 Centre Street, North  
8 New York, New York

February 11, 2003

9 The above-entitled hearing commenced  
10 at 9:30 a.m.  
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1       APPEARANCES:

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3       Landmarks Preservation Commission

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5       BRIAN HOGG  
6       JAN POKORNY  
7       JOAN GERNER  
8       SHERIDA PAULSEN  
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13      CHRISTOPHER MOORE  
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15      SARAH CARROLL  
16      CAROLINE KERRY LEVY  
17      MARK SILVERMAN  
18      DIANE JACKIER

## 1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MS. JACKIER: Chair Tierney?

3 MR. TIERNEY: Here.

4 MS. JACKIER: Vice Chair Vengoechea?

5 MR. VENGOECHEA: Here.

6 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Gerner?

7 (No response.)

8 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Kane?

9 MS. KANE: Here.

10 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Moore?

11 (No response.)

12 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Olcott?

13 MR. OLCOTT: Here.

14 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Paulsen?

15 (No response.)

16 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Pike?

17 MR. PIKE: Here.

18 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Pokorny?

19 (No response.)

20 MS. JACKIER: Commissioner Match Suna?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. HOGG: The first two items are  
23 continued public hearings. The first item,  
24 application for a Certificate of Appropriateness in  
25 Manhattan. Docket 03-2628, 8 West 70th Street,

1 Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - Individual  
2 Landmark, in the Upper West Side/Central Park West  
3 Historic District. Block 1122, Lots 36, 37.

4 An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts  
5 style synagogue, designed by Brunner & Tryon and  
6 built in 1896-97.

7 Application is to demolish the existing  
8 community house and construct a 14-story building.

9 The second application is a request for  
10 modification use and bulk in Manhattan. Docket  
11 03-2653. 8 West 70th Street, Congregation Shearith  
12 Israel Synagogue - Individual Landmark, also within  
13 the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic  
14 District. Block 1122, Lots 36, 37.

15 An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts  
16 style synagogue, designed by Brunner & Tryon and  
17 built in 1896-97.

18 Application is to request that the  
19 Landmarks Preservation Commission issue a report to  
20 the City Planning Commission relating to an  
21 application for a special permit, pursuant to  
22 Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

23 MR. FRIEDMAN: I'm Shelly Friedman  
24 of Friedman & Gottbaum representing Congregation  
25 Shearith Israel.

1           The applications before you this morning  
2       are filed on behalf of the 450 families of the  
3       Congregation Shearith Israel. It's interesting to  
4       note that if you do a search of the term "Shearith  
5       Israel," you will find many references -- none of  
6       them coined by the Congregation itself -- referring  
7       to Shearith Israel as the "Mother Congregation  
8       American Jewry." It is that role in which this  
9       building is viewed, both in terms of the  
10      Congregation's role as the birthplace of the  
11      American Jewish experience. It predates the  
12      American Revolutionary War, as well as its role,  
13      centuries old role, in the migration of the Jewish  
14      peoples to the western hemisphere that this  
15      building was considered an international landmark  
16      long before this commission honored it as such in  
17      the 1970's.

18           Each succeeding generation has taken  
19      with great pride its role as the steward of an  
20      icon, which is world renowned as a symbol of  
21      liberty, freedom and a historical continuity and  
22      faith. The congregation is pleased to be here this  
23      morning and present to you its plan for a building  
24      which will permit it to build 14 stories on a site  
25      which controls immediately behind the landmark.



1           Its interests in preserving the landmark  
2       itself are well documented by its efforts virtually  
3       since the construction of the building, and its  
4       preservation is taken as an article of faith by the  
5       Congregation itself. We're not here to ask for  
6       your help in preserving the building. That will  
7       continue. What we are here to do is to ask you for  
8       your assistance in helping us to produce a modest  
9       economic engine, ten or eleven apartments, which  
10      will be used to support the fulfillment of the  
11      completion of the preservation program of the  
12      landmark itself, to permit the restoration of the  
13      parsonage immediately adjacent to the landmark,  
14      which is in the historic district, and to permit  
15      the replacement of a dysfunctional and commonly  
16      viewed unattractive community house which is behind  
17      the designated landmark but also within the  
18      historic district.

19           Our presentation this morning will  
20      consist of five speakers. I will be followed by  
21      Rabbi Mark Angel, to discuss the program of  
22      Synagogue, immediately followed by Peter Neustadter  
23      to describe the history, in brief, of the  
24      Congregation and the relevance of that history to  
25      the application before you.

1                   They will be followed by Elise  
2           Quasebarth who will describe the context in which  
3           we are viewing -- the multiple contexts in which we  
4           are viewing this project as you look at it and find  
5           for its appropriateness.

6                   She will be followed by Charles Platt,  
7           who will describe the building itself in the  
8           application. Following that, Steve Tilly, who is  
9           the restoration architect for the Synagogue, will  
10          discuss the restoration program. And I will come  
11          back to discuss the zoning actions that are being  
12          requested pursuant to the Section 74-711 request.

13                   This congregation seriously needs your  
14          assistance with regard to both the Certificate of  
15          Appropriateness and the filing of the report to  
16          support the 74-711 special permit so that all of  
17          these preservation efforts continue and so that  
18          they can bring the building and retain the building  
19          in first-class condition.

20                   I'm going to ask Rabbi Angel to speak to  
21          you.

22                   RABBI ANGEL:     Thank you very much. I  
23          began serving Congregation Shearith Israel as a  
24          student rabbi in 1969. I was a 24-year-old young  
25          man then. I have the pleasure of sitting next to

1 Rabbi Emeretis Rabbi David Poole, who had begun  
2 serving our congregation in 1907. Dr. Poole gave  
3 me a blessing upon starting that auspicious career  
4 at Shearith Isreal, and when Dr. Poole held my  
5 hand, his historic memory went back to 1907, his  
6 predecessor began in 1877. That predecessor began  
7 in 1888. That predecessor began in 1838. The long  
8 and the short of it is, when I shook his hand, I  
9 was connecting -- I was the eighth rabbi since  
10 1768. This is a Congregation with a very deep and  
11 profound historical sense, a sense of continuity, a  
12 sense of tradition.

13 I have learned in the years I have  
14 worked in the congregation how very important the  
15 historical context our community is. Every morning  
16 we say our prayers in the chapel, furnishings in  
17 which go back to 1730. We have plaques here and  
18 there in the building representing families that go  
19 back to colonial days. Every year around Memorial  
20 Day, we do a service downtown in our cemetery where  
21 we mark the graves of our congregants who fought in  
22 the American Revolution.

23 Within our congregation, history is  
24 alive. The most important thing about our  
25 congregation is not only a sense of renovation for

1 its history and its past, but it is not a museum.  
2 It's a living, vibrant institution that has its  
3 roots in the past with a vision for the future.

4 We live, of course, in very complicated  
5 times, and it's very rare to have any institution  
6 in America that has memory going back 350 years.  
7 This congregation has that. As Shelly Friedman  
8 just mentioned a minute ago, the congregation not  
9 only serves its immediate community, but is a  
10 symbol of the continuity of the American Jewish  
11 community. It happens to be the first congregation  
12 founded in America. And not just the American  
13 Jewish community, but how many symbols of any  
14 denomination do we have in America that go back 350  
15 years?

16 In our neighborhood, we've had ups and  
17 downs over the years. In the 1920's, my  
18 predecessor that I mentioned before, Dr. Poole,  
19 wrote a report that the Congregation sell this  
20 building and move over to the East Side because the  
21 neighborhood is so bad. Subsequently, we had other  
22 periods of good and bad. Our trustees have always  
23 had the opinion, "We've invested in this  
24 neighborhood. This is where are. This is we are  
25 going to be the anchor, the demographic anchor for

1 the congregation and for the community."

2 The congregation has felt a very strong  
3 sense of stewardship to be able to maintain the  
4 building built by Arnold Brunner, designed by Louis  
5 Tiffany. These are sources of tremendous pride for  
6 us.

7 During the past five years our  
8 congregation has taxed itself mercilessly. When I  
9 say "mercilessly," I mean we really have been  
10 working so hard simply to maintain and restore the  
11 building. We have spent so much time and energy  
12 and funds to do this that, in fact, it's starting  
13 to impinge upon the overall good of the  
14 congregation.

15 Every dollar that we spend maintaining  
16 the building is a dollar taken away from our  
17 spiritual mission, from our youth programs, from  
18 education, from social action programs, service to  
19 the young and old. Shearith Israel has been a  
20 historic venerable institution. It's alive,  
21 something that's growing, something that has  
22 future. And it's necessary for us to have the  
23 wherewithal to be able to create a stronger future  
24 for us and for the community in which we live.

25 We're about to celebrate our 350th

1 anniversary, September 2004. Mark it on your  
2 calendars. We've been on our present site for 105  
3 years. The site of our building in 1897 was a dust  
4 bowl. I think the only building in the area was on  
5 72nd Street, the Dakota. All the buildings in our  
6 vicinity, all these buildings you see here all came  
7 after Shearith Israel. It was understood that the  
8 community grows, the community develops. And just  
9 as Shearith Israel was a very good neighbor and was  
10 very happy to see the development of others and  
11 know others with similar sentiments of kindness and  
12 compassion, the work of our own congregation.

13 We think our proposal is reasonable and  
14 thoughtfully conceived, and the experts will tell  
15 you about that, but I just want to conclude by  
16 saying that we ask you to consider our proposal  
17 favorably on its own merits, but also in light of  
18 the importance to the ongoing stability and ability  
19 of Shearith Israel to maintain its high standards  
20 of stewardship and communal service. We owe this  
21 respect and reverence to the generations that have  
22 come before us, but we also owe this respect and  
23 commitment to the generations that will follow us.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. NEUSTADTER: Good morning. My

1 name is Peter Neustadter. I am the Parnas or  
2 President of Congregation Shearith Israel, the  
3 Spanish and Portugese Synagogue in the City of New  
4 York.

5 In 1654, 23 Sephardic Jews, fleeing the  
6 inquisition in Portuguese Brazil, were making their  
7 way back to Amsterdam when they were captured by  
8 pirates, rescued by a French ship and dropped off  
9 destitute two weeks before Rosh Hashanah here in  
10 and then New Amsterdam.

11 That Rosh Hashanah service held  
12 September 16, 1654 marked the beginning of Jewish  
13 life in North America. Even at that time they had  
14 the historic foresight to name their newly formed  
15 congregation "Shearith Israel" or a "Remnant of  
16 Israel."

17 Congregation Shearith Israel, the  
18 subject of this application, residing in its fifth  
19 synagogue building on 70th and Central Park West is  
20 not only the oldest Jewish congregation in North  
21 America, but the oldest in the English-speaking  
22 world. These Jews, from the beginning, fought not  
23 to be tolerated but to be equal citizens. They  
24 fought with the Dutch against the British, they  
25 fought with the British against the Indians, and

1 with George Washington for the Independence of the  
2 United States.

3 Because of community opposition,  
4 services were held in private homes until they were  
5 given the right to purchase land and build the  
6 first synagogue building in New York in 1730. That  
7 1730 synagogue building still exists today next to  
8 our main sanctuary on Central Park West. It has  
9 been carefully preserved and restored and is used  
10 every day for morning and evening services. We sit  
11 on the original 1730 benches. The Torah scrolls  
12 are kept in the 18th century ark lit by a  
13 270-years-old Eternal Light.

14 Pre-revolutionary rimonim or bells crown  
15 the Torah scrolls. One set of these bells in the  
16 main sanctuary was made by the famous colonial  
17 silversmith Myer Meyers, a contemporary Paul Revere  
18 and Parnas of the congregation during the colonial  
19 period.

20 In the ark there are Torah scrolls that  
21 were slashed by British soldiers when they entered  
22 the synagogue during the Revolutionary War. The  
23 Chazzan will read on the same 1730 reader's  
24 platform surrounded by the Morano style  
25 candlesticks. In the main sanctuary, the wood



1 floor boards under the reader's platform were  
2 taken from the 1730 building.

3 Shearith Israel's mission is about  
4 preserving the past and carefully handing it down  
5 to the next generation. For hundreds of years, we  
6 acted as a landmark and preservation group before  
7 the concept was popular. Our goal today is still  
8 the same, preserve the past, which is the landmark;  
9 hand it down to the next generation; restore; and  
10 provide means for future generations to maintain  
11 it.

12 Even before the fire at the central  
13 synagogue, the trustees of the congregation ordered  
14 an engineering study of our 100-year-old classical  
15 Beaux art building. The engineers reported that  
16 the south wall and parts of the ceiling were in  
17 danger of collapse, the turn-of-the-century  
18 electrical wiring with its newspaper insulation was  
19 a fire hazard, and there was, in fact, evidence of  
20 early electrical fires that, thank God, did not  
21 spread. Water leakage from the roof and walls were  
22 causing damage to the magnificent scagliola.  
23 Tiffany glass was falling out of its frames and  
24 limestone masonry was in danger of falling off the  
25 building.

1           It was obvious to the trustees that we  
2       could not wait to go through this lengthy procedure  
3       to start the repairs. Our historic building had to  
4       be protected and stabilized immediately. We did  
5       the responsible thing. We started a major capital  
6       campaign and spared no expense to protect the  
7       landmark. New electrical systems, state-of-the-art  
8       fire detection and suppression systems were  
9       installed. The first nitrogen mist suppression  
10      system in New York City was put in place. Leaks  
11      were fixed, walls reinforced and fire retardant  
12      materials pumped in.

13           During the restoration, our architects  
14      discovered that not only did Louis Tiffany design  
15      the windows, but, also, Tiffany did the entire  
16      interior design. We have restored the interior to  
17      its original 1897 Louis Tiffany color scheme. We  
18      always knew that our Synagogue was magnificent, but  
19      when the interior scaffolding came down, it was  
20      beyond expectation.

21           New York City certainly has one of the  
22      great synagogues of the world. While we have  
23      stabilized and protected the landmark, much work is  
24      left to be done. Our restoration architect, Steve  
25      Tilly, will give a detailed report on the extensive

1 work that remains undone on the exterior of the  
2 landmark and parsonage.

3 In addition, the community house next to  
4 the landmark on 70th Street was in terrible  
5 condition and should be torn down and rebuilt.

6 The trustees of the congregation have  
7 decided not to proceed with the developer for this  
8 application. We wanted to take control over this  
9 process. We are the ones that are going to be here  
10 after the developer has left.

11 The goal of a developer would not  
12 necessarily coincide with the needs of the landmark  
13 or the community. To achieve this, we interviewed  
14 and hired architects and consultants who have a  
15 reputation for historic conservation and  
16 preservation. We asked them to design the  
17 minimum-sized building that could become the  
18 economic engine for us to finish the restoration,  
19 rebuild the community house and provide the  
20 endowment for continued maintenance of the  
21 landmark.

22 We feel our proposal is a responsible  
23 one that highlights and supports the landmark  
24 building, enhances the skyline of Central Park West  
25 and compliments the neighborhood.

1           Many people have asked why don't we just  
2       raise the money from the congregation and finish  
3       the restoration and rebuild the community house?  
4       Before we submitted the application, I met it with  
5       our Budget, Finance and Campaign Committees and  
6       main supporters of the congregation. In today's  
7       world, where there is such a great demand on every  
8       charitable dollar both here in New York and abroad,  
9       I can tell you definitely that it would be  
10      impossible to raise the sum of money required from  
11      the congregation. There is no chance that the  
12      congregation will be able to finish the restoration  
13      of the landmark, continue the maintenance of the  
14      landmark and rebuild the community house without  
15      this **economic engine** that this project would  
16      provide.

17           We hope that future generations will  
18      thank this generation of congregants, this  
19      generation of New Yorkers, and especially this  
20      landmark board for providing us the ability to pass  
21      this precious heritage to them in a condition that  
22      would make us all proud.

23           Thank you.

24           MS. QUASEBARTH:     Good morning,  
25      commissioners. My name is Elise Quasebarth. With

1 the historic preservation consultants for the  
2 project, we worked very closely with the team to  
3 look at the context that this proposal is being  
4 made and to better understand it and to propose a  
5 building that would be appropriate both to the  
6 individual landmark, Central Park West, and to  
7 West 70th Street.

8 Just to give you some views of the  
9 existing condition, this is the synagogue building  
10 here looking south on Central Park West. The  
11 rectory building is immediately to the south of it.  
12 Here's another view. This is looking down West  
13 70th Street, and this is a closer view showing the  
14 synagogue and the community house, closer to the  
15 community house and the adjacent lot to the west,  
16 which is an empty lot today. This constitutes the  
17 site for redevelopment.

18 This building was actually a refacing of  
19 an earlier building -- two buildings that were  
20 acquired by the synagogue in the 1940's. They had  
21 considered building a new building and actually  
22 filed with the Department of Buildings to do that,  
23 did not execute that plan, and in 1954, what they  
24 did was demolish the facade -- the facades of the  
25 two buildings that were there. Here's a 1940

1 photograph showing that. They took off the top  
2 story and built this facade. This is 1954 and the  
3 architects were Cole & Leiberman.

4 Our historical images show the changes  
5 of the neighborhood over time, and one of the  
6 things that's really quite interesting is that the  
7 synagogue building which was built in 1897 had a  
8 context, at that time, of buildings which were much  
9 smaller row houses completely along West 70th  
10 Street and smaller apartment buildings along  
11 Central Park West. This photo from 1928 actually  
12 shows the site of this building here that you see  
13 in this photo. This is a nine-story apartment  
14 building that was replaced by the current apartment  
15 buildings which exist today. That is 15 stories  
16 plus a penthouse. It also shows this apartment  
17 building in 1928 which was replaced the following  
18 year by the existing 17-, 18-story apartment  
19 building to the north. So, it's very interesting  
20 to see that as the synagogue was built, that the  
21 city built up around it.

22 If you look at the immediate context, we  
23 also looked at the buildings along Central Park  
24 West, which I'm going to show first. To recall  
25 that our institution here at 70th Street is in a

1 body of institutional buildings along Central Park  
2 West. Certainly, you know about the apartment  
3 buildings with the wonderful art deco and  
4 turn-of-the-century apartment buildings. The  
5 institutions tend to be on the corners, and what we  
6 were looking for here is to see what the individual  
7 contexts were for those institutions as well. What  
8 we did see was that each one of them has a very  
9 dense urban environment with taller apartment  
10 buildings sitting either immediately adjacent to  
11 them or with a little space between them. They'll  
12 talk about the spaces when we talk about the  
13 building. Here's the New York Historical Society  
14 here, an apartment building, and others as we go  
15 down Central Park West.

16 So, we felt that what we were proposing  
17 for our site had a relationship which was very  
18 similar to relationships we see to our  
19 institutional buildings along the avenue.

20 Finally, we want to look a little more  
21 closely with what's happening in the immediate  
22 vicinity. I'll locate you on our map here, this is  
23 Central Park West, West 70th Street. And our site  
24 is here, the Synagogue is right on the corner, and  
25 the building site is immediately to the west. The

1 buildings, again, dark gray, are apartment  
2 buildings. You see that along Central Park West  
3 and even inside along West 70th Street, there are  
4 apartment buildings as well. So, the side street  
5 has row houses, as well as apartment buildings.  
6 These are nine stories. There is one here on 69th  
7 Street that's 14. You can see that there is really  
8 kind of a denser development of apartment buildings  
9 in this small ecosystem of the historic district,  
10 images showing those relationships. This is  
11 looking west on 70th Street with the apartment  
12 building immediately adjacent to our site. And  
13 more importantly, I think what's interesting to  
14 note is that the buildings that exist on Central  
15 Park West, which tend to be tall apartment  
16 buildings, have a very strong presence on the side  
17 street, and they reach very far back into the side  
18 street. As you can see here, our site is well  
19 within the line, the zone, of the footprint of  
20 buildings along Central Park West. It's  
21 illustrated very clearly. Here is the Magestic at  
22 72nd Street and our building immediately to the  
23 north. Again, it has a very strong presence on  
24 72nd Street.

25 If you look at the model, you can see



1 very clearly how that works. Our site is here and  
2 you can see the buildings along Central Park West  
3 and the apartment buildings that are immediately  
4 nearby.

5 So, what we hope that you will agree  
6 with is that this proposal is appropriate because  
7 it echoes familiar forms and scale relationships  
8 throughout the historic district. It fits within  
9 the immediate context of the denser apartment house  
10 development, and that the site is well within the  
11 zone of Central Park West apartment buildings as  
12 they reach back into the side street.

13 I would like now to introduce Charles  
14 Platt, who -- well, the architects from Platt,  
15 Byard, Dovell & White, to discuss the architecture,  
16 and they also have some boards that will show some  
17 of the design relationships between existing  
18 buildings.

19 MR. WHITE: Thank you, Commissioners.  
20 I'm Sam White from Platt, Byard, Dovell & White. I  
21 have with me my partners, Paul Byard and Charles  
22 Platt.

23 What I would like to do is take you  
24 through the dimensional characteristics of the  
25 application, and then I'll ask Charles and Paul to

1 discuss the architectural.

2 As have been described, the existing  
3 side is a 64-by-100-foot site behind the synagogue  
4 at the corner of Central Park West and West 70th  
5 Street. The parsonage is to the south. The  
6 existing is occupied by a four-story community  
7 house and a vacant lot. The proposal is to remove  
8 the community house and to build, along the sides  
9 of the community house and the vacant lot, a  
10 14-story building which would have complete block  
11 coverage at the first floor and then at floors 2  
12 through 4 would have a 20-foot rear yard and floors  
13 5 through 14 would have a 30-foot rear yard. I can  
14 show you this section. The space is below grade.  
15 First floor would be built full with a small  
16 synagogue -- it starts -- it's currently in the  
17 parsonage building -- moved and re-accommodated in  
18 the back of the new development. Then floors 2, 3  
19 and 4 would be the community facility, offices and  
20 schools, back with a 20-foot rear yard. Floors 5  
21 through 14 would have a 30-foot yard. They would  
22 be occupied by apartments.

23 A section cut the other way looking  
24 south, parallel to 70th Street, shows that at the  
25 5th floor the building is set back ten feet from

1 the synagogue. For architectural reasons, this  
2 allowed us to create a figurative building that  
3 allowed the synagogue to start to read as a  
4 three-dimensional object, particularly at the back  
5 of the synagogue.

6 I would like to show you three  
7 representative plans. The first floor plan shows  
8 the sanctuary itself. Steve Tilly will talk a  
9 little bit more about it, but the Torah scrolls are  
10 stored here. For what we describe as "liturgical  
11 reasons," you cannot, in fact, enter this building  
12 through what would appear to be the front door  
13 itself. An entry to the building is from the back,  
14 and there are some problems with respect to that.  
15 The current entry is a small side door here and an  
16 even smaller existing door in the parish house.  
17 One of the goals of this project is to create a  
18 first floor that resolves the fenestration  
19 problems. But the first floor would be divided  
20 between apartment use and community-facility use, a  
21 small apartment lobby with its own front door at  
22 the western end of 70th, and then the balance of  
23 the first floor being given over to community  
24 facility and synagogue uses.

25 On floors 2 through 4, the 20-foot rear

1 yard would have a typical plan of classrooms or  
2 offices. You would technically have two cores.  
3 One is the apartment residence core all the way to  
4 the west, and then you have a smaller community  
5 core which provides egress and access to the  
6 synagogue at all levels.

7 And then, on floors 6 through 14, where  
8 we have the setback of ten feet from the back of  
9 the synagogue, you have the 3,500 square foot --  
10 gross square foot footprint of each floor, of the  
11 upper floors. That would be developed as one  
12 apartment per floor, with windows facing south,  
13 east and north and a parting wall to the west.

14 Charles, at that point, do you want to  
15 start to talk now about the architectural issues?

16 MR. BYARD: Very, very briefly -- I'm  
17 Paul Byard. Why don't I just try to remind you  
18 where we were before when we talked a little bit  
19 about expression, which is what is principally  
20 shown best on the two rendered elevations. And it  
21 had to do with issues of trying to organize the  
22 expression to take advantage of some of the cues of  
23 light -- solid and void of light, glass, of dark,  
24 and of white, and work them into a suitable  
25 expression for a new building that would be closely

1 integrated and related to the old. I think the  
2 renderings speak awfully well for themselves.  
3 Maybe you would want to emphasize some of the other  
4 issues of massing.

5 MR. PLATT: My name is Charles Platt.

6 Sam White has mentioned the setback from  
7 the synagogue, and this was very important to us.  
8 Not only is it set back here, but there is a reveal  
9 that continues down. This is to allow the very  
10 fine landmark itself to have breathing room, and  
11 there is a great deal of our thinking that goes  
12 with that in the use of materials, the form itself.  
13 It's to complement the synagogue there, not to  
14 imitate or mimic any of its details, but to set  
15 itself appropriately apart from the synagogue.

16 The envelope that we arrive at,  
17 described by Sam, set back 30 feet for the tower  
18 and 20 feet down below gives you a somewhat -- a  
19 symmetrical form on the synagogue itself. And in  
20 order to overcome that, we had looked at various  
21 signals that we found up and down Central Park  
22 West.

23 Perhaps that board would be useful here.  
24 The corners on buildings on Central Park West are  
25 very important. We have taken a cue from that and

1 developed corners here, which allows us to set the  
2 main frame of the elevation symmetrically over the  
3 bridge line of the synagogue. The form itself is  
4 not symmetrical, but we believe we've overcome that  
5 and, in fact, have set this to -- to have put it  
6 asymmetrically really created all kinds of  
7 inappropriate tension between the two buildings,  
8 and we set that off there.

9 The form of window which you see  
10 somewhat here with the casement windows on the side  
11 is, also, rather typical of some of the buildings  
12 up and down Central Park West. We have used that  
13 device as well to create our facade. The window  
14 itself is very carefully scaled, and, actually,  
15 that portion of it on this facade is a slight  
16 distortion on the east facade; it is the same  
17 scale. It happens to be this one, but is rather  
18 typical of the pairing of windows or the individual  
19 open part up and down, again, Central Park West, of  
20 the adjoining buildings.

21 In order to anchor this and to relate  
22 the tower -- hardly a tower, but this form -- to  
23 the synagogue itself, we have created at the  
24 school/community facility, a face here which allows  
25 high windows and a great deal of light into the

1 classroom and allows, also, an expression which  
2 relates to the tower up above, remembering that the  
3 entrance to the synagogue is actually here. It's  
4 in that door there, as Sam pointed out, for  
5 liturgical reasons, you cannot enter here. It's  
6 there. But with this, we will begin to open up --  
7 and Steve Tilly can go into this further -- but  
8 we're providing handicapped access, and with  
9 ability to accommodate with these screens here --  
10 which are somewhat distracted, shown here -- to be  
11 worked out in detail, screens with glass behind, so  
12 that there is light coming through that in both  
13 directions. And then you have a more formal  
14 entrance. This will continue to be used, but this  
15 provides the entrance and exit for the grand  
16 occasions, while entrance to the tower, residential  
17 tower above, is maintained.

18 At the top, as with all buildings -- I  
19 think all -- actually, I haven't checked that. But  
20 I dare say, all buildings, there is a top to them  
21 which requires embellishment and a different  
22 treatment, and we have done the same there with the  
23 top two floors of our building.

24 MR. BYARD: That also has a source in  
25 the studio window.

1 MR. PLATT: Well, indeed, it does.

2 MR. BYARD: One of the wonderful  
3 features of this particular neighborhood is the  
4 double-high studio windows.

5 MR. PLATT: This shows rather pinker  
6 than we intend it to be. The stone that we are  
7 looking at now for the building is really much more  
8 of a buff color, and it matches a lot of the  
9 masonry up and down the avenue. We also considered  
10 Jerusalem stone. There was a very careful decision  
11 not to use the kind of limestone, the grayish or  
12 buff limestone used on the synagogue, but again, as  
13 with the form, to set this aside and apart in terms  
14 of color and style.

15 The west and south elevations have brick  
16 and clear glass. There will be some deformed glass  
17 up on the sides here and there, with the main  
18 element. That again relates, although many, many  
19 changes have taken place in this building, but  
20 there were different treatments of glass in that  
21 building. Originally, we were going to use that as  
22 well.

23 At this level here we will be using  
24 bronze, which goes with and compliments the doors  
25 to the synagogue, whereas up above it will be



1 painted metal and at the roof, zinc. The roof --  
2 these are the frames of the window. That's it very  
3 briefly, but this -- with the exception of the  
4 stone, it's the complete pallet of the building. I  
5 say the "exception." It's just not consolidated,  
6 but it's going to be something like that.

7 MR. BYARD: In designing this  
8 building, we saw ourselves as having four contexts  
9 in which to work. And I think the development of  
10 the design and the judging of the design has to be  
11 related to those contexts.

12 First is the context of the landmark.  
13 This is a building immediately adjacent to a  
14 designated landmark. I think that informed us on a  
15 number of issues. It informed us about the color  
16 of the stone we wanted to choose, so that the stone  
17 for the new building attached itself to the  
18 landmark. It also informed us about the  
19 developments of the three-dimensional nature of  
20 this facade, with a series of screens and layers  
21 and real depth. The landmark itself is a building  
22 of immensely robust plasticity, that it would be  
23 wrong to get a flat, flat, flat building next to  
24 it. So, this building, within the context of  
25 contemporary techniques, really tries to work with

1 light and shadow and very deep recesses, and the  
2 activity down around the base starts to replicate  
3 the layering that occurs with the landmark itself.

4 The next context is the context of  
5 Central Park West. We saw this as a Central Park  
6 West building. I think, if you look at the site  
7 model, in particular, you will see that the  
8 composition and placement of this building is sort  
9 of a deliberate carving out of a space on Central  
10 Park West. That space over the existing synagogue  
11 honors the landmark. I think it is essential, in  
12 creating that space, you have buildings holding the  
13 frame in place. So that this is a building that we  
14 think has a very active role along Central Park by  
15 virtue of its placement as well as by virtue of its  
16 appearance.

17 We also have the context of the  
18 neighborhood. This is a historic district. It's a  
19 historic district whose character arises out of a  
20 very fine scale, elements that occur at a  
21 pedestrian level, as well as the general pedestrian  
22 scale of the mid-blocks regardless of whether  
23 they're starting to develop into higher mid-blocks  
24 than up north.

25 As you walk down the street, I think

1 your awareness of this building is going to be  
2 really determined by what is going on on the first  
3 four floors of it, that these windows were intended  
4 to create an element that replicated the townhouse  
5 scale of the mid-block areas beyond it. As we  
6 develop the nature of the grills and the entrances,  
7 I think that the standard by which they have to be  
8 judged is whether they are truly pleasant to walk  
9 past because that is the character of those side  
10 streets on West Side.

11 You also have Central Park -- the  
12 designated landmark itself, the scenic landmark,  
13 and this is a building which can be seen from  
14 Central Park. It is obvious they're going to be  
15 looking out at Central Park, so that the centering  
16 of the screen and the creation of two-story windows  
17 at the top is really a response to -- I think, some  
18 of the design issues that come out of the  
19 picturesque landscape. Think about buildings built  
20 in the third quarter of the 19th century invariably  
21 had towers and belvederes. There was sort of an  
22 interactive quality between the building and the  
23 landscape. You wanted the building to be designed  
24 to have a feature that looked as if the landscape  
25 should be looked at and appreciated. That was one

1 of the reasons we developed two-story windows at  
2 the top. They are part of that tradition of sort  
3 of the belvedere buildings.

4 I'm going to stop here. Charles or  
5 Paul, do you have something more to add?

6 MR. PLATT: I'm just going to point out  
7 that some of your remarks just now about the scale  
8 of 70th Street, how important that element is, even  
9 though it's rendered much more heavily here.  
10 That's a quirk of the rendition here. But those  
11 scale elements show there, and that ten-foot  
12 setback here is not an arbitrary dimension. We  
13 know that. And you may see in this model here that  
14 it was also typical, really, throughout upper  
15 Manhattan that larger buildings on the avenue have  
16 an eight-foot or a ten-foot alleyway between them  
17 and the small-scale buildings, generally, so that  
18 ten feet was chosen specifically here as typical of  
19 this district as well as others.

20 MR. VENGOCHEA: What is the actual  
21 distance of the building from Central Park?

22 MR. PLATT: The synagogue is 108 feet  
23 to here, and we are another 64 feet there. It is,  
24 as was pointed out by Elise, not the furthest back.  
25 This building comes back further. I believe this

1 does, and there are at least two others south of  
2 this, which they stand from the avenue back further  
3 than that distance here.

4 MR. FRIEDMAN: We are going to shift  
5 the presentation now to discuss briefly the Section  
6 74-711 aspect, if that's okay.

7 The Section 74-711 design resolution is  
8 a very unique vision. It exists to permit the  
9 Landmarks Commission to assist an applicant in  
10 obtaining zoning waivers from the Department of  
11 City Planning, the Planning Commission, in  
12 furtherance of a defined preservation purpose.

13 I am going to turn this over to Steve  
14 Tilly and then come back and list those zoning  
15 actions for you. What Mr. Tilly is going to  
16 present to you is the quantity of work that remains  
17 on this landmark that must be done in order to  
18 bring it forward to a first-class condition, and  
19 that is the standard in the zoning resolution to  
20 which we are all aspiring here, to return the  
21 landmark and be able to maintain it in a  
22 first-class condition.

23 74-711 has been used by this Commission  
24 many times in the past, in some cases simply to  
25 remove air rights from over the landmark so it can

1 no longer be developed, and that also is at play  
2 here.

3 But before I get into that, I'd like to  
4 ask Steve Tilly to present to you the quantum of  
5 work that we are hopeful will be included in the  
6 preservation program finding that will further the  
7 preservation of the landmark.

8 MR. TIERNEY: Before you start, I  
9 believe much of this is in the record, so that we  
10 militate for a succinct summary of it, if you  
11 could.

12 MR. TILLY: My name is Steve Tilly and  
13 I have been master planning with the congregation  
14 since 1999, and that master plan, preservation  
15 master plan, led to the notion of the new building.

16 Many of you have visited the site and  
17 seen the work in progress that Peter described,  
18 Peter Neustadter, and which we have all taken great  
19 pride in what's been accomplished. My message is  
20 very simple today, which is there is a lot more to  
21 do.

22 I have tried to highlight on the plans  
23 and elevations, I have highlighted in lurid mode --  
24 which you can probably see even in the back of the  
25 room -- the remaining scope of work. There is a

1 lot of work to do on the parsonage. You remember  
2 the site plans right now are three buildings and a  
3 vacant lot. The parsonage faces Central Park and  
4 was part of the original composition with an early  
5 addition. It has not been touched. We've done a  
6 little bit of roof repair, but there is a  
7 tremendous amount of work that needs to be done on  
8 that portion of the building. And I won't go on  
9 into elaborate detail on it. That's in the record.

10 Another large piece of work is that we  
11 have stopped water from migrating through the  
12 building, which was causing a lot of exterior and  
13 interior damage, with an underlayment for the final  
14 roof. While we have stopped the water, we have not  
15 completed the roofing job on the sanctuary itself.  
16 And you can see that, which will be a lead-coated  
17 and standing seam copper roof, like that which we  
18 discovered under the previous asphalt will be  
19 restored, and that's a very big-ticket item.

20 In addition to those major pieces, there  
21 is a significant amount of work on the front of the  
22 synagogue itself. The bronze gates need to be  
23 restored. The front steps, which you can see in  
24 these photographs, are small and deteriorated.  
25 They need to be replaced. The railing needs

1 replacement, this inappropriate railing, which also  
2 interferes with the egress. The bronze gates have  
3 to be modified for appropriate egress, and there's  
4 a whole set of area ways and railings which move  
5 around the building on 70th Street which also have  
6 not been addressed and need to in the near future.  
7 So, that program, again, compacted, is the program  
8 which led us back -- as we looked at the master  
9 plan, to the need to maintain the building, to  
10 complete the preservation program in a first-class  
11 manner, which led us back to the notion of the new  
12 building.

13 In addition, obviously, as my associate  
14 architects have described, the existing community  
15 house is not an appropriate partner for the  
16 sanctuary. And there are major circulation  
17 problems that the current arrangement imposes on  
18 the ongoing life in the sense of sustainability of  
19 the landmark; that is, traffic circulates  
20 inappropriately through one space and another. The  
21 small synagogue is burdened by extra traffic  
22 internally, and the new building would remove the  
23 small synagogue and allow corridors and appropriate  
24 egress for the safety and the ongoing life of the  
25 building.



1 MR. FRIEDMAN: I'll conclude then by  
2 just citing --

3 MR. TIERNEY: Just to confirm, there  
4 is a cyclical maintenance program also attached?

5 MR. TILLY: Absolutely. The cyclical  
6 program would come back to many of these issues  
7 that we addressed in this last sort of 75-year  
8 program.

9 MR. FRIEDMAN: To just conclude by  
10 listing the zoning actions we requested you support  
11 us on, the zoning lot is split. The avenue portion  
12 is under R10A. The mid-block portion is zoned for  
13 R8B.

14 We are asking for a series of zoning  
15 actions, the most important of which is to transfer  
16 9,000 square feet off of the synagogue, from the  
17 R10A portion of the site, onto the new development  
18 portion of the site. In addition, that would still  
19 have 82,000 square feet of developable Central Park  
20 West F.A.R. presiding over the synagogue, but by  
21 virtue of this approval, that development F.A.R.  
22 would be frozen. So, we are leaving 82,000 square  
23 feet on the table, so to speak, as part of this  
24 process. We would be asking to transfer 9,000 of  
25 that across the district boundary line. We are

1 asking, because of the configuration of the new  
2 development, there is a height and setback waiver  
3 in the R10A portion of the building and a setback  
4 waiver within the R8B portion.

5 We are also seeking, as Sam pointed out,  
6 in the stacking of the building for that portion of  
7 the building, which is for community facility space  
8 only. That is the bottom two floors. You well  
9 know that we get the first 23 feet at full-lot  
10 coverage under the zoning for the community  
11 facility. We would be requesting, however, for the  
12 upper three floors, we be able to provide a 20-foot  
13 rear yard instead of a 30-foot rear yard. That  
14 would make the programmatic issues for the  
15 community facility space much, much easier to deal  
16 with. When we begin the residential portion of the  
17 development, that goes back to a complying 30-foot  
18 rear yard for the remaining part of the building.  
19 In that description of the rear yard, there's also  
20 a corollary lot coverage issue, but they just track  
21 each other.

22 So, we have the rear-yard situation. We  
23 have the height and setback situation, but most  
24 importantly, we have the issue of transferring the  
25 bulk off of the designated landmark, and so that it

1 no longer theoretically threatens any sort of  
2 development on the landmark itself.

3 That concludes our presentation. Mr.  
4 Chairman, thank you very much.

5 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you all. Before  
6 we have any questions, just so everyone understands  
7 how we are going to proceed from now on, if it's  
8 not yet been clear, I'll try to make it clear.

9 The commissioners here at the table now  
10 can ask some questions if there are questions, and  
11 I believe there will be, of the presenters. And at  
12 the conclusion of that process, we'll hear from the  
13 public, and people have signed in, and anyone who  
14 hasn't should do so, and you will be heard over a  
15 period of time. Then I would like to have  
16 reaction, based on testimony that's presented, from  
17 the presenters or whomever. Then we will move, in  
18 the final stage, to a discussion in open session,  
19 of course, among the commissioners about everything  
20 that will have transpired up to that point. I hope  
21 that's clear enough and that's what the general  
22 procedure is in all cases, but particularly one  
23 like this where we have a lot of public interest  
24 and a lot of people who wish to be heard.

25 We'll proceed now to questions from the

1 commissioners.

2 MS. KANE: I have one for the  
3 architects. I know Sam White referred to the  
4 depths of shadows, of light and shadows and  
5 comparing that with the depth of the architecture  
6 of the synagogue itself. Could you just show us a  
7 little bit more of where the depth is? For  
8 example, where the depth of the windows is, of the  
9 glass front on the community center portion and the  
10 shadows and the setback of the brick portion?

11 MR. PLATT: Yes. Here you have it --  
12 we do have a section. They are somewhere. In  
13 general, Commissioner, we spoke about light and  
14 dark here, the comparison, but this is not  
15 articulated at all in the same way. I think the  
16 main point was that rather than a taut type of  
17 building here, we felt that this needed to have  
18 articulation and light and shadow in it, but it  
19 isn't even the same type here. This is molded,  
20 especially in the front. The columns are circular,  
21 and there's a great deal more play of form there.  
22 We're not trying to do that at all. But what we  
23 have done -- and this is partly to create scale as  
24 well, the appropriate scale of the history -- is to  
25 set back the casement windows on the sides up above

1 here and leave that central portion much nearer to  
2 the face. It's only a bit back.

3 MR. VENGOECHEA: If you have a plan  
4 that shows just what you describe, of the casement  
5 windows, that would be helpful.

6 MR. WHITE: The issue of depth goes at  
7 least in part to the issue of what's masonry and  
8 what isn't. It's always depth that tells you that  
9 this thing is stone. It's the thickness.

10 MR. PLATT: This is a typical floor on  
11 6 through 14. Here you see the profile, the  
12 masonry in dark here, the window with the casement  
13 setback and the affixed portion forward here. That  
14 is -- although, the actual dimensions shift  
15 somewhat from the front to the sides, it is the  
16 same pattern and the same treatment.

17 Down below, at the community building --  
18 you see here up above the projection of these  
19 windows, this is typical through here with this  
20 very important reveal, which takes that ten feet  
21 and brings it down and separates until you hit the  
22 first floor, that recess there, and then -- and  
23 these, the windows with the deformed or fretted  
24 glass at the sides and clear glass in between, and  
25 then, at the ground floor, the articulation with

1       these openings set back, better in here with the  
2       shadows.

3               MR. BYARD:       The model shows it.

4               MR. PLATT:       Does that answer the  
5       question?

6               MS. KANE:       Yes.

7               MR. VENGOECHEA:   What is the actual  
8       depth of the setback of the bay -- the windows?

9               MR. BYARD:       In here?

10              MR. VENGOECHEA:   What is the depth in  
11       there?

12              MR. PLATT:       I think that's eight,  
13       actually. In here it's eight inches back.

14              MR. VENGOECHEA:   In the model, is  
15       there a projection?

16              MR. PLATT:       Yes. There is a very  
17       slight projection that goes -- it doesn't show  
18       here, but it shows here.

19              MR. BYARD:       There.

20              MR. PLATT:       You see right here, there  
21       is a projection no more than four inches.

22              MR. VENGOECHEA:   Beyond the face?

23              MR. PLATT:       Beyond the face, beyond the  
24       masonry face.

25              MR. PLATT:       I think that really is the

1 best place to look at it is here in the rendering.

2 MR. VENGOECHEA: I would like to ask a  
3 question about the communitouse. You explained the  
4 reason why it's problematic in terms of the plan of  
5 the synagogue and the function of the synagogue.  
6 Could you, perhaps, address the architectural  
7 qualities and why it might be appropriate to do  
8 away with the house, in terms of the architectural  
9 quality, of the overall quality and its  
10 relationship?

11 MS. QUASEBARTH: This facade, as I  
12 indicated before, is simply pasted on the earlier  
13 structures, and there are drawings from 1954 that  
14 show that very clearly. It's not integrated to the  
15 original buildings at all. It is of late date for  
16 the historic district. It's not of the character,  
17 qualities and scale of buildings that one finds in  
18 the district. Nor does it elevate itself  
19 architecturally as an individual building. If you  
20 think of a comparison, perhaps, the upper East Side  
21 historic districts, you have the brownstones and  
22 apartments that you find in the Upper East Side.  
23 You also have the Guggenheim Museum or the Whitney,  
24 and they are of a certain scale and recognized  
25 by -- or they were executed by renowned --

1 internationally renowned architects, and this is  
2 one that is really much more modest in its  
3 articulation. And it's rather backward looking  
4 rather than forward looking in terms of its design.

5 MS. KANE: I noted that you described  
6 earlier -- I want to talk about the top of the  
7 building, and you described the studio windows and  
8 showed us -- was is the Hotel Des Artiste that you  
9 had showed us with the studio windows before?

10 MR. PLATT: Yes.

11 MR. KANE: Could you just elaborate a  
12 little bit more on not just the studio windows, but  
13 also on the zinc cladding on the top of building,  
14 how you're treating the top, what you're trying to  
15 evoke, what its precedent is?

16 MR. PLATT: The roof line is actually  
17 right about here. This is a slight parapet above.  
18 We have chosen to do that parapet in the zinc  
19 cladding, which you see on the sample board, and  
20 then, to extend it down in order to integrate that  
21 part of the design there so that it doesn't become  
22 a ribbon or just a ribbon across the top. There is  
23 no specific precedent for this, other than it's  
24 kind of suggested by treatment of parts of the  
25 Hotel Des Artiste and other places in the district.



1 But this is a top that really, aside from the  
2 creation of the windows and the form that that  
3 gives you, is derived from this building itself.  
4 It's really its own expression. There isn't a  
5 direct antecedent this.

6 MR. BYARD: But the connections -- I  
7 think you're right -- remember, aren't just to the  
8 art glass of the studios, but how important the  
9 treatment of glass is in the synagogue itself and  
10 the way it is, you know -- the canes and all of the  
11 work that holds the glass is used in a certain way,  
12 and then this is closer to the studio use of a  
13 clear glass and the mottled glass on the side and  
14 then it looks at it again as a piece of an  
15 apartment building, which is where it shows up as a  
16 studio, one of the really interesting parts of this  
17 neighborhood -- neighbor next door -- the presence  
18 of those studios windows, and they're terrific when  
19 you look up at them and you become aware that the  
20 glass is, in fact, art glass so often, and more of  
21 it was art glass.

22 MR. TIERNEY: Questions?

23 (No response.)

24 We will then move to the public portion  
25 of the hearing. I will be calling, roughly, based

1 on the sequence of signing and other minor changes  
2 added to that, but mostly sequentially. The first  
3 speaker I would like to call on is a representative  
4 from Assemblyman Dick Gottfried's office, Dan  
5 Golub.

6 MR. GOLUB: Good morning, members of  
7 the Commission, Chair Tierney. It's good to be  
8 here for the first time with you as Chair. Thank  
9 you for this opportunity to speak.

10 My name is Dan Golub. I represent  
11 Assemblyman Richard Gottfried. He would like to be  
12 here, but due to legislative session, he's in  
13 Albany today. I'll submit his testimony for the  
14 record. I'll try to abbreviate it somewhat for you  
15 today.

16 Richard Gottfried is the assembly member  
17 representing the 75th Assembly District, which  
18 includes Congregation Shearith Israel and the site  
19 of the proposed building. He urges the Commission  
20 to reject the proposed project, and his concerns  
21 are shared by Borough President Fields and assembly  
22 member Stringer, State Senators Dwayne and  
23 Schneiderman and Community Board 7.

24 Under the law, the congregation must  
25 prove that its proposed real estate development

1 both "contributes to a preservation purpose" and  
2 "relates harmoniously" to the landmark synagogue  
3 and the historic district. It does not pass either  
4 test. It has nothing to do with the preservation  
5 of the synagogue landmark, and it is grossly out of  
6 scale and conflicts with the historic district.

7 A growing and prosperous congregation  
8 can and should support its mission without damaging  
9 the surrounding community and the law.

10 First, the project does not "contribute  
11 to a preservation purpose."

12 Under Section 74-711(a)(1) of the zoning  
13 code, the City Planning Commission may not approve  
14 this proposal unless the Landmarks Preservation  
15 Commission issues a report finding that the  
16 proposal contributes to a preservation purpose.  
17 This project does not "contribute to a preservation  
18 purpose." Is it a plan to yield money to the  
19 congregation.

20 If the statutory language --  
21 "contributes to a preservation purpose" -- is  
22 meaningful, it must mean that preservation of the  
23 landmark will in some way be increased or improved  
24 by the project. If preservation will be no more or  
25 no less with or without the proposal, then the

1       proposal is not contributing anything to a  
2       preservation. It's irrelevant to that purpose.

3               The congregation has not provided any  
4       evidence that the funds derived from the project  
5       would support any restoration or maintenance of the  
6       landmark beyond what it has been doing and will, in  
7       any event, continue to do. The congregation has  
8       done an admirable job of restoring and maintaining  
9       the landmark synagogue, thanks to the resources of  
10      its members, and while it claimed it could do much  
11      with the proposed development, it offers no  
12      evidence of financial need, nor does it suggest  
13      that it could or would not continue the restoration  
14      and maintenance without the profits from this real  
15      estate development.

16             The most that can be said is that, to  
17      some extent, some of the profits from the project  
18      will supplant synagogue funds that would otherwise  
19      help preserve the landmark. Supplanting support  
20      for preservation cannot be said to "contribute to a  
21      preservation purpose."

22             Second, the violation of statutory  
23      standard.

24             The proposal involves a landmark  
25      building and is located in a historic district.

1 Before the Commission can act favorably on the  
2 project, it must find that it relates harmoniously  
3 to the subject landmark building and buildings in  
4 the historic district.

5 The proposed building would be on West  
6 70th Street, not Central Park West, a side street  
7 of the Upper West Side/Central Park Historic  
8 District. This and many other side streets of the  
9 historic district are characterized primarily by  
10 decades-old brownstones and small apartment  
11 buildings.

12 The proposed building would be  
13 dramatically out of scale with the buildings on the  
14 side street. The building would be one and a half  
15 times the height of the adjacent building. It  
16 would be about three times the height of the  
17 brownstones that make up most of the block.

18 It would be more than two and a half  
19 times the ordinarily-permitted streetwall height  
20 for this site.

21 It would also be several times the total  
22 bulk or F.A.R. that would ordinarily be permitted  
23 for the site.

24 If this building does not flunk the  
25 "harmonious" test, what does it take to flunk?

1           Third, the plan will get worse. If this  
2 development is approved, the congregation or  
3 commercial developer would certainly see the  
4 potential for multiplying its profit by adding more  
5 floors to the building.

6           The congregation would not argue that  
7 since the Commission has found that creating a  
8 multi-million dollar endowment for the synagogue  
9 "contributes a preservation purpose," then  
10 enlarging the endowment would certainly contribute  
11 even more. They will argue that if a new 14-story  
12 building is "harmonious" with a brownstone block,  
13 then surely a few more stories would not make a big  
14 difference.

15           The Commission should think ahead to  
16 that prospect and consider this: When the  
17 congregation comes back for more, on what basis  
18 will the Commission be able to turn them down?

19           On this point, I do want to stop just a  
20 little bit because I did hear Mr. Friedman claim --  
21 for the first time that I've heard -- that if the  
22 transfer of air rights were allowed, that the  
23 remaining air rights on the Central Park West  
24 building would be frozen. I'm not sure exactly  
25 what that means. If that means that there's some

1 sort of binding commitment never to use those air  
2 rights and never to transfer them, I think we'd  
3 obviously consider that to add to our concern. But  
4 I hope you will ask for some written specificity as  
5 to what that means.

6 Fourth, the damaging precedent.  
7 Approving this proposed real estate development  
8 would set a dangerous precedent that would  
9 seriously undermine the protection for landmarks  
10 and historic districts.

11 If the developer of a side street  
12 building that is several times the height and bulk  
13 of the other buildings on the block in a historic  
14 district is allowed to claim that it "relates  
15 harmoniously to the buildings in the historic  
16 district," then every historic district is in grave  
17 peril.

18 If this development is approved, then in  
19 this and other historic districts we will soon have  
20 churches, synagogues, schools, and even ordinary  
21 property owners coming up with real estate schemes  
22 to make money by multiplying the height and bulk of  
23 the building. They will all be able to point to  
24 this example. The Commission will have given up  
25 its ability to insist on meaningful contribution to

1 a preservation purpose or to apply any meaningful  
2 standard of what is harmonious with a historic  
3 district.

4 New York City has not headed down that  
5 road and it should not. The laws protecting  
6 landmarks and historic districts are an important  
7 part of what holds our city together. These laws  
8 should not be ignored, diminished or distorted.

9 Finally, the better alternative. The  
10 congregation is a growing congregation. It has a  
11 magnificent building and sanctuary that require  
12 restoration and maintenance. The congregation has  
13 been honoring its centuries-old tradition and its  
14 religious mission by raising the necessary funds to  
15 preserve the synagogue.

16 Now the congregation wants to build a  
17 new, expanded "community house" and support its  
18 programming. A new community house -- without a  
19 real estate component -- could certainly be  
20 designed in such a way that would not run afoul of  
21 the landmarks an historic district laws and  
22 applicable zoning.

23 The congregation can and should preserve  
24 the synagogue and build and run the new community  
25 house by raising the necessary funds, primarily



1 from among its members. That's not a simple  
2 matter, but that is what congregations do across  
3 New York City and across the country, and this  
4 congregation is better able to do that than the  
5 vast majority of other congregations.

6 In conclusion, the Landmarks  
7 Preservation Commission should stand by the law and  
8 reject the proposed real estate development. It  
9 does not "contribute to a preservation purpose" and  
10 it is not "harmonious" with the historic district.  
11 The congregation should stand by its honorable  
12 tradition and turn away from real estate  
13 development.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. TIERNEY: The next speaker is Avra  
16 Petrides from the Municipal Arts Society.

17 I would like to make an observation that  
18 goes in two directions, sort of almost a  
19 schizophrenic observation. One is I would like  
20 everyone, of course, to be as succinct as possible,  
21 et cetera, but, also, to speak more slowly for the  
22 sake of our stenographer. On the one hand, speed  
23 up, slow down, whatever it is. I think everybody  
24 understands.

25 MS. PETRIDES: Good morning. The

1 Society's Preservation Committee received a  
2 presentation by representatives of Congregation  
3 Shearith Israel describing the Certificate of  
4 Appropriateness and 74-711 zoning applications.  
5 They outlined the nature of these requests, the  
6 special provisions being sought and the way they  
7 believe the preservation purpose criterion for the  
8 74-711 is met by the proposal. They also presented  
9 designs for the new building and made their  
10 argument for its appropriateness.

11 In its discussion, the Preservation  
12 Committee identified three issues that we feel are  
13 key. First, the issue of height and massing of the  
14 new building. The Committee was divided over  
15 whether or not the building's height and massing  
16 are appropriate to the historic district. A slight  
17 majority of members felt that on this particular  
18 streetscape and in this location, a 14-story  
19 building is appropriate to the neighborhood.  
20 Others did not. They expressed concern about the  
21 tower's relationship to the low-rise buildings in  
22 the middle of the block.

23 Second, the issue of design. The  
24 Committee found the design to be inappropriate for  
25 the historic district. A number of design

1 components appear to be unresolved, such as the  
2 overall dimension and the penthouse proportions.  
3 In addition, the Committee questioned the  
4 relationship between the synagogue entrance and the  
5 residential entrance.

6 Third, the validity of authorizing the  
7 shifting of bulk under 74-711. The Committee felt  
8 the preservation purpose as described was not  
9 compelling enough to warrant this action. The  
10 restorative elements mentioned to us, such as  
11 replacement of the roof and addressing water  
12 damage, appeared to the Committee to be more on the  
13 order of routine maintenance.

14 We appreciate the synagogue's past  
15 attention to restoring its building, but would like  
16 to be assured that there is a comprehensive  
17 preservation program in place. We were not  
18 provided with any details regarding a continuing  
19 maintenance plan, nor was there any indication of  
20 how revenues generated by the proposed project  
21 would meet expenses for restoration of the  
22 synagogue.

23 Based upon the Committee's review, we  
24 believe that the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
25 should not approve the Certificate of

1 Appropriateness for the 74-711 authorization at  
2 this time, but we look forward to future discussion  
3 of this proposal as it evolves.

4 Thank you very much for this opportunity  
5 to press the Society's views.

6 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you very much:

7 Next, Roger Lang from the Landmarks  
8 Conservancy.

9 MR. LANG: Good morning, Mr. Chairman,  
10 Commissioners. I'm Roger Lang speaking on behalf  
11 of the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

12 The Converancy supports Congregation  
13 Shearith Israel's proposal. We hope you that you  
14 will grant it a Certificate of Appropriateness and  
15 also agree to invoke the provisions of Section  
16 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution in order to allow  
17 regulatory relief necessary for its construction.

18 The Conservancy took this position after  
19 members of our Public Policy Committee and Sacred  
20 Sites Program staff viewed two presentations by the  
21 proponents, and after they read the briefs in  
22 opposition being circulated by Landmark West.

23 This proposal isn't at all like the  
24 blockbusters of the 1980's. It does not involve  
25 the demolition or removal of any significant

1 features or structures. Nor does it overhang the  
2 landmark. At 14 stories, this new building is  
3 realistic, pragmatic, sensible and modest. It's in  
4 scale of the height and bulk of adjacent  
5 residential buildings to the north and south. And  
6 it is well-designed with attractive contextual  
7 features.

8 This building is not plunked down in the  
9 middle of an unbroken row of townhouses. Rather,  
10 it is at the end of a block, adjacent to a  
11 nine-story building and standing, in part, on a  
12 vacant lot and in an R10A district.

13 This proposal is also good for the  
14 landmark synagogue. The new building provides  
15 needed ancillary space as well as funds for ongoing  
16 restoration of the sanctuary and parsonage. The  
17 Restrictive Declaration accompanying this project  
18 will ensure that the landmark will be maintained in  
19 a "sound, first-class condition," the highest  
20 standard for such care. Moreover, the transfer of  
21 some F.A.R. from the temple site to the tower site  
22 will diminish development pressure on the landmark.

23 The transfer of development rights is a  
24 hallmark of New York City's Landmarks Law. It was  
25 intended to help preserve low buildings by enabling

1       their owners to shift some of unused bulk to other  
2       nearby sites. This provision is a key reason why  
3       our law has passed Constitutional muster and has  
4       survived legal challenges.

5               In this instance, a small fraction of  
6       the total floor area available is being shifted  
7       westward. The balance remains unused and that  
8       situation is unlikely to change. Accordingly, we  
9       would prefer that the owner voluntarily renounce  
10      use of the remaining F.A.R. as a part of the  
11      covenants contained in the Restrictive Declaration.

12             Finally, we urge this Commission to  
13      proceed with confidence to use Section 74-711. In  
14      our view, doing so will not set an adverse  
15      precedent, either for the Commission or for the  
16      preservation community. It's in the Zoning  
17      Resolution for this very purpose. It is to be used  
18      at your discretion. It will benefit the landmark.  
19      It is rooted in specific findings that apply only  
20      to this site and this situation. Therefore,  
21      Commissioners, we hope you go right ahead and use  
22      it.

23             And we thank you for the opportunity to  
24      present the Conservancy's views

25             MR. TIERNEY:       Mr. Christabel Gough.

1 MR. GOUGH: Good morning. I'm  
2 Christabel Gough for the Society of the  
3 Architecture of the City.

4 From the outset, there has been tension  
5 between Landmarks Preservation and zoning, since  
6 what zoning would allow can often be inimical to  
7 preservation. In 1961, much of New York was zoned  
8 to encourage new construction on a much larger  
9 scale than the existing cityscape, and defining the  
10 overlapping jurisdiction of City Planning was an  
11 issue when the landmarks laws was enacted. It was  
12 established that zoning does not supersede the  
13 landmarks law in the sense that the LPC need not  
14 approve proposals for inappropriate bulk or massing  
15 just because they comply with zoning. But  
16 nevertheless, over the years, there have been many  
17 appeals for City Planning to modify the zoning map,  
18 to bring the available F.A.R. more in line with the  
19 historic Cityscape where historic districts have  
20 been designated.

21 After years of citizen campaigning led  
22 by the owners of small historic properties, City  
23 Planning has responded in some areas by mapping  
24 contextual districts such as the R8B zones we are  
25 looking at in this application. Such zoning tends

1 to encourage conservation, restoration and adaptive  
2 re-use of New York's townhouse neighborhoods,  
3 reinforce the stability of such neighborhoods and  
4 permit a more contextual massing for any new  
5 building in the historic area.

6 We would be very alarmed to see what to  
7 us would be an unprecedented move for LPC:  
8 Ignoring existing contextual zoning to approve a  
9 new building whose bulk, height and massing  
10 substantially exceeds what zoning would allow, in a  
11 context of smaller buildings, and in a zoning  
12 district that is mapped specifically to limit  
13 out-of-context construction and preserve the  
14 context of the existing neighborhood.

15 To use Section 74-711 of the Zoning  
16 Resolution to make this possible would be equally  
17 alarming. In the past, this section has most often  
18 been used to enable adaptive re-use of older  
19 buildings, for instance, by allowing residential  
20 and commercial uses in manufacturing zones. It  
21 appears to us that the present application would  
22 set a precedent that would turn the landmarks law  
23 against itself, using preservation tools like  
24 74-711 to enable the kind of inappropriate massing  
25 that the historic district designation was intended



1 to obviate. We are sorry that this issue has been  
2 raised in connection with a congregation that has  
3 done such wonderful restoration work, but the  
4 zoning issues involved make it impossible for us to  
5 support in application.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. TIERNEY: Pia Frankenberg.

8 MS. FRANKENBERG: Good morning. I'm  
9 not much a speaker, and I'll try to make it short.

10 I moved to New York City in 1995. I  
11 live in 88 Central Park West, which is located  
12 between 68th and 69th Street. And I don't lose any  
13 views or anything of that sort. I just like that  
14 neighborhood.

15 MR. TIERNEY: Could you state your name  
16 for the record?

17 MS. FRANKENBERG: Oh, I'm sorry. Pia  
18 Frankenberg.

19 I like this neighborhood very much, and  
20 I would like to divert your attention for a moment  
21 to a building that already exists on the corner of  
22 68th Street and Central Park West, 18 Central Park  
23 West, which is the only modern building, built  
24 in the '70's, before, actually, I think that  
25 neighborhood has been considered a landmark --

1 historic landmark district.

2 And I think, if you look at the proposal  
3 and if you look, at the same time, at the already  
4 existing building, you would see that you get the  
5 worst of both worlds. There seems to be a little  
6 bit of a confusion of where the new building will  
7 actually be located, whether it belongs to Central  
8 Park West or whether it belongs to 70th Street.  
9 The female architect mentioned that it would  
10 enhance the skyline, it would enhance the skyline  
11 of Central Park West. I couldn't disagree more,  
12 because I think we already have a great, beautiful  
13 building, the synagogue, without the need for any  
14 enhancement behind it.

15 If you look at 80 Central Park West, you  
16 will see that it pretty much looks the same when  
17 you look at it from the front. It's like this  
18 small, sort of narrow finger sticking up in the  
19 air. Unfortunately, you can't see it on any of the  
20 displays there. But it reaches very far into the  
21 block of 68th Street, and that's actually where it  
22 dominates the block. And I think that's exactly  
23 what's going to happen with the proposal, the  
24 building at 70th Street. It will turn this block  
25 into -- at least the beginning of the block into

1 something very anonymous. It's going to be a  
2 condominium, as far as I understand. There is  
3 going to be a lot of fluctuation. The neighborhood  
4 actually, really has this feeling of people knowing  
5 each other. You meet the same people every day on  
6 the street if you walk your dog and go shopping, et  
7 cetera, et cetera. And I think you should keep  
8 this in mind because not only would it alter the  
9 looks and the views and the site of the  
10 neighborhood, it would also alter the feeling. I  
11 never walk down 68th Street because I just don't  
12 like to walk there. It's this huge, long stretch  
13 of this apartment building facing Central Park West  
14 but at the same time facing 68th Street, and it's  
15 totally anonymous. I don't know a soul in this  
16 building, and that's what going to happen to 70th  
17 Street.

18 I said I'd cut it short. Thank you.

19 MR. TIERNEY: James Platt.

20 MR. PLATT: My name is James Platt. I  
21 live at 91 Central Park West. As far as I know,  
22 I'm no relation to Charles Platt.

23 I could say that today's proposal is not  
24 about the synagogue. If you believe this is about  
25 the synagogue, then you believe what President Bush

1        says, that he's not decided to go to war on Iraq.  
2        This is an economic project. It's not the  
3        synagogue. The synagogue has interests in a  
4        cemetery in downtown New York. They have chosen to  
5        spend their funds the way they want to spend them.  
6        If they don't want to spend them on preservation,  
7        that's their choice. But to use this as an  
8        argument is completely fallacious and, also,  
9        intellectually dishonest.

10                I would also make the case for  
11        esthetics. The renderings that you see before you  
12        would suppose that, perhaps, you were standing  
13        either in the middle of Central Park or on 70th  
14        Street where no one can stand, they would be from  
15        several heights up where a pigeon might be. The  
16        drawings don't give it justice to what it is. They  
17        may be accurate in terms of a building proposal,  
18        but they are not reliable.

19                I say, finally, I believe this is a case  
20        of financial need that they are asserting and, in  
21        fact, it's one that they need to make a decision  
22        about how they want to spend their money, and is  
23        not a zoning issue and it has nothing to do with  
24        the synagogue.

25                Thank you.

1 MR. TIERNEY: George Litton.

2 A. Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission,  
3 thanks for the opportunity to appear before you as  
4 a private citizen. The congregation Shearith  
5 Israel went to some length --

6 MR. TIERNEY: Could you state your  
7 name for the record?

8 MR. LITTON: My name is George Litton.  
9 I'm a tenant shareholder at 91 Central Park West.  
10 I lived there for nearly 40 years. I've been a  
11 member of the board of our building for over 30  
12 years, and I'm very proud to see so many of my  
13 neighbors here today. We are a building that's  
14 extremely community-minded. Our president, Jean  
15 Martowski, I believe was instrumental in gaining  
16 historical landmark status for the Central Park  
17 West District.

18 Now, my own apartment, 15-A, faces east  
19 and south. The proposal of the congregation to  
20 build its new building has absolutely no effect on  
21 my light and my air. It does have a profound  
22 effect on my neighborhood, on my city and my  
23 quality of life, which is why I'm here.

24 I'm a retired businessman. My career  
25 was in development, both here in New York and

1 internationally. I hold a civil engineering degree  
2 from Yale and an MBA in finance from Columbia. I  
3 am, by training and conviction, pro-development,  
4 but that means responsible development. The  
5 Shearith Israel proposal, regrettably, is  
6 irresponsible and deserves to be defeated.

7 I'm a passionate Westsider, which is why  
8 I'm here. I've lived here for 64 of my 68 years.  
9 The first four years were spent in another city.  
10 Paris is the city of my birth. Those of you who  
11 have been to Paris are fortunate to know what  
12 landmarks preservation can mean. Baron Ausman  
13 (ph.) is not here today. Mayor Bloomberg does not  
14 have the resources of Napoleon, III. But you have  
15 the power and the ability to make a difference, and  
16 that's why so many of our neighbors are here today.

17 I grew up on the Central Park West. I  
18 played in the park. I went to public school. I  
19 remember the 9th Avenue L, probably not too many  
20 here do. My son grew up in this neighborhood. He  
21 loves it. Our grandchildren, unfortunately, are  
22 being raised in Texas, but I expect them to come  
23 for visits and to develop the same passion and love  
24 for New York. The Commission is to bequeath to  
25 future generations a New York which preserves the

1 best for future generations.

2 Twenty years ago a developer came along  
3 and promised the synagogue a pot of gold if allowed  
4 to build a 42-story luxury condo tower cantilevered  
5 over the synagogue. Unfortunately, the trustees of  
6 the synagogue fell for the pitch. The community  
7 was outraged. It was joined by members of the  
8 congregation, and the proposal was defeated. I  
9 testified then, as I do now.

10 Today's proposal, on the surface,  
11 appears more reasonable, a mere 14 stories instead  
12 of 42. But it is as pernicious and irresponsible  
13 as its predecessor. Does it satisfy the legitimate  
14 needs of a religious institution? No. It goes far  
15 beyond the four stories for the true needs of the  
16 congregation. It adds ten stories for a luxury  
17 condo development, pure profit at the expense of  
18 the community. Mr. Friedman, at the outset, very  
19 quietly referred to it -- the ten stories -- as an  
20 "economic engine" for the preservation of the  
21 synagogue building. It's not an economic engine;  
22 it's an economic bulldozer, which will be trampling  
23 the rights of the community.

24 Nobody has mentioned the numbers  
25 involved here. He mentioned ten or eleven

1       apartments. They will be floor-through apartments  
2       with square footage of about 1,500 to 2,000 square  
3       feet each. I'm sorry, the square footage probably  
4       is 3,500 to 5,000 square feet. At prevailing  
5       prices for condos in the neighborhood of \$1,500 to  
6       \$2,000 per square foot, I ask you to do the  
7       arithmetic. If I'm not mistaken, that means each  
8       of those floors can generate from \$5 to \$10 million  
9       for apartments.

10               If you agree to this proposal, you will  
11       be setting a terrible, adverse precedent that will  
12       be picked up by every non-profit religious  
13       institution in New York that has the ability to  
14       profit at the expense of its community. I urge you  
15       not to do so.

16               Paris is great because from virtually  
17       any street you can see the sky. There is a fixed  
18       height limit. 70th Street with its brownstones is  
19       the closest equivalent we will find in New York in  
20       our immediate neighborhood of a Paris streetscape.  
21       That's worth preserving.

22               Thank you.

23               MR. TIERNEY:     Hold the applause till  
24       everyone has spoken, if you can. It will move  
25       things better, faster.



1 Laura Ludwig.

2 MS. LUDWIG: My name is Laura Ludwig.  
3 I'm speaking for the Women's City Club of New York,  
4 which is an 88-year-old, non-profit, non-partisan  
5 advocacy organization which works to shape policy  
6 in New York City on a broad range of issues.

7 It is difficult to oppose such a  
8 venerable and distinguished applicant as the  
9 Congregation Shearith Israel. We do so because of  
10 an overriding responsibility to support the  
11 Landmarks Law and contextual zoning regulations  
12 which apply to historic districts throughout the  
13 City.

14 In applying for a Certificate of  
15 Appropriateness, the congregation seeks to persuade  
16 the Landmarks Preservation Commission that its  
17 proposed 14-story building should be seen as a  
18 Central Park West building. It is clear to us at  
19 the Women's City Club that the proposed structure  
20 would be a mid-block building between Central Park  
21 West and Columbus Avenue. Any building so situated  
22 must be governed by R8B zoning, which acknowledges  
23 and protects the low-rise scale of mid-block  
24 brownstone buildings in the Upper West Side/Central  
25 Park West Historic District.

1           The Historic District zoning regulations  
2           were designed to protect the existing West Side  
3           neighborhoods while allowing for appropriately  
4           scaled development. It is essential to preserve  
5           the distinction between the R10A designation and  
6           the R8B designation of the mid-blocks.

7           If the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
8           approves a Certificate of Appropriateness and the  
9           Department of City Planning follows with waivers, a  
10          damaging precedent would be set. This could, in  
11          time, compromise the whole contextual zoning plan  
12          which has served historic districts and the city  
13          very well.

14          We request to deny this application.  
15          Thank you.

16                 MR. TIERNEY:       Simeon Bankoff.

17                 MR. BANKOFF:       Good morning,  
18          Commissioners, Chair Tierney. I'm Simeon Bankoff,  
19          a resident of Brooklyn. I have the pleasure of  
20          serving as the Executive Director of the Historic  
21          Districts Council, but I am actually testifying as  
22          a private citizen.

23                 Just for the record, HDC has stated its  
24          opposition to this proposal, as have our colleague  
25          groups, the Friends of the Upper East Side Historic

1 Districts, the Grand Society for Historic  
2 Preservation, Landmark West and the Murray Hill  
3 Neighborhood Association.

4 As part of my position at HDC, I have  
5 the pleasure of talking to communities who are  
6 seeking landmark designation, and one of the things  
7 which they often ask is "What does that mean? What  
8 can we actually apply for?" And one of the great  
9 things I can say is, "Actually, under the law, you  
10 can apply for anything." You can apply for a Home  
11 Depot door on your 1836 building and you will go  
12 before the Landmarks Commission and try to convince  
13 the commissioners that this is appropriate. You  
14 can apply for a scale model or even a real sized  
15 model of the Singer building to be built in  
16 Douglaston, and, indeed, if you have the land, you  
17 can apply for this. And would go before a public  
18 hearing and be forced to prove that this was an  
19 appropriate application.

20 LPC has, when doing this -- and this is  
21 a wonderful example of what's going on, that the  
22 applicant is applying with a very well thought out  
23 project, and the Commission is actually regarding  
24 it.

25 Now, the difference here from any other

1 projects which involve new construction is that  
2 many other projects such as the very contentious  
3 project on 91st and Madison was built "as of right"  
4 in the sense that the zoning envelope allowed for a  
5 building that size. In this case, however, the  
6 Landmarks Preservation Commission is being asked to  
7 change the zoning envelope. This is not an "as a  
8 right" building by any stretch of the imagination.  
9 You're being asked to look at this building as a  
10 new construction and, in fact, even allow more than  
11 would be allowed under the Zoning Resolution, as  
12 put together to help protect the neighborhood  
13 character; therefore, it is up to the applicants,  
14 who have done a wonderful job on their existing  
15 structure, to prove, in fact, doubly prove that  
16 this is an appropriate building for the  
17 neighborhood and this is an appropriate building  
18 for the site.

19 I believe, for all of the reasons  
20 already spoken about, its height, its mass and its  
21 appearance, that this building is not the  
22 appropriate thing to do here and that the Landmarks  
23 Commission is beholden to a higher level -- if one  
24 can believe that -- of appropriateness because this  
25 is not an "as of right" building.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. TIERNEY: Alan Sugarman.

3 MR. SUGERMAN: Good morning. My name  
4 is Alan Sugarman. I live across the street from  
5 the congregation. I've lived there for almost 30  
6 years.

7 It seems to me that one of the  
8 fundamental issues for this Commission to look at  
9 is whether one can accept at face value, based upon  
10 the evidence presented to you, that this building  
11 has anything at all to do with the restoration of  
12 the existing temple. I think that there is really  
13 very little that's been shown. I think it's  
14 apparent, at least from my point of view, from what  
15 I've heard, that this is all about the construction  
16 of a new -- it's called a community building. It's  
17 truly a congregation building, a building to serve  
18 the members of the congregation. It's to tear  
19 down, as was pointed out today, a building that is  
20 actually two brownstones that was -- I would  
21 agree -- terribly reconstructed 30 or 40 years ago.  
22 I guess it's 50 years ago.

23 Based on that, I think that we cannot  
24 all consider any economic impact this might provide  
25 to the synagogue, to restore and continue its

1 restoration efforts in the synagogue. This has to  
2 be viewed solely in terms of this particular  
3 building. I think if you apply any of your  
4 standards to this particular building, then this  
5 proposal must be rejected.

6 I would also like to point out an  
7 opposite -- and really not shown in any of the  
8 beautiful photos today -- opposite this building is  
9 a continuous row of brownstones. It's all the way  
10 down the street. In fact, exactly across the  
11 street is a brownstone that in the last two or  
12 three years was beautifully restored. And, in  
13 fact, the stoop was replaced. As you know, many of  
14 the stoops were taken down. This owner has gone in  
15 and completely restored that building. It's quite  
16 beautiful. So, I urge the congregation to look at  
17 that as a model for what it should do for its  
18 responsible development.

19 I also urge the architects who talk  
20 about the context and what the context informs them  
21 as to what should be there, and if you look at the  
22 historical context in the three brownstones that  
23 were there and what's on the street, one would  
24 logically be informed that once you go back into  
25 the site, it is a low four- to five-story building.

1                   Finally, I point out that no one here  
2                   has shown the impact that this building will have  
3                   on the light on 70th Street, and this is a 70th  
4                   Street project. And it's really quite odd. It's  
5                   within the technical capability of this well-funded  
6                   development project to show what this is going to  
7                   do to the light of 70th Street, and I probably  
8                   won't see sunny skies like this on a winter  
9                   morning.

10                   I think this project should be rejected.  
11                   Thank you.

12                   MR. TIERNEY:       We have a representative  
13                   from City Council Gale Brewer's office here.

14                   MR. BOCIAN:       Good afternoon. My name  
15                   is Joshua Bocian, and I'm here today representing  
16                   City Council Member Gale Brewer. She apologizes  
17                   for not being able to be here in person. She is in  
18                   Albany on official business, and I will read her  
19                   testimony on her behalf.

20                   My name is Gale Brewer, and I represent  
21                   Council District 6 on the West Side of Manhattan,  
22                   which includes the Congregation Shearith Israel  
23                   Synagogue at 8 West 70th Street and Central Park  
24                   West. Due to another commitment that requires me  
25                   to be in Albany, I asked my Director of Constituent

1 Services, Joshua Bocian, to represent my comments  
2 regarding the congregation's applications for a  
3 Certificate of Appropriateness and a Modification  
4 of Use and Bulk at 8 West 70th Street, Block 36,  
5 37, lot 1122. I am also submitting a written copy  
6 of these comments.

7 Congregation Shearith Israel is one of  
8 New York's oldest, most storied and significant  
9 congregations. It has earned widespread respect  
10 through its commitment to the community and its  
11 care and maintenance of the individual landmark it  
12 occupies. Previously, the congregation withdrew a  
13 proposal to construct a residential building on a  
14 portion of their property after it was widely  
15 opposed by the community and various organizations  
16 interested in preservation of historic properties  
17 and the Upper West Side Historic District.

18 In the application at issue today, the  
19 congregation proposes to demolish its existing  
20 community house at 8 West 70th Street and to  
21 construct on a portion of its property a new  
22 community house and a residential building that  
23 requires a special permit from the Zoning  
24 Resolution.

25 Over the years, the congregation has



1       done a superb job of continuing to protect and  
2       restore its treasured historic synagogue and three  
3       historic cemeteries that the congregation maintains  
4       at sites in New York City. The synagogue itself is  
5       one of New York's most important landmarks, and  
6       occupies a prominent location on Central Park West  
7       in the Upper West Side Historic District. Indeed,  
8       it was to protect such buildings and the  
9       historical, cultural, social and physical context,  
10      and to ensure their preservation that the Landmarks  
11      Law was enacted and the Commission acted to create  
12      the district.

13               Congregation Shearith Israel has been an  
14      exemplary neighbor on the West Side since  
15      construction of its current magnificent home in  
16      1897, and a member of the community of New York  
17      City for centuries. In recent years the  
18      congregation has continued its long efforts to  
19      honor the place that the synagogue holds in the  
20      community and in the high regard of all concerned  
21      for its historic and architectural significance.  
22      This work has come at great expense, and the  
23      required cost of restoration, maintenance and  
24      repairs will continue to pose a significant  
25      financial burden to the congregation for the

1       foreseeable future. A primary justification cited  
2       by the congregation for the current request is to  
3       help meet these obligations.

4               The congregation and some members of the  
5       community believe that the synagogue's proposal  
6       represents a plan for development that is modest in  
7       scale and sensitive to its surroundings and  
8       neighbors. In an effort to address the many  
9       concerns about this project, the congregation has  
10      chosen to work with respected architects and  
11      preservationists in preparing their proposal and  
12      design. Part of the design calls for demolition of  
13      the existing community house because of the  
14      congregation's need to improve and expand its  
15      facilities and better serve the needs of its  
16      membership. The residential portion is viewed as  
17      the primary generator of needed income.

18             The congregation believes that their  
19      proposed 14-story, 157-foot building is in context  
20      with adjacent buildings of ten or more stories.  
21      And in fact, approximately 15 percent of the  
22      Central Park West Historic District mid-block is  
23      reportedly occupied by buildings that are larger  
24      than permitted under the current zoning.

25             However, I have several reservations

1 about the current proposal. First, the City  
2 Planning Commission created the R8B zoning in 1984  
3 to protect the low-rise character of the mid-blocks  
4 of the Upper West Side. The Landmarks Commission  
5 reinforced this protective zoning by creating the  
6 Upper West Side Historic District in 1990. Second,  
7 the R10A zoning district covering Central Park West  
8 gives way to mid-block R8B district at a point 125  
9 feet in from the avenue. The proposed building is  
10 more than 125 feet into the mid-block, crossing  
11 this important boundary. Third, I'm concerned that  
12 approval of this project would set a precedent  
13 threatening to erode the unique brownstone  
14 mid-block character of the district and the Upper  
15 West Side. Fourth, the exceptional nature of this  
16 proposal is evident in the requirement that various  
17 city agencies must grant waivers, variances,  
18 special permits, and a Certificate of  
19 Appropriateness. The proposal is to demolish a  
20 landmarked structure and alter its visual and  
21 aesthetic character; in addition, it's been noted  
22 that this proposal is a form of "spot zoning."

23 Concerns have been raised that the  
24 Landmarks Commission is being asked to support a  
25 proposal whose design and developer could be

1 changed after approval of the proposal. This issue  
2 is a serious one, but in this case I believe that  
3 the perception is mistaken, and that the  
4 congregation intends to proceed in good faith with  
5 their current proposal.

6 It is essential to note that this  
7 congregation has worked diligently along with  
8 residents, preservationists, and the Landmarks  
9 Commission to maintain the integrity of the Central  
10 Park West Historic District. All of us will  
11 continue to gain immeasurably by assuring its  
12 continued presence for years to come.

13 However, on balance, this project would  
14 set a precedent and might induce other institutions  
15 along Central Park West to seek similar variances.  
16 This could lead to a widespread deterioration of  
17 the special zoning district. On this basis and the  
18 concerns cited above, I recommend to the Commission  
19 that the request for a certificate be denied.

20 I want to re-emphasize that the  
21 congregation faces long-term financial challenges,  
22 as do other religious institutions in my district.  
23 Although I realize that this issue is beyond the  
24 purview of the Commission, a means to address this  
25 challenge must be found while protecting our

1 historic properties and the core characteristics of  
2 the West Side.

3 I thank our Commissioners for their  
4 attention to these issues. Thank you.

5 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

6 Board of 18 West 70th, represented by  
7 Mark Daniel.

8 MR. DANIEL: Thank you very much.  
9 The commission will be happy to hear I edited a  
10 quite long statement to make it a little briefer  
11 for purposes of this section.

12 My name is Mark Daniel. I'm treasurer  
13 of the board, and our board president is out of the  
14 state today, so I have been asked to speak on  
15 behalf of the board.

16 We are good neighbors with the  
17 synagogue. Many of our residents are also members  
18 of the synagogue. In 1984, when the city  
19 designated the historic district, they found 85  
20 percent of the structures within these mid-blocks  
21 were complying and conforming with the designation  
22 of the historic district, the townhouse character.  
23 It is unquestionable that because 87 percent of  
24 this proposed tower's property is within the  
25 mid-block, that this would be a mid-block tower and

1 would, therefore, violate this designation.

2 Our building is one of only -- as many  
3 people pointed out, our building is only one of two  
4 buildings on the 70th Street block that breaks the  
5 60-foot townhouse character of the mid-block, but  
6 our building was built in 1920 and clearly predated  
7 the landmark designation.

8 History clearly confirms that the  
9 predominant character of the neighborhood was  
10 low-rise mid-blocks framed by high-rise avenues.  
11 Surely, the existence of our building should not be  
12 used as an excuse to violate this character.  
13 Anyone walking on 70th Street would see -- if this  
14 proposal were completed, would see a tower rising  
15 head and shoulders above the synagogue and its row  
16 house neighbors to the north and the west. And  
17 they would wonder this, whether a Central Park West  
18 building on a brownstone block could happen on  
19 their block. Isn't this the very kind of  
20 non-compliance the historic district designation  
21 and the zoning resolutions were designed to prevent  
22 from spreading deeper into the area's mid-blocks.

23 We urge you, therefore, to disapprove  
24 this Certificate of Appropriateness because, A, the  
25 proposed mid-block, 14-story condo tower

1       irretrievably diminishes both the landmark  
2       synagogue and the landmark district and, B, it  
3       replaces a row house scale, mid-block building with  
4       a high-rise tower that is unprecedented in a  
5       historic district mid-block.

6               But we are happy to have Commissioner  
7       Tierney now as a new commissioner for the  
8       Commission and thank all of you for your time  
9       today. We also noted in the New York Times a  
10      couple of weeks ago -- you may or may not know  
11      that we and some other buildings in the  
12      neighborhood have been working with groups such as  
13      Landmark West to preserve the character of the  
14      district, and it was wonderful to see that  
15      Commissioner Tierney and the Landmark Commission,  
16      as well as Arlene Simon from landmark West were on  
17      the same side on the Child's building, and we hope  
18      that you are on the same side on this building as  
19      well.

20              Thank you very much.

21              MR. TIERNEY:       Elizabeth Ashby.

22              MS. ASHBY:        Good morning,  
23      Commissioners. Good morning, Chairman. My name is  
24      Elizabeth Ashby, and I will be speaking on behalf  
25      of our organization, the Historic Neighborhood

1 Enhancement Alliance. But I have also been asked  
2 to read a statement on behalf of Civitas, of which  
3 I'm a board member, and I'll read Civitas' first.

4 Civitas, an over 20-year-old Upper East  
5 Side and East Harlem zoning and planning  
6 organization is on record for supporting and  
7 upholding R8B mid-block zoning regulations.

8 Civitas is appreciative of the needs of  
9 the institutions for expansion and believes that  
10 needed growth is possible while still respecting  
11 the spirit of R8B.

12 The present application, with requests  
13 for significant variances, violates the mid-block  
14 context, which many communities throughout the city  
15 have fought to establish and uphold.

16 Civitas urges that the Commission reject  
17 this application because of the adverse effect it  
18 will have on the mid-block and because of the  
19 precedent it will set for future applications.

20 And on behalf of Historic Neighborhood  
21 Enhancement Alliance and, also, since everybody is  
22 getting a bit historical, going back to the  
23 pirates, I was one of the people -- elderly people  
24 now -- who worked for many years to get R8B. And  
25 the reason that it was felt to be essential by both



1 the community and by the City Planning Commission  
2 was that R8 was far too tall, far too large for the  
3 context of our mid-blocks, which were low-rise.

4 And I won't see in building. I live on  
5 the other side of the park, but on our side of the  
6 park it's similar. We have avenues with taller  
7 buildings and mid-blocks with lower buildings.

8 R8 was the prevailing mid-block zoning  
9 before R8B, and we also all realized that the  
10 context is a four- or five-story brownstone, a  
11 townhouse, and a five-story tenant. This building  
12 -- this zoning was designated way back when.

13 The proposed building is not even an R8  
14 building. This could not be built under the old  
15 zoning, and the old zoning was wrong and widely  
16 recognized as wrong and was the reason for changing  
17 it to R8B. This is an R10 building. And I think,  
18 as the applicants so well made the point, this  
19 belongs on Central Park West. Everything that they  
20 have argued to defend this building argues either  
21 for Central Park West or the little gaps, which  
22 they have mentioned -- gaps between buildings, as  
23 they carefully pointed out, these led into low-rise  
24 brownstones, not into a 156-foot building.

25 The other tall building they were

1 talking about was on 72nd Street. That's a wide  
2 street. So, I think that this is not only by  
3 definition inappropriate, it's an example, an  
4 extreme example of the reason that the zoning was  
5 changed in order to protect the character of our  
6 mid-blocks.

7 I think that on the subject of the  
8 74-711, yes, this building will provide a lot of  
9 money to the owner of the landmark. And if it were  
10 bigger, it would provide even more money, but  
11 that's not what 74-711 is here to do, and I don't  
12 think it in any way meets those standards. And I  
13 think that it is veering toward "bank robbery" as a  
14 means to get money instead of a preservation  
15 purpose. So, we hope that you will deny this  
16 firmly.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. TIERNEY: George Matouk, the  
19 president of 103 Central Park West.

20 MR. GREER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.  
21 I'm not George Matouk. I'm Jay Greer. Mr. Matouk  
22 has to chair the regular meeting of our board of  
23 directors this morning and asked me to be here  
24 instead.

25 I'm here on his behalf and the other

1 eight members of the board to express our unanimous  
2 opposition to the proposal. This, I should say,  
3 has been held inappropriate by the overwhelming  
4 majority of Community Board 7 and its Preservation  
5 Subcommittee. We believe it threatens the  
6 predominantly low-rise mid-block character of the  
7 Upper West Side, including but not limited to the  
8 section of West 70th Street right across from our  
9 building.

10 I should say, I and my fellow directors  
11 and, I believe, most, if not all of our tenant  
12 shareholders, deeply respect the long extraordinary  
13 history of Congregation Shearith Israel and the  
14 contributions it has made to the national and  
15 international religious communities. A majority of  
16 our board has met with the leaders of the  
17 congregation and has sought to reassure them of our  
18 respect for them, their institution and the faith  
19 that they profess. We are also well aware, because  
20 of having lived in the area for 30 or 40 years, of  
21 the need to preserve their landmark temple, which  
22 they are seeking to restore. We are also very well  
23 aware and have no objection to the congregation's  
24 desire to construct a new community house to  
25 replace the existing structure at 810 West 70th

1 Street and to expand it into the current vacant lot  
2 next door. However, as soon as the current plan  
3 was announced, we received a quite unprecedented  
4 and, I might say, unsolicited flood of objections  
5 from the majority of our fellow residents,  
6 including many whose apartments do not overlook  
7 West 70th Street. Only after that, did the  
8 board -- none of whose views will be obstructed, I  
9 should say, by the proposed structure -- vote to  
10 oppose the present plan.

11 We strongly support the existing zoning  
12 for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is  
13 designed to protect the low-rise character of  
14 neighborhood mid-blocks and oppose this and all  
15 other present and future applications for what we  
16 think are blockbusting developments like this one.  
17 We are joined in our opposition of this by quite a  
18 considerable number of elected officials and civic  
19 associations and others. We think that list is  
20 growing.

21 I should add we are not persuaded that  
22 the proposal in its present form is necessary to  
23 achieve whatever preservation project purposes the  
24 congregation is seeking to serve, but has yet to  
25 spell out with any specificity, at least in terms

1 of the dollars involved.

2 We also believe that the massive  
3 proposed structure will not only destroy the  
4 character of one of most beautiful residential  
5 blocks on the Upper West Side, but that it will  
6 overwhelm the existing landmark temple with  
7 consequent diminution of its civic duty.

8 Accordingly, I and my fellow directors  
9 urge you and your fellow commissioners to do all in  
10 your power to preserve and protect our community by  
11 opposing as vigorously as possible this  
12 ill-conceived project and any other such projects  
13 that require waivers of existing zoning  
14 requirements and threaten to destroy our  
15 community's unique character.

16 Thank you for your attention.

17 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

18 Myles Weintraub.

19 MR. WEINTRAUB: Good morning. My is  
20 Myles Weintraub. I'm an architect and was a  
21 co-founder of the Urban Design Group of the New  
22 York City Planning Commission in the late '60's and  
23 early '70's, the pioneer organization in urban  
24 design in this country. I am also a resident of 18  
25 West 70th Street, whose views are not affected by

1 the proposed project.

2 I'm here to discuss two aspects of the  
3 project. One is the shadows that would be cast  
4 and, alas, our drawings have not appeared, delayed  
5 somehow in transit, so I will just briefly describe  
6 them.

7 We looked at the effect of the proposed  
8 14-story building. Its shadows, during the  
9 equinoxes -- not to load the argument one way or  
10 the other. In comparison to an "as of right"  
11 building, an "as of right" building on this site  
12 would be 60 feet high at the street wall and would  
13 cast a shadow of roughly 60 feet during the  
14 equinoxes at midday -- a few hours before, a few  
15 hours after -- on a 60-foot-wide street.

16 And it should be emphasized that we  
17 should measure the height, the appropriateness or  
18 inappropriateness of the proposal both in its  
19 context in the historic district, but also that  
20 this is a 60-foot-wide street, not a 100-foot-wide  
21 street, which is where our ten buildings usually  
22 appear.

23 The other aspect of my presentation has  
24 to do with some views that we have taken  
25 photographically, patching in the proposal along

1 the streetscape of 70th Street, in other words, to  
2 gauge its effect on the historic district as  
3 opposed to the landmark building. And we think  
4 that the proposal's inappropriateness is fairly  
5 clear when you look at the views along 70th Street.

6 The first board shows a view looking  
7 from -- roughly from the northeast looking down the  
8 block, when you can see the synagogue, the tower  
9 and then 18 West 70th Street, which is the  
10 nine-story building, and then the brownstones  
11 follow. In this somewhat foreshortened view, in  
12 comparison to the one that's up on the wall at the  
13 end -- at the right-hand end -- is what you would  
14 see, roughly, if you were standing at the corner on  
15 70th Street. It's a pedestrian's eye view. It is  
16 not a view looking at a massive model. It's what  
17 people would see standing on the street, which is a  
18 point of view, we think, is extremely relevant in  
19 looking at a brownstone street with its  
20 predominantly 60-foot-high buildings.

21 This view is taken with your back  
22 towards Columbus Avenue. It's looking southeast,  
23 again, measuring the proposed tower against the  
24 facades of some of the brownstones in the mid-block  
25 and the nine-story building that's immediately

1 adjacent to the proposal. And you can then see the  
2 top of the existing synagogue.

3 Needless to say, the tower, which is  
4 predominantly in the R8B portion of the historic  
5 district, doesn't look anything like the rest of  
6 the buildings on the south side of 70th Street.

7 Then, the last board is a view of the  
8 north side of 70th Street, which is not in the  
9 applicant's presentation, which has been referred  
10 to by several other speakers, and it is an  
11 unbroken, i.e., call it a "normative view" of a  
12 brownstone block in the historic district. It's a  
13 solidly five-story brownstone line of buildings.  
14 The stoop that's been restored is the first one on  
15 the right. There are others down the block that  
16 have been restored in the 38 years that I've lived  
17 on this block, and that is the movement, to replace  
18 stoops that have been taken down.

19 And that's really all we have to say.  
20 And I think the question of appropriateness is the  
21 main question before you. If you find the  
22 application inappropriate, then 74-711 is  
23 essentially moot.

24 Thank you very much for your attention.

25 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.



1                   The West Side Federation of Neighborhood  
2                   and Block Association, Miriam Febus.

3                   UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:       She walked out  
4                   for a minute.

5                   MR. TIERNEY:       We will get her later.  
6                   Kate Wood, would you like to go on?

7                   MS. WOOD:       Sure. My name is Kate  
8                   Wood. I'm actually speaking on behalf of Dr.  
9                   Elliot Sclar, who was one of my professors in urban  
10                  planning at Columbia University, and he asked me to  
11                  present his testimony here today. And while I'm up  
12                  here, I just wanted to point out for the  
13                  Commissioners that yellow folders were given to  
14                  Diane, and she will distribute them at some point.  
15                  Not to distract you now, but they do contain a lot  
16                  of materials that have been discussed by Myles  
17                  Weintraub, as well as some other things that will  
18                  be presented. So, that's for your review either  
19                  now or later.

20                  On to Elliot Sclar. Many of you know  
21                  him. He's a professor of urban planning and public  
22                  policy and public affairs, as well as director of  
23                  graduate programs in urban planning at Columbia  
24                  University.

25                  Interestingly, Professor Sclar is

1       presently the coordinator of a major U.N. task  
2       force to improve the lives of the urban poor. In  
3       addition, he has over 30 years of experience as a  
4       neighborhood planner in New York and Boston.

5               His statement: The proposed building  
6       would sit almost entirely in an R8B zoning  
7       district. R8B zoning on the Upper West Side is  
8       intended to encourage low-rise construction  
9       compatible with the traditional row houses that you  
10      find are the core characteristics of this fine  
11      neighborhood's side streets.

12             I want to express my serious concern  
13      about this proposal, in part, for the damage it  
14      will do to one of the finest neighborhoods in the  
15      city, and, in part, because it will irreparably  
16      harm the balanced land use regulatory policy that  
17      has helped make this area one of America's leading  
18      urban neighborhoods.

19             The very fact that this project will  
20      require that various City agencies grant it a  
21      series of waivers, variances, special permits, in  
22      addition to a Certificate of Appropriateness,  
23      should set off alarm bells everywhere in the  
24      Planning and Preservation Committee.

25             The precedent that the granting of these

1       waivers, variances and special permits will create  
2       may effectively render the carefully crafted  
3       land-use development plan for the Upper West Side  
4       moot. The contextual zoning and landmark  
5       designations that guide this neighborhood's growth  
6       and change -- and this neighborhood has grown and  
7       changed -- were thoughtfully designed and  
8       democratically adopted policies intended to fairly  
9       balance the maintenance of this neighborhood's  
10      charms with the real needs for added development.  
11      This project will destroy this careful balance.

12               As a general matter, it is inherently  
13      improper for any developer, even a non-profit  
14      institution, to seek special exemption from a  
15      zoning policy that was crafted with meticulous care  
16      and community-wide support that this one received.

17               I am fully familiar with the background  
18      of this zoning. In the spring of 1982, I directed  
19      a graduate studio at Columbia University's Graduate  
20      School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.  
21      That was the starting point for this zoning change.  
22      The client for that studio was the Department of  
23      City Planning. The student-produced work helped to  
24      launch the process that led to the adoption of the  
25      City's first contextual zone on the Upper West Side

1 in 1984. In total, eight new districts were  
2 created that essentially down-zoned the mid-blocks  
3 and up-zoned the avenues, in keeping with the  
4 existing context of that neighborhood. The new  
5 zoning identified the mid-blocks in which R8B zones  
6 were matched to replace R72 as having a strong and  
7 identifiable low-rise scale and coherence.

8           These building types create distinctive  
9 environments as stated in the City Planning  
10 Commission's report, and the boundaries between  
11 these environments are critical to maintain. The  
12 R10A district covering Central Park West gives way  
13 to the mid-block R8B district at a point 125 feet  
14 from the avenue. A 14-story building that is more  
15 than 125 feet into the mid-block -- or actually,  
16 straddled that line -- the majority of it being in  
17 the R8B district would destroy this crucial  
18 boundary. Indeed, it should be noted that the line  
19 between the old R10 Avenue zoning and R72 mid-block  
20 zoning, prior to the zoning amendment, used to be  
21 drawn at 150 feet. The City Planning Commission  
22 called this line "abnormally deep" and reduced it  
23 to 125 feet in order to contain tall construction  
24 closer to Central Park West. This is not an  
25 arbitrary change in policy, but a careful and

1 measured response to the Upper West Side building  
2 environment.

3 The Upper West Side today is a delicate  
4 balance of intense and highly congested urban  
5 living that has grown to the necessary respite to  
6 remain vital by its lower-scale mid-blocks. Once  
7 the scale of these mid-blocks is breached in one  
8 brace, the case for preservation in all others will  
9 be severely compromised.

10 Please deny this application.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

13 Miriam Febus.

14 MS. FEBUS: I guess it's good afternoon  
15 now. Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Miriam  
16 Febus. I'm the president of the West Side  
17 Federation of Neighborhood and Block Associations.  
18 It's an umbrella organization representing block  
19 associations, neighborhood organizations, co-ops  
20 and so forth.

21 I just would like to list some of block  
22 associations. Since there are about 44 of them  
23 there won't be time to really name them, but I  
24 could just go through some of them. West 64th  
25 Street Block Association; West 67th Street

1 Committee, numbers 2, 15, 17, 27, 33, 39, 40, 45,  
2 50; West 69th Street Block Association; West 75th  
3 Street Block Association; West 77th Street Block  
4 Association; Park West 77th Street Block  
5 Association; West 78th Street; Museum Block  
6 Association; West 89th Block Association.

7 Am I going too fast?

8 MR. TIERNEY: No, but we have a flavor  
9 for how many you have. That will go on the record.  
10 In the interest of moving things along --

11 MS. FEBUS: Okay. There's only three  
12 more. West 90th Street Block Association; West  
13 92nd Street; west 93rd Street; West 123rd Street;  
14 and Duke Ellington Association. I'm sorry about  
15 that.

16 I just would like to let you know that  
17 we have been around for over 30 years trying to  
18 improve and maintain the quality of life on the  
19 West Side.

20 On January 13, 2003, the Federation  
21 passed the following resolution: Whereas, the  
22 proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel for a  
23 14-story, 157-foot tower is incompatible with the  
24 mid-block of West 70th Street, a brownstone block  
25 between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue.

1               Whereas, it threatens the wide-spread,  
2               low-rise mid-block character of the Upper West Side  
3               and may pave the way for other architecturally  
4               incompatible projects; and.

5               Whereas, this project will violate the  
6               existing zoning and undermine the character of the  
7               historic district;

8               Therefore, be it resolved that the  
9               Federation supports the community in its opposition  
10              to the proposed construction of this 14-story tower  
11              by Congregation Shearith Israel and it further  
12              resolves that we support the existing zoning for  
13              the Upper West Side Historic District.

14              I just wanted to make it very clear that  
15              the Federation is not opposed to development, but  
16              we need balance in every aspect of planning, and  
17              that includes not only the new, but preserving some  
18              of our history and character of this great city.  
19              Preserving the character of the Upper West Side  
20              Historic District is an integral part of the City's  
21              history and character.

22              The Federation looks to you, the  
23              Landmarks Commission, to uphold the landmark status  
24              of this Upper West Side Historic District and deny  
25              approval of this ill-conceived proposal.

1 Thank you for your patience.

2 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

3 Rena Rosen.

4 MS. ROSEN: Good afternoon,

5 Commissioners. My name is Rena Soshel Rosen. I'm  
6 a graduate of Columbia University's Historic  
7 Preservation Program and a resident of the Upper  
8 West Side. I have been asked to read the statement  
9 of Martin Gallent, former vice chairman of the New  
10 York City Planning Commission, who, unfortunately,  
11 could not be here today. His statement follows.

12 As a the former vice chairman of the New  
13 York Planning Commission, I took an active part in  
14 the report and consideration of the Commission's  
15 position on the Contextual Zoning Amendment dated  
16 April 9, 1984. I have reviewed the recent  
17 statements of Professor Elliot D. Sclar and Norman  
18 Marcus, Esquire, both of which are in the record,  
19 and I find myself in accord with both of their  
20 positions in support of denying a special permit to  
21 construct a 14-story building in the mid-block of  
22 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus  
23 Avenue.

24 The Planning Commission was extremely  
25 concerned with the development in this area and



1 took a very thoughtful and reflective position.  
2 The statements of Professor Elliot D. Sclar and  
3 Norman Marcus, Esquire, certainly reflect my views,  
4 and, I believe, the sentiments of the City Planning  
5 Commission as of April 9, 1984. I can fully  
6 support their positions and arguments as reflected  
7 in their statements.

8 Permitting a 14-story building in the  
9 area would be a travesty and a denial of the  
10 planning principles which the Commission has sought  
11 to maintain and promote in the orderly development  
12 of this City.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. TIERNEY: Melissa Baldock.

15 MS. BALDOCK: Good afternoon,  
16 Commissioners.

17 My name is Melissa Baldock, and I'm a  
18 second-year student in Columbia's Historic  
19 Preservation Program. I am strongly opposed to the  
20 proposed 14-story, mid-block building on West 70th  
21 Street. If built, the new building will have a  
22 detrimental effect on the integrity of the Upper  
23 West Side, Central Park West Historic District and,  
24 moreover, would set a dangerous precedent for new  
25 mid-block buildings and historic districts

1 throughout the city.

2 Using GIS, Geographic Information  
3 Systems, I produced this map of the buildings on  
4 the Upper West Side. The black boxes around are  
5 the areas which are zoned R8B. Just to go over the  
6 key, the yellow buildings, which are the majority  
7 of the buildings in the boxed areas, are buildings  
8 which are one to six stories in height, primarily  
9 row-house buildings, but a few tenement buildings.

10 The orange-brown buildings are buildings  
11 that are ten to twelve stories in height, which  
12 there are a few interspersed about the R8B area,  
13 but again, primarily, it is the one to six stories.

14 Lastly, the red buildings are special 13  
15 to 36 stories, which are primarily along the  
16 Central Park West thoroughfare and, also, the major  
17 cross streets such as 72nd Street and 81st Street.

18 So, I just want to point out again that  
19 the yellow buildings are primarily the ones that  
20 are within the district.

21 If I were to map the proposed building  
22 on the map, it would be a rare instance of a red  
23 building, or a 14-story building, in the R8B zone.  
24 In other words, it would stick out like a sore  
25 thumb compared to the neighboring blocks protected

1 under both the R8B zone and the Upper West Side  
2 Historic District. The new building, as the map  
3 illustrates, would be entirely out of context with  
4 the surroundings, overwhelming the synagogue and  
5 the neighboring row-house buildings.

6 I'm not sure if you can see, but some of  
7 buildings have black dots on them, and those black  
8 dots are non-profit or institutional buildings  
9 within the district. Some of those are churches or  
10 synagogues or different types of non-profits. I  
11 just wanted to show on the map that there are many  
12 other buildings that could apply for similar  
13 variances, and if this building is approved, it  
14 could set a dangerous precedent. In fact, there  
15 are eleven other institutional buildings within the  
16 R8B zone on this map, and this map just goes from  
17 Central Park West to Columbus Avenue. I didn't map  
18 the other blocks.

19 The Upper West Side is fortunate to have  
20 both a historic district and architectural zoning  
21 which work hand in hand to protect the area from  
22 buildings such as the one proposed for West 70th  
23 Street. Both the district and the R8B zoning were  
24 established in the area in order to prevent  
25 out-of-scale buildings like the one before us today

1 from permanently marring the streetscapes and  
2 quality of life on the row-house blocks. I urge  
3 you to give the district and the zoning the respect  
4 that they deserve.

5 Again, I implore you to protect the  
6 integrity of the Upper West Side/Central Park West  
7 Historic District and the designated mid-blocks  
8 throughout the City and deny the application before  
9 you.

10 MR. TIERNEY: Lauren Belfer.

11 MS. BELFER: Good afternoon. My name  
12 is Lauren Belfer, and I live in the Upper West Side  
13 Historic District. I'm going to read a statement  
14 sent by Architect Richard Roth, Jr., who couldn't  
15 be here today.

16 To the Commissioners, although now  
17 retired in the Bahamas, I remain a New Yorker  
18 fiercely committed to the architectural greatness  
19 of my city. Emory Roth & Sons, Architects, a firm  
20 I headed as chairman, contributed significantly to  
21 that greatness.

22 My grandfather, Emory, founder of our  
23 firm, more than any other architect in any era, was  
24 responsible for the creation of Central Park West's  
25 unique skyline, with 55 Central Park West, the San

1 Ramo, the Oliver Cromwell, the Berisford, the Alden  
2 Hotel, the Ardsley and the Eldorado, all bearing  
3 our firm's signatures. That is why I follow very  
4 closely any development that threatens the  
5 integrity of the Central Park West Historic  
6 District and why I was appalled by the proposal of  
7 the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue to build a  
8 mixed-use high-rise condo development immediately  
9 behind the congregation's own landmark's synagogue.

10 I write respectfully to urge you to  
11 adhere unwaveringly to the existing landmark and  
12 zoning laws which protect our unique neighborhood.  
13 Any variance granted to Congregation Shearith  
14 Israel inevitably will establish adverse precedents  
15 which would echo throughout the city.

16 Existing laws and regulations were  
17 developed to counter years of neglect and were  
18 promulgated for the common good. Please, do not  
19 capitulate to the entreaties of vested special  
20 interests. Your grandchildren will thank you.

21 Sincerely,

22 Richard Roth, Architect.

23 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

24 Nina Gray and Alexander Gray.

25 MR. GRAY: Hello. My name is

1 Alexander Gray. I'm eleven years old and a 5th  
2 grade student. I live at 80 Central Park West just  
3 down the street from the synagogue.

4 I was born a year after the Upper West  
5 Side Historic District was designated. This fall  
6 at school my class learned about preservation and  
7 we studied our neighborhood. We learned that a  
8 historic district is designated to protect the  
9 special character of the architecture in the  
10 neighborhood.

11 In Ethics, we discussed the importance  
12 of community and being aware of everybody's needs.  
13 Laws and rules are made to protect the community.  
14 If this synagogue is allowed to break these rules  
15 by building a building exceeding the height laws  
16 put in place by the Landmark Preservation  
17 Commission, then what is going to stop everybody  
18 else from doing the same thing? Our historic  
19 district will be ruined if you allow this to  
20 happen. Preservation is for everyone.

21 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you, Alex. Very  
22 well delivered.

23 MS. GRAY: My name is Nina Gray, and I  
24 have the great distinction of being his mother.

25 I'm the consulting curator for the

1 Museum of Tiffany Glass which owns most of the  
2 remaining glass left over from Tiffany's furnaces.  
3 I was very pleased to see the conservation and  
4 restoration work of Tiffany's windows of the  
5 synagogue and the rest of the work that Tiffany's  
6 studios carried out there. I think it is highly  
7 inappropriate to jeopardize the integrity of this  
8 landmark and the landmark district by opening the  
9 door to this kind of development. This  
10 neighborhood has witnessed intense development  
11 around Lincoln Square in the past 15 years and will  
12 not benefit in any way from the addition of more  
13 luxury apartments, not least because it sets a  
14 precedent for other numerous developments.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you very much to  
17 the Gray family.

18 Barry Rosenberg.

19 MR. ROSENBERG: Good afternoon. I am  
20 a member of Community Board 7, I represent the  
21 Community Board here today. I'm going to read a  
22 letter prepared by the Chair of the Landmarks  
23 Committee and the Chair of Community Board 7. They  
24 are Lenore Norman and Larry Horowitz.

25 Dear Chairman Tierney:

1                   Manhattan Community Board 7 urges the  
2 Landmarks Commission to deny the proposal by  
3 Congregation Shearith Israel that is before you  
4 today. This application for the construction of a  
5 14-story, 159-foot building on West 70th Street  
6 between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue is  
7 totally inappropriate in a number of ways.

8                   No one denies the importance of  
9 preserving the economic viability of our religious  
10 and cultural institutions along Central Park West;  
11 however, this cannot be done at the expense of a  
12 community which fought long and hard to establish  
13 the mid-block zoning which is designed to protect  
14 the character of the neighborhood.

15                  The proposal before you violates the  
16 tenants of the "brownstone block." The building is  
17 two times the height of what is allowable on the  
18 block; does not have a harmonious relationship with  
19 the other structures on the block or with the  
20 synagogue itself; the visibility from Central Park  
21 creates a negative impact; and, finally, there are  
22 many institutions that would like to have the same  
23 opportunity. This is a dangerous precedent.

24                  Again, we urge the Commission to  
25 continue to protect our historic districts and



1 mid-block zoning and reject this application.

2 The Committee's resolution -- which I am  
3 submitting here, I will not read -- was voted  
4 against this proposal, 60 by the committee members,  
5 and at the full board vote, it was turned down 30  
6 against the proposal and four abstentions.

7 Simultaneously, in conjunction with land  
8 use, the same resolution was rejected by that  
9 committee, 60 committee members again, and the full  
10 board vote was 29 against, as well.

11 I call this to your attention for a  
12 matter of process. This particular proposal came  
13 to Landmarks at Community Board 7, the full board,  
14 in the due course of coming before you today. The  
15 fact that our Land Use Committee, at the request of  
16 the synagogue and its interests, took up this  
17 particular proposal and basically rejected it in  
18 the same numbers foretells the position of  
19 Community Board 7 if this proposal should pass here  
20 and come back to Community Board 7. So, it is,  
21 perhaps, a telling indication of how Community  
22 Board 7 would vote and I think it's representative  
23 of the community's interests.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

1 MR. ROSENBERG: If I may, one other  
2 thing, Community Board 8, basically the other side  
3 of the park, has presented a letter here that I  
4 won't read just because of time, but essentially  
5 expresses the same thing. I will submit it,  
6 however.

7 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

8 Elizabeth Evans.

9 Steven Gottlieb.

10 MS. SIMON: I'm not Stephen Gottlieb,  
11 but I am Arlene Simon. Stephen Gottlieb had to  
12 leave so he asked if I could read this, and I said  
13 I would.

14 The Fine Arts Federation urges the  
15 Landmarks Commission to disapprove the application  
16 for a 14-story building behind the landmark  
17 Shearith Israel Synagogue on West 70th. The  
18 building's height and design are inappropriate for  
19 the synagogue and for the historic district.

20 The Fine Arts Federation was founded in  
21 1895 in association of 20 arts organizations  
22 dedicated to fostering and protecting the artistic  
23 interests of New York City.

24 A 14-story building will loom over the  
25 low-rise Beaux-Arts style synagogue detracting from

1 its silhouette and visual impact on Central Park  
2 West.

3 As our past president, Georgio  
4 Cavelliere, points out, Central Park West is a  
5 unique avenue with Central Park on one side, and on  
6 the other side, a mix of tall apartment buildings  
7 and low-rise institutional buildings like the  
8 synagogue and the New York Historical Society. A  
9 14-story apartment building so close to the  
10 synagogue and to Central Park West will alter that  
11 historic and scenic streetscape. The low-rise  
12 houses on the side streets in the Upper West  
13 Side/Central Park West Historic District are a key  
14 feature of the district. While West 70th Street  
15 between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue is  
16 not monolithically low rise, the proposed 14-story  
17 building is much higher than any other buildings on  
18 the block and the typical side-street profile. The  
19 present design of the proposed building does not  
20 relate to the base, materials and fenestration of  
21 the synagogue.

22 Yours truly,

23 Stephen Gottlieb, President.

24 MR. TIERNEY: Ron Prince.

25 MR. PRINCE: Thank you. My name is

1 Ron Prince, and I'm a resident of the Central Park  
2 West/Upper West Side Historic District for ten  
3 years. I'm not a lawyer or an architect, but I do  
4 want to offer some common-sense observation on this  
5 proposed project.

6 We've heard so much in the presentation  
7 from the applicant about how this building relates  
8 to the world of Central Park West. It harmonizes  
9 with the landmark buildings, we're told, on Central  
10 Park West, it's of the scale of buildings on  
11 Central Park West. We are to believe that it's a  
12 Central Park West building, and it is. And that  
13 is, of course, precisely its problem. It is not on  
14 Central Park West. It is on 70th Street, and it is  
15 geographically -- and in reality -- very much of  
16 that world.

17 Here's a nugget for you to just sort of  
18 underscore that point. According to architects'  
19 drawings that we have, the building would reach 172  
20 feet into the block. If you would imagine, if you  
21 would, the longest field goal in NFL history. That  
22 is 63 yards. I looked it up. I'm not really good  
23 at football. 63 yards. This building would reach  
24 into the block 57 yards or just six yards less than  
25 the world longest field goal. That's a long way.

1                   There's another big problem with the  
2                   proposal's unmistakable Central Park's centrality.  
3                   This is a building that looks entirely to the park,  
4                   but what if you have the bad fortune of coming into  
5                   70th Street from the other side? Any approach from  
6                   the west, from Columbus Avenue or from Broadway,  
7                   the very dominant item on your cityscape would be  
8                   the building's rather unflattering derriere.  
9                   Please keep in mind that is not a subtlety. The  
10                  building would loom 60 feet above the next tallest  
11                  building on the block. It's an effect that you can  
12                  see right there on the architect's model. I  
13                  encourage you, Commissioners to please take a look  
14                  at how much it rises and what the facade would be  
15                  looking westward. 70th Street as a whole, not just  
16                  the synagogue, is a gem of the historic district,  
17                  and you are involved in this matter in nothing less  
18                  than a policy call on whether the laws and  
19                  designations protecting it are to be construed as  
20                  merely soft guidelines.

21                 Mr. Tierney, we're delighted you're on  
22                 board on this matter, continuing the great work  
23                 started by Ms. Paulsen and the other commissioners.  
24                 And we hope you'll be guided by some of our own  
25                 words. You write -- and we got it from your

1 website -- the Commission's mission to safeguard  
2 the city's unique historic, esthetic and cultural  
3 heritage has never been more vital. At the same  
4 time, we must press forward to develop what the  
5 mayor has aptly called the "landmarks of the  
6 future." I am certain that all but the most  
7 cynical would agree that 14 stories devoted to yet  
8 more luxury condos on a site designated for  
9 brownstone height in the heart of the rightly  
10 designated historic district do not a "landmark of  
11 the future" make.

12 This proposal is not right for this  
13 historic district and it is not right for New York  
14 City. Thank you very much.

15 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

16 Jonathan Kurtin.

17 MR. KURTIN: My name is Jonathan  
18 Kurtin. I live at 101 Central Park West, across  
19 from the proposed project.

20 I sympathize with the synagogue. We are  
21 under stressful economic times and we're all having  
22 budget problems. But the issue here is not whether  
23 you like the project or whether I like the project.  
24 I think my position is: What is this group of  
25 people here who are going to vote on this? They

1 were appointed to uphold the law. If you grant  
2 this variance, you may not be breaking the law but  
3 you're breaking the spirit of the law. The spirit  
4 of the law was to protect this community.

5 That's all I have to say.

6 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

7 Robert Goldrich.

8 MR. GOLDRICH: My name is Robert  
9 Goldrich, and I live at 91 Central Park West. My  
10 apartment will not be obstructed by this new tower.  
11 I'm against development of this residential  
12 multi-million dollar condominium tower. I believe  
13 that this development is wrong in the context of  
14 all the hard work put into the development of this  
15 historic district in the 1980's. I believe it is  
16 not in the community's interest.

17 I hope that the very wealthy  
18 congregation will reconsider its proposed real  
19 estate tower and, instead, build a townhouse-type  
20 school and community house in its place. This  
21 would be the appropriate size for this block, 70th  
22 Street.

23 The lawyers and architects and synagogue  
24 board members are trying to fool us to believe that  
25 this is a Central Park West building. 70th Street

1 is one of the prettiest blocks in the City. As Ron  
2 Prince from 70th Street just described with his  
3 field goal description, this building is on that  
4 block, removed from the avenue and out of context  
5 with the gorgeous townhouses on that block. I  
6 believe that if the City allows tower development  
7 in a historic district, the City will negatively  
8 affect the economic benefits of a historic  
9 district. It will ruin the character of those  
10 districts and the historic beauty which helps  
11 attract money into New York and keeps us all in New  
12 York.

13 This will be a dangerous precedent, as  
14 we have heard many times over and over again today,  
15 for every historic district. Please rule against  
16 this very unpopular tower and, instead, rule in  
17 favor of an appropriate-scale building and in favor  
18 of the historic district and permit the development  
19 of a beautiful townhouse-type community house and  
20 school.

21 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

22 Thomas Lynch.

23 MR. LYNCH: My name is Thomas Lynch.  
24 I'm not an expert. 62 years ago and two months and  
25 one week and six days, I saw that synagogue for the



1 first time. My father was holding my hand. He was  
2 an Irish immigrant. He showed me Central Park  
3 West. We came down from 10th Avenue and 206th  
4 Street. He said, "Tommy, this is one of the most  
5 beautiful places in New York, one of the most  
6 beautiful." I never forgot that.

7 I'm glad, after 62 years, that it's  
8 still standing there and that I'm still able to  
9 stand here. It would be wrong to spoil it. I  
10 remember Abraham Lincoln being quoted, having come  
11 back from hearing a preacher preach on sin. Upon  
12 being asked, "What did the preacher say," he said,  
13 "I'm against it." Me, too.

14 MR. TIERNEY: Patti Lieberman.

15 MS. LIEBERMAN: My name is Patti  
16 Lieberman. My husband and my children and I have  
17 lived on the Upper West Side. My husband and I  
18 have lived there for 28 years, at 101 Central Park  
19 West for the past 17. And I have been very  
20 interested in this process.

21 I've attended the Committee Community  
22 Board Subcommittee meeting and the previous  
23 Landmarks Preservation Committee meeting and have  
24 listened carefully to the various testimonies both  
25 for and against the project. Much has been said

1 that's very similar, but the argument against this  
2 building that stands out most for me is a precedent  
3 that it would set for other synagogues, churches  
4 and non-profits in the City.

5 At the last Landmarks Preservation  
6 meeting, many of the congregants spoke about the  
7 importance of the synagogue to them, and I think  
8 that's great. The synagogue is doing its job of  
9 creating a spiritual home for its congregants, just  
10 like my synagogue on the Upper West Side has done  
11 for me and my family.

12 Others have said that it's difficult to  
13 raise money in these economic times for capital  
14 improvements. My synagogue on the Upper West Side  
15 and my children's school on the Upper West Side  
16 also underwent difficult capital campaigns to  
17 renovate their facilities, but never was there talk  
18 of luxury condos on the top to finance these  
19 renovations, and never was there an attempt to turn  
20 a home renovation, whether it be a spiritual home  
21 or an educational home, into a real estate  
22 development project.

23 The historic district was created with  
24 zoning standards that related to all buildings so  
25 that no one would have to play the role of deciding

1       whether one synagogue or church or institution was  
2       more welcoming or more historic or more important  
3       than the other. So, in my view, it's very simple.  
4       A building should be judged on its physical  
5       structure, not whether its windows match or its  
6       roof is zinc. It is still 100 feet taller than the  
7       zoning regulations allow and, therefore,  
8       inappropriate. But build a building within the  
9       current zoning regulation, and I, for one, would  
10      welcome it on my street.

11               Thank you.

12              MR. TIERNEY:     Dana Cappitta.

13              MS. CAPPITTA:    Hi. My name is Dana  
14      Cappitta. I'm an Upper West Sider. I'm going to  
15      read a letter to Mr. Robert Tierney from  
16      biographer, historian, and Upper West Sider Robert  
17      Carro.

18               Dear Mr. Tierney,

19               I am writing to express my opposition to  
20      a proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel at 8  
21      West 70th Street which would violate the zoning  
22      codes established for the Central Park West  
23      District.

24               I object because it would set a  
25      dangerous precedent. If you walk along Central

1 Park West today, there are a number of low-rise  
2 religious buildings whose membership could, for the  
3 same reasons, request the same waivers, variances  
4 and special permits as has been set before you  
5 today by Congregation Shearith Israel. Setting a  
6 precedent is often only the first step in changing  
7 existing rules and regulations.

8 Furthermore, if we grant a special  
9 exemption to Congregation Shearith Israel to alter  
10 the contextual zoning district of the Upper West  
11 Side and allow it to construct a building higher  
12 than the five or six stories mid-block, it will not  
13 only alter the nature of the 70th Street block but  
14 will endanger the entire West Side Historic  
15 District. It is a district, a neighborhood, a  
16 fabric whose parts fit together and complement each  
17 other. One particular vital piece of the fabric is  
18 the low-rise nature of the mid-blocks. This is a  
19 key element in the delicate balance between  
20 high-rise and low-rise buildings which makes this  
21 area so harmonious.

22 There were, moreover, other excellent  
23 reasons for establishing zoning regulations  
24 limiting the height of mid-block buildings in this  
25 district. None of those reasons have changed.

1       There exists sufficient areas adjacent to the West  
2       Side Historic District which have no height  
3       restrictions, which provide adequate areas for  
4       high-rise development south towards Columbus Circle  
5       and beyond and west of Broadway. If for no other  
6       reason, the area should be preserved as an  
7       alternative to high-rise neighborhoods.

8               Cordially,

9               Robert Carro.

10              Thank you.

11              MR. TIERNEY:       Mark Hartnett.

12              MR. HARTNETT:     My name is Mark  
13       Hartnett and I'm a resident on 70th Street, and I  
14       just want to make my presence counted as a person  
15       against this building.

16              MR. TIERNEY:       Thank you.

17              Moisha Blechman.

18              MS. BLECHMAN:     Good afternoon. My  
19       name is Moisha Blechman. I live at 64th and  
20       Central Park West. I'm Chairman of the 64th Street  
21       Block Association, but I speak here, really, as a  
22       citizen who has lived in the neighborhood for 34  
23       years and watched incrementally as the sky and the  
24       sun has been disappearing from this neighborhood.  
25       And I feel that this is a fundamental problem that

1 we are losing so much sky, so much air and so much  
2 sunlight. Many times it goes because there's an  
3 "as of right" building, and this happened at the  
4 corner of our street. We had a splendid building  
5 which should have been landmarked. So, if there is  
6 flexibility to the law, this was the time to use  
7 this flexibility when it came to an "as of right."  
8 Therefore, I'm wondering does the City stand behind  
9 its laws or is it weighted in one direction alone,  
10 that we stand behind the laws when it's "as of  
11 right," but we don't when it's this kind of a law?  
12 So, that is my question.

13 The other is that I am concerned about  
14 the esthetics, because it seems to me that building  
15 this new building behind it is a contradiction to  
16 the whole idea of restoration and maintenance of  
17 our landmarks because, again, we're talking of --  
18 the word "context" has been used a great deal  
19 today. And in Paris -- when we discussed Paris, it  
20 was always looking down an avenue to see a  
21 building. How is it placed in terms of the sky?  
22 What are we looking at around the building? So,  
23 this is very important. And it seems to me that  
24 fixing a new door, new railings, et cetera, what  
25 worth is that if what sets off the architecture as

1 a whole is gone? You have something else.

2 So, those are my two remarks. Thank  
3 you.

4 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

5 Elizabeth Mayers, 25 Central Park West.

6 MS. MAYERS: Good afternoon. My name  
7 is Elizabeth Mayers, and I live at 25 Central Park  
8 West and 62nd Street, and I would like to read my  
9 own letter to the chair of the Commission here.

10 I am writing to express my dismay at  
11 Congregation Shearith Israel's request for a  
12 variance to allow the construction of a 14-story  
13 building on West 70th Street. This application  
14 represents a flagrant exception to existing zoning,  
15 which would result in an inappropriate intrusion in  
16 a carefully crafted contextual zone. As you know,  
17 the R8B zoning prevents such large structures from  
18 rising above the surrounding brownstones and other  
19 low buildings. It is astonishing that anyone would  
20 consider that the zoning, which was created after  
21 much deliberation in 1984, should be scrapped for  
22 this project, opening precedents for further  
23 destruction of this R8B zone.

24 My extended family has had a long  
25 relationship with Congregation Shearith Israel and

1 with the Upper West Side. The Chanin family built  
2 the Century and the Majestic apartment buildings.  
3 My husband's uncle, Harry Bernstein, held the  
4 honorary position of custodian of Shearith Israel's  
5 cemetery in lower Manhattan for many years, and the  
6 family was in the congregation of this august  
7 synagogue for two generations. He lived at 25  
8 Central Park West, where I live, and he was always  
9 concerned with the character of the area and proud  
10 of Shearith Israel as a beautiful and elegant  
11 edifice to which he had made many contributions.  
12 In the current circumstances, I feel certain that  
13 this relative of ours, whom we remember for his  
14 concern for the neighborhood where he had chosen to  
15 live, would have encouraged other members of the  
16 congregation to play by the existing rules. That  
17 was who he was, and giving his well-known sense of  
18 humor and the esteem in which he was held by his  
19 friends and associates, I imagine that he would  
20 have been pretty successful at persuading others.

21 Despite my respect for this congregation  
22 and its present home, and the meaning that it has  
23 had for so many generations of Jewish New Yorkers,  
24 I ask that the R8B zoning not be waived for this  
25 building, which would so markedly diminish the



1 Upper West Side Historic District.

2 Sincerely,

3 Elizabeth Mayers.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. TIERNEY: Deirdre Stanforth.

6 MS. STANFORTH: Good afternoon and  
7 welcome to Commissioner Tierney.

8 I'm Deirdre Stanforth, owner of a  
9 brownstone on West 83rd Street and an early pioneer  
10 on the West Side when it was still considered a  
11 slum. We were refugees from the East Side, victims  
12 of not one, but two apartments' demolitions. In  
13 1966 we were looking for a brownstone to call home  
14 so that we would never have to move again, and I  
15 never have.

16 Not only did I become a preservationist,  
17 I even wrote two or three books about it. This is  
18 one, published in 1976 for the Bicentennial.

19 By the time Landmark West was founded, I  
20 was only too happy to join the effort achieve a  
21 historic district designation to save the West Side  
22 from losing its character to the overbuilding,  
23 overcrowding and anonymity that has overwhelmed the  
24 East Side. We might have believed the Landmarks  
25 Commission would protect our historic district from

1 all future harm, but new battles arise constantly,  
2 with incredibly imaginative excuses for breaking  
3 the rules.

4 The application from Shearith Israel for  
5 a Certificate of Appropriateness is an oxymoron if  
6 there ever was one. This was clearly demonstrated  
7 by the enormous turn-out of protesting neighborhood  
8 residents at the Community Board meeting that was  
9 held to discuss the subject.

10 Under the absurd pretense of  
11 "preservation," they seek permission to erect a  
12 grossly oversized cash-cow of a rental building,  
13 which defaces their own property, as well as the  
14 Central Park West profile and the entire historic  
15 district.

16 A wealthy congregation proposes to  
17 finance the maintenance of their fine Greek Revival  
18 building by erecting a totally inappropriate tower  
19 which will loom over their synagogue, severely  
20 damaging the appearance of their house of worship  
21 and the low-rise neighborhood surrounding it, as  
22 well as the elegant Central Park skyline.

23 Raising funds for so-called  
24 "preservation" is no excuse for destroying it. In  
25 fact, this outrageous proposal is exactly what the

1 Landmarks Commission was designed to protect us  
2 against. This application must not be granted.

3 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

4 A representative of Andrew Dolkart.

5 MS. COSSON: My name is Polly Cosson,  
6 and I'm a student at Columbia University's Historic  
7 Program, and I will be reading a statement prepared  
8 by one of my professors, Andrew Dolkart, as  
9 follows:

10 I would like to add my voice to the  
11 chorus of New Yorkers opposed to the granting of  
12 variance for Congregation Shearith Israel to build  
13 a 14-story building, including an apartment house  
14 on a mid-block behind the synagogue.

15 I am an architectural historian and  
16 adjunct associate professor in the Columbia  
17 University School of Architecture where I teach  
18 about New York City. I have, over the years, had a  
19 special interest in the Upper West Side, and I'm a  
20 founding board member of Landmark West.

21 I believe that the synagogue's proposal  
22 defies the carefully crafted 1984 contextual zoning  
23 instituted on the Upper West Side, which permits  
24 tall buildings on the avenues but restricts the  
25 height of buildings on low-rise mid-blocks.

1           Permitting the speculative apartment  
2 building, with Synagogue use at the base, would  
3 open the door to additional out-of-scale  
4 construction in the low-rise zoning district and  
5 within the Upper West Side Historic District.  
6 While Congregation Shearith Israel is certainly an  
7 institution of great historic significance, it  
8 should be abiding by the same zoning rules that  
9 regulate all other land owners in the area.

10           In addition, I oppose any action by the  
11 Landmarks Preservation Commission to assist the  
12 synagogue in applying for a variance since the  
13 synagogue has not established a pressing  
14 preservation purpose for this project except to  
15 state that funds from development will assist in  
16 maintaining their buildings, something that any  
17 building owner is required to do on a regular  
18 basis.

19           I hope that this project is rejected and  
20 that Shearith Israel and its talented architects  
21 will return with a new proposal to erect an  
22 up-to-date community house that fits within the  
23 area zoning.

24           Sincerely,

25           Andrew Dolkart.

1 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

2 Jamie Lynton.

3 MS. LYNTON: Hi. I'll make this very  
4 brief.

5 I am a brownstone owner on 70th Street,  
6 and I would like to thank the Commission for  
7 protecting our street. It's a beautiful street and  
8 I recommend you all go take a walk down it. It's  
9 really a rare gem in New York.

10 We painstakingly renovated our  
11 brownstone over the last twelve years, and we have  
12 come in much contact with the Commission. To clean  
13 the front of our building, we make an application.  
14 We have air conditioning issues, we have windows  
15 that need to be changed. Everything we do to our  
16 building really needs to be passed by you. And, as  
17 many brownstone owners know, that can be a pain,  
18 but we're so happy to have you there protecting us.  
19 Even the most routine things, sometimes -- the  
20 things that seem most routine need to be passed by  
21 you. And you know what? It's worth it. We  
22 appreciate it as owners.

23 When we first bought the house, my  
24 husband had a fantasy about building a little sort  
25 of thing at the top, a two-story penthouse with

1 lots of light for a kind of a studio kind of thing.  
2 We never did it, but -- and I hope this isn't  
3 revealing too much about our marriage, but we never  
4 did it. And he still has that fantasy. It's his  
5 real estate fantasy. Everyone has their own little  
6 secret real estate fantasy, and that's his. And we  
7 walked by one in another neighborhood that doesn't  
8 have any historic preservation. They're building  
9 this beautiful, modern, two-story penthouse, and he  
10 goes, "God, why can't we do that? Let's do that.  
11 We can do that."

12 And I said, "Honey, I love you very  
13 much. Hell would have to freeze over before  
14 Landmarks Preservation would allow us to build that  
15 on our roof. They're just not going to let us do  
16 it. Pigs would have to fly."

17 And my six-year-old goes, "What do you  
18 mean 'Pigs would have to fly, Mommy?'" And I had  
19 to go through the whole thing, what Landmarks  
20 Preservation Commission does for us, that that's  
21 what allows our brownstone block to stay the way it  
22 is, and that's why we have it.

23 And she said, "You mean they're sort of  
24 the Dumbledore of our house, Mom? They protect  
25 us?"

1 I said, "Yes. That's what's going on.  
2 We have somebody that's protecting our  
3 neighborhood. They're looking over us. They're  
4 not going to let Daddy build that thing on our  
5 roof." So, I want to thank you for being my  
6 daughter's Dumbledore.

7 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you.

8 I believe that concludes at least those  
9 who have signed up. We passed over two people.  
10 I'm not sure they're still here, but if they are  
11 here, they're welcome to give a quick summary.

12 Ron Kahan and Elizabeth Evans.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

14 MR. TIERNEY: If not, I wonder if  
15 there's anyone else here who has not signed up who  
16 wishes to speak briefly.

17 Please.

18 MS. LUCASH: My name is Sherry Lucash.  
19 I live at 50 West 70th Street.

20 I think it's important for you all to  
21 know that the street really cares about this.  
22 Nobody has quite mentioned the traffic which runs  
23 west to east on 70th, and everybody who drives down  
24 70th Street will see the back side of this  
25 building, which we have been told is not pretty. I

1 haven't seen it myself, but I believe it.

2 It will create more congestion on our  
3 little street, which is already taxed with school  
4 buses and oil trucks and many maintenance trucks.  
5 If we could eliminate a little bit of that, it  
6 would be all to the good.

7 And I think the most dramatic person who  
8 spoke today was the woman who mentioned the  
9 building on Central Park West and 68th Street which  
10 is a blot. And I don't think anybody here can deny  
11 that, and I would feel really sad if we had a blot  
12 on 70th Street.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. TIERNEY: Anyone else?

15 (No response.)

16 Let me just briefly mention that since  
17 our last hearing on November 26th, in addition to  
18 all of the testimony heard here today, for which I  
19 thank everyone who's still here who did come  
20 forward to speak, we have a stack of some letters  
21 that have been coming in. A rough count is 67  
22 letters in opposition, 7 letters in support,  
23 400-odd postcards in support, and then I have a lot  
24 of e-mail, all of which I read on the subject as  
25 well. So, I appreciate all the input, as do all



1 members of the Commission. It's a very important  
2 part of our deliberations as we consider this and  
3 other matters that come before the Commission.

4 As I said at the outset, I don't know  
5 how our scheduling is. I'll do a quick sense of  
6 whether the proponents, the applicants, would care  
7 to -- right at this moment -- respond, if they  
8 choose, to any of the specifics that might have  
9 been raised during the last couple of hours, if you  
10 wish. If not, it's your choice.

11 MR. FRIEDMAN: No. We're happy to  
12 proceed.

13 MR. TIERNEY: Then maybe we would then  
14 have a discussion among the Commission about what  
15 we all heard here today.

16 Who would want to begin? How about my  
17 immediate predecessor, Commissioner Paulsen?

18 MS. PAULSEN: I would be happy to  
19 start the discussion. I, too, would like to thank  
20 the community. And I, in my capacity as chair, was  
21 the recipient of many of the postcards, letters and  
22 e-mails prior to Chair Tierney assuming the job,  
23 and it was very moving testimony, both at the  
24 previous public hearing and today, and all of those  
25 communications.

1 I think that with all deference to  
2 Elliot Sclar and Norman Marcus and many of the  
3 other esteemed former members of the Planning  
4 Commission, this proposal is following the process  
5 that it needs to follow with respect to our review.  
6 This is a proposal that is asking for a Certificate  
7 of Appropriateness. We are being asked to judge  
8 whether this building, this specific proposal is  
9 appropriate to this historic district. We are not,  
10 and by law, cannot determine whether this building  
11 merits any variances, waivers or special permits  
12 from the City Planning Commission. That is the  
13 venue for that discussion.

14 What the applicants have presented to us  
15 is a building on a lot that is split, a lot that  
16 falls both in the Central Park West higher-density  
17 district and in the R8B lower-density district.  
18 The zoning envelope that would be produced by an  
19 "as of right" development would not be appropriate  
20 to this historic district. It would not relate to  
21 anything in the district. It would not be a  
22 handsome building. It would not, in Commissioner  
23 Tierney's words, be a "future landmark."

24 The proposal that we have before us does  
25 propose a building that could be appropriate in

1 this district. It is harmonious in scale. These  
2 blocks, the mid-blocks, especially south of 72nd  
3 Street in the Upper West Side Historic District,  
4 have many taller buildings. Having resided myself  
5 in one of those taller mid-block buildings in the  
6 Upper West Side Historic District, they are not  
7 intrusive, they are totally appropriate, and our  
8 historic district designation recognizes that there  
9 are not two types in the Upper West Side Historic  
10 District, but many.

11 A building of this scale could be  
12 harmonious, could be appropriate. I do not believe  
13 that the design details presented before us today  
14 with respect to fenestration and some of the  
15 specific design elements of the facade at the base  
16 of the building are yet fully resolved and  
17 appropriate. Nor do I think that the types of  
18 windows proposed at the top of the building relate  
19 well to the context. So, I'm going to frame my  
20 comments with respect to the massing, which I  
21 believe can be found appropriate to the district.

22 MR. OLCOTT: I agree completely with  
23 those comments. I actually think that much has  
24 been said today about the notion of this being a  
25 mid-block building. I think that's an

1 oversimplification. I've been saying that it's a  
2 Central Park West building as well. As  
3 Commissioner Paulsen pointed out, it is on the  
4 border between the two. But from where I sit, it  
5 looks to me to be significantly closer to Central  
6 Park West than to the mid-block. How long is this  
7 block? 400 feet?

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's longer than  
9 that. It's one of the long blocks, but I'm not  
10 sure. I may be talking through my hat.

11 MR. OLCOTT: It's interesting -- I  
12 guess, before the line was moved, it would have  
13 been considered on the corner. In fact, I think  
14 it's rather important to note that directly across  
15 the street is 109 feet, not including this tower,  
16 and on the other side of the building is a building  
17 that is equally tall. So, it seems to me that it's  
18 taken its place quite well along the row of tall  
19 buildings that occur along Central Park West and  
20 extend well into the middle of the blocks. So, in  
21 that way, I find it to be appropriate.

22 However, I don't think that, in  
23 particular, the massing of the building is fully  
24 resolved. Actually, it's also important to note  
25 that I think the applicants have taken great care

1 to push the mass away from the individual landmark  
2 building whereas they could easily have come to a  
3 proposal that put it cantilevered over it or  
4 pushing or without the ten-foot reveal, in fact,  
5 put much more of the bulk in the corner lot zone,  
6 the R10 rather than R8. I think that they've done  
7 the right thing in not doing that. In fact, this  
8 is exactly the kind of application that should be a  
9 74-711. This is exactly why we have such a  
10 regulation because the zoning doesn't necessarily  
11 fit what this particular layout of the lots do.

12 I think, having said all that, that the  
13 massing of this building is really rather  
14 oversimplified itself. In fact, it's a box. I  
15 think it can go much farther than having some  
16 setbacks, as many buildings do on Central Park  
17 West. I think, in particular, it could have  
18 setbacks on the side street, which would go a very  
19 long way towards relating to mid-block. The fact  
20 that it is close to Central Park West does not mean  
21 that it shouldn't have some relationship to it. I  
22 don't see any reason why the sides have to be all  
23 the same because, clearly, their positions are not  
24 all the same. I think, in particular, the top  
25 needs a great deal more development and could be

1 much more delicately handled by the position of  
2 setbacks.

3 MR. VENGOECHEA: I agree with the  
4 comments that were made by both Sherry and Richard.  
5 I think that the issue of zoning here -- we  
6 recognize that oftentimes zoning puts out a series  
7 of generalized district boundary lines that apply  
8 equally -- whether it's a 150-foot boundary or a  
9 100-foot boundary -- equally throughout a  
10 particular district. In fact, it doesn't recognize  
11 the specific variance that might be noted in this  
12 particular block or in a two- or three-block area  
13 where you do have changes both in depth of  
14 building -- and I think that that is where the  
15 74-711 and the work we do here at the Commission  
16 can recognize and fine tune that condition.

17 This building is obviously both of a  
18 mid-block context, as well as a Central Park  
19 context. In that respect, I think that greater  
20 work has to be done with respect to the massing to  
21 bring it in relationship to both of those contexts.  
22 I think one of the things that one can easily do is  
23 look where corner signs are and setbacks are on  
24 existing buildings. They occur throughout -- just  
25 in looking at the elements, we have the 12th and

1 13th floor of the building, both on Central Park  
2 West, having setbacks or having expressions, very  
3 strong architectural expressions. So, I think that  
4 the massing can be looked at in a lot more detail,  
5 and, of course, a better relationship to the  
6 existing context, both Central Park, as well as the  
7 mid-block, by incorporating some of these lines  
8 somehow on the facade of this new proposal.

9 I think that the architectural -- we  
10 really are going to have to be a little bit more --  
11 I agree with the idea that the windows, as well as  
12 the lower part of the design of the new building, I  
13 don't think relates at all to the character both of  
14 the synagogue, nor the building itself. There's a  
15 dual reading that's unresolved in my mind. The  
16 building doesn't have its own identity, which I  
17 think it's very important that it present its own  
18 identity, that it has a certain distinctiveness  
19 about it, even though it is a building that must by  
20 its nature, in terms of the floor plan, take into  
21 account its relationship with the synagogue. But  
22 the way that it's being, at this point, proposed,  
23 it's not achieving that at all. I think the  
24 setback is fine, and creating a transition between  
25 the two buildings is the right way to go. And

1 regarding the roofscape, at this point, I agree  
2 with the comments, that I think they are related to  
3 what I mentioned, either setting back of some sort  
4 or adding other elements that create a better  
5 relationship for the building and its surroundings.

6 I think that will be all.

7 MR. TIERNEY: Tom?

8 MR. PIKE: I especially identify with  
9 what Commissioner Paulsen and Commissioner Olcott  
10 said. They said it better than I could. But I  
11 have no problem about them voting for  
12 appropriateness of a building on this site. I  
13 think the concept of having a building here is  
14 okay.

15 I think in this particular design, the  
16 massing and the height and the fenestration need to  
17 be worked on. Especially, I'm concerned about the  
18 height. But the concept of having a building here,  
19 I think, is a good one. And I also think that this  
20 design has respected the landmark. It's a major,  
21 major site in New York City and I think the design  
22 has respected that, and that's one of the things I  
23 like about the design. But I would like to see  
24 more workup.

25 MR. TIERNEY: Meredith?



1 MS. KANE: I want to start, first of  
2 all, by just complimenting the general level of  
3 discussion around this application. I think that  
4 the presentation, first of all, by the applicants  
5 was an extraordinarily high quality,  
6 well-thought-through application. And I think that  
7 the discussion by the community and the passion --  
8 the knowledge of zoning, the passion shown for the  
9 preservation of the neighborhood is really -- is  
10 just extraordinary. And I know I learned an  
11 enormous amount by sitting and listening,  
12 basically, to both parties in the discussion. One  
13 thing that's extremely heartening is the commitment  
14 to preservation that is so evident and the passion  
15 for preservation that is so evident both from the  
16 applicant and from the community.

17 I know the applicant, basically, took a  
18 shorter time today to go through the preservation  
19 of the existing individual landmark. At the  
20 previous hearing that we held, the applicant went  
21 through in somewhat more detail the preservation of  
22 the individual landmark and tying that and the  
23 commitment to preservation in with the history of  
24 the applicant, and the applicant's presence in New  
25 York was really an extraordinarily moving process.

1 I want to speak to the preservation  
2 purpose in the 74-711 because I think that that is  
3 something that -- it was certainly addressed in the  
4 testimony from the community. And I think under  
5 the standards that we have applied to many  
6 applications, the preservation purpose here for the  
7 74-711 is more than abundant. I think that the  
8 preservation purpose, really, I think, falls into a  
9 couple of different categories. The first is the  
10 physical improvements and physical preservation of  
11 the individual landmark that is on the landmark  
12 site that gives rise to the 74-711. The applicant  
13 today presented the remaining uncompleted portions  
14 of what is an almost complete historic restoration  
15 of this extraordinary individual landmark, a great  
16 many parts of which have been completed over the  
17 course of the last several years of preservation  
18 activity.

19 I know that a number of commissioners  
20 went on an informal tour to see some of the  
21 interior preservation work that had been done, and  
22 it was absolutely extraordinary, the level of work  
23 and the quality of work, the care, and the way that  
24 that will preserve this individual landmark well  
25 into the next century and beyond. I think that the

1 additional work that is planned to be done as part  
2 of this application, combined with the  
3 extraordinary work that has already been done by  
4 the applicant, which I think you really fairly can  
5 take into account here, certainly brings us -- and  
6 the continuing maintenance declaration that we put  
7 in place on this, brings us very, very, very well  
8 within the scope of preservation work that -- the  
9 preservation purpose that would justify the 74-711.

10 I think the second thing that we need to  
11 look at is the improvement that is proposed to the  
12 lot, that to the extent that we are granting -- or  
13 that we are applying -- I guess we're not applying  
14 anymore, but we're basically issuing a report to  
15 the City Planning Commission in support of  
16 modifications of bulk, et cetera, you know, in  
17 support of the preservation purpose. And I believe  
18 that they do here for the reasons described by, you  
19 know, our fellow commissioners, including the  
20 separation of the new building from the individual  
21 landmark building and that that does result, in  
22 fact, in a shift of more of the bulk into what is  
23 the R8B district from what otherwise would have  
24 been located in a R10 district, but I think the  
25 preservation purpose is served by that shift.

1 I think, too, that the argument was well  
2 made better than I could for the height of the  
3 building, being within the context, you know,  
4 largely within the line of what is appropriate. It  
5 is a building that is not quite in the mid-block,  
6 although the zoning line is drawn in the middle it.  
7 It's also, as we talked about, not quite of Central  
8 Park West because it is, in fact, the first  
9 building in on the block.

10 I certainly support the comments that  
11 have been made for various design changes in the  
12 building that I think will enable it to relate even  
13 more harmoniously both to the individual landmark  
14 and to the building.

15 MR. TIERNEY: Thank you, Meredith.

16 Chris?

17 MR. MOORE: I think the opposition  
18 made a good case. I think the applicant has also  
19 made a pretty good case. I think the application  
20 itself, I don't think this is a precedent setter.  
21 I think this is a pretty unique condition.  
22 Overall, the applicant has shown sensitivity to the  
23 synagogue. I think the applicant itself, that the  
24 presence of that nine-story building next to the  
25 site -- I think the applicant would be helped

1       tremendously if it lopped a few floors off, but  
2       failing that, I think this proposal is going to  
3       fall through.

4               MR. TIERNEY:       Sherry, did you speak of  
5       the demolition? I should ask you if you --

6               MS. PAULSEN:       I think that it is  
7       totally appropriate to demolish the existing  
8       community house on the site. It represents no  
9       particular style or significant era of  
10      architectural development on the Upper West Side.  
11      I think that it is appropriate to allow for the  
12      demolition of the existing building on this site,  
13      of course, waiting until we find an appropriate  
14      design for the new building.

15              MR. TIERNEY:       Sure. All tied in.

16              MR. PIKE:        Agreed on the demolition.

17              MR. TIERNEY:       Any of the commissioners  
18      wish to add anything else at this juncture?

19                      (No response.)

20              If not, I think what we would like to do  
21      is probably close the public hearing for today.  
22      And you all will take with you these comments that  
23      have been made here at the end. I think there's a  
24      certain amount of consensus on some of the major  
25      issues and some others not necessarily a consensus,

1 but deriving from some of those thoughts and maybe  
2 come back to us with something that reflects an  
3 attempt to address those, and not only to us but  
4 also to those who represent the community, having  
5 an interest here and spoken today and spoken on  
6 other occasions and have a very real interest in  
7 everything that's transpired here today. I would  
8 think that that would be the next step in this  
9 process, and presumably, it's been made clear  
10 enough in these comments and would give you the  
11 guidelines to do that.

12 MR. FRIEDMAN: We'll be back.

13 MR. TIERNEY: Good. I would entertain  
14 a motion to close the hearing for today.

15 Tom?

16 MR. PIKE: Motion.

17 MR. TIERNEY: And seconded?

18 MR. VENGOCHEA: Second.

19 (Time noted: 1:30 p.m.)  
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21  
22  
23  
24  
25

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, MARGARET EUSTACE, a Shorthand Reporter  
and a Notary Public, do hereby certify that the  
foregoing is a true and accurate transcription of my  
stenographic notes.

I further certify that I am not employed  
by nor related to any party to this action.

  
MARGARET EUSTACE,  
Shorthand Reporter



Richard N. Gottfried  
75th Assembly District

Chair  
Committee on Health

## NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

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### REJECT THE SHEARITH ISRAEL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Testimony by Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried  
Before Landmarks Preservation Commission  
February 11, 2003

My name is Richard N. Gottfried. I am the Assembly Member representing the 75th Assembly District, which includes Congregation Shearith Israel (CSI) and the site of the proposed building. I urge the Commission to reject the proposed project.

Under the law, CSI must prove that its proposed real estate development both "contributes to a preservation purpose" and "relates harmoniously" to the landmark synagogue and the historic district. It does not pass either test. It has nothing to do with the preservation of the synagogue landmark, and it is grossly out of scale and conflicts with the historic district.

A growing and prosperous congregation can and should support its mission without damaging the surrounding community and the law.

#### The project does not "contribute to a preservation purpose"

Under Section 74-711(a)(1) of the zoning code, the City Planning Commission may not approve this proposal unless the Landmarks Preservation Commission issues a report finding that the proposal "contributes to a preservation purpose." This project actually has nothing to do with a "preservation purpose." It is simply a plan to yield an extraordinary amount of money for CSI.

If CSI's proposed development were actually intended to help preserve the landmark structure, it would not have worked behind closed doors with City agencies for two years without a word to its neighbors or the preservation community. Its secrecy and effort to rush the development through the approval process belie its claim of public spirited motive.

If the statutory language – "contributes to a preservation purpose" – is meaningful, it must mean that preservation of the landmark will in some way be increased or improved by the project. If preservation will be no more or no less *with* or *without* the proposal, then the proposal is not *contributing* anything to a preservation purpose. It is *irrelevant* to that purpose.

CSI has not provided any evidence that the funds derived from the project would support any restoration or maintenance of the landmark beyond what it *has been doing* and will in any event *continue* to do. CSI has done an admirable job of restoring and maintaining the landmark synagogue, thanks to the resources of its members. CSI offers no evidence of financial need, nor does it suggest that it could not or would not continue the restoration and maintenance without the profits from this real estate development.



Instead, CSI concedes that the profit from the deal will largely be committed to building its “community house” and running the synagogue’s programs. The real beneficiaries will be the synagogue’s wealthy and growing membership, which will not have to dig as deeply into its pockets as it otherwise would to run the synagogue.

Since restoration and maintenance of the landmark have been and will continue to be done *without* the proposed project, the most that can be said is that to some extent, some of the profit from the project will *supplant* synagogue funds that would otherwise help preserve the landmark. Supplanting support for preservation cannot be said to “*contribute* to a preservation purpose.”

### **Violation of statutory standard**

The proposal involves a landmark building and is located in a historic district. Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission can act favorably on the project under Section 74-711(a)(2) of the zoning code, it must find that it “relate(s) harmoniously to the subject landmark building (and) buildings in the Historic District.”

The proposed building would be on West 70th Street, a side street of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This and many other side streets of the historic district are characterized primarily by decades-old brownstones and small apartment buildings.

The proposed building would be dramatically out of scale with the buildings on the side street. The 157-foot building would be one and one half times the height of the adjacent building. It would be about three times the height of the brownstones that make up most of the block.

It would be more than two and a half times the ordinarily-permitted streetwall height for the site.

It would also be several times the total bulk or FAR that would ordinarily be permitted for the site.

If this building does not flunk the “harmonious” test, what *does* it take to flunk?

### **The plan will get worse**

If this real estate development is approved, CSI will then bring in a commercial developer or owner for the residential part of the building. The commercial developer will certainly see the potential for multiplying its profit by adding more floors to the building.

CSI and the developer will then argue that since LPC had found that creating a multi-million dollar endowment for the synagogue “contributes to a preservation purpose,” then enlarging the endowment would contribute even more. They will argue that if a new 14-story building is “harmonious” with a brownstone block, then surely a few more stories would not

make a big difference.

The Commission should think ahead to that prospect and consider this: When CSI or its commercial partner comes back for more, on what basis will the Commission be able to turn them down?

## **Damaging precedent**

Approving this proposed real estate development would set a dangerous precedent that would seriously undermine the protection for landmarks and historic districts. When the law is ignored, diminished or distorted for one applicant, other applicants will insist on – and will receive – similar exemptions, because the Commission will have no legal basis for turning them down.

If a real estate development that does not improve or increase historic preservation is allowed to claim that it “contribute(s) to a preservation purpose,” does the statutory standard have any meaning? If the Landmarks Preservation Commission empties the statutory language of meaning, how will the Commission hold any future applicant to a meaningful standard and insist on a real contribution to preservation?

If the developer of a side street building that is several times the height and bulk of the other buildings on the block in a historic district is allowed to claim that it “relate(s) harmoniously to . . . the buildings in the Historic District,” then every historic district is in grave peril.

If this real estate development is approved, then in this and other historic districts we will soon have churches, synagogues, schools, and even ordinary property owners coming up with countless real estate schemes to make money by multiplying the height and bulk of a building. They will all be able to point to the example of CSI. And the Landmarks Preservation Commission will have given up its ability to insist on a meaningful contribution to a preservation purpose or to apply any meaningful standard of what is harmonious with a historic district.

New York City has not headed down that road and should not. The laws protecting landmarks and historic districts are an important part of what holds our City together. These laws should not be ignored, diminished or distorted.

## **The better alternative**

CSI is a growing congregation with wealthy members. It has a magnificent building and sanctuary that require restoration and maintenance. The congregation has been honoring its centuries-old tradition and its religious mission by raising the necessary funds to preserve the synagogue.

Now, CSI also wants to build a new, expanded “community house” and support its programming. (Note that the “community house” serves CSI, not the community.) A new community house – without a real estate development component – could certainly be designed

in a way that would not run afoul of the landmarks and historic districts laws and applicable zoning.

CSI can and should preserve the synagogue, and build and run the new community house, by raising the necessary funds, primarily from among its members. It is not a simple matter, but that is what congregations do across New York City and across the country. And CSI is better able to do that than the vast majority of other congregations.

## **Conclusion**

The Landmarks Preservation Commission should stand by the law and reject the proposed real estate development. It does not "contribute to a preservation purpose" and it is not "harmonious" with the historic district. CSI should stand by its honorable tradition and turn away from real estate development.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

C. VIRGINIA FIELDS  
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

November 22, 2002

Ms. Sherida E. Paulsen  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel; 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street

Dear Chair Paulsen:

I am writing to request that the Commission postpone the hearing on Congregation Shearith Israel (The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue), scheduled for November 26<sup>th</sup>

Built in 1892, the glorious synagogue is an individual landmark, and within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. Congregation Shearith Israel (CSI) has plans to have an unknown developer build a 157ft. building on its property at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. The preservation purpose of the project remains in question, as does its potential for setting a bad precedent for development within historic districts.

In addition, the Congregation has apparently been working on this proposal for quite sometime, but only now has reached out to area residents and community organizations for their input. The full board of Community Board 7 will not have adequate chance for review before the November 26<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing.

Given the extent of concerns surrounding the proposal, I am hopeful that you will consider postponing the Commission's hearing until January, so that alternatives can be adequately researched and the proposed project thoroughly evaluated by the Community Board, area residents and local organizations.

Very truly yours,

C. Virginia Fields  
Manhattan Borough President

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

C. VIRGINIA FIELDS  
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

July 1, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chairman  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building - 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
Upper West Side Historic District  
Manhattan

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have recently reviewed the revisions to the application that Congregation Shearith Israel will be presenting to the Commission at its public hearing on July 1, 2003. As you know, I had previously expressed my reservations about the original design. However, I find the revisions to be a significant improvement over the original plans. I now therefore recommend that the Commission approve the requests for a Certificate of Appropriateness and a report to satisfy the requirements of Section 74-711(1) of the Zoning Resolution. I regret that my schedule does not permit me to personally appear in order to elaborate on the reasons for my support.

In reviewing these revisions, I believe that Congregation Shearith Israel has successfully integrated its new building with each of the three important preservation objectives. First, the building is now an elegant partner with the Synagogue, which is an individual landmark. Second, the new building will be a sympathetic and contextual addition to the Central Park West skyline as viewed from Central Park, the City's premier scenic landmark. Thus, the building is appropriate to the context of the Upper West Side Historic District in two important respects. The southeast portion of the Historic District consists primarily of multiple dwellings and commercial structures, and as such the proposed building sits amidst structures of similar height and bulk. And with regard to the eastern edge of the Historic District, the proposed building extends west into the midblock to approximately the same distance as the other Central Park West buildings in the District.

The proposal appears to be suitable candidate for the Commission's assistance in pursuing a Section 74-711 Special Permit. Its stewardship of the landmarked Synagogue has earned praise from preservationists throughout the City. There appears to be more than enough preservation work ahead to warrant the Commission's involvement in pursuing the zoning waivers required to promote a preservation purpose.

I remain concerned, as do many of my constituents, with the fact that over 50,000 sf of zoning floor area remains unutilized in the present development plans. Local residents should not be required to remain in fear of further development on this site, nor of the sale of the unused development rights to another party. I ask the Commission to take whatever steps it can to assure that the remaining development rights cannot be used. I also ask that the Commission require the Congregation to adhere to the best practices for excavation of this site so that the other historic buildings in the Historic District are protected.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Virginia Fields", is written over a horizontal line.

C. Virginia Fields  
Manhattan Borough President

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9 Transcript of the Public Hearing  
10 before the  
11 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
12 on Tuesday, November 26, 2002  
13 at  
14 One Centre Street, 9th floor  
15 New York, New York  
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23 AR-TI RECORDING COMPANY, INC.  
24 305 Madison Avenue 142 Willis Avenue  
Suite 449 P.O. Box 347  
New York, N.Y. 10165 Mineola, N.Y. 11501  
25 (212) 349-9692 (516) 741-5235

1       proposal.

2                   CHAIRMAN PAULSEN:    Thank you.

3                   Dr. Alan Singer and then James Greer.

4                   DR. SINGER:    My name is Alan Singer, I  
5       am the Executive Director of Congregation Shearith  
6       Israel.

7                   I believe that the proposed building is  
8       not only appropriate, but it is a necessity. I  
9       would like to explain several ways that Congregation  
10      Shearith Israel serves the community since it is the  
11      community house that we now seek permission to  
12      replace.

13                  First and foremost, our religious  
14      services are open to the public twice daily, 365  
15      days a year, even on the high holidays we go out of  
16      our way to accommodate visitors who make prior  
17      arrangements with our security department. We  
18      provide many classes and lectures open to the  
19      public.

20                  Second, tour groups. Thousands of  
21      individuals per year from across the United States  
22      of all ages, of all religions, participate in guided  
23      tours of our historic landmark. In addition to  
24      taking great pride in showing others our beautiful  
25      sanctuaries, we proudly fulfill our responsibility



1 to explain the history of America's first Jewish  
2 congregation. Our one of a kind archives are made  
3 accessible to scholars and museums worldwide. In  
4 fact, the new space that we are proposing will allow  
5 us to better serve the academic community by  
6 returning 50 percent of our historic documents back  
7 to our facility from the off-site warehouse on 110th  
8 Street where we currently rent space.

9 Throughout our history, we have been  
10 asked by communal and governmental bodies to host  
11 community-wide events which we were always happy to  
12 accommodate. In June 2002 at the request of the  
13 Manhattan Borough President, C. Virginia Fields,  
14 Shearith Israel hosted an evening of Jewish Heritage  
15 Commemoration, which was attended by over 200 people  
16 and the general public was invited.

17 In March of 1997, having just completed  
18 the restoration of our Tiffany glass windows, our  
19 synagogue hosted a workshop in stain glass  
20 restoration at the request of the New York Landmarks  
21 Conservancy which was attended by 185 individuals.  
22 This past May, at the request of the New York  
23 Landmarks Conservancy, Shearith Israel for the first  
24 time in anyone's memory opened its historic West  
25 21st Street cemetery to the general public to

1 provide hands-on experience in a program titled  
2 "Preserving Historic Burial Grounds." 50  
3 reservations were received in advance of the  
4 workshop and over 180 people actually participated.

5 And this coming January, Shearith Israel  
6 has gladly agreed to host another program of the New  
7 York Landmarks Conservancy which is a forum on  
8 decorative paint finishes to which we will, again,  
9 be happy to invite the entire community.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

12 Mr. Greer, and then Jonathan Baker.

13 MR. GREER: Members of the Committee, my  
14 name is Jay Greer. I reside at 101 Central Park  
15 West, where I am a director of the  
16 board of directors and immediate past president.

17 I am under a considerable disadvantage,  
18 both I and my directors. Our first notice of this,  
19 as far as I can tell, came about five weeks ago.  
20 Our first board meeting came before the first  
21 meeting. That board, having heard the information  
22 that was in the press and some that we gleaned from  
23 our friends at 91, took the unanimous view that this  
24 was not an appropriate building to be put in across  
25 the street on 70th Street, for all the reasons that

1 See Page 6 re "economic engine"

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9 Transcript of the Public Hearing

10 before the

11 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

12 on Tuesday, November 26, 2002

13 at

14 One Centre Street, 9th floor

15 New York, New York  
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1 existing community house and construct a new  
2 14-story building.

3 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Meisha?

4 MS. HUNTER: Good afternoon,  
5 Commissioners. Meisha Hunter preservation staff.

6 This is an application for alterations at  
7 the site of Congregation Shearith Israel as well as  
8 complex community house and vacant lot adjacent to  
9 the community --

10 AUDIENCE: Could you speak louder?

11 MS. HUNTER: Yes. Is that better?

12 And there is a large team to present  
13 today so I am not going to be speaking too long. We  
14 will begin with the counsel for the team.

15 MR. FRIEDMAN: Good afternoon,  
16 Commissioners, Shelly Friedman, Friedman & Gotbaum.

17 You have before you the applications on  
18 behalf of the 450 families of Congregation Shearith  
19 Israel for a 14-story building adjacent to its  
20 landmark. It is interesting to note that if you do  
21 a research of the literature, you will find several  
22 references, none of them attributable to the  
23 congregation, referring to the congregation as,  
24 quote, "The Mother Congregation of American Jewery."

25 This is an odd statement and it is at

1 odds with Jewish tradition as there is no hierarchy  
2 among its houses of worship as with other religions.  
3 Yet, for what it represents, both in the  
4 congregation's historic role as the pre  
5 Revolutionary War birthplace of the American Jewish  
6 experience and its equally historic role of the  
7 centuries old migration of the Jewish people into  
8 the New World, the building at 70th and Central Park  
9 West was already an international landmark long  
10 before its designation by the Commission in the  
11 1970s.

12 Each succeeding generation of congregants  
13 has taken it as a matter of pride that they are the  
14 stewards of the world-renowned physical icon of  
15 faith, liberty, perseverance and history. The  
16 continuing preservation of the synagogue for what it  
17 represents to its past and its future is to this  
18 congregation already an article of faith.

19 With that in mind, the congregants come  
20 before you today fully supportive of your mission  
21 and view it as identical to their own.

22 This generation of congregants needs your  
23 assistance. Not once in its 350-year history on  
24 Manhattan has it asked for such assistance from the  
25 City of New York. It needs to produce a modest

1 economic engine, 10 or 11 apartments, to further its  
2 preservation program for the landmark; to restore  
3 adjacent parsonage, which is, in fact, one of the  
4 true remaining single-family, built as a home on  
5 Central Park West; and to replace a dysfunctional  
6 and utterly unattractive community house located in  
7 the historic district.

8 We are requesting a Certificate of  
9 Appropriateness and for a report one exception  
10 74-711 special permit is essential to these needs.  
11 Our presentation today will hopefully demonstrate to  
12 you the care with which the congregants have  
13 approached this request. The formal presentation  
14 will consist of remarks by Rabbi Marc Angel  
15 following myself. He will be followed by Peter  
16 Neustater, who is the president of the board of  
17 trustees. They will discuss the commitment to  
18 preservation purpose that the synagogue has long  
19 adhered to and is certainly willing to adhere to as  
20 we move forward through this process.

21 They will be followed by Steve Tilly.  
22 Steve Tilly has been a preservation architect since  
23 1999, has been working on the synagogue itself, and  
24 will talk to you about the steps which have already  
25 been taken to stabilize it, but for the important

1 work that remains especially to maintain the  
2 building and to bring it up to first class  
3 condition.

4 He will be followed by Elise Quasebarth,  
5 Elisa Quasebarth, who will speak about the context  
6 of building in the historic district, as an  
7 individual landmark and as across the street from a  
8 scenic landmark. And, then, she will be followed by  
9 Charles Platt and Paul Byard who will take you  
10 through the building.

11 Then, if you wish, I can return to talk  
12 about some of the zoning aspects that are being  
13 requested in the Section 74-711 application. And,  
14 of course, we are all here to respond to your  
15 questions.

16 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

17 RABBI ANGEL: Thank you for very much  
18 for giving us this opportunity to make our  
19 presentation. My name is Marc Angel, I am the Rabbi  
20 of the congregation. I began serving Congregation  
21 Shearith Israel in 1969. I was a young kid in those  
22 days. When I first came to the synagogue and sat at  
23 the reader's desk, the person immediately to my  
24 right then Rabbi Emeritus, David Sol Pool. Dr. Pool  
25 began Shearith Israel in 1907. Dr. Pool's

1 See page 19 re 'economic engine'

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1 Central Park West, this was a duck farm. The only  
2 building in the area, I believe, was the Dakota at  
3 on West 107th Street. All the other buildings in  
4 the neighborhood since 1897 blocked our views,  
5 interrupted our lives, caused all kinds of  
6 commotion, but you know what, this is a growing city  
7 and we are part of it and we did our best to adapt  
8 and to be a very good neighbor.

9 In sum, Shearith Israel has proven over  
10 the years its seriousness, its integrity and its  
11 commitment to New York and its commitment to the  
12 West Side. We have invested time, we have invested  
13 money. This building, this area is not only our  
14 past, we believe it is also our future. We ask you  
15 to help us maintain the standards for which this  
16 congregation is famous. We owe this respect and  
17 reverence to the generations that have come before  
18 us, and perhaps, more importantly for this evening,  
19 we owe this standard of commitment and reverence to  
20 the generations yet to come.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

23 MR. NEUSTATER: My name is Peter  
24 Neustater. I am the "Pinna" (ph) of Congregation  
25 Shearith Israel Spanish and Portugese synagogue in

1 the City of New York.

2 In 1654, 23 Sephardic Jews claimed a  
3 position in Portuguese Brazil. They were making  
4 their way back to Amsterdam when they were captured  
5 by pirates, rescued by a French ship and dropped off  
6 destitute two weeks before Rosh Hashana here in New  
7 Amsterdam. That Rosh Hashana service, held  
8 September 1654, marked the beginning of Jewish life  
9 in North America. Even at that time, they had the  
10 historic foresight to name their newly formed  
11 congregation Shearith Israel, remnant of Israel.

12 Congregation Shearith Israel, the subject  
13 of this application, residing in its fifth synagogue  
14 building on 70th and Central Park, is not only the  
15 oldest Jewish congregation in North America, but  
16 also the oldest in the English- speaking world.  
17 These Jews from the beginning fought not to be  
18 tolerated, but to be equal citizens. They fought  
19 with the Dutch against the British. They fought  
20 with the British against the Indians and with George  
21 Washington for the independence of the United  
22 States.

23 On exactly this date, November 26, 1789,  
24 President George Washington declared a national day  
25 of Thanksgiving. Our congregation 213 years ago

1 celebrated this first Thanksgiving ever in the City  
2 of New York. The 1730 synagogue that this  
3 Thanksgiving was celebrated in still exists today  
4 next to our main sanctuary. It has been carefully  
5 preserved and restored and is used every morning and  
6 evening for services.

7 We sit on the original 1730 benches. The  
8 Torah scrolls are kept in the 18th Century Ark, lit  
9 by 270 year old eternal light. Pre Revolutionary  
10 War era bells crown the Torah scrolls. One set of  
11 these bells in the main sanctuary was made by the  
12 famous colonial silversmith Ron Myers, a  
13 contemporary of Paul Revere and the "Pinnaas" (sic)  
14 of this congregation during the colonial period.

15 In the Ark there are Torah scrolls that  
16 were slashed by British soldiers when they entered  
17 the synagogue during the war. The Chazan would read  
18 on the 1730 reader's platform surrounded by the  
19 Milano style candlesticks. In the main sanctuary  
20 the loose floor boards under the reader's platform  
21 were taken from the 1730 synagogue building.

22 This Friday afternoon we will be lighting  
23 a Chanukah Menorah that predates Christopher  
24 Columbus. As you can see, Shearith Israel's mission  
25 is about preserving the past and carefully handing

1 it down to the next generation. For hundreds of  
2 years we acted as a landmark and preservation group  
3 before this concept was popular.

4 During the early 19th Century, the  
5 Congregation of Turo Synagogue, the oldest building  
6 in the United States, dwindled and could not main  
7 their synagogue building. It was Shearith Israel  
8 that took over the building, maintained it until the  
9 congregation was revitalized at the end of the 19th  
10 century. Today Turo Synagogue, still owned  
11 Congregation Shearith Israel, was the first  
12 religious institution to join the National Trust.

13 Shearith Israel, throughout its 348-year  
14 history has always been at the forefront of historic  
15 preservation. To think that we are going to do less  
16 is inconceivable. Our goal today is still the same,  
17 preserve the past through the landmark, hand it down  
18 to the next generation restored, and provide the  
19 means for future generations to maintain it. Even  
20 before the fire at the Central Synagogue, the  
21 trustees of the congregation ordered an engineering  
22 study of our 100-year old building.

23 The engineers reported that the south  
24 wall and parts of the ceiling were in danger of  
25 collapse. The turn of the century electrical wiring

1 with a staple installation was a fire hazard and  
2 there was, in fact, evidence of earlier electrical  
3 fires that, thank God, did not spread. Water  
4 leakage from the roof and walls were causing damage  
5 to the magnificent scagliola. Tiffany glass was  
6 falling out of its frames, and limestone masonry was  
7 in danger of falling off the building.

8 It was obvious to the trustees that we  
9 could not wait to go through this lengthy procedure  
10 to start the repairs. Our historic building had to  
11 be protected and stabilized immediately. We did the  
12 responsible thing, we started a major capital  
13 campaign and spared no expense to protect the  
14 landmark. New electrical systems, state of the art  
15 fire detection and suppression systems were  
16 installed.

17 The first mist suppression system in the  
18 City of New York was put in place. Leaks were  
19 fixed, walls were reinforced and fire-retardant  
20 materials pumped in. During the restoration, our  
21 architects discovered that not only did Louis  
22 Tiffany design the windows, but, also, Tiffany did  
23 the entire interior. I think you will find of  
24 interest the original list of invoices presented to  
25 the trustees in 1898 that were found by architects

1 in our archives, if you would pass that around.

2 We have restored the interior to the  
3 original 1897 Louis Tiffany color scheme. We all  
4 knew that our synagogue was magnificent, but when  
5 the interior scaffolding came down, it was beyond  
6 expectations. New York City has one of the greatest  
7 synagogues in the world.

8 While we have stabilized and protected  
9 the landmark, much work is still left to be done.  
10 Our restoration architect, Steve Tilly, will give a  
11 detailed report on the extensive work that remains  
12 undone on the exterior of the landmark and the  
13 parsonage.

14 In addition, the community house next to  
15 the landmark on 70th Street is in terrible condition  
16 and has to be torn down and rebuilt. The trustees  
17 of the congregation have decided not to proceed with  
18 the developer for this application. We wanted to  
19 take control over the process. We are the ones that  
20 are going to be here years after the developer has  
21 left. The goal of the developer would not  
22 necessarily coincide with the needs of the landmark  
23 in this community.

24 To achieve this, we have interviewed  
25 architects and consultants that have a reputation

1 for historic conservation and preservation. We  
2 asked them to design the minimum size building that  
3 could become the economic engine for us to finish  
4 the restoration, rebuild the community house and  
5 provide the endowment for continued maintenance of  
6 the landmark.

7 We feel our proposal is responsible, one  
8 that highlights and supports the landmark building,  
9 enhances the skyline of Central Park West, and  
10 complements the neighborhood. Many people have  
11 asked why don't we just raise the money from the  
12 congregation and finish the restoration and rebuild  
13 the community house? Before we submitted this  
14 application, I met with our budget finance and  
15 campaign committee, the main supporters of the  
16 congregation. In today's world where there is such  
17 great demand on every dollar, both here in New York  
18 and abroad, I can tell you definitively that it  
19 would be impossible to raise the sum of money  
20 required from the congregation. There is no chance  
21 that the congregation will be able to finish the  
22 restoration of the landmark, continue the  
23 maintenance of the landmark, and rebuild the  
24 community house without the economic engine that  
25 this process provides.

1           We will not be able to finish our task  
2       without this approval. 100 years from now when our  
3       grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be  
4       sitting on the same benches that our ancestors sat  
5       on during the first Thanksgiving in 1789, we hope  
6       that they, at that time, will thank this generation  
7       of congregants, this generation of New Yorkers, and  
8       especially this landmark committee for providing us  
9       with the ability to pass this precious heritage to  
10      them in a condition that will make us all proud.

11           Thank you.

12           CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Thank you.

13           MR. TILLY: My name is Steve Tilly. My  
14      architectural team has been shepherding the master  
15      planning and restoration process to this point.

16           As you can see, the time frame of  
17      Shearith Israel is long, looking back as well as  
18      looking ahead, and it is has been a thrill for us to  
19      join this for the last tiny segment and to try to  
20      help look ahead for the next several hundred years.

21           When we arrived and started working with  
22      Peter and Rabbi Angel and the committee trying to  
23      develop a preservation-based master plan, we looked  
24      at obvious riches that we needed to preserve and  
25      restore. We also saw obvious problems, an abundance



1 See Page 26 for Tilley reference to Economic Engine  
2  
3  
4  
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6  
7  
8

9 Transcript of the Public Hearing

10 before the

11 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

12 on Tuesday, November 26, 2002

13 at

14 One Centre Street, 9th floor

15 New York, New York  
16  
17  
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19  
20  
21

22 ORIGINAL

23 AR-TI RECORDING COMPANY, INC.

24 305 Madison Avenue

Suite 449

25 New York, N.Y. 10165

(212) 349-9692

142 Willis Avenue

P.O. Box 347

Mineola, N.Y. 11501

(516) 741-5235

1 areas shaded in purple represent the entire scope of  
2 preservation work that you need?

3 MR. TILLY: The areas in purple  
4 represent those areas that need to be addressed in  
5 the continuing preservation work.

6 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: How much of this has  
7 already been accomplished?

8 MR. TILLY: The purple is what remains.

9 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: The purple is the  
10 what remains?

11 MR. TILLY: Right. The gray tone area  
12 indicates the surfaces we have dealt with to this  
13 point, but the purple hasn't been dealt with.  
14 Which, again, there are quibbles on that, because,  
15 for example, the largest piece of purple that you  
16 are seeing here is the roof of the sanctuary, and  
17 that we have put a temporary roof on, we put a  
18 membrane roof on, and that we have done in a way  
19 sitting on plywood which will allow to restore the  
20 standing seam metal roof which we found underneath  
21 the asphalt.

22 So there is a major expensive piece of  
23 work that needs to be done, that roof is actually  
24 visible up and down Central Park West. That is,  
25 restoring that roof. The entire roof of the

1 parsonage needs to be replaced. If we look at the  
2 photographs, over here it shows the parsonage. The  
3 mansard roof on the parsonage, which is both a  
4 decorative finish and a building envelope, it is  
5 actually beyond the end of its useful life so that  
6 needs to be completely redone.

7 We have serious limestone staining that  
8 remains on the parsonage from copper and other kinds  
9 of growth, that we actually will need to replace the  
10 limestone. The front steps of the parsonage need  
11 to be replaced. There are Tiffany windows that  
12 haven't been dealt with. There was a program on the  
13 major Tiffany windows four or five years ago, the  
14 windows that they could not reach and that the  
15 budget would not stretch to, which are in back.  
16 These windows are in the back of the small synagogue  
17 which is adjacent to the large synagogue. These are  
18 on the south wall. Those are beginning to show  
19 signs of buckling, so we need to begin restoration  
20 and protect those windows in the back.

21 These pictures show you the parsonage  
22 roof. This shows you the membrane of the roof on  
23 the sanctuary which is being installed in copper  
24 hatch. We have done penetration for the future for  
25 ACHV systems, and that is awaiting the copper. This

1 is the detail of the copper maynard that needs  
2 preservation.

3 On the sanctuary, there is an  
4 inappropriate railing. The front steps are really  
5 -- we deferred -- the scope of work that we done was  
6 really everything that we did not need scaffolding  
7 for. So we scaffolded the exterior and we  
8 scaffolded the interior, just the work that could be  
9 done from ladders on the ground. The front of the  
10 synagogue facing Central Park West has seriously  
11 deteriorated limestone steps, inappropriate  
12 railings, a set of grades which do not meet access  
13 codes, so we are in the process of restoring those.

14 A set of railings in front of the  
15 parsonage and the parsonage steps which is in need  
16 of repair. The areaway around the sanctuary, we  
17 still have water, the potential for water to migrate  
18 in at the foundation. We arrested the water that  
19 was moving through the rest of the structure, but  
20 that needs to be attended to. The hen house was  
21 recently removed by the MTA, so that leaves the  
22 railings leading down and the stairways leading down  
23 to that areaway also remaining to be done.

24 So those are really the symptomatic  
25 highlights of the degree of deterioration on the

1 exterior.

2 At the end of our master plan, we return  
3 to issues of, as I said, there were circulation  
4 issues, there also were the substandard issues in  
5 the community house itself. So that we turned to  
6 the notion of the new building on the community  
7 house site for those three reasons, in order to  
8 replace the substandard facilities in a building  
9 that was, again, beyond the end of its useful life,  
10 to solve the interior circulation problems, and also  
11 to act as an **economic engine** for the rest of the  
12 preservation program that we have mapped out.

13 Now I think Elise will talk about the  
14 concept of the new building.

15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN PAULSEN: Stephen, do you have  
17 a full scope of work regarding the preservation that  
18 you are proposing for the historic building?

19 MR. TILLY: Yes.

20 MS. QUASEBARTH: Good afternoon,  
21 Commissioners. My name is Elise Quasebarth,  
22 preservation consultant for this project.

23 We have worked with the team to take a  
24 look --

25 AUDIENCE: Can you speak up, please.

See pages 16 and 17 re "economic engine"

1 THE NEW YORK CITY  
2 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
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3  
4 PUBLIC HEARING  
5 -----

6 Municipal Building  
7 1 Centre Street, North  
8 New York, New York

February 11, 2003

9 The above-entitled hearing commenced  
10 at 9:30 a.m.  
11  
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New York, N.Y. 10165 Mineola, New York 11501  
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25

1 anniversary, September 2004. Mark it on your  
2 calendars. We've been on our present site for 105  
3 years. The site of our building in 1897 was a dust  
4 bowl. I think the only building in the area was on  
5 72nd Street, the Dakota. All the buildings in our  
6 vicinity, all these buildings you see here all came  
7 after Shearith Israel. It was understood that the  
8 community grows, the community develops. And just  
9 as Shearith Israel was a very good neighbor and was  
10 very happy to see the development of others and  
11 know others with similar sentiments of kindness and  
12 compassion, the work of our own congregation.

13 We think our proposal is reasonable and  
14 thoughtfully conceived, and the experts will tell  
15 you about that, but I just want to conclude by  
16 saying that we ask you to consider our proposal  
17 favorably on its own merits, but also in light of  
18 the importance to the ongoing stability and ability  
19 of Shearith Israel to maintain its high standards  
20 of stewardship and communal service. We owe this  
21 respect and reverence to the generations that have  
22 come before us, but we also owe this respect and  
23 commitment to the generations that will follow us.

24 Thank you.

25 MR. NEUSTADTER: Good morning. My

1 name is Peter Neustadter. I am the Parnas or  
2 President of Congregation Shearith Israel, the  
3 Spanish and Portugese Synagogue in the City of New  
4 York.

5 In 1654, 23 Sephardic Jews, fleeing the  
6 inquisition in Portuguese Brazil, were making their  
7 way back to Amsterdam when they were captured by  
8 pirates, rescued by a French ship and dropped off  
9 destitute two weeks before Rosh Hashanah here in  
10 and then New Amsterdam.

11 That Rosh Hashanah service held  
12 September 16, 1654 marked the beginning of Jewish  
13 life in North America. Even at that time they had  
14 the historic foresight to name their newly formed  
15 congregation "Shearith Israel" or a "Remnant of  
16 Israel."

17 Congregation Shearith Israel, the  
18 subject of this application, residing in its fifth  
19 synagogue building on 70th and Central Park West is  
20 not only the oldest Jewish congregation in North  
21 America, but the oldest in the English-speaking  
22 world. These Jews, from the beginning, fought not  
23 to be tolerated but to be equal citizens. They  
24 fought with the Dutch against the British, they  
25 fought with the British against the Indians, and



1 with George Washington for the Independence of the  
2 United States.

3 Because of community opposition,  
4 services were held in private homes until they were  
5 given the right to purchase land and build the  
6 first synagogue building in New York in 1730. That  
7 1730 synagogue building still exists today next to  
8 our main sanctuary on Central Park West. It has  
9 been carefully preserved and restored and is used  
10 every day for morning and evening services. We sit  
11 on the original 1730 benches. The Torah scrolls  
12 are kept in the 18th century ark lit by a  
13 270-years-old Eternal Light.

14 Pre-revolutionary rimonim or bells crown  
15 the Torah scrolls. One set of these bells in the  
16 main sanctuary was made by the famous colonial  
17 silversmith Myer Meyers, a contemporary Paul Revere  
18 and Parnas of the congregation during the colonial  
19 period.

20 In the ark there are Torah scrolls that  
21 were slashed by British soldiers when they entered  
22 the synagogue during the Revolutionary War. The  
23 Chazzan will read on the same 1730 reader's  
24 platform surrounded by the Morano style  
25 candlesticks. In the main sanctuary, the wood

1 floor boards under the reader's platform were  
2 taken from the 1730 building.

3 Shearith Israel's mission is about  
4 preserving the past and carefully handing it down  
5 to the next generation. For hundreds of years, we  
6 acted as a landmark and preservation group before  
7 the concept was popular. Our goal today is still  
8 the same, preserve the past, which is the landmark;  
9 hand it down to the next generation; restore; and  
10 provide means for future generations to maintain  
11 it.

12 Even before the fire at the central  
13 synagogue, the trustees of the congregation ordered  
14 an engineering study of our 100-year-old classical  
15 Beaux art building. The engineers reported that  
16 the south wall and parts of the ceiling were in  
17 danger of collapse, the turn-of-the-century  
18 electrical wiring with its newspaper insulation was  
19 a fire hazard, and there was, in fact, evidence of  
20 early electrical fires that, thank God, did not  
21 spread. Water leakage from the roof and walls were  
22 causing damage to the magnificent scagliola.  
23 Tiffany glass was falling out of its frames and  
24 limestone masonry was in danger of falling off the  
25 building.

1           It was obvious to the trustees that we  
2       could not wait to go through this lengthy procedure  
3       to start the repairs. Our historic building had to  
4       be protected and stabilized immediately. We did  
5       the responsible thing. We started a major capital  
6       campaign and spared no expense to protect the  
7       landmark. New electrical systems, state-of-the-art  
8       fire detection and suppression systems were  
9       installed. The first nitrogen mist suppression  
10      system in New York City was put in place. Leaks  
11      were fixed, walls reinforced and fire retardant  
12      materials pumped in.

13           During the restoration, our architects  
14      discovered that not only did Louis Tiffany design  
15      the windows, but, also, Tiffany did the entire  
16      interior design. We have restored the interior to  
17      its original 1897 Louis Tiffany color scheme. We  
18      always knew that our Synagogue was magnificent, but  
19      when the interior scaffolding came down, it was  
20      beyond expectation.

21           New York City certainly has one of the  
22      great synagogues of the world. While we have  
23      stabilized and protected the landmark, much work is  
24      left to be done. Our restoration architect, Steve  
25      Tilly, will give a detailed report on the extensive

1 work that remains undone on the exterior of the  
2 landmark and parsonage.

3 In addition, the community house next to  
4 the landmark on 70th Street was in terrible  
5 condition and should be torn down and rebuilt.

6 The trustees of the congregation have  
7 decided not to proceed with the developer for this  
8 application. We wanted to take control over this  
9 process. We are the ones that are going to be here  
10 after the developer has left.

11 The goal of a developer would not  
12 necessarily coincide with the needs of the landmark  
13 or the community. To achieve this, we interviewed  
14 and hired architects and consultants who have a  
15 reputation for historic conservation and  
16 preservation. We asked them to design the  
17 minimum-sized building that could become the  
18 economic engine for us to finish the restoration,  
19 rebuild the community house and provide the  
20 endowment for continued maintenance of the  
21 landmark.

22 We feel our proposal is a responsible  
23 one that highlights and supports the landmark  
24 building, enhances the skyline of Central Park West  
25 and compliments the neighborhood.

1           Many people have asked why don't we just  
2       raise the money from the congregation and finish  
3       the restoration and rebuild the community house?  
4       Before we submitted the application, I met it with  
5       our Budget, Finance and Campaign Committees and  
6       main supporters of the congregation. In today's  
7       world, where there is such a great demand on every  
8       charitable dollar both here in New York and abroad,  
9       I can tell you definitely that it would be  
10      impossible to raise the sum of money required from  
11      the congregation. There is no chance that the  
12      congregation will be able to finish the restoration  
13      of the landmark, continue the maintenance of the  
14      landmark and rebuild the community house without  
15      this **economic engine** that this project would  
16      provide.

17           We hope that future generations will  
18      thank this generation of congregants, this  
19      generation of New Yorkers, and especially this  
20      landmark board for providing us the ability to pass  
21      this precious heritage to them in a condition that  
22      would make us all proud.

23           Thank you.

24           MS. QUASEBARTH:     Good morning,  
25      commissioners. My name is Elise Quasebarth. With

See Page 6 for Reference to "engine."

1

1 THE NEW YORK CITY  
2 LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
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3  
4 PUBLIC HEARING  
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1 Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - Individual  
2 Landmark, in the Upper West Side/Central Park West  
3 Historic District. Block 1122, Lots 36, 37.

4 An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts  
5 style synagogue, designed by Brunner & Tryon and  
6 built in 1896-97.

7 Application is to demolish the existing  
8 community house and construct a 14-story building.

9 The second application is a request for  
10 modification use and bulk in Manhattan. Docket  
11 03-2653. 8 West 70th Street, Congregation Shearith  
12 Israel Synagogue - Individual Landmark, also within  
13 the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic  
14 District. Block 1122, Lots 36, 37.

15 An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts  
16 style synagogue, designed by Brunner & Tryon and  
17 built in 1896-97.

18 Application is to request that the  
19 Landmarks Preservation Commission issue a report to  
20 the City Planning Commission relating to an  
21 application for a special permit, pursuant to  
22 Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

23 MR. FRIEDMAN: I'm Shelly Friedman  
24 of Friedman & Gottbaum representing Congregation  
25 Shearith Israel.

1           The applications before you this morning  
2       are filed on behalf of the 450 families of the  
3       Congregation Shearith Israel. It's interesting to  
4       note that if you do a search of the term "Shearith  
5       Israel," you will find many references -- none of  
6       them coined by the Congregation itself -- referring  
7       to Shearith Israel as the "Mother Congregation  
8       American Jewry." It is that role in which this  
9       building is viewed, both in terms of the  
10      Congregation's role as the birthplace of the  
11      American Jewish experience. It predates the  
12      American Revolutionary War, as well as its role,  
13      centuries old role, in the migration of the Jewish  
14      peoples to the western hemisphere that this  
15      building was considered an international landmark  
16      long before this commission honored it as such in  
17      the 1970's.

18           Each succeeding generation has taken  
19      with great pride its role as the steward of an  
20      icon, which is world renowned as a symbol of  
21      liberty, freedom and a historical continuity and  
22      faith. The congregation is pleased to be here this  
23      morning and present to you its plan for a building  
24      which will permit it to build 14 stories on a site  
25      which controls immediately behind the landmark.



1           Its interests in preserving the landmark  
2       itself are well documented by its efforts virtually  
3       since the construction of the building, and its  
4       preservation is taken as an article of faith by the  
5       Congregation itself. We're not here to ask for  
6       your help in preserving the building. That will  
7       continue. What we are here to do is to ask you for  
8       your assistance in helping us to produce a modest  
9       economic engine, ten or eleven apartments, which  
10      will be used to support the fulfillment of the  
11      completion of the preservation program of the  
12      landmark itself, to permit the restoration of the  
13      parsonage immediately adjacent to the landmark,  
14      which is in the historic district, and to permit  
15      the replacement of a dysfunctional and commonly  
16      viewed unattractive community house which is behind  
17      the designated landmark but also within the  
18      historic district.

19           Our presentation this morning will  
20      consist of five speakers. I will be followed by  
21      Rabbi Mark Angel, to discuss the program of  
22      Synagogue, immediately followed by Peter Neustadter  
23      to describe the history, in brief, of the  
24      Congregation and the relevance of that history to  
25      the application before you.

1                   They will be followed by Elise  
2           Quasebarth who will describe the context in which  
3           we are viewing -- the multiple contexts in which we  
4           are viewing this project as you look at it and find  
5           for its appropriateness.

6                   She will be followed by Charles Platt,  
7           who will describe the building itself in the  
8           application. Following that, Steve Tilly, who is  
9           the restoration architect for the Synagogue, will  
10          discuss the restoration program. And I will come  
11          back to discuss the zoning actions that are being  
12          requested pursuant to the Section 74-711 request.

13                   This congregation seriously needs your  
14          assistance with regard to both the Certificate of  
15          Appropriateness and the filing of the report to  
16          support the 74-711 special permit so that all of  
17          these preservation efforts continue and so that  
18          they can bring the building and retain the building  
19          in first-class condition.

20                   I'm going to ask Rabbi Angel to speak to  
21          you.

22                   RABBI ANGEL:     Thank you very much. I  
23          began serving Congregation Shearith Israel as a  
24          student rabbi in 1969. I was a 24-year-old young  
25          man then. I have the pleasure of sitting next to



Testimony before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Regarding Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue  
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness and 74-711  
November 26, 2002

Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm Vicki Weiner, Kress Fellow for Historic Preservation at the Municipal Art Society of New York. The Society's Preservation Committee received a presentation by representatives of Congregation Shearith Israel describing their Certificate of Appropriateness and 74-711 zoning applications. They outlined the nature of these requests, the special provisions being sought, and the way they believe the preservation purpose criterion for the 74-711 is met by the proposal. They also presented designs for the new building and made their arguments for its appropriateness. In its discussion, the Preservation Committee identified three issues that we feel are key.

First, the issue of height and massing of the new building. the Committee was divided over whether or not the building height and massing are appropriate to the historic district. A slight majority of members felt that on this particular streetscape, and in this location, a fourteen-story building is appropriate to the neighborhood. Others did not, expressing concern about the tower's relationship to the low rise buildings in the middle of the block.

Second, the issue of design. the Committee found the design to be inappropriate for the historic district. A number of design components appeared to be unresolved, such as the overall fenestration and the penthouse proportions. In addition, the Committee questioned the relationship between the Synagogue entrance and the residential entrance.

Third, the validity of authorizing the shifting of bulk under 74-711. the Committee felt the preservation purpose as described was not compelling enough to warrant this action. The restorative elements mentioned to us, such as replacement of the roof and addressing water damage, appeared to the Committee to be more on the order of routine maintenance. We appreciate the Synagogue's past attention to restoring its building, but would like to be assured that there is a comprehensive preservation program in place. We were not provided with any details regarding a continuing maintenance plan, nor was there any indication of how revenues generated by the proposed project would meet expenses for restoration of the Synagogue.

Testimony before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Regarding Congregation Shearith Israel  
Page 2

Based upon the Committee's review, we believe that the Landmarks Preservation Commission should not approve the Certificate of Appropriateness or the 74-711 authorization at this time. We look forward to future discussion of this proposal as it evolves.

Thank you for this opportunity to express the Society's views.



# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7923 FAX: 212-669-7797



<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

If you wish to speak, please complete this form. In order to give others an opportunity to speak, all speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> St.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

State Senator Thomas K. Duane

*Name*

494 Eighth Avenue NY NY 10001

*Address*

29<sup>th</sup> New York State Senatorial District

*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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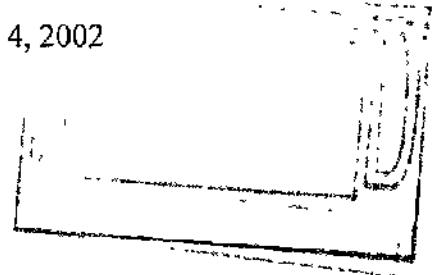
# COMMUNITY BOARD 7



www.protectwest70.org

Manhattan

December 4, 2002



The Honorable Sherida E. Paulsen  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th floor  
New York, NY 10007

*Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Congregation Shearith Israel*

Dear Chairperson Paulsen,

The enclosed resolutions were adopted by Community Board 7 at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 3, 2002.

Please contact the Community Board office for further information about these resolutions or to advise the Board of any action taken by your office pertaining to these matters.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Horowitz  
Chair

Enclosures

Cc: Shelly Friedman

## COMMUNITY BOARD 7



www.protectwest70.org

Manhattan

## RESOLUTION

**Date: December 3, 2002****Committee of Origin: Landmarks****Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Central Park West), Congregation Shcarith Israel, Application #03-2628.****Full Board Vote: 30 In favor 0 Against 4 Abstentions 0 Present**

WHEREAS, Congregation Shearith Israel is an individual landmark and also located in the Central Park Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the Synagogue proposes to demolish its community house, also within the historic district, and replace it with a 14-story building; and

WHEREAS, the proposed building is two times the height of the allowable buildings on the block; and

WHEREAS, the building has a negative impact on the synagogue and does not relate harmoniously to other buildings in the district; and

WHEREAS, the effect on Central Park where the building is clearly visible over the landmark and appears to overpower it is also negative; and

WHEREAS, the building is being developed by a private developer with no guarantee that the terms of the project won't change; and

WHEREAS, there are many institutions along Central Park West that are in need of funds, this project is precedent setting;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **disapproves** application #03-2628 to demolish the existing community house and construct a new 14-story building at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Committee: 6-0-0-0. Board Members: 3-0-0-0, Public Member: 1-0-0-0.*

## COMMUNITY BOARD 7



www.protectwest70.org

Manhattan

## RESOLUTION

**Date: December 3, 2002**

**Committee of Origin: Landmarks Joint with Land Use**

**Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Central Park West), Congregation Shearith Israel, Application #03-2652.**

**Full Board Vote: 29 In favor 0 Against 4 Abstentions 0 Present**

WHEREAS, Community Board 7/Manhattan finds the proposed building does not relate harmoniously with the subject landmark or with the surrounding buildings in the Central Park Historic District; and

WHEREAS, Community Board 7 has **disapproved** application #03-2628 for a certificate of appropriateness for the proposed building at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **disapproves** application #03-2652 by Congregation Shearith Israel to request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission issue a report to the City Planning Commission relating to an application for a special permit to allow the construction of a 14-story building adjacent to the synagogue.

*Committee: 6-0-0-0. Board Members: 3-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.*



# COMMUNITY BOARD 7 Manhattan

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## RESOLUTION

**Date: November 21, 2002**

**Landmarks Committee Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Against 0 Abstentions 0 Present\***

**Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Congregation Shearith Israel. #03-2628.**

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 7 Manhattan finds the proposed building does not relate harmoniously with the subject landmark or with the surrounding buildings in the Upper West Side Historic District;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Landmarks Committee **disapproves** application #03-2628 by Congregation Shearith Israel the Landmarks Preservation Commission to demolish the existing community house and construct a new 14-story building on properties adjacent to the synagogue.

*Board Members: 3-0-0-0 Public Member: 1-0-0-0.*

\*Subject to vote of the Full Board on December 3, 2002

# COMMUNITY BOARD 7 Manhattan

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## RESOLUTION

Date: November 21, 2002

Landmarks Committee Vote: 6 In Favor 0 Against 0 Abstentions 0 Present\*

Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Congregation Shearith Israel, #03-2652.

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 7 Manhattan finds the proposed building does not relate harmoniously with the subject landmark or with the surrounding buildings in the Upper West Side Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the Landmarks Committee has **disapproved** application #03-2628 for a certificate of appropriateness for the proposed building;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Landmarks Committee **disapproves** application #03-2652 by Congregation Shearith Israel to request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission issue a report to the City Planning Commission relating to an application for a special permit to allow the construction of a 14-story building adjacent to the synagogue

*Board Members: 4-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0*

\*Subject to vote of the Full Board on December 3, 2002.

# COMMUNITY BOARD 7/Manhattan

## FACSIMILE COVER PAGE

To: Diane Jackier

Sent: 11/25/02 at 2:05:16 PM

Fax #: 569-7797

Pages: 3 (including cover)

Company: LPC

Subject: Congregation Shearith Israel, #03-2628

### MESSAGE:



## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRAL STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7923 FAX: 212-669-7797<http://nyc.gov/landmarks>

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address CONGREGATION SPIRITUALITY ISRAEL

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

JENNIFER HOPPA  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Address  
MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT C VIRGINIA FIELDS  
Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date Nov 1 24 2002Item # 9510 Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

NORMAN MARCOS  
Name

91 Central PK West  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Representing*

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 2002Item # 9, 10 Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.

           In favor of proposal X Against proposal            Other position           

MARK D. LEBOW  
Name

1067 FIFTY AVE, N.Y. NY 10021  
Address

101 CPW, 91 CPW, 18 DUNKER CORP. etc.  
Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11, 26, 02Item # 9 + 10 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> ST.

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position       

KATE WOOD  
Name

LANDMARK WEST!  
Address

45 W. 67<sup>th</sup> ST. NYC 10023  
Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 11 / 26 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70th Street.\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other positionLISA KERSAUVAGE  
Name

Address

FRIENDS WEST 70

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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# FRIENDS



OF THE UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT'S

20 East 69th Street New York, New York 10021  
(212) 535-2526 Fax (212) 535-2155  
info@friends-ues.org  
www.friends-ues.org

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*Past President*  
(1982 - 1991)

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William P. Ratner  
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Anne Schillrot  
Patricia B. Selch  
Janice Sloan  
Patricia T. Sullivan  
Roger W. Tuckman  
Julia Wadlowson  
Cynthia Rob Zaluski

November 26, 2002

## LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS HEARING TESTIMONY BY LISA KERSAVAGE

Re 03-2628- Block 36, 37, lot 1122, 8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel  
Synagogue - Individual Landmark, Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

Madam Chair, Honorable Commissioners,

FRIENDS is testifying on this issue because both the East and West Sides share a common and precious characteristic, low rise mid-blocks of residential buildings. This building pattern is essential to preserve in order to maintain the sense of place of both neighborhoods.

This proposal to build a 14-story building on a mid-block is egregiously inappropriate. In order to receive a modification of the use and bulk regulations under Section 74-711, the Landmarks Preservation Commission must find that the bulk of the modifications relate harmoniously to the landmark building or buildings in the Historic District. It is eminently clear that the proposed 14-story building is not harmonious to the landmarked synagogue itself, nor to the dominant character of the mid-blocks in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. Off the Avenue, West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, like most of the mid-blocks on the Upper West Side, is made up primarily of 4-6 story rowhouses.

FRIENDS feels that inappropriateness alone warrants a denial of this application.

Please deny this application.



THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11/26 / 2021 / \_\_\_\_\_

Item # 9/10 Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ✓ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

TAKES OVER

Name \_\_\_\_\_

101 Central Park West

*Address*

## Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

JONATHAN BAKER  
Name

31 W. 69 ST 1-B NYC 10023  
Address

Sidmar Property Corp.  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 11 / 26 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 5-Bearittu ISRAEL

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

BOB MATTSO  
Name

300 CENTRAL PARK WEST  
Address

SELF  
Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 25 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Sheep Mt. Israel (Lungary apt)

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Deborah Snyder Platt  
Name

91 Central Park West 7F  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70th

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

Francis Daniel  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Name*

18 W 70th St.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Address*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 28 / 02Item # 92.17 Item Address 10 W 70th ST

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

MYLES WEINTRAUB

Name

18 WEST 70th ST NY NY 10023

Address

18 W 70th St SELF

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 11 / 26 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Congregation Shearith Israel\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_Dana Miller

Name

110 West 90<sup>th</sup> St. #26 NYC 10024

Address

Representing \_\_\_\_\_

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 11/23/2002

Item # \_\_\_\_\_

Item Address CS/ 14-story tower

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal / Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

FON PRINCE

Name

18 W 70TH, NYC 10023

Address

Representing \_\_\_\_\_

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date Dec, 27, 02

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 704 37 Ponds Tower

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Michael AMSL

Name \_\_\_\_\_

111 C.P.W. NY 10023

*Address*

## Representing

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# THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN-IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # 9 AND 10

Address 8 WEST 70TH STREET

☒ In favor of Proposal

☐ Against Proposal

☐ Unsure of Position

Please Print:

GABRIEL GOLDSTEIN

Name

50 EAST 72ND ST - 3A

Address

MYSELF

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address -- Attention: Terri Rosen Deutsch, Chief of Staff

*(This section contains a large area of horizontal lines crossed out with a large 'X', indicating that no additional statements were provided.)*

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TOTAL P 02



THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN-IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # 9 AND 10

Address 8 WEST 70TH STREET

☒ In favor of Proposal

☐ Against Proposal

☐ Unsure of Position

Please Print

Suzanne Stern  
Name

21 East 22 St NYC 10010  
Address

MYSELF

Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN-IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # 9 AND 10

Address 8 WEST 70TH STREET

☒ In favor of Proposal

☐ Against Proposal

☐ Unsure of Position

Please Print:

Naumi Doudavany

Name

305 W 70<sup>th</sup> Street

Address

MYSELF

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address -- Attention: Terri Rosen Deutsch, Chief of Staff

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # 9 & 10 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST.

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

JEFFREY MOSCER

*Name*

8 W. 70<sup>TH</sup> ST. NEW YORK NY. 10023

*Address*

SELF

*Representing*

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor North, New York, N.Y. 10007 TEL: (212) 669-7700 FAX: (212) 669-7780

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN-IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # 9 AND 10

Address 8 WEST 70TH STREET

☒ In favor of Proposal

☐ Against Proposal

☐ Unsure of Position

Please Print

GLORIA MOSSER

Name

351 EAST 84TH ST

NY 10028

Address

MYSELF

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address -- Attention: Terri Rosen Deutsch, Chief of Staff

*(This section contains horizontal lines for additional information, crossed out with a large X.)*

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 25 / 02Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Shearsh Israel Luxury apt.\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_James Platt

Name

91 Central Park West 7F

Address

Representing \_\_\_\_\_

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN-IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02

Item # 9 AND 10

Address 8 WEST 70TH STREET

☒ In favor of Proposal

☐ Against Proposal

☐ Unsure of Position

Please Print:

Terri Rosen Deutsch  
Name

100 West 70th Street, Apt 10  
Address

MYSELF

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address -- Attention: Terri Rosen Deutsch, Chief of Staff

*(This section contains a large area of horizontal lines crossed out with a large 'X', indicating that no additional statements were submitted.)*

If you need additional space please use the reverse of this form

TOTAL P 02

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 26 / 02Item # 910 Item Address 3 W 70th

           In favor of proposal            Against proposal 1 Other position

                      Mantowski  
Name

           91 CAW  
Address

           91 CAW Corp.  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11/26/02

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal ☒ Other position \_\_\_\_\_Name Robert WrightAddress 6 West 77 StRepresenting Member, NY Historical Society, MuseumPresident, Friends of Museum Park Committee

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

If you need additional space, please use the other side



## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 11 / 24 / 02 CPLC 70th StItem # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Portuguese Syn.

In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal ☒ Other position \_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Blake

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
91 Central Park W  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_

Representing \_\_\_\_\_

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 11 / 1 / 02Item # 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21 Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Name Sandra L. ...Address 232 ...Representing NYC

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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If you need additional space, please use the other side.

Norman Marcus  
November 26, 2002

The Upper West Side – Central Park West Historic District and  
The Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue

A harbinger of importance to the Upper West Side – Central Park West Historic District is before you. It is the request by the Central Park West Shearith Israel Congregation to permit within the Historic District a midblock 14-story structure containing 10 residential condominium floors. It seeks to shift its development potential away from the historic Central Park West “wall” into the vulnerable underbelly of the District, its characteristic brownstone/limestone midblocks. This request was unanimously rejected by The Landmarks Committee of Community Board No. 7 last Thursday night as “inappropriate” and unworthy of receiving a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

It is a harbinger because there are at least a half dozen institutions waiting to apply the precedent: The Ethical Culture Society, The Holy Lutheran Church, The Second Church of Christ Scientist, The Universalist Church, The New York Historical Society, The Museum of Natural History, and The First Church of Christ Scientist. In all of these cases we have significant, underbuilt structures which punctuate the historic Central Park West wall – and which help define the shape of the District.

Because these structures are individually landmarked or significant contributors to the Historic District, they are protected unless hardship claims can be substantiated by them. To the extent these are charitable or religious properties, the ability to fulfill their charitable or religious purpose defines their reasonable investment-backed expectations as property owners. Commercial exploitation of their unused zoning potential is neither a “right” of these institutions, nor does it promote the character of its surrounding Historic District.

The Congregation in this case proposes to demolish its low rise school and open space used at a midblock scale and replace it with a tower three times its height. The midblock on the north side of 70th Street – where the new tower’s shadow will fall – stands entirely at brownstone scale. The south side has however within its brownstone rows, two pre-war 9-story buildings.

The historic district report of the Landmarks Preservation Commission traces the evolution of the district and remarks on the survival of so many 19th Century brownstone blocks. The two 9-story multiple dwellings which replaced isolated brownstones in these midblocks did not become the “new” midblock look as they did in much of the Bronx. The proposed 14-story structure will tower mightily over the brownstones and over the 9-story apartments from the 1920’s as well. It’s as if a Central Park West building, denied its usual location, migrated around the corner to the midblock.

A Certificate of Appropriateness application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (“LPC”) in a Historic District must be judged against its historic context. Measured against the built form of the 70th Street midblock, or the midblocks within the entire historic district, the proposed 14-story tower is a visitor from another planet; it has no place on this midblock. Nor

can it be seen as a setback part of the Central Park West wall of the Historic District since it is more than 100 feet west of this wall. By all common sense, historic and zoning criteria, the 14-story proposal sits in the West 70th Street midblock, as defined by the land use public policy of the community and the city. Because its sponsor is a nearby designated landmark does not change the criteria LPC must apply to the proposal. It is neither necessary nor appropriate to financially benefit a landmark at the cost of the Historic District. Architectural "appropriateness" is not transformed by a multi-million dollar real estate contribution to the designated landmark.

This proposal is modest only in comparison with the synagogue's earlier 42-story incarnation. It destroys the scale of 70th Street. It fills in one of the characteristic dips in the CPW historic skyline. It gratuitously bottles up the inner courtyard of 18 West 70th Street above the zoning and historic height limit of the area. I can't rationalize these impacts just because of the economic advantage to the CPW property owner, the respected historic Spanish-Portuguese synagogue.

**Executive Director**

Andrew Berman

**President**

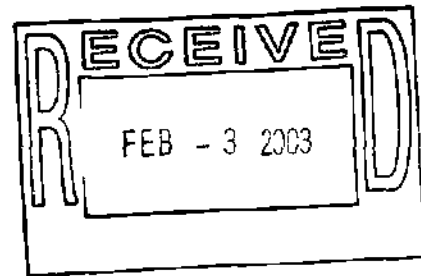
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Alice B. Sandler  
Verna Small  
Calvin Trillin  
Jean Claude van Itallie  
Anni Marie Wiener Summer  
Anthony C. Wood

January 16, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chair Tierney:

Robert

I am writing in regard to Congregation Shearith Israel's 14-story, 157-foot tall tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) proposed for the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. Construction of such a tower would require the granting of several waivers, variances, and special permits exempting the new structure from the current existing zoning and other regulations designed to encourage compatibility between new construction and the existing context of low-rise rowhouses on residential sidestreets, as well as entail the demolition of a structure currently afforded landmark protections.

GVSHHP is very concerned about the precedent which approval of such a project would set. We strongly believe that contextual zoning and zoning which has been crafted to ensure design compatibility in historic neighborhoods should be strengthened and protected, rather than weakened. We also feel strongly that proposals involving the demolition of structures within landmark districts and exemptions from existing zoning must be held to the highest standards to ensure they are approved only in cases of utmost necessity, as the least onerous path possible, and that the results will not impact negatively upon the integrity of their surroundings. It is unclear to us how this standard has been met with this proposal.

Thus GVSHHP joins Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West!, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer and a growing list of others in opposition to this proposal.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman  
Executive Director

*Established in 1985 to protect the  
cultural and architectural heritage  
of Greenwich Village.*



cc: Mayor Michael Bloomberg  
City Planning Commission Chair Amanda Burden  
Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields  
New York State Senator Thomas K. Duane  
New York State Senator Eric Schneiderman  
City Council Member Gale Brewer  
Congressman Jerrold Nadler  
New York State Assemblyman Richard Gottfried  
New York State Assemblyman Scott Stringer  
Arlene Simon, President, Landmark West!

Robert J Jacobson Jr  
91 Central Park West  
New York City,  
NY  
10023

Mr. Robert Tierney  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Center Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York City,  
NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing this letter to vigorously oppose Congregation Shearith Israel's proposed construction of a 15 story tower atop its "community" house on West 70<sup>th</sup> St., (the reality being this "community" house is not for the community, but for themselves!!). To allow this tower to happen would fly in the face of all the preservation laws now in place and not only most negatively affect this neighborhood's architectural harmony but anywhere else in the city as well. If this developers' dream but community's nightmare goes forward, it will not at all fit in with the already harmonious style of this area ...and once again, if allowed here then it will be "carte blanche" for any developer in the city to invade a neighborhood and do the same and therefore break the preservation laws for which they were designed.

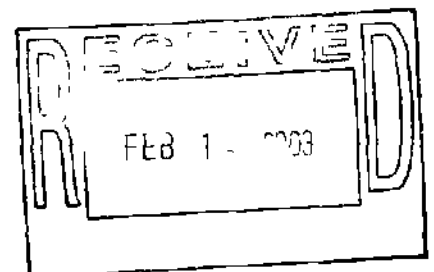
This proposed building is grossly out of scale and totally conflicts with the nature of this historic upper Westside district.

For this Congregation to build a new community house is quite admirable; but I don't think this tower above should become CSI's profit center at the expense of this lovely upper Westside neighborhood.

Thank you for your time and in advance, for listening to me.

Most Sincerely,

  
Robert J. Jacobson, Jr.



# CIVITAS

A Union of Citizens

1457 Lexington Avenue New York NY 10128-2506

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August Heckscher  
1914-1997

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28 January 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Center Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10005

*Re: Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70th Street*

Dear Chairman Tierney:

CIVITAS, an over 22 year old Upper East Side and East Harlem zoning and planning organization is on record for supporting and upholding R8B mid-block zoning regulations.

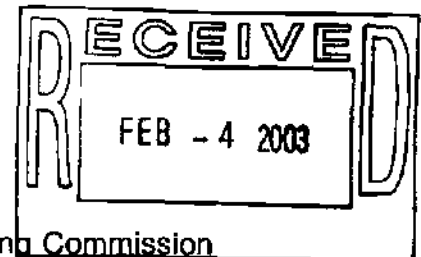
CIVITAS is appreciative of the needs of institutions for expansion and believes that needed growth is possible while still respecting the spirit of R8B.

The present application, with requests for significant variances, violates the mid-block context, which many communities throughout the city have fought to establish and uphold.

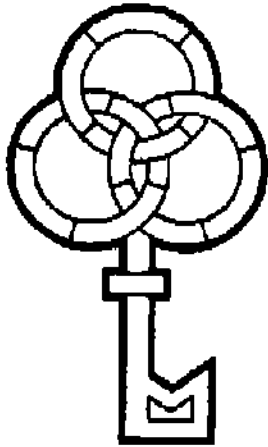
CIVITAS urges that the Commission reject this application because of the adverse effect it will have on the mid-block and because of the precedent it will set for future applications.

Sincerely yours,

*Genie Rice*  
Genie Rice, President



cc: Amanda Burden, Chairman City Planning Commission  
C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President



# KEY DESIGN & RESTORATION

DECORATIVE ARCHITECTURAL  
GLASS - WOOD - METAL

Date *2/10/03*

Attention---- *Robert B. Tierney*

From---- *W 89 St Block assn*

Regarding---- *proposed tower on W 70 St.*

Page # 1 of 2 pages

If there is a problem with Fax transmission or if you require further information, please contact me at (212)-787-9326.

Feb-10-03 03:17P wasa

2125299079www.protectwest70.org01

# THE FINE ARTS FEDERATION OF NEW YORK

National Academy of Design  
New York Chapter of the American  
Institute of Architects  
The Architectural League of New York  
Municipal Art Society  
Van Alen Institute  
National Sculpture Society  
National Society of Mural Painters  
Brooklyn Chapter of the American  
Institute of Architects  
The Associates of the Art Commission  
Historic Districts Council



**FOUNDED 1895**

FineArtsFed@aol.com

New York Chapter of the American  
Society of Landscape Architects  
New York Metropolitan Chapter of the  
American Society of Interior Designers  
American Abstract Artists  
Sculptors Guild  
New York Metropolitan Chapter of the  
American Planning Association  
New Yorkers for Parks  
New York Artists Equity Association,  
Inc.  
New York Society of Architects  
Public Art Fund, Inc.

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Louis Newman, *Director*  
Nancy Owens, *Director*  
Jan Pokorny, *Director*  
Leo Rabkin, *Director*  
Marion Roller, *Director*  
Regina Stewart, *Consultant*

February 10, 2003

Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney,

The Fine Arts Federation urges the Landmarks Commission to disapprove the application for a 14-story building behind the landmark Shearith Israel synagogue on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. The building's height and design are inappropriate for the synagogue and for the historic district. The Fine Arts Federation, founded in 1895, is an association of 20 arts organizations dedicated to fostering and protecting the artistic interests of New York City.

A 14-story building will loom over the low-rise Beaux Arts style synagogue, detracting from its silhouette and visual impact on Central Park West. As our past president Giorgio Cavaglieri points out, Central Park West is a unique avenue, with Central Park on one side and on the other side a mix of tall apartment buildings and low-rise institutional buildings, like the synagogue and the New York Historical Society. A 14-story apartment building so close to the synagogue and to Central Park West will alter that historic and scenic streetscape.

Feb-10-03 03:17P wasa


2125299079 www.protectwest70.org 2

Fine Arts Federation  
2/10/03 Shearith Israel Letter  
Page 2

The low-rise row houses on the side streets in Upper West Side/Central Park West historic district are a key feature of the district. While West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue is not monolithically low-rise, the proposed 14-story building is much higher than any other building on the block and than the typical side street profile.

The present design of the proposed building does not relate to the base, materials, and fenestration of the synagogue and inappropriately moves the entrance.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Gottlieb', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Gottlieb, President

FEB-10-1903 16:18 FROM

TO

12126697960 P.01  
www.protectwest70.org

Monday, February 10, 2003

Mr. Robert B. Tierney, Chairman  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Center Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
New York, NY 10007

Re: The Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel to build a 14 story tower 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I am a principal partner at Siris/Coombs Architects, an architectural firm which has made the Upper West Side it's home for the past 25 years. I am writing to express my strong opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the prevalent low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and, if approved, would pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I am a strong supporter of the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and I oppose all present and future applications for overscaled and inappropriate building developments such as this one.

Westiders like myself are joined in our opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. Elected officials supporting this effort to disapprove this development include Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Coombs, AIA  
Siris/Coombs Architects  
2112 Broadway, Suite 405  
New York, NY 10024



Heather McCracken  
02/11/2003 10:25 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: Proposal by Shearith Israel for Zoning Variance

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 02/11/2003 10:27 AM -----



"Elizabeth Mayers"  
<emayers@nyc.rr.com>  
>

To: <rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: Proposal by Shearith Israel for Zoning Variance

02/11/2003 12:40 AM

ELIZABETH G. MAYERS  
25 CENTRAL PARK WEST, APT. 3I  
NEW YORK, NY 10023  
212.541.9287

February 10, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 8th Floor  
New York, NY

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my dismay at the possibility of a variance, applied for by Congregation Shearith Israel on West 70th Street. The proposed 14-story building would represent a flagrant exception to existing zoning, resulting in an inappropriate intrusion into this carefully crafted contextual zone. As you know, the R8B zoning prevents such large structures from rising above the surrounding brownstones and other low buildings. It is astonishing that anyone would consider that the zoning, which was created after much deliberation in 1984, should be scrapped for this project, opening precedents for further destruction of this R8B zone.

My extended family has had a long relationship with Shearith Israel. My husband's uncle, Harry Bernstein, held the honorary position of custodian of Shearith Israel's cemetery in lower Manhattan for many years, and the family was in the congregation of this august synagogue for two generations. He lived at 25 Central Park West, where I live, and he was always concerned with the character of the area and proud of Shearith Israel as a beautiful and elegant edifice to which he made many contributions. In the current circumstances I feel certain that this relative of ours, whom we remember for his concern for the neighborhood where he had chosen to live, would have encouraged other members of the congregation to play by the existing rules. That was who he was, and given his well-known sense of humor and the esteem in which he was held by his friends and associates, I imagine that he would have been pretty successful at persuading others.

Despite my respect for this institution and the meaning it has had for so many generations of Jewish New Yorkers, I hope that the R8B zoning will not be waived for this building which will so markedly diminish the Upper West Side Historic District.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Mayers



# NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

822 Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY 12248  
Tel: 518-453-4941 Fax: 518-455-5939

25 Broadway, Rm. 2232w York, NY 10007  
Tel: 212-312-1492 Fax: 212-312-1494  
E-mail: Gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us

Richard N. Gottfried  
84th Assembly District

Chair  
Committee on Health

COMMITTEES  
Rules  
Health  
Higher Education  
Insurance  
Judiciary  
Social Services  
Majority Steering

November 13, 2002

Sherida Paulsen, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street  
New York, NY 10007  
BY FAX AND BY MAIL

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
8 West 70th Street

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

We are writing to ask the Commission to postpone the hearing on Congregation Shearith Israel (The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue), scheduled for November 26

The Commission's schedule for the public hearing on this project means that Community Board 7 will not be able to participate in the hearing, because the Board will not be considering the proposal until its full board meeting on December 3. There are significant concerns about the proposal, including whether the development serves a preservation purpose and whether it would set bad precedent for zoning and development in historic districts. Shearith Israel has been working with the City on this project for two years, without any word to the community. It is wrong for it to now to seek to rush through the public review process. The community's voice must be heard.

Shearith Israel (CSI) has proposed to build a 14-story (159-foot) building on its property at 8 West 70th Street. The synagogue itself is a landmarked building, and is located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. In order to proceed with this development, CSI must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, as well as a waiver from the City Planning Commission or the Board of Standards and Appeals.

We urge you to postpone the date of this hearing until after December 3, so that the Commission will be able to consider the opinion of Community Board 7 in making its decision on this matter.

Very truly yours,

*Thomas K. Duane*  
Thomas K. Duane  
State Senator

*Richard N. Gottfried*  
Richard N. Gottfried  
Assembly Member

*Gale Brewer*  
Gale Brewer  
Councilmember

cc: Community Board 7  
Historic Districts Council  
Landmark West!  
Municipal Arts Society  
Congregation Shearith Israel  
Various local co-ops and residents

To: DJ

**CHRISTOS INC.**  
241 WEST 37<sup>th</sup> STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10018  
www.christosbridal.com  
TEL: (212) 921-0025  
FAX: (212) 921-0127

November 22, 2002

Ms. Sherida Paulsen  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair

Dear Ms. Paulsen,

Community Board 7 Landmarks Committee held a hearing last night regarding Congregation Shearith Israel's plans to construct a 14 story tower in a designated historic district.

The local residents turned out in force to oppose the towers construction which will destroy the character of the neighborhood.

Congregation Shearith Israel can meet the needs of its growing membership by constructing a six story building where it plans to build the tower. Under current laws a six story structure is permissible. Shearith Israel is abusing its non-profit status by attempting to gain a "special permit" so it can cash out on the 10 condominiums.

The congregation should do what other congregations do when money is needed. Ask its members to contribute to meet its future financial needs. Shearith Israel is a wealthy congregation capable of raising the funds required. The money can be put into a trust and used to repair and maintain the historic synagogue and build its community center.

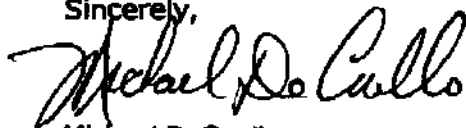
To permit the 14 story tower to be constructed destroys the integrity of the Landmarks Law and betrays the trust residents expect from its elected officials and community representatives.

The community will attend the Landmarks Preservation Committee meeting on Tuesday, November 26th, to express its opposition to the 14 story tower.

Reject the construction of the condominium in our neighborhood. Protect the land marked Central Park West skyline and the historic brownstone mid-blocks.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Michael DeCuollo  
Homeowner @ 91 CPW

To: DJ

Sherida Paulsen  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair

November 20, 2002

VIA FAX  
212-669-7960

Re: Congregation Shearith

Dear Chair Paulsen,

As a resident of 91 Central Park West, Upper West Side, and a member of the design community, I vehemently oppose the development of the proposed condominium tower!

The historic district in which I live acclaims Landmark status. With the brownstones, and the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, the entire community of 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> streets will be impacted. The Landmark Law was established to protect these buildings and the development of this "special-permit", threatens the architectural integrity of our city.

Please decline any and all requests to develop this site on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

Sincerely,



Lois M. LeBlanc

Stuart & Naomi Paley  
101 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023

To: DJ

November 20, 2002

Honorable Sherida Paulsen  
Landmarks Preservation Committee  
City of New York  
New York, NY

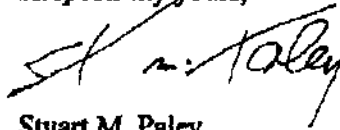
Dear Ms. Paulsen,

Congregation Shearith Israel, located on Central Park West and 70<sup>th</sup> Street, is rushing a major community change through the planning process. It has just disclosed a plan to erect a midblock condominium tower for which it is trying to get approvals and permits. They have done this in such a way as to deny the very vehement opposition of the local community a reasonable time to make a complete and effective presentation to both the Landmarks Commission and the Community Planning Board.

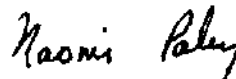
It is unfair, unethical and indeed reprehensible that this wealthy congregation, already favored by its tax-exempt status, should seek the further privilege of exemption from the protection of an historic district in order to enrich itself at the expense of the community. Moreover, should they prevail, their success could well be used for the destruction of similar neighborhoods throughout the city.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Respectfully yours,



Stuart M. Paley



Naomi Paley

To: DJ

November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2002

Ms. Shenda Paulsen  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Fax number 212 669-7960

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing in regards to Congregation Shearith Israel's plan to construct a 14-story condominium tower on West 70th Street, on the mid-block west of Central Park West

Having been a resident of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street for over thirty years and currently being a working mother raising my six year old daughter here, I am extremely concerned about how this structure will adversely affect not only our block, but also the entire neighborhood

Allowing the proposed tower to be built would severely compromise the integrity and character of both the Landmarks Law and of the Upper West Side / Central Park West Historic District. The tower will also compromise the beauty and stature of Congregation Shearith Israel's own Landmark synagogue

I urge you to help deny all of the special permits, waivers, variance and zoning provisions that building this tower would require. These special waivers and variances are being requested by a non-profit organization for a project that is clearly intended for profit.

In addition to causing irreparable damage to the immediate neighborhood, compromising the Landmarks Law this time could set an ugly precedent for exploitation of other sites and a continuing degradation of the beauty and historical nature of the entire Central Park West / Upper West Side District

Please help protect both the Landmarks Law and our landmarked neighborhoods

Thank you for giving this matter your full attention

Most sincerely yours,



Susanne S. Rostock  
18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10023

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/25/2002 02:40 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Against Portuguese Synagogue's proposal to erect building on W.70th St.

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/25/2002 02:41 PM -----



**PaulAvr@aol.com**

11/25/2002 01:59 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: Against Portuguese Synagogue's proposal to erect building on W.70th St.

Dear LPC Chair Paulsen:

On November 21, the Landmarks Committee of CB 7 voted unanimously to recommend denial of Congregation Shearith Israel's proposal to erect a building on W. 70th Street. Such a building would be devastating to the area and set a bad precedent for future such proposals.

I hope the Landmarks Preservation Commission will deny the proposal and preserve this area.

Ina Avrigh

425 Riverside Drive

NYC 10025

www.protectwest70.org

Sherida Paulsen

11/26/2002 09:05 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: DO NOT PERMIT 14 STORY W. 70 STREET BUILDING

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/26/2002 09:06 AM -----



**"DAEDALUS  
PRODUCTIONS, INC."**  
<info@rosenblumphoto.org>

11/25/2002 05:05 PM

To: &lt;spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc: <gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>, <bp@manhattanbp.org>,  
<mgnysa@aol.com>, <strings@assembly.state.ny.us>,  
<duane@senate.state.ny.us>

Subject: DO NOT PERMIT 14 STORY W. 70 STREET BUILDING

TO: THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
FROM: NINA AND DANIEL ALLENTUCK, 15 West 70 Street, NY NY 10023

Dear Sherida Paulsen:

Please uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, and protect our beloved landmarked Central Park West skyline and the Historic District brownstones in our neighborhood. We live directly across the street from the proposed site and we vehemently protest the proposed building that is planned to be put up next to Congregation Shearith Israel on 70th Street and urge you NOT to grant waivers or variances or special permits that will allow this completely illegal building to be built.

Allowing this illegal building to go forward will set a dangerous precedent for our neighborhood as other sites held by non-profit institutions will also try to put up outlawed buildings that will allow the historical character of the neighborhood to be destroyed. Please vote against allowing the construction of a mid-block building twice as tall as the law permits. Do NOT allow the air rights to be shifted across a zoning boundary, nor waive the zoning laws. Please protect the neighborhood and its landmark status, which is the job of your Commission.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nina Rosenblum Allentuck



# Ron Prince

Marketing Consultant

18 West 70th Street

Penthouse A

New York, NY 10023

ronprince@worldnet.att.net

212 579 9160 voice

212 579 9158 fax

November 18, 2002

To: Sherida E. Paulsen  
LPC Chair

Fax: 669-7960

3 pages (including this cover page)

# Ron Prince

**Marketing Consultant**

18 West 70th Street

Penthouse A

New York, NY 10023

ronprince@worldnet.att.net

212.579.9160 voice

212.579.9160 fax

November 18, 2002

Sherida E. Paulsen, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street  
9th Floor North  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing you about a very important issue in preservation – and to appeal for your support.

As you know, Congregation Shearith Israel (CSI) is seeking approval to build a 14-story structure on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, behind their landmark building on 70<sup>th</sup> & CPW. The building would be on the site of CSI's current community house plus an adjoining, now-vacant lot. Four above-ground floors would house new community facilities; ten more would go to luxury condos.

*If built, this structure would tower over a quintessential block in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.*

The waivers, variances and special permits this scheme requires are of themselves telling of the project's inappropriateness. They include:

- o The transfer of air rights from the CSI's landmark building to the site behind it – a precedent and a dangerous one!
- o The transfer of air rights across zoning districts – the synagogue (on higher-rising CPW) and the proposed building site (reaching well into residential West 70<sup>th</sup>) are in different zones.
- o Waiver of zoning law in order to allow a building twice the legal height. (The current design is approximately 75% higher than the now-tallest mid-block structure.)
- o Waiver of "rear yard" and "set back" provisions.

Letter to Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair Sherida E. Paulsen  
November 18, 2002  
Page 2 of 2

*All this in a designated historic district!*

The synagogue maintains that the sale of the development rights will endow its own preservation and other programs. But opening the door to special-permit development by not-for-profits endangers historic areas throughout our city.

There really is a question of policy here -- and of appropriateness:

*Should an organization with an historic site be permitted to expand to the great detriment of an historic district? The answer should be no, even for institutions of worship.*

This is a high-stakes case: The integrity of the Landmark Law and of this (and other) historic districts need protection. Please use your voice and prestige to ensure that a building plan of extremely inappropriate scale is defeated.

I look forward to your hearings on this proposal next week, on November 26<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,



**Sherida Paulsen**

11/14/2002 02:55 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: proposed plan

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/14/2002 02:55 PM -----

**Nitzat91@aol.com**

11/14/2002 02:35 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: proposed plan

Dear Ms Paulsen;

I am writing this e-mail in reference to Congregation Sherith Israel's proposed plan to develop their site at west 70th st. I am in favor of a new community house for the congregation but very much opposed to a 14 storey condominium tower. I am perplexed at landmark's willingness to chip away at laws that were created to save the skyline and preserve the area as a historic district. Whittling away at these laws will initiate renewed efforts by other non profits to develop their properties as well. Please help us preserve the restrictions that we have all worked so long and so hard to create. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Anita Jacobson

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/14/2002 01:12 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: [Fwd: Cong. Shearith Israel's 14-story plan]

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/14/2002 01:13 PM -----

**Alison Ames**

&lt;luluames@earthlink.net&gt;

11/14/2002 10:50 AM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: [Fwd: Cong. Shearith Israel's 14-story plan]

Dear Councilmember:

Please do NOT allow Congregation Shearith Israel to go ahead with plans to erect a 14-story tower behind its landmark building on 70th street and Central Park West.

If the CSI is allowed to breach the regulations now governing the CPW/Upper West Side Historic District (as happened when "Millenium Partners" put up all those monsters above 66th St/B'way -- and continues its death-march now below that intersection), what's to stop neighboring religious and/or otherwise tax-exempt organizations e.g. Lutheran Church at CPW & 65th; Ethical Culture at CPW & 63rd; Christian Science at CPW & 68th; Universalist at CPW & 76th; NY Historical Society at CPW & 77th, and on and on from doing the exact same thing?

Apart from the hideousness of its design and its disruption of the appeal of the neighborhood, not to mention its shadow, the tower CSI plans is in direct contravention of its alleged neighborliness, and is clearly just a means for the congregation to get richer on its tax-supported "religious" basis.

Sincerely yours,

Alison Ames  
140 west 69th St  
NY NY 10023  
212 874 8131

To: DJ

**To Whom It May Concern;**

**I have lived on the West Side from 71<sup>st</sup> Street to 69<sup>th</sup> Street since 1969. I love my neighborhood. I chaired the Halloween Block Association Party and I love being involved.**

**There are laws set up to preserve our city and my neighborhood. The Landmarks Preservation Commission should uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. The skyline on CPW and the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue need this protection. If you let the Congregation Shearith Israel's plan to construct a 14 story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street you will be setting a very dangerous precedent for exploitation of other "soft sites" held by non-profit institutions. If all they need is a "special-permit" to endanger our neighborhood with loss of views, light and property value, what would stop others from taking their paths the same way?**

**I believe that you should listen to my voice and work for the people that live here and voted for you. Please stop this action now.**

**Thank you,**

*Mary Ann Terranova and family*  
**Mary Ann Terranova  
28 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street  
NYC, NY 10023**

Sherida Paulsen

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

11/15/2002 02:11 PM

cc:

Subject: The Building @ 70th and CPW

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/15/2002 02:12 PM -----



Jeanette Thirlwell  
 <izoneinc@interport.ne  
 t>

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: The Building @ 70th and CPW

11/15/2002 11:08 AM

Please respond to  
 izoneinc

November 15th 2002

Mr. Peter Smallman  
 11 West 69th Street. 10-A  
 New York, NY 10023

Please note that this letter will serve to address five separate and  
 interested parties;

Michael Bloomberg Mayor of New York City  
 Sherida Paulsen Chair- Landmarks Preservation Commission  
 Amanda Burden Chair- City planning Commission  
 Gale Brewer City Council Member  
 C. Virginia Fields President- Manhattan Borough

Dear Members of Community Board 7,

It has been brought to our attention the proposed planning for a 14  
 storied building to be constructed adjacent to the synagogue on West  
 70th street and Central Park West. I cannot relate strongly enough how  
 disappointed I am at this prospect.

The CPW skyline lives in a Historic District and therefore should be  
 protected and remain unaltered. The landmarks like the Brownstones and  
 Spanish - Portuguese Synagogue are well established points of interest.  
 It's just what the neighborhood doesn't need.

For the synagogue, a tax-free institution, to allow this building to  
 rise sets a dangerous precedent that opens the door for others to follow  
 suite. The zoning laws need to be adhered to for all buildings.

Thank you,

Peter Smallman

Sherida Paulsen  
11/15/2002 02:08 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject:

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/15/2002 02:09 PM -----



"Herz, Suzanne"  
<SHerz@randomhouse  
.com>

To: <Spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject:

11/15/2002 09:31 AM

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am a resident of 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street and I am writing to you to express my grave concern about the proposed construction by Congregation Shearith Israel. My feeling is that the construction of a 14 story tower attached to an exceptionally beautiful landmark building will devastate the integrity of the historic district as well as the landmark building itself.

*My fear is if this action is approved it will set a precedent for future "special permit" non-profit developments endangering other historic districts in the city. I also do not want to see the exploitation of air rights and special zoning deals for tax free Institutions.*

The Congregation's building is in need of repair and they are looking to this as a major cash infusion. They are doing this without regard to the impact on the neighborhood or community.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Herz

Vice President,

Associate Publisher,

Executive Director of Publicity

Doubleday Broadway

212-782-9786

[sherz@randomhouse.com](mailto:sherz@randomhouse.com)



Sherida Paulsen

11/18/2002 09:19 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Shearith Israel

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/18/2002 09:20 AM -----

"Carol & Bill  
Greilsheimer"<CGreilsheimer@nyc.r  
r.com>

To: "Sherida Paulsen" &lt;spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc:

Subject: Shearith Israel

11/17/2002 11:10 PM

Mr. and Mrs. William H. Greilsheimer

91 Central Park West

New York, NY 10023

November 18, 2002

Re: Shearith Israel

Dear Hon. Sherida Paulsen:

As long standing members of this community, both of us were born and raised on the west side, we have watched our neighborhood change very dramatically over the years. Some of the changes have been for the better, others not. We cheered when our neighborhood became an historic district, for we felt that would preserve some of its character and livability.

The proposed construction of an oversized building between Columbus and Central Park West on 70<sup>th</sup> Street by Congregation Shearith Israel would harm the district and establish a dangerous precedent. The very integrity of the district would be threatened. For if Shearith Israel or the developer to whom it sells is granted the right to build a building twice the height for which the area is zoned, on what grounds could similar invasions of the district's integrity be refused to the other non-profit organizations in the neighborhood?

Will the New York Historical Society on 77<sup>th</sup> Street be allowed to exceed zoning limits?

Or Stephen Wise Free Synagogue on 68<sup>th</sup> Street between CPW and Columbus? How about St. Stephens Church on 69<sup>th</sup> Street between Broadway and Columbus? Or, the Christian Science church on the corner of 68<sup>th</sup> Street and CPW? Or the one on 66<sup>th</sup> and CPW? Or The Ethical Culture Society on 64<sup>th</sup> and CPW? And all the myriad others?

How can you say yes to one of them and no to the others?

The proposed tower will over shadow Shearith Israel's beautiful landmarked building. It will alter the Central Park West skyline. It will disturb the character of the mid-block on west 70<sup>th</sup> -truly one of the lovely blocks between Columbus and CPW. It is inappropriate for this neighborhood!

If they want to build, let it be brownstone height and no taller! That is what the historic district permits and they are entitled to no more!

Please assist our neighborhood in preserving its unique and very wonderful character. We are expecting your help.

Very truly yours,

Carol L. Greilsheimer

William H. Greilsheimer

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/18/2002 09:18 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Proposed mid-block construction of high-rise condo tower

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/18/2002 09:19 AM -----

**HinckleyIV@aol.com**

11/16/2002 02:07 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: Proposed mid-block construction of high-rise condo tower

Dear Chairperson Paulsen,

I write to urge that you and the Landmarks Commission uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which as you know is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. The plan of Congregation Shearith Israel to build a 159' tall, 14-story mid-block luxury condominium building on West 70th Street irreparably damages the low-rise, brownstone character of the mid-block on that street, which of course is part of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This planned construction ironically also harms the individual landmark to which it is to be connected--the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue itself--in that the tower's size and shadow will dominate that beautiful building.

Granting a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow demolition of the existing 4-story community house and replacing it with the proposed luxury condominium tower would set a dangerous precedent where future "special permit" non-profit developments are sought, thus endangering other historic areas throughout the city. Therefore, this is no local issue.

Tax-free institutions should be stopped from reaping financial windfalls by attempting to shift air rights across zoning boundaries through applications for special treatment. In this case, the CPW skyline has been placed at risk; in the future other city skylines will share that fate if this application is granted.

We urge that you and the Commission deny this unwarranted application for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Respectfully, Charles R. Church  
91 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023

10 DJ

November 15, 2002

Sherida Paulsen  
Fax: 669-7960

Dear Ms. Paulsen.

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen, residing at 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Our neighboring synagogue, Congregation Shearith Israel, is planning to build a 14-story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. This 14-story tower will greatly affect the landmarked Central Park West skyline. It will interrupt the low-rise, brownstone character of the mid-block on our street. Most importantly, this construction will set a dangerous precedent for exploitation of other sites held by non-profit institutions.

I am calling on you to use your influence to tell your fellow committee members to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. I hope that you will help in our community's battle to prevent exploitation of "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions and protect the landmarked CPW skyline and Upper West Side Historic District brownstone mid-blocks.

Thanks you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Arthur & Carola Rowe

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Rowe  
18 W 70th St Apt 4C  
New York, NY 10021 4605

www.protectwest70.org

GIORGIO CAVAGLIERI

ARCHITECT

250 WEST 57TH STREET

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10107

GIORGIO CAVAGLIERI FAIA

245-4207

245 4983

245 4984

Ms. Sheridan Paulsen, Chair  
 Landmark Preservation Commission  
 1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl North  
 New York, N.Y. 10007

15 November 2002

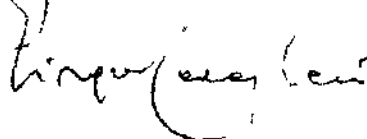
Dear Chair Paulsen

This is to urge you to reject the application by the Congregation Shearith Israel of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for any variance to the regulations which allow only a 6 story building on their property

Any higher structure would not only conflict with the beautiful design of the present building, but also interfere with the skyline of Central Park West which was the determining factor for the designation of that Historic District

Moreover, there are previous denials of similar variances to the Church of Christ Scientist, and to the N.Y. Historical Society in former applications in the same district of Central Park West. Thus, a variance now would create a very dangerous precedent which could cause complete defacing of the district character

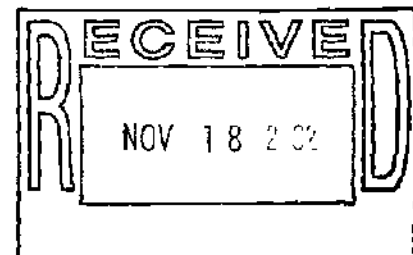
Respectfully,



Giorgio Cavaglieri FAIA

cc Landmark Committee of Community Brd 7  
 Mr & Mrs Michael Marsh  
 Mr & Mrs Lieberman  
 Mr & Mrs Fishman

*Synagogue Bd Members*



**Sherida Paulsen**

11/18/2002 03:43 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: attempt to destroy landmark

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/18/2002 03:44 PM -----

**Sandy Horwitz**  
<Sandy@kenzer.com>

11/18/2002 03:44 PM

To: "gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us" <gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>,  
"spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov" <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>,  
"bp@manhattanbp.org" <bp@manhattanbp.org>,  
"mgnysa@aol.com" <mgnysa@aol.com>,  
"strings@assembly.state.ny.us" <strings@assembly.state.ny.us>,  
"duane@senate.state.ny.us" <duane@senate.state.ny.us>

cc:

Subject: attempt to destroy landmark

As a supporter of your political career, I am writing to enlist your assistance for me and my neighbors in preventing Shearith Isreal synagogue on CPW and 70th St, N.Y.C. from selling their air rights to construct a fourteen story condominium tower.

This condominium would ruin this Historic Brownstone Block and Landmark synagogue to say nothing of ruining the Landmark CPW skyline.

Please advise what you can and will do to assist me and my many Neighbors in this effort

Very truly yours,

Sandra H. Assael

91 CPW

New York, NY 10023

Sherida Paulsen

To Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

11/18/2002 03 26 PM

cc

Subject

- --- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/18/2002 03 26 PM ----



"Daniel, Marc  
(Exchange)"  
<mdaniel@bear.com>

11/18/2002 02 59 PM

To 'spaulsen@lpc nyc gov' <spaulsen@lpc nyc gov>  
cc gale brewer@council nyc ny us' <gale brewer@council nyc ny us>  
"bp@manhattanbp org" <bp@manhattanbp org>,  
'mgnyasa@aol com' <mgnyasa@aol com>,  
'strings@assembly state ny us' <strings@assembly state ny us>,  
'duane@senate ny us' <duane@senate ny us>

Subject

Dear Ms Paulsen,

I am treasurer of the Board of Directors and a resident of 18 West 70th Street. As a longtime Upper West Sider, I wanted to make sure you were aware of my strong concerns regarding the tower at 8 West 70th Street proposed by the Board of Trustees of Congregation Shearith Israel. It seems unquestionable to me that the construction of a 14 story tower adjacent to an exceptionally beautiful landmark building will destroy the integrity of the historic district as well as the landmark building itself. The charm and character of the historic district and of 70th Street will be permanently and harmfully altered if this proposal is permitted to be approved, as the tower would exceed by over 70% the height of the next tallest building on 70th Street and would be twice as high as permitted under current zoning. Moreover, the proposed tower would dramatically change the facade of the synagogue and the views across Central Park of the synagogue.

I am not only concerned for the future of my historic district, but for the cherished goals of preservation throughout the city. The tower plan calls for the transfer of development rights across zoning districts which would set a dangerous precedent for other historic districts adjacent to landmark buildings. If this plan is approved it would invite construction throughout the city out-of scale to the architectural integrity of its neighborhoods. As a senior managing director at Bear Stearns, I am strongly in favor of economic development. I am not opposed to appropriate development on this site or anywhere in the city. I am opposed to development that harms the surrounding community. I agree that the synagogue could benefit from a new community center. But the building of that community center should not alter the character of the historic district, as the proposed tower would. As you are no doubt aware, the trustees' representative has communicated with its neighbors after 2-3 years of planning and did not choose to consult with any of us to reach a reasonable compromise. A community center that is no higher than the synagogue itself seems to me to be a reasonable compromise to provide the synagogue with what they need without causing harm to the surrounding community or the valuable preservation goals that our city has long championed.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Marc R Daniel

\*\*\*\*\*

Bear Stearns is not responsible for any recommendation, solicitation, offer or agreement or any information about any transaction, customer account or account activity contained in this communication.

Sherida Paulsen  
11/15/2002 05 09 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc  
Subject: 70th and Central Park West

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/15/2002 05:10 PM -----



"karen avrich"  
<avrichk@hotmail.com>  
>

To: spaulsen@lpc nyc.gov  
cc  
Subject: 70th and Central Park West

11/15/2002 03:12 PM

I am writing to express my great concern for the proposed 14-story building adjacent to the Spanish Portuguese synagogue on Central Park West and 70<sup>th</sup> Street

This project would negatively affect thousands of people in the neighborhood (and throughout New York City), as well as permanently alter one of the most beautiful and charming districts of the Upper West Side

The lawyers, architects, and representatives for the synagogue have themselves acknowledged that the project is motivated by greed, rather than by any attempt to benefit the neighborhood or improve the block. Hundreds of residents of the Upper West Side are horrified by the idea of such an unsightly and noxious proposal, and are troubled by the precedent approval of such a building would set for the city as a whole.

I was born and raised on the Upper West Side, and I realize that the face of the city does change. For this reason, it is more essential than ever to preserve the landmark areas which delight New Yorkers and tourists alike, and which maintain a sense of the elegance and history of the city.

Thank you very much for your time,

Karen Avrich

91 Central Park West

MSN 8 with e-mail virus protection service: 2 months FREE\*



Sherida Paulsen  
11/19/2002 09:23 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc.  
Subject: Everything will be changed, changed utterly

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/19/2002 09:23 AM -----



Mikedazzle@aol.com  
11/18/2002 10:45 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov  
cc.  
Subject: Everything will be changed, changed utterly

Dear Ms. Paulsen,

I am frequent visitor to 18 West 70th Street. My daughter, her husband and two grandchildren have lived there for years. I wanted to make sure you were aware of my strong concerns regarding the monstrous tower at 8 West 70th Street proposed by the Board of Trustees of Congregation Shearith Israel.

It seems to me that the construction of a 14 story tower adjacent to a beautiful landmark building will change the integrity of this historic district and the landmark building itself. To paraphrase W. B. YEATES **"Everything will be changed, changed utterly, a terrible ugliness will be born"**

The charm and character of the historic district and of 70th Street will be harmfully altered if this proposal is approved by a tower that exceeds by 70% the height of the next tallest building on 70th Street. It would be twice as high as permitted under current zoning.

What happened to the cherished goals of preservation throughout the city? The tower plan calls for the transfer of development rights across zoning districts. This sets a dangerous precedent for other historic districts adjacent to landmark buildings.

I am strongly in favor of economic development. I am not opposed to appropriate development on this site or anywhere in the city. I am opposed to development that harms the surrounding community. The synagogue should have a new community center but not at the expense of altering the character of the historic district.

It would be helpful if a meeting between the parties were arranged to effect a compromise. A community center that would be no higher than the synagogue itself seems to me to be a reasonable compromise providing the synagogue with what they need without causing harm to their neighbors.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Mooney BE. BSC.

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/19/2002 09:23 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: West 70th Street Proposal

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/19/2002 09:24 AM -----

**"Peter Janovsky"**

&lt;pjanovsky@msn.com

&gt;

To: &lt;spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc:

Subject: West 70th Street Proposal

11/18/2002 10:58 PM

Peter Janovsky  
91 Central Park West Apt. 14F  
New York, NY 10023

Sherida Paulsen

Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I have been living on the Upper West Side for more than 30 years, and I appreciate the unique quality of the streets and neighborhoods of this part of the City. As a result, I write to urge strongly that New York City deny Congregation Shearith Israel permission to build its proposed 14 story project on West 70th Street.

Permitting such a project would seriously undermine the character of our neighborhood. It would denigrate the effectiveness of the Landmarks Law, and mar the Central Park West skyline, including especially the way that the Synagogue itself fits in with the historic district.

Most seriously, permitting the variances and other measures necessary to permit the project would set a very dangerous precedent for future attempts to irrevocably alter the beauty of historic districts.

As a tax free institution, the Synagogue already enjoys significant benefit. Permitting it to abuse this benefit by undermining the quality of life of its neighbors is not in the best interest of the city.

Sincerely,

Peter Janovsky

SHERIDA PAULSEN  
 FAX FOR: C. VIRGINIA FIELDS 11/17/02  
 MAYOR BLOOMBERG

PLEASE DO NOT PERMIT CONVERSION  
 Shemeth Israel TO BUILD A 14-STORY  
 TOWER ON WEST 70 ST. IT WOULD NOT ONLY  
 BE A VIOLATION OF THE ESSENCE OF LANDMARK  
 LAW, BUT ALSO AN EYESORE IN THE  
 MIDST OF THE LANDMARKED UPPER WEST SIDE  
 BROWNSTONE AREA IN THE MIDDLE OF THE  
 BLOCK. IN ADDITION, THE CONVERSION  
 WOULD BE PUTTING THE LANDMARKED CPW  
 SKYLINE AT RISK, OVERSHADOWING ITS OWN  
 LANDMARKED SYNAGOGUES AT 70ST + CPW (THE  
 SPANISH-PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE) + CREATE A  
 DANGEROUS PRECEDENT FOR FUTURE EXPLOITATION  
 OF THE UWS AREAS.

Arlene Goodman  
 Frank Goodman  
 91 CPW Apt 3B  
 877-4085

Sherida Paulsen  
11/19/2002 12:52 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: Development on West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/19/2002 12:53 PM -----



Andrea Kopel  
<Andrea@citymeals.org>  
g>  
11/19/2002 11:30 AM

To: "spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov" <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: Development on West 70th Street

Dear Commissioner Paulsen:

On behalf of the Board members and residents of 24 West 70th Street, I am writing in opposition to the proposed construction of a 14-story apartment high-rise on the site next to the Congregation Shearith Israel on West 70th Street near Central Park West.

A building of this size would overshadow the beautiful Individual Landmark synagogue and the surrounding brownstones on the block. If you have ever been on West 70th Street, you know that it is one of the last remaining quintessential Upper West Side blocks, free of the types of large eyesore buildings that cropped up before current landmarks policies were in place.

As I'm sure you know, the city would need to grant a series of waivers, variances, special permits, and transfers of air rights in order to approve this high-rise. These types of waivers and transfers make a mockery of our Landmarks Law. More importantly, approving this project would open the door to many other developers seeking to take advantage of "soft sites" owned by non-profits, thereby endangering other historic neighborhoods throughout the city.

I implore you to uphold the integrity of the city's Landmarks Law, which was intended to protect neighborhoods from exactly this type of development. Please feel free to contact me at 212-687-1234 if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,  
Andrea S. Kopel  
Board President  
24 West 70th Street Apartment Corp.

Sherida Paulsen  
11/20/2002 11:15 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: CPW Historic District

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/20/2002 11:15 AM -----



SANKOVITCH@aol.co  
m  
11/20/2002 10:45 AM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov  
cc:  
Subject: CPW Historic District

Dear Ms. Paulsen, In writing to you we wish to express our concern about the proposed construction of a 14-story building on W.70th street. Such a construction would do great damage to the historic configuration and importance of the area, not least to the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, an architecturally as well as historically significant landmark that would be dwarfed and diminished by the proposed building. We believe that it is important to preserve the integrity of buildings and districts the Landmarks Law is intended to protect, and we hope that protection will not fail in this case. Thanking you for your kind attention, we are yours sincerely, Tilde and Anatol Sankovitch

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/20/2002 01:33 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Condo Construction in a Landmark District

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/20/2002 01:34 PM -----

**PFDOYNOW@aol.com**

11/20/2002 12:25 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: bp@manhattanbp.org

Subject: Condo Construction in a Landmark District

Dear Ms Paulsen,

We are asking for your help in opposing the new high-rise construction proposed by Congregation Shearith Israel. During our xx years as residents of the Upper West Side, we have seen many changes in our community. Much of the construction has been good for the neighborhood and has resulted in a cleaner, more prosperous, better-serviced area. The land marking of the Upper West Side as a historic district was a positive effort to keep the charm of the original brownstones, while still allowing some of the more beneficial construction on the avenues. The newly proposed mid-block luxury condominium tower, however, runs counter to the many years of improvements that have made the Upper West Side one of the most desirable neighborhoods in the City.

While we are certainly in favor of renovation, the proposed luxury condominium tower is much too tall for the block. Variances are needed to transfer the "air rights" from the synagogue site to the community house and to allow a mid-block building almost 100 ft. taller than the current law permits. If the variances are granted, the new building would tower over both the beautiful land marked synagogue and the adjacent building, 18 West 70th St. This mid-block high-rise would not only detract from the Synagogue, but would seriously disrupt the skyline of this historic district. In addition, if the various zoning waivers are granted to these property owners, it will set a precedent for future "special-permits" to non-profit developments endangering other historic areas throughout the city. Further precedents would be set for the exploitation of "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions.

In short, we implore you to tell the Landmarks Preservation Commission to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law and oppose the construction of this condominium tower.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Pauline and David Doynow  
101 Central Park West

Sherida Paulsen  
11/20/2002 01:33 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/20/2002 01:33 PM -----



"Correa, Anne"  
<acorrea@clinique.com>  
11/20/2002 12:11 PM

To: "spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov" <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing to you about a landmark Synagogue located on the corner of Central Park West and 70th street in Manhattan. Congregation Shearith Israel plans to demolish the existing 4-story community house and construct a new 14-story luxury tower in its place. This can only happen if City agencies grant a series of waivers, variances and special permits.

The Synagogue does not have "air rights" over that site. We count on you to protect individual landmark's like the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue. We also count on you to prevent exploitation of "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions.

I ask that the Landmarks Preservation Commission uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law which, as I'm sure you know, is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. The landmarked CPW skyline and UWS/CPW Historic District brownstone mid-blocks need your protection. Also, I believe it is important to avoid setting a precedent for future "special-permit" non-profit developments endangering other historic areas throughout the city.

Please, please help us to protect our historic districts and landmarks in this instance as well as all others. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Anne Correa

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/20/2002 05:20 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Appeal to Stop Proposed Building on 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/20/2002 05:20 PM -----

**"Mark Hartnett"**  
<markhartnett@nyc.rr.  
com>

11/20/2002 05:07 PM

To: &lt;spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc:

Subject: Appeal to Stop Proposed Building on 70th Street

November 15, 2002

Mayor Michael Bloomberg

Fax: 788-2460

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen, residing at 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Our neighboring synagogue, Congregation Shearith Israel, is planning to build a 14-story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. This 14-story tower will greatly affect the landmarked Central Park West skyline. It will interrupt the low-rise, brownstone character of the mid-block on our street. Most importantly, this construction will set a dangerous precedent for exploitation of other sites held by non-profit institutions.

I am calling on you to use your influence to tell your Commission to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. I hope that you will help in our community's battle to prevent exploitation of "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions and protect the landmarked CPW skyline and Upper West Side Historic District brownstone mid-blocks.

Thanks you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Hartnett



**Sherida Paulsen**

11/20/2002 05:19 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: OPPOSED TO CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL'S  
CONDOMINIUM !!

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/20/2002 05:20 PM -----

**Jakeat91@aol.com**

11/20/2002 04:42 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: Landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: OPPOSED TO CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL'S  
CONDOMINIUM !!

Dear Madam Chairwoman,

As a neighbor of Congregation Shearith Israel's for over 30 years, I am absolutely opposed to their proposed construction of a 15 story condominium apartment house next to their temple (On West 70th Street). To permit this monstrosity to the character and skyline of this neighborhood, would fly in the face of what the Landmarks Preservation Commission is about....namely, PRESERVING the nature and history of this city's neighborhoods.

First of all, the Central Park West SKYLINE will be altered terribly with this building. The character of 70th Street itself will be horribly changed. This IS a HISTORIC district and for good reason- the unique quality of the surrounding brownstone buildings and their side streets. The Synagogue itself is a LANDMARK ....

If we start with issuing "special permits," "waivers" and the like for this developer's dream BUT a NEIGHBORHOOD'S NIGHTMARE, then where do we STOP this process ??? ONce you allow this to happen then ALL OVER the city it will not cease....This is precisely what the Landmarks Preservation Commission is all about....IT will have to just keep issuing these special permits once this horrendous process begins...Please do not allow this to happen !!

Finally, I believe that the representatives of the Congregation have NOT been fair with their neighbors by scheduling a meeting on this during a MAJOR holiday time when many folks (their friends ?) will be away. This could have been scheduled at a much fairer time in order for this community deal with this issue. I don't think that was the intention of the folks from the Congregation.....

Please oppose this on our behalf...

Thank you for your time.

Most Sincerely,

Robert J. Jacobson, Jr.

91 Central Park West

NYC 10023

212 799 2158

Email: Jakeat91@aol.com

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/21/2002 09:36 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Landmark District

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/21/2002 09:37 AM -----



**Susanne Rostock**  
<Rostock@bigplanet.com>

11/20/2002 09:16 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: Landmark District

Ms. Sherida Paulsen; Chair; Landmarks Preservation Commission

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

As a follow-up, I am emailing you a copy of a letter I faxed to your office this afternoon:

I am writing in regards to Congregation Shearith Israel's plan to construct a 14-story condominium tower on West 70th Street, on the mid-block west of Central Park.

Having been a resident of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street for over thirty years and currently being a working mother raising my six year old daughter here, I am extremely concerned about how this structure will adversely affect not only our block, but also the entire neighborhood.

Allowing the proposed tower to be built would severely compromise the integrity and character of both the Landmarks Law and of the Upper West Side / Central Park West Historic District. The tower will also compromise the beauty and stature of Congregation Shearith Israel's own Landmark synagogue.

I urge you to help deny all of the special permits, waivers, variance and zoning provisions that building this tower would require. These special waivers and variances are being requested by a non-profit organization for a project that is clearly intended for profit.

In addition to causing irreparable damage to the immediate neighborhood, compromising the Landmarks Law this time could set an ugly precedent for exploitation of other sites and a continuing degradation of the beauty and historical nature of the entire Central Park West / Upper West Side District.

Please help protect both the Landmarks Law and our landmarked neighborhoods.

Thank you for giving this matter your attention and full support.

Most sincerely yours,

Susanne Szabo Rostock

18 West 70th Street

NYC, NY 10023

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/20/2002 11:16 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

CC:

Subject: No Subject

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/20/2002 11:16 AM -----

**Alber20@aol.com**

11/20/2002 11:12 AM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

CC:

Subject: No Subject

Dear Chairperson Paulsen

I am a resident of 91 Central Park West and I am writing to oppose the proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel to erect a fourteen-story building on West 70th Street.

The proposal doesn't effect my views in any way; it does affect the life of the neighborhood and the concept of "historic district."

I know that there is a tendency to oppose building just on general principle. Most people don't like change, and some people oppose change even when it's for the better. However, this is not one of those occasions. The change proposed by the Synagogue to the site on Central Park West and 70th Street is a major step backwards.

For years, our neighborhood fought to become a historic district, and finally we achieved that goal. If this fifteen-story tower is approved to loom over the Synagogue, then the historic district will simply be historical fiction. This is not about obstinacy and this is not about opposing progress. This is about opposing regression.

The air and the light are disappearing from Manhattan. Much of the residential Upper East Side is a lost cause and the West Side is slowly being buried alive as well. The towers built around Lincoln Center, the enormous Millennium buildings, and the rising monstrosity that is the AOL Time Warner Tower are all casting their long shadows across the neighborhood.

This building under discussion--as currently described-- is no mega-tower, but it simply does not belong on West 70th Street. What is the meaning of a historic district if this structure is permitted to rise. Why not erect similar buildings on 69th or 71st street, why not a high-rise over the New York Historical Society, or the Museum of Natural History? Bit by bit, the magnificent street front that is Central Park West will simply become a façade, like the Western street on a Hollywood lot.

Let us allow the historic district to be more than just an empty term; let us allow it to be remain a neighborhood. A neighborhood of scale and appropriateness, of air and light and beautiful buildings, maintained as they have been for the greater part of a hundred years.

Sincerely,

Andrew Bergman

To: DJ

November 19, 2002

Sherida E. Paulsen  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Paulsen:

On behalf of the Board members and residents of 24 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, I am writing in opposition to the proposed construction of a 14-story apartment high-rise on the site next to the Congregation Shearith Israel on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street near Central Park West

A building of this size would overshadow the beautiful Individual Landmark synagogue and the surrounding brownstones on the block. If you have ever been on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, you know that it is one of the last remaining quintessential Upper West Side blocks, free of the types of large eyesore buildings that cropped up before current landmarks policies were in place.

As I'm sure you know, the city would need to grant a series of waivers, variances, special permits, and transfers of air rights in order to approve this high-rise. These types of waivers and transfers make a mockery of our Landmarks Law. More importantly, approving this project would open the door to many other developers seeking to take advantage of "soft sites" owned by non-profits, thereby endangering other historic neighborhoods throughout the city.

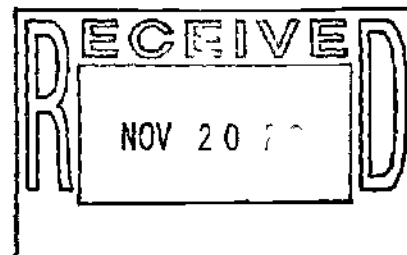
I implore you to uphold the integrity of the city's Landmarks Law, which was intended to protect neighborhoods from exactly this type of development. Please feel free to contact me at 212-687-1234 if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,



Andreo S. Kopel  
Board President  
24 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street Apartment Corp.

cc. The Honorable Gale Brewer  
The Honorable C. Virginia Fields



Sherida Paulsen

11/25/2002 01:15 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Landmarks Preservation Commission Meeting 11/26/02

----- Forwarded by Shenda Paulsen/Lpc on 11/25/2002 01:16 PM -----



"Stutzman, David"  
 <Stutzman@sewkis.com>  
 m>

11/25/2002 11:30 AM

To: "spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov" &lt;spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc: "gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us" <gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us>,  
 "golubd@assembly.state.ny.us" <golubd@assembly.state.ny.us>

Subject: Landmarks Preservation Commission Meeting 11/26/02

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

As a resident of Central Park West and as president of the Board of Directors of 80 CPW Apartments Corp., I am writing to urge you to reject the request of Congregation Shearith Israel (the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue) to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Congregation's plan to build a 14-story tower overshadowing its synagogue, the Central Park skyline and the low-scale brownstones on 70th Street, thereby damaging the fabric of the Central Park West Historic District.

I, along with many of my fellow residents of 80 Central Park West and scores of members of the community surrounding the proposed tower, attended the meeting of Community Board Seven's Landmark Committee on November 21st and were heartened by Assembly Member Richard Gottfried's impassioned and eloquent rebuttal to the synagogue's battery of P.R. spokesmen. We were pleased to see that the Committee unanimously opposed the project on several grounds.

This Congregation, one of the wealthiest in the city with some of New York's leading and richest citizens among its leaders and congregants, has presented a specious argument for selling out its neighbors and reputation in order to cash out on the currently overinflated luxury housing market. Despite the Congregation's representatives' mantra that the project was essential to the health and survivability of the Congregation and in the interests of "historic preservation," at no point during the meeting did the representatives provide any proof that the major capital repairs could not be satisfactorily funded out of the Congregation's substantial endowment or the pockets of its members, and the representatives' veiled threats to blackmail the landmarks approval process should the Congregation not get its way was insulting to all present.

I understand the Landmarks Preservation Commission will tomorrow hold its first public meeting on the Congregation's request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish the existing 4-story community house, construct the tower and obtain relief from the zoning rules that are designed to curtail this very type of development. I respectfully request that you and your fellow Commission members carefully and critically review the Congregation's proposals and reject them. Permitting such a blatant grab for cash along one of the city's most picturesque avenues will establish a dangerous precedent which we all will live to regret.

Sincerely yours,

David E. Stutzman  
 80 Central Park West  
 New York, NY 10023  
 stutzman@sewkis.com

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/25/2002 01:16 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Opposition to plans for 8 West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/25/2002 01:17 PM -----

**Richard\_Stolley@tiohd.com**

11/25/2002 12:55 PM

To: gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us, spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov,  
bp@manhattanpb.org, mgnysa@aol.com,  
strings@assembly.strategy.us, duane@senate.stateny.us

cc:

Subject: Opposition to plans for 8 West 70th Street

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

I add my voice, and that of my family, to those opposing the plans to demolish an existing synagogue community house and in place construct a new 14-story building adjacent to the synagogue at 8 West 70th Street.

We live at 101 Central Park West, directly across the street from the proposed building. Like so many other families, we bought our apartment in the neighborhood because we believed its beauty was protected by landmarks legislation and by the Landmarks Commission.

Now the Landmarks Commission has been asked to grant a variance at this address that would permanently change, and blight, the neighborhood, this historic district.

We appeal to all of you to help us stop this building and protect the neighborhood, the integrity of the Landmarks Law, the classic Central Park West skyline and the Spanish & Portugese Synagogue itself.

Please do not set a precedent for allowing "special permit" non-profit developments that surely will endanger other historic areas of New York, if you grant this request.

New York is a city of neighborhoods; they are what make this huge metropolis so livable. We appeal to you to listen to the neighbors and stop this project.

Thank you for your attention.

Richard B. Stolley  
101 Central Park West, Apartment 5C  
New York, NY 10023

Business address:  
Senior Editorial Adviser  
Time Inc.  
1271 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10020

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/22/2002 09:13 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue -- Please Oppose!

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/22/2002 09:14 AM -----



**"Jeff Byles"**

**<jbyles@earthlink.net>**

11/21/2002 11:35 AM

To: <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>

cc: <landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org>,

<gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>, <bp@manhattanbp.org>

Subject: Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue -- Please Oppose!

Dear Ms. Paulsen and LPC,

Please protect the integrity of our city's landmarks law and the low-rise, brownstone character of the Upper West Side by blocking the luxury condo tower proposed by Congregation Shearith Israel.

I believe this tower is out of scale, out of character, and disrespectful of the unique neighborhood fabric that is one of our city's greatest assets. This tower would set a tragic precedent and would be a blight on our streetscapes.

Please respect the dignity of our landmarks.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Byles  
Upper West Side

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/22/2002 09:15 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/22/2002 09:16 AM -----

**Nraegray@aol.com**

11/21/2002 12:32 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue

Dear Madame Chairwoman:

I have lived in New York City for over twenty years and have long been dismayed by the power and influence that developers have in the government. I have seen a steady decline in the architectural integrity and beauty of New York City as a result of new buildings that are constructed with little or no regard to the neighborhoods. The overwhelming image that is projected is that of selfish greed with no regard for history and aesthetics.

If if Shearith Israel receives the City's dispensation to construct a building that is any taller than the four stories that they are currently legally allowed to build it threatens not only the upper west side historic district but every other historic district and landmark in the city. You must resist the temptation to accept whatever donations and monetary incentives the developers are offering to protect the Landmarks Law.

Shearith Israel is a landmarked building with very significant Tiffany windows and an interior decorated by Tiffany studios. This landmark must be protected. The Central Park West skyline should not be further denigrated with another out of place building.

This building would be an exploitation of the "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions and should not be allowed. You must avoid setting precedent for future "special-permit" non-profit developments endangering other historic areas throughout the city.

I hope that you will give serious consideration to this issue and preserve the architectural integrity of the city for future generations.

Sincerely,  
Nina Gray  
80 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023



**Sherida Paulsen**

11/22/2002 09:16 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: spanish/portuguese synagogue

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/22/2002 09:17 AM -----

**Mauricebabb@aol.com**

11/21/2002 01:51 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: spanish/portuguese synagogue

Ms. Paulsen:

I urge you to do what you can to prevent the attempt by this synagogue to stash away what they can against future financial needs by trying to get an OK to raise a fourteen story high-rise to the west of the synagogue, in violation of the height limitation on mid-block structures within the brownstone historic district.

We are already appalled at the shadows cast over the southern end of the park by the mega-building being erected at Columbus Circle. Why should the hard-won landmark preservation restrictions be flaunted simply to enable any institution and/or developers to cash in while the getting is good?

My immediate concern is the example that would be set by waiving the landmark restrictions in the instance of the synagogue. As you know, there are numerous other cultural assets housed in low-rise structures at various points of Central Park West. Each of them could seize upon the opportunity to convert adjacent land or air-space into nest eggs. Let's stem it now, without caving in at the outset.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice Babb  
80 CPW, Apt 19D  
NY, NY 10023

email: [mauricebabb@aol.com](mailto:mauricebabb@aol.com)

**Sherida Paulsen**

11/22/2002 09:18 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: West 70th Street, New York -- Proposed High Rise

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/22/2002 09:18 AM -----



**"Lauren Topelsohn"**  
**<ltopelsohn@trantech.net>**

11/21/2002 04:20 PM

To: <gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>, <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>,  
 <bp@manhattanpb.org>

cc: &lt;ps1101cpw@msn.com&gt;

Subject: West 70th Street, New York -- Proposed High Rise

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing this letter on behalf of my grandmother, Riva Denberg, in protest to the proposed high rise development project for the property located at West 70<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan.

My Grandmother has been a resident at 101 Central Park West for nearly sixty (60) years. Each morning for sixty years, she has put on her make up, gotten dressed and went about her errands in the neighborhood. At the age of 96, she is an upper-west side fixture – still out and about and on her own; dodging the roller bladers on the sidewalks of 72<sup>nd</sup> street who tower over her 4 feet, 10 inches; weaving through the street traffic to keep her weekly beauty-parlor appointment; and making her way to Zabars to fight the good fight during the holiday crush. Each year, the streets are a little more crowded. Each year, they are a little more dangerous for her.

The proposed condominium is the latest threat to her safety and offense to the character of the neighborhood. Isn't the monstrosity now looming at the former site of the New York Coliseum enough? Does the value of "transferable air rights" and New York's need for "luxury apartments" require that we further clog the transit system, overwhelm the streets and side walks, and choke off the sky? When will the City say enough; when 90-something-year old women must hide in their homes for fear of being trampled or knocked down in canyons of darkness?

New York has already sacrificed too many of its historic districts to over-zealous development by persons who live elsewhere. The Landmarks Preservation Commission must uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law and oppose the construction of this tower.

Lauren Topelsohn, Esq.

NY T: 212-354-0498

NJ T: 973-618-2175

Fax: 866-482-3171

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**Sherida Paulsen**

11/21/2002 10:24 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 11/21/2002 10:24 AM -----



**"Avra Petrides"**

**<bridgestage@earthlink.net>**

11/21/2002 01:05 PM

To: <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>

cc:

Subject: Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue

Dear Chairman Paulsen,

As regards the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, it is of real importance that the integrity of the Landmarks Law not be tampered with, which was enacted to protect designated buildings and districts. Should a special dispensation be granted in this matter, it would set a disastrous precedent and endanger historic areas throughout the city.

Please do everything in your power to see that the Landmarks Law as it now stands is upheld. Thank you.

Avra Petrides

Director, THE BRIDGE Stage Of The Arts

101 West 78th Street, Suite 21

New York, New York 10024

[bridgestage@earthlink.net](mailto:bridgestage@earthlink.net)

**CHRISTOS INC.**  
241 WEST 37<sup>th</sup> STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10018  
[www.christosbridal.com](http://www.christosbridal.com)  
TEL: (212) 921-0025  
FAX: (212) 921-0127

To: DJ

November 19, 2002

Ms. Sherida Paulsen  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair

Dear Ms. Paulsen,

As a resident of the Upper West Side and a homeowner at 91 Central Park West I am asking you to reject Congregation Shearth Israel's proposal to construct a fourteen story tower behind its historic synagogue.

On November 5, 2002 I attended a community meeting at which time the attorney for the synagogue exhibited the building's plans and explained the need for its construction.

The synagogue needs to expand its facilities for its growing congregation. What is interesting is the synagogue will utilize only four floors within the 14 story tower to be constructed. If this is the case why the extra ten stories? Bottom line is money. The synagogue will sell the land behind its historic building to a private developer who will construct the towers. After purchasing the land what's to prevent the developer from constructing another five floors or twenty floors?

At the meeting the attorney stated the congregation raised eight million dollars to renovate the synagogue's historic interior. Congregation Shearth Israel is, reportedly, one of the wealthiest congregations in Manhattan. If they raised eight million dollars in the past then they can do it again and raise the money needed to construct the four stories they require. They don't need the extra ten stories. The congregation is abusing their non-profit status by attempting to gain a waiver and have the air rights shifted across a zoning boundary. Their cupidity is creating great animosity with its neighbors.

I ask you to reject Congregation Shearth Israel's request to construct a 14 story tower in our historic neighborhood. Under existing laws and regulations only a six story building is acceptable. Do not make an exception to the established laws. To do so will set a dangerous precedent for historic districts throughout Manhattan. This fourteen story tower will destroy the low rise, brownstone character of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street and the Central Park West skyline. Granting a special allowance will open a pandora box not only for Central Park West but other historic areas in New York City. Developers will love it if you grant them a special permit.

Please reject the building's plans.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Michael DeCuollo

To DJ

***Evalyn Kaufman 18 WEST 70TH STREET, NEW YORK 10023, EN 2-7636***

November 17, 2002

Ms. Sherida Paulsen  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

As a longtime resident of 18 West 70th Street in Manhattan, I am writing to express concern about plans proposed by the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue located at 70th Street and Central Park West to erect a 14-story luxury condominium adjacent to the Synagogue and facing 70th Street.

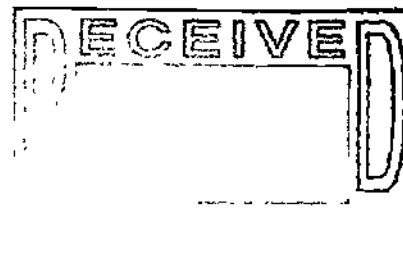
A building this size would not only destroy the character of 70th Street and surrounding neighborhoods included in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District but would set a dangerous precedent for other tax-free institutions to make special zoning and air-rights deals detrimental to their neighbors.

Residents at 18 West 70th Street and others in this area are appealing to the Landmarks Commission and other agencies needed for approval to rule against the construction of this 14-story tower and to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which is intended to protect designated buildings and districts, including the Synagogue itself.

It is our hope that you will lend your support to our efforts in opposing this project.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Evalyn Kaufman*

# THE INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY



November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2002

225 Lafayette Street  
Suite 1009  
New York, NY 10012  
telephone (917) 237-1208  
fax (917) 237-1230  
email [institute@classicist.org](mailto:institute@classicist.org)  
web [www.classicist.org](http://www.classicist.org)

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Hon. Sherida E. Paulsen  
Chair  
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
New York, New York 10007

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness  
8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue

Dear Commissioner Paulsen:

I am writing on behalf of the Institute of Classical Architecture and Classical America, an organization that has been devoted to promoting the ideals of classicism in architecture and the related arts for over forty years.

The Congregation Shearith Israel is one of the most extraordinary examples of *Academic Classicism in New York City*. Brunner & Tryon have designed a sophisticated interpretation of Roman classical architecture that manifests the nobility and grace of harmonious proportions, creating a substantial monument within the Upper West Side/ Central Park West Historic District.

The tower proposed for the site to the west, designed by Platt Byard Dovell White Architects LLP, is inappropriate as a neighbor for this great institution. While we appreciate that the building is substantially lower than the tower proposed in 1983, we object to the design on several levels.

On the side street, the building fails to address its context and its base adopts neither the scale nor the materials of the Synagogue nor of the lower buildings to the west. The east-facing facade is a mixture of horizontal windows and barely integrated stone. The facade fails to establish a sympathetic relationship with the temple below. We feel that the dignity and beauty of this great landmark demand a better architecture in this project.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Pennoyer  
The Institute of Classical Architecture / Classical America



Testimony before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
 Regarding Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue  
 Application for Certificate of Appropriateness and 74-711  
 November 26, 2002

Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm Vicki Weiner, Kress Fellow for Historic Preservation at the Municipal Art Society of New York. The Society's Preservation Committee received a presentation by representatives of Congregation Shearith Israel describing their Certificate of Appropriateness and 74-711 zoning applications. They outlined the nature of these requests, the special provisions being sought, and the way they believe the preservation purpose criterion for the 74-711 is met by the proposal. They also presented designs for the new building and made their arguments for its appropriateness. In its discussion, the Preservation Committee identified three issues that we feel are key:

First, the issue of height and massing of the new building: the Committee was divided over whether or not the building height and massing are appropriate to the historic district. A slight majority of members felt that on this particular streetscape, and in this location, a fourteen-story building is appropriate to the neighborhood. Others did not, expressing concern about the tower's relationship to the low rise buildings in the middle of the block.

Second, the issue of design: the Committee found the design to be inappropriate for the historic district. A number of design components appeared to be unresolved, such as the overall fenestration and the penthouse proportions. In addition, the Committee questioned the relationship between the Synagogue entrance and the residential entrance.

Third, the validity of authorizing the shifting of bulk under 74-711: the Committee felt the preservation purpose as described was not compelling enough to warrant this action. The restorative elements mentioned to us, such as replacement of the roof and addressing water damage, appeared to the Committee to be more on the order of routine maintenance. We appreciate the Synagogue's past attention to restoring its building, but would like to be assured that there is a comprehensive preservation program in place. We were not provided with any details regarding a continuing maintenance plan, nor was there any indication of how revenues generated by the proposed project would meet expenses for restoration of the Synagogue.

ASHTON HAWKINS  
151 CENTRAL PARK WEST

November 21, 2002

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing to call your attention to a presentation issue vital to the Upper West Side neighborhood that really extends to all residential neighborhoods in the city.

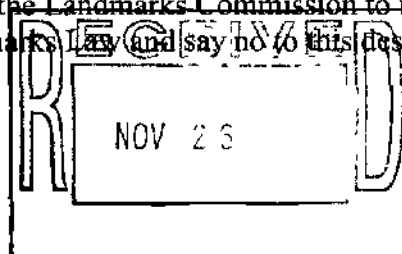
Congregation Shearith Israel, better known as the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue, at Central Park West and 70<sup>th</sup> Street, is seeking approval to build a 14 story structure on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, behind their landmarked building. The site covers their current community house plus an adjoining vacant lot. Four above ground floors would house new community facilities; the ten remaining floors would go to luxury condos.

If allowed to go forward, this building would tower over one of the handsome low-rise brownstone streets characteristic of the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District, and detract from the landmarked Synagogue itself. It would provide an unwelcome distortion of the skyline of this historic district.

We are not opposed to renovation but the proposed building is much too tall for the block. The waivers, variances and special permits that its construction would require are in themselves evidence of the building's unsuitability to the site. What's more, if granted, they would set a precedent for future special treatment of non-profit organizations, thus endangering other historic districts throughout the city.

The exploitation of soft sites by non-profit institutions, using such aids as air rights transfers and special zoning deals must not be encouraged if it works to the detriment of neighborhoods. You will recall that such a proposal several years ago a by the New York Historical Society on West 77<sup>th</sup> Street was quite rightly defeated.

I urge the Landmarks Commission to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law and say no to this destructive condominium tower.



Sincerely yours,

*Ashton Hawkins*  
Ashton Hawkins



OFFICE OF THE  
MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT  
C. VIRGINIA FIELDS

To: DW

## FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO SHERIDA PAULSEN FROM JENNIFER POPPA  
COMPANY VPC PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
FAX NUMBER 646-7965 DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER 2  
RE: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ URGENT ☐ FOR REVIEW ☐ PLEASE COMMENT ☐ PLEASE REPLY ☐ PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS



**Heather McCracken**  
07/01/2003 09:20 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th Street Tower

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 07/01/2003 09:25 AM -----



**LBelfer@aol.com**  
07/01/2003 09:08 AM

To: rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th Street Tower

Dear Chairman Tierney,

I am writing to you to express my concerns over Congregation Shearith Israel's proposed 15-story tower, midblock on West 70th Street.

I have lived in this neighborhood for over twenty years. The rows of brownstones on West 70th Street have always been a comfort and an inspiration to me, a haven of peace and tranquility in the bustling city, linking me to the city's history.

A condominium tower on West 70th Street would destroy the historic integrity of this neighborhood forever. The design of the proposed tower is utterly inappropriate for the site. Civic groups across the city have condemned the proposal for its inappropriate height and bulk.

The Landmark Commission's decision on this issue will have repercussions throughout the city, in every historic neighborhood. What is the purpose of having a Landmark District, if it can be desecrated at the whim of developers?

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Lauren Belfer



**Heather McCracken**

07/01/2003 08:56 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 07/01/2003 09:01 AM -----



**Dkennedyco@aol.com**

06/30/2003 05:22 PM

To: rtlemev@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: West 70th Street

To: Hon. Robert Tierney

Dear Sir:

This is to protest in the strongest terms any approvals for an out-of-character building by Congregation Sheareth Israel on West 70th Street.

Has this organization addressed ANY of the community's concerns?  
Is their real plan to get zoning waivers for "economic engine" purposes?

We have seen far too many blocks on the Upper West Side destroyed by special approvals and waivers, and this destruction must stop now.

No more, please.

As a long time resident of the Upper West Side, I urge you in the strongest terms to compel this organization to comply with the standard zoning requirements and to deny them any waivers or exceptions of any kind.

What makes them so special that they even think they deserve exceptional consideration to destroy a beautiful block on West 70th Street?

This organization insults us all and is playing you all on the Landmarks Preservation Commissions for stooges as it asks for special consideration so that it can inflict severe damage on a landmark, the historic district and the contextual zoning by an overscaled building on West 70th Street. How dare they!

Sincerely yours,  
Daniel Kennedy  
157 West 79th Street

Jun 30 03 04:59p

Rudel

DUPLICATE

**Julius Rudel**  
**101 Central Park West**  
**New York, NY 10023**

June 21, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Comm./Chair  
VIA TELEFAX

Dear Chairman Tierney;

Unfortunately conducting engagements outside New York prevent me from attending the July 1<sup>st</sup> meeting regarding the proposal for Temple Shearith Israel to build an apartment building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. However, as a lifelong New Yorker and as someone who has had something to do with the art and beauty of this great city, I want to add my voice to those who rise in protest of this heinous project

Twenty years ago, a similar proposal was defeated by those of us who care about the heritage and beauty of our city and of our neighborhood. In my travels around the world, I am often struck by how other cities truly preserve the riches of their past and do not allow the greed of over-construction ruin what is beautiful.

Should we fail to stop this project, it won't be long before similar proposals by the other houses of worship that line Central Park West appear, all cleverly designed to not have too much of an impact. But consider for a moment what more construction on 65<sup>th</sup>, 68<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, and 96<sup>th</sup> streets would do to this already congested neighborhood. Our mission should be to preserve the beauty that is this historic district and to fend off developers' 'visions' of what our neighborhood should look like. To give in to this attempt would lead us down a slippery slope. It wasn't so long ago that I joined with many other musicians and urged our city to preserve Carnegie Hall and save it from the wrecker's ball. Imagine New York today without that jewel, then look around and see why we must stop this project before it rises into our skyline.

You should step forward and do everything in your power to stop the foolishness that allows developers to bypass zoning rules that were put in place to preserve the character of our neighborhood and the beauty of this fabulous city.

Sincerely,

  
Julius Rudel

Charles R. Church  
91 Central Park West, Apt. 8E  
New York, New York 10023  
(212) 873-4743 (tel and fax)  
hinckleyIV@aol.com

June 27, 2003

FAX (212) 669-7955

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th Fl.  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Proposed Even Taller Mid-block Condo Tower

Dear Chairman Tierney,

I write in anticipation of the July 1 hearing concerning Congregation Shearith Israel's ("CSI") revised, and even more disturbing, proposal to construct a modern, mid-block condo tower, that is thoroughly out of character and scale with the adjacent landmark, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, and the rest of the buildings on the block, low-rise brownstone rowhouses (with the exception of a couple of pre-war apartment houses, themselves dwarfed by the proposed tower), all situated in the West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

I protest this revised proposal:

—while CSI initially sought approval for a completely offensive to the eye and sensibilities tower three times the height of what are almost exclusively brownstones on the block, the revised proposal would expand the eyesore to 15 stories and 168 feet (from 14 stories and 157 feet)! Community Board 7—whose mission requires it to protect the neighborhood and its character—voted overwhelmingly to disapprove this blight on our community, and citizens from addresses around the West Side appeared in protest at the last hearing convened by the Commission (about 40 of these testified), while you acknowledged in your closing remarks the dozens of letters and emails you had received objecting to the initial, less offensive proposal. Other neighborhoods are up in arms: for example, the Park Slope Civic Council wrote to you: "Our 800 members and 30 trustees...[oppose]...any precedents that could be used to compromise the decades of work and accomplishments achieved to maintain the integrity of our historic and unique district." CSI has failed entirely to even address the basis for this upswelling of opposition. Rather, it plays games: This really is a Central

Park West Tower, it would have us believe, despite what our eyes tell us. Well, it is not a Central Park West Tower. The tower lies 100 feet up the block from Central Park West! CSI plays that shell game in an attempt to distract the Commission from the reality that its condo tower has no place in the heart of the W. 70th Street block, where it would stand out like a very sore thumb.

—The applicant wants a host of zoning waivers to produce an "economic engine". An economic engine for what? CSI already has renovated substantially and has long maintained the synagogue the same way other religious institutions do—it has funded the work from its members' contributions. Now it would change that tradition. Most clearly, CSI now seeks to enrich itself from this project. The estimates of the full-floor apartments with park and river views I have heard indicate that they would sell for \$10 million per floor! That may be conservative.

—Further, CSI's conclusory argument asks the Commission to accept blindly its financial need. Though from the beginning CSI has been requested to open its books, so that its assertion might be tested, on every occasion it has adamantly refused. Nor has it provided a membership list, since the appearance on it of some of the wealthiest people in the city would embarrass it so. Rather, CSI simply insists that the landmark must be respected—I have no quarrel with that, though I urge simultaneously that the historic district should be respected as well—while seeking to foist on the neighborhood a monstrosity under its unsupported claim that such is needed to preserve the landmark. But where is the evidence for that?

In sum, I ask the Commission not to permit the destruction of a beautiful block in an historic district by shattering the zoning regulations that protect it.

Sincerely,



Charles R. Church

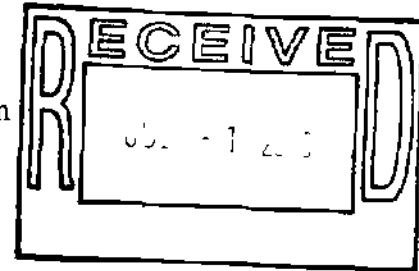
**103 Central Park West Corporation  
101 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023**

June 27, 2003

**VIA PRIORITY MAIL**

**CERTIFIED - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10007



**Re: Congregation Shearith Israel, Manhattan**

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I am writing pursuant to the request of a unanimous board of directors of the 103 Central Park West Corporation to reaffirm its previously expressed and most strenuous opposition to the proposal of the captioned congregation to build what we now understand is a narrow, 15-story tower on 70th Street adjacent to its synagogue and immediately to the south of our 100-unit cooperative apartment building.

Preliminarily, I wish to express the Board's astonishment and deep disappointment that the Commission has scheduled a hearing on this most controversial proposal two days before the long 4th of July Holiday weekend, when I and many others who oppose this proposal have prior commitments to be elsewhere. We consider this particularly outrageous because it is the second time in less than a year that the Commission has done this: there was a hearing on this proposal set for the Tuesday immediately before the Thanksgiving Day holiday last November. It seems that the proponents and the Commission are quite uninterested in having a full hearing on this proposal, which we understand has been significantly altered since the Commission's last hearing on February 11, 2003.

We understand that the building plan has been modified to make it taller and thinner than originally proposed, but that the total building volume will remain essentially unchanged. If so, it is even more inappropriate to put what is really a "sliver" building in the mid-block area between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue that is nearly 50% taller than any other building in the mid-block portion of that block. Surely, allowing construction of such a building in a historic district makes complete nonsense of the whole concept underlying the creation of such districts.

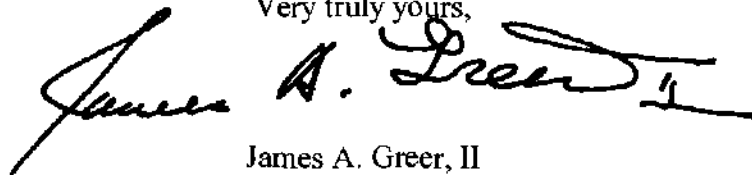
To date we have neither seen nor heard from the representatives of the captioned congregation and valid reason why they should be permitted to impose this inappropriate building on the neighborhood over the vehement objections of the vast majority of those

who will have to live in its immediate vicinity. It appears from the presentations I have heard from the congregation's representatives that they are unwilling to ask their constituents to reach into their own pockets to pay for what I agree is a much-needed new social hall and office space. There certainly has been no demonstration that this very well-to-do congregation lacks the resources for such a project. Absent such a showing, there is no plausible justification for allowing the present plan to proceed.

Under these circumstances, the objections set forth in the February 11, 2003 letter from our then-President George Matouk (copy attached) remain and, if anything, are even more apposite now than they were then. The same is true for the testimony I gave last Fall before the Landmarks Subcommittee of Community Board 7. (See copy attached.)

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully urge you and your commission to dismiss the congregation's present application and recommend that they submit something that responds to their needs for more meeting, classroom and office space without creating an ugly new building that is entirely out of character for the historic district in which it will be located and which will not offend the legitimate sensibilities of its immediate neighbors or seriously undermine the vital concept of historic districts.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James A. Greer, II". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name.

James A. Greer, II  
President Emeritus and Director

Atts: (1) February 11, 2003 letter of George Matouk to Hon. Robert B. Tierney

(2) Nov. 21., 2002 testimony of James A. Greer before Landmarks Subcommittee of  
Community Board 7



**103 Central Park West Corporation  
101 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023**

February 11, 2003

**BY HAND DELIVERY**

Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Congregation Shearith Israel**

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing in my capacity as President of 103 Central Park West Corporation to express the unanimous opposition of our 9-member Board of Directors, as well as that of a majority of our over 100 tenant-shareholders to the captioned congregation's proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot high tower (plus roof top mechanical equipment) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been held "inappropriate" by the overwhelming majority of Community Board 7 and its Preservation Sub-Committee, threatens the predominantly low-rise, mid-block character of the Upper West Side, including but not limited to the section of West 70th Street across the street from our building.

I and my fellow directors and, most, if not all, of our fellow tenant-shareholders deeply respect the long, extraordinary history of Congregation Shearith Israel and the contributions it has made and continues to make in the national and international religious community. A majority of our Board has met with the leaders of the Congregation and has sought to reassure them of our respect for them, their institution and the faith they profess. We are also well aware of the importance of preserving their landmark temple, which they have been seeking to restore.

We are also aware of and have no objection to the Congregation's desire to construct a new community center or social hall to replace the existing structure at 8-10 West 70th street and expand it into the Congregation's currently vacant lot adjacent to their current community center. However, as soon as the current plan was announced, we received an unsolicited flood of objections from a majority of our fellow residents, including many whose apartments do not overlook West 70th Street. Only after that did the Board, none of whose views would be obstructed by the proposed structure, vote to oppose the present plan.

We strongly support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose this and all other present and future applications for "block busting" building developments like this one. We are joined in our opposition to this West 70th Street project by a considerable number of elected officials, civic organizations, block associations, and other buildings and coop boards, as well as a growing number of concerned individuals. (See attached list).

I should add that we are not persuaded that the proposal in its present form is necessary to achieve whatever presentation purposes the Congregation is seeking to serve but has yet to spell out with any specificity. We also believe that the massive, proposed structure will not only destroy the character of one of the most beautiful residential blocks on the Upper West Side, but that it will overwhelm the existing landmark temple with consequent diminution in its considerable beauty.

Accordingly, I and my fellow directors urge you and your fellow commissioners to do all in your power to preserve and protect our community by opposing as vigorously as possible this ill-conceived project and all other such projects that require waivers of existing zoning requirements and threaten to destroy our community's unique character. I am enclosing 20 copies of this letter and its attachment, which I hope will be sufficient to provide a copy for each member of the Landmarks Preservation Commission and for your principal staff members.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,



George Matouk

President

103 Central Park West Corporation

Att.: List of Opponents (partial)

Encls. (20)

cc: Board of Directors - 103 Central Park West Corporation  
Janice Negrin - Insignia Residential Group

**101 Central Park West, Apt. #3E**  
**New York, NY 10023-4204**  
 Tel: (212) 873-8217  
 Fax: (212) 362-5308  
 e-mail: jaygreer@worldnet.att.net

My name is Jay Greer. I reside at 101 Central Park West, where I have lived for the past 13 years and where I have been a member of the Board of Directors for the past 10 years. I appear here this evening, on behalf of our 9-member Board, to record our unanimous opposition to the proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel to construct a 14-story apartment and office tower at 8-10 West 70th Street.

Our Board of Directors was first apprised of the Congregation's proposal at its November 12 Regular Meeting, when we were presented with 45 unsolicited communications from residents of our building objecting to the proposal. Based on this unique outpouring of complaints, the Board voted unanimously to register its strenuous objection to the proposal in its present form. On behalf of the Board, I attended the November 21 hearing of Community Board 7's Landmarks Committee, where I spoke against the proposal. As you know, the Committee unanimously voted to reject the proposal as "not appropriate."

On November 25, Our president, George Matouk, and I and four of our other fellow directors met with Rabbi Angel, President Neustadter and Mr. Friedman for more than an hour, to listen to their views respecting the Congregation's proposal and to express our Board's unanimous opposition to the proposal in its present form. We tried to make it clear that we had no problem with the Congregation's desire to preserve its Temple and adjacent "parsonage" on Central Park West, or to rebuild and expand its "Community House." However, we strongly opposed the Congregation's plan to pay for this by building 10 floors of luxury apartments above their community house and selling them. We offered to meet with the Temple representatives to try to come up with a way of accomplishing what the Congregation wants to do without creating a massive, inappropriate and, in the view of many, unattractive building on one of the most beautiful residential streets on Manhattan's West Side Historic District.

On November 29, Mr. Matouk and I attended the hearing on this proposal before the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, where we listened with great care to the presentation by the Congregation and its professionals in support of their plan. At the conclusion of that presentation, I, again speaking for the Board of 101 Central Park West, reiterated our objections to the proposal in its present form, and also reiterated our willingness to try to help the Congregation find a more appropriate way to accomplish its stated goals. At the conclusion of the hearing the Chair announced that the Commission would defer a vote on the proposal and indicated there would be further hearings at dates to be set.

To date, we have heard nothing from the Congregation's representatives regarding our proffer of assistance. Accordingly, Mr. Matouk and I are here to reaffirm the

unanimous objection of the Board of 101 Central Park West to the proposal in its present form and to urge the Community Board to adopt the unanimous finding of its Landmarks Committee that the Congregation's proposal is "not appropriate."

I was born in New York in 1932 and have lived here for most of my adult life. For the past 33 years I have lived within 150 feet of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, first at 91 Central Park West, where we lived until late June, 1989, and since then at 101 Central Park West. I am generally familiar with and deeply respect the long, remarkable history of Congregation Shearith Israel; I am profoundly indebted to the faith of the Congregation; and I love and worship the God it seeks to serve.

I am well aware of the challenges faced by religious institutions housed in historic buildings, having been the lay leader of an historic New York church, the Church of the Ascension at 5th Avenue and 10th Street. I also served some years ago on the committee of the Council of the Episcopal Diocese of New York that formulated a Diocesan policy statement which sought to reconcile in a responsible way for its churches and other Episcopal institutions in the Diocese, the competing considerations that confront religious institutions operating in landmark buildings.

I am acutely aware of the importance of upgrading buildings built many years ago and the considerable challenge of doing so in the Historic District in which we live. I have been a director at both 91 Central Park West and 101 Central Park West for more than 20 years and - two years ago - completed six years' service as the president of 101 Central Park West.

Lastly, I am very familiar with the challenges faced by non-profit institutions charged with maintaining 100+ year old buildings like Congregation's beautiful Temple. For at least 15 years I was the treasurer of a small non-profit corporation with very modest resources that owns a beautiful building, which was built at almost exactly the same time as the Temple. Four years ago I became its president.

I and my fellow directors at 101 Central Park West bear no ill will to Congregation Shearith Israel, but we are opposed to its current proposal. I am sure we would be willing to work with the leadership of the Congregation in an effort to find an appropriate solution to whatever problems it is trying to solve. (This might include reconstruction of the Congregation's community center and development of the adjacent vacant lot, provided the style of the new building(s) did not clash with the Temple or exceed it in height.) However, we believe there is absolutely no justification for granting the Congregation the numerous variances, waivers and exceptions that they admit would be necessary to permit the present proposal to go forward. In sum, we respectfully request that Community Board 7 reject this entirely unacceptable plan.

I am sorry to say that the proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel is in, my opinion, fatally defective. While it presumably will result in some significant benefit to the Congregation, it does so at a cost to the immediate neighborhood that is unacceptable. (I leave to it to others to explain why it creates a host of undesirable exceptions to the New York City Landmarks Preservation scheme, but I share those views.)

First, it will leave this beautiful area with a large and, in my opinion, unattractive building that is out of character with the rest of its surroundings and will be for many years to come a gigantic, permanent, ugly monument to the evident contempt that Congregation Shearith Israel has once again displayed for its immediate neighbors. (For those of you who have moved here recently or were here but have forgotten, the Congregation about 20 years ago proposed an even worse structure that was quite properly rejected following a public outcry.)

Second, when the project is complete, it will permanently add more people, more cars and trucks, and more trash to an already-densely populated neighborhood.

Third, the proposed residential structure on top of the Congregation's new facilities will adversely affect the views and/or the light of the 30 or so families that live on the south side of 101 Central Park West, as well as a good many others in 91 Central Park West and 18 West 70th Street, and probably other buildings as well.

Fourth, it guarantees that, during the demolition and construction phase of the project, we in the neighborhood will be subjected to several more years of excessive noise, dirt and trash accumulation, as well as inconvenient and potentially hazardous sidewalk obstructions, in the immediate vicinity of the Synagogue, which were a considerable problem during the past several years while the Congregation refurbished its Temple. This time, however, these annoying interference's with the peace and quiet of the area are likely to be much worse and last considerably longer.

Fifth, during the demolition and construction phase of the project, 70th Street, which is already very crowded, will once again be obstructed, as it was during the refurbishing of the Temple. This time, however, the blockage is likely to be much worse and last much longer.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request that the Synagogue's proposed plan be disapproved.

Nov. 21, 2002

**NED ROREM**

27 June

~~20 January~~ 2003

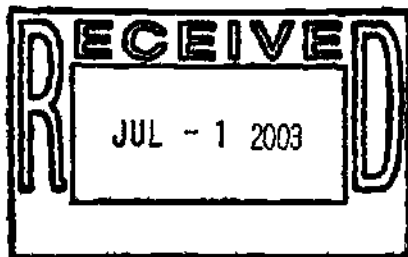
re. proposal for a 14-story tower  
on West 70th Street

to Michael Bloomberg  
Gale Brewer  
Robert Tierney  
Amanda Burden  
C. Virginia Fields  
Richard Gottfried  
Scott Singer  
Tom Duane  
Eric Schneiderman  
Jerrold Nadler

It has been suggested that we who are against the proposed building, should stick to the issue of how that building relates esthetically to the neighborhood, ~~But~~ it should be stressed, too, how such a structure relates to the quality of life of the neighbors. If a building is beautiful, but also the cause of anxiety for those nearby, then the beauty is false: the new landmark becomes a mockery.

For thirty-four years I have lived at 18 West 70th Street, sixth floor facing East. I am a composer and author, doing my work entirely at home. On my birthday last October I received a citation from Mayor Bloomberg as being an embellishment to our city. There are other artists at 18 West, as well as at Central Park West abutting the Synagogue, professionals and families working at home.

Should a 14-story tower be erected, the noise would preclude ~~any work~~--or, indeed, any repose--during the years of construction. And the finished tower would block out every ray of light on the eastern side of our building. To claim that the new tower would "relate harmoniously with the subject landmark or with the surrounding buildings" is a claim that is, on the deepest level, cynical and specious.



Ned Rorem



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10007

June 21, 2003

Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure to welcome all those attending the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary gala concert of the Gay Gotham Chorus. This evening everyone gathered will be dazzled by the wonderful music of the Musica Bella Orchestra, James Lent and Ned Rorem, the world premiere works of Paul Moravec and Adam Silverman and of course, the GGC. ]

On behalf of the residents of New York City, I congratulate Artistic Director Jonathan Babcock and all those associated with GGC for reaching this important milestone. For a decade, you have been entertaining audiences with outstanding concerts of classical music and have contributed significantly to maintaining our City's cultural vitality. In addition, I recognize the tremendous source of support you have been for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community and to so many important charities throughout our great City. It is always gratifying to unite with people and organizations sharing my commitment to giving back to the community and making a difference in the lives of others.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable event and many more successful seasons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael R. Bloomberg".  
Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

June 21, 2003

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to send greetings to each of you celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gay Gotham Chorus. I join my voice with yours in paying tribute to Ned Rorem as family, friends and the art community celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. J

For 10 years, the Gay Gotham Chorus has received critical acclaim for its diverse repertoire of traditional and contemporary choral works. The arts have always been a unifying force in our world, bringing people together across vast cultural, social, economic and geographic divisions. Music not only binds us to our past, it binds us to each other. The beauty of your choral performances gives individuals the opportunity to embrace the art of music and their human powers to imagine and create.

Not only has the Chorus excelled in the vocal arts, but its' members are also actively involved with many charitable organizations that build stronger communities. Through your activism and advocacy on many noteworthy causes, you have been a positive force for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community.

Please accept my best wishes for a wonderful and successful concert and much continued success.

Sincerely yours,

*Hillary Rodham Clinton*

Hillary Rodham Clinton  
United States Senator



FROM : Peveri or ESRA S

FAX NO. :

www.protectwest70.org  
Jun. 26 2003 03:00PM P1

## East Side Rezoning Alliance

50 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10016 (212) 683-0783

### Founders

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June 26, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
W. 70th St., between Central  
Park West & Columbus Ave.,  
Borough of Manhattan

Dear Chairman Tierney:

Our Alliance of community groups was formed in 1985, and we have cooperatively worked with the City to achieve appropriate land use and rezoning in the CB-6 area.

It takes years for community groups to obtain landmark designations, establish historic districts, and acquire appropriate zoning to protect and reinforce the existing character of their neighborhoods.

Once that is done, we can all expect appropriate changes, but the Congregation Shearith Israel's proposal to build a 14-story, 157-foot tower in the low-rise R8-B midblock of West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue is NOT appropriate. The building will overshadow the landmarked Synagogue, alter the Central Park West streetscape, and undermine the scale and character of this West 70th Street midblock located in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

We believe that landmarks, Historic Districts, and contextual zones should be protected. We ask that you do not approve Congregation Shearith Israel's proposal because it is inappropriate and could set an unwelcome local and city-wide precedent. Our Historic Districts are too important to tamper with.

Very truly yours,

*Irene Peveri*  
Irene Peveri  
Co-chair

A coalition of East Side community groups between 14<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> Streets working for responsible rezoning of the area.



June 26, 2003

Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Tierney:

The Upper West Side is a wonderful neighborhood of pleasingly scaled streets, fine architecture and community amenities. A generous patchwork of historic districts have helped maintain the neighborhood's most admired and appreciated qualities. It is these physical qualities that drive the Upper West Side's economic vitality, not a 14- or 15-story tower placed on a low-rise block.

As west Harlem residents we visit the Upper West Side regularly for shopping and entertainment. We are troubled by the tower proposed for West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue (8 West 70th Street/Congregation Shearith Israel). Weighed against the established zoning, the historic character of the street and plain common sense as to how to preserve the qualities of a place, this tower is simply not appropriate in height or bulk.

Approving this project would send a very welcome message to developers and builders across the city: historic districts are up for grabs; contextual zoning is not to be taken seriously.

The new proposal being resubmitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission has no discernable improvements over the previous design and does not warrant special exemptions at the community's long term expense.

Please do not approve this project. The voice of your Commission is needed to help prevent zoning variances from wreaking havoc with the Upper West Side's widely cherished character.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Kathleen Randall*

Kathleen Randall

*Richard Ray*

Richard Ray



**Heather McCracken**

06/26/2003 03:12 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: W 70th St Tower

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 06/26/2003 03:18 PM -----



**David Colarossi**  
<dcolaros@yahoo.com>  
>

06/26/2003 03:06 PM

To: rlemey@lpc.nyc.gov  
cc:  
Subject: W 70th St Tower

I am writing in relation to Congregation Shearith  
Israel's application to build a 14-story tower on the  
midblock of West 70th Street.

I live on the upper west side and I am strongly  
opposed to the proposal. Such a building is  
completely out of character for the upper west side's  
historic district, violates the zoning laws, and sets  
a horrible precedent for others to violate them as  
well.

Such a building would hurt the upper west side's  
beautiful landscape and I respectfully request that  
you reject their proposal.

Sincerely  
David Colarossi

---

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Heather McCracken  
06/26/2003 09:12 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 06/26/2003 09:18 AM -----



Abankier@aol.com  
06/25/2003 06:44 PM

To: rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov  
cc: ressc@assembly.state.ny.us  
Subject: CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

Dear Commissioner Tierney:

I am writing you as a resident and a Board Member of 101 Central Park West to strongly protest the possibility that the Landmark Commission may allow the monstrosity which the Synagogue would like to build.

The Synagogue should have the right to develop its property, but it should be consistent with the rules and regulations which we all must follow as we live in a Historic District, and not be allowed to bend and interpret the rules as they see fit.

A building, the size they propose, would wreck the skyline, the mood and the feeling of the neighborhood. I thought that the Landmark Commission was created to stop this from happening.

Please note that in the past, I was a member of the Synagogue. Although you may be told that the congregation is in favor of the building, many current members of the congregation may be AGAINST this building and the negative good will that it is generating in the community. However, as members of the congregation they are afraid to speak up.

I also wish to point out that my apartment is on the other side our house and therefore my views will not be affected by the is new building. This allows me to be relatively objective, and to be opposed to this construction on the grounds that it is a shame that a few wealthy people, who do not for the most part live in our community, could be allowed to sway the Landmark Commission to wreck a historic district and an entire neighborhood.

To conclude, please do not let this horrible event occur.

Sincerely yours,

Alain Bankier  
101 Central Park West  
1212-595-4805



Heather McCracken

06/26/2003 09:13 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th Street tower.

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 06/26/2003 09:18 AM -----



Jonathanbaker  
<jonathanbaker@nyc.r  
r.com>

06/26/2003 03:22 AM

To: <rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th Street tower.

Dear Mr. Tierney,

I am strongly opposed to Congregation Shearith Israel's proposed 157-foot, 14-story condo tower on West 70th street. I am a life-long resident (as was my father before me) and brownstone owner on the same block.

The proposed tower is out of character with the block. The congregation is wealthy and can live quite well without this odious tower. No member of that congregation actually lives on the block or endures the burden of its consequences.

Shearith Israel ripped to the ground two handsome and historic brownstones, enraging the residents of the block (I remember). Their 'penance' for this architectural crime is to put a skyscraper upon the grave of the brownstones. This heaps insult upon injury.

We residents who actually live on the block and have spent our lives caring for it put the best interests of the neighborhood foremost.

Please vote no on this tower which has aggravated all the residents of the block. Thank you.

Jonathan Baker  
31 West 69th Street  
NY NY 10023  
212-874-7578

**Heather McCracken**

06/24/2003 09:43 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Landmark on 70th st.

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 06/24/2003 09:49 AM -----

**CShane2988@aol.com**

06/23/2003 09:41 PM

To: gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us, rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov,  
bp@manhattanbp.org, gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us,  
strings@assembly.state.ny.us, duane@senate.state.ny.us,  
EricSenate@aol.com, jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov

cc: landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: Landmark on 70th st.

**Hello Everyone,**

My name is Casey and I am a 15 year old boy who lives at 18 W 70th. My building is next to the congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue. The building is beautiful, but now they want to build a 14 story highrise right next to it. Here's what I don't get: NO ONE in the neighborhood, families or businesses, want this building. So why is it that one smaller group of people can do what they want and ignore the rest of us? The building not only does not fit into the historical district, but will cause the neighborhood to be overcrowded and increase garbage. Also, every time their "lawyers," hold a meeting, it's near a holiday, which makes it very hard for people against the building to attend. This is very suspicious to me, it's as if they are setting a meeting when no one can come. Not fair.

Please stop this building. It's not right. We have a great neighborhood and would like for it to stay that way. The snyagogue claims they need the money. I don't know if I believe that, but if it is true, they could come up with a better way than making an entire neighborhood very unhappy. We have always been good neighbors to them and I wish they would do the same.

Please help,

Casey Shane

PS By neighborhood, I don't mean just my street, it's the entire area; 67th st. to 72nd st., between Broadway and CPW.

**Heather McCracken**

06/23/2003 08:48 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL TOWER, WEST 70TH STREET

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 06/23/2003 08:53 AM -----

**Matt Williams**<matt\_williams@windd  
ancer.com>

06/20/2003 08:51 PM

To: "Robert B. Tierney" &lt;rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;, "C. Virginia Fields"

&lt;bp@manhattanbp.org&gt;, Richard Gottfried

&lt;gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us&gt;, Scott Stringer

&lt;strings@assembly.state.ny.us&gt;, Tom Duane

&lt;duane@senate.state.ny.us&gt;, Eric Schneiderman

&lt;ericsenate@aol.com&gt;, Jerrold Nadler

&lt;jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov&gt;

cc: &lt;landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org&gt;

Subject: CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL TOWER, WEST 70TH STREET

Ladies &amp; Gentlemen,

I am writing to protest the building of this tower in our Upper West Side neighborhood. Is there no end to this mindless mania? Must all communities fall to the whims of indiscriminate developers. The scale of this project will completely destroy the fundamental character of this Historic District and must be stopped.

Sincerely,

Matt Williams



Heather McCracken

06/20/2003 09:46 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Oppose Congregation Shearith Israel request for a special permit

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 06/20/2003 09:51 AM -----



Anna Taam

&lt;avtaam@yahoo.com&gt;

06/19/2003 11:21 PM

To: rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: Oppose Congregation Shearith Israel request for a special permit

Mr. Robert B. Tierney - Landmarks Preservation  
Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9th Fl.  
NYC 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

The request by Congregation Shearith Israel for a "special permit" is unacceptable and inappropriate-- it must be rejected in order to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks.

As a resident of the neighborhood for over 20 years, I am outraged that the request is still under consideration. The proposed development would have dire consequences for the surrounding area. The high quality and unique character of the area must be preserved. I urge you to oppose Congregation Shearith Israel's request for a permit.

Sincerely,

Anna Taam  
11 West 69th Street  
Apt 7D  
New York, NY 10023

---

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JUNE 19, 03

To:

ROBERT B. TIERNEY  
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION CHAIR  
1 Centre St., 9th Floor, N.Y.C. 10007

DJ

Dear Mr. Tierney!

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen, residing at 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Our neighboring synagogue, Congregation Shearith Israel, is planning to build a 14-story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. This 14-story tower will greatly affect the landmarked Central Park West skyline. It will interrupt the low-rise, brownstone character of the mid-block on our street. Most importantly, this construction will set a dangerous precedent for exploitation of other sites held by non-profit institutions.

I am calling on you to use your influence to tell the Landmarks Preservation Commission to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. I hope that you will help in our community's battle to prevent exploitation of "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions and protect the landmarked CPW skyline and Upper West Side Historic District brownstone mid-blocks.

Thanks you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Arthur &amp; Carol Rome



Proud Sponsor of The Wildlife Land Trust

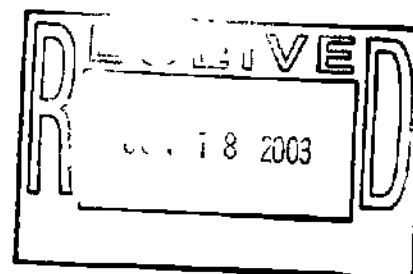
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Rowe  
18 W 70th St. Apt 4C  
New York, NY 10023-4605

DT

June 17, 2003

Sherida Paulsen

Fax: 669-7960



Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing to you as a concerned citizen, residing at 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Our neighboring synagogue, Congregation Shearith Israel, is planning to build a 14-story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. This 14-story tower will greatly affect the landmarked Central Park West skyline. It will interrupt the low-rise, brownstone character of the mid-block on our street. Most importantly, this construction will set a dangerous precedent for exploitation of other sites held by non-profit institutions.

I am calling on you to use your influence to tell your fellow committee members to uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. I hope that you will help in our community's battle to prevent exploitation of "air rights" and special zoning deals for tax-free institutions and protect the landmarked CPW skyline and Upper West Side Historic District brownstone mid-blocks.

Thanks you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

*Arthur & Carole Rowe*

Arthur & Carole Rowe  
18 W 70th St Apt 4C  
New York, NY 10023

DJ



# The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association

June 10, 2003

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Edward Curtin  
Paula Hutter Gilliam  
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Robert B. Tierney, Chair

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10007

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel (8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street)

Dear Chairman Tierney:

The Trustees of the Murray Hill Neighborhood Association ask you to deny Congregation Shearith Israel's request for a "Special Permit" which would allow them to build a 14 story building mid block on W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street, in the low-rise Upper West Side Historic District.

The synagogue's efforts to circumvent the Landmarks law would set a terrible precedent by encouraging other owners to do the same in a self serving attempt to bend the laws which protect our architectural and historically important neighborhoods.

As you know, Murray Hill has a potentially similar situation on the south side E. 36<sup>th</sup> Street. Granting a special permit to Shearith Israel would no doubt create a flood of applications which would undermine the integrity of historic districts all over town.

We urge you to help us and other neighborhoods preserve and protect our historic districts by opposing this attempt to waive existing zoning.

Sincerely,

MURRAY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

*Diane Bartow*

Diane Bartow, President

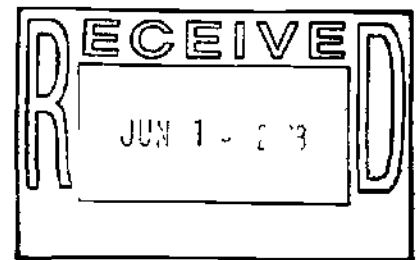
*Joyce Mendelsohn*

Joyce Mendelsohn

*Virginia Parkhouse*

Virginia Parkhouse,

Co-Chairs, Preservation & Design Committee



Post Office Box 1897 • New York, New York 10156-1897

Telephone 212-886-5867

www.murrayhill.org

www.protectwest70.org

→ MBB  
DT

April 28, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Commissioner Tierney,

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157 foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper west Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West, and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of the elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community's character by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

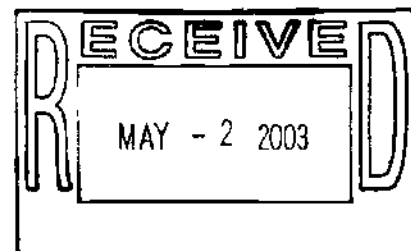
Thank you,

Very truly yours,



John and Jane Kauffmann

145 Central Park West  
Apartment 23C  
New York, New York 10023



Dear *Mr. Robert B. Turner*

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

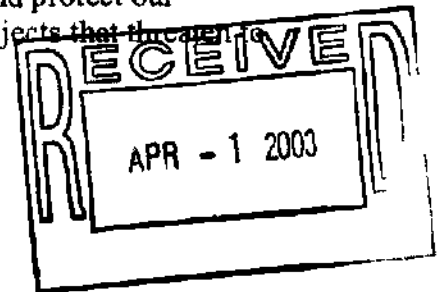
Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Lorence Hodes*

Name/Address

*145 Central Pk. W.  
New York, N.Y. 10023*



*P.S. Please do everything you can to support the existing Landmark laws! Although this is a proforma letter the desire to preserve the neighborhood is very strong.*

03/18/2003 12:04 211 36516

www.protectwest70.org 01

March 18, 2003

Dear Mr. Tierney

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise mid-block character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

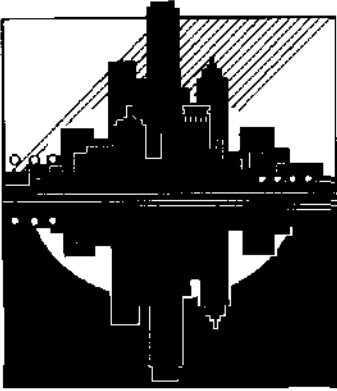
I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood mid-blocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michelle Harman  
146 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023



**Ralph Ginzburg**, 80 Central Park West, Apt. 16B, New York, NY 10023  
Phone number: 212-799-0096. E-mail address: Manhattanite@nyc.rr.com

Friday, February 28, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre St.  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Tierney,

I am a life-long scholar of Jewish history and admirer of Congregation Shearith Israel.

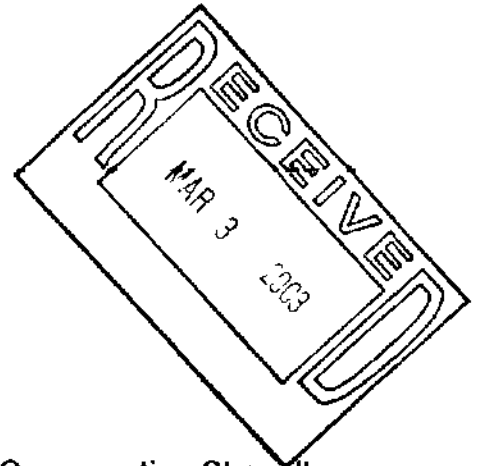
But I was dumbfounded by your commission's failure to summarily reject the congregation's proposal to build a humongous office tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street in order to buttress its finances.

It is not the responsibility of your commission to protect religious institutions. It is your job to safeguard the physical character of communities like the Upper West Side-Central Park West Historic District.

**I urge you, immediately, to do whatever you can to put the kibosh on Congregation Shearith Israel's outlandish construction plans.**

You are opening up a putrid can of worms that will reek for decades as other religious institutions seek to ape Congregation Shearith Israel and shore up their finances at the expense of a neighborhood's time-honored character.

Respectfully,



**CHRISTOS INC.**  
241 WEST 37<sup>th</sup> STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10018  
[www.christosbridal.com](http://www.christosbridal.com)  
TEL: (212) 921-0025  
FAX: (212) 921-0127

February 25, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre St., 9<sup>th</sup> Flr  
New York, N.Y. 10007

Dear Sir,

As a resident of the Upper West Side and a homeowner at 91 Central Park West I am asking you to reject Congregation Shearth Israel's proposal to construct a fourteen story tower behind its historic synagogue.

On November 5, 2002 I attended a community meeting at which time the attorney for the synagogue exhibited the building's plans and explained the need for its construction.

The synagogue needs to expand its facilities for its growing congregation. What is interesting is the synagogue will utilize only four floors within the 14 story tower to be constructed. If this is the case why the extra ten stories? Bottom line is money. The synagogue will sell the land behind its historic building to a private developer who will construct the towers. After purchasing the land what's to prevent the developer from constructing another five floors or twenty floors?

At the meeting the attorney stated the congregation raised eight million dollars to renovate the synagogue's historic interior. Congregation Shearth Israel is, reportedly, one of the wealthiest congregations in Manhattan. If they raised eight million dollars in the past then they can do it again and raise the money needed to construct the four stories they require. They don't need the extra ten stories. The congregation is abusing their non-profit status by attempting to gain a waiver and have the air rights shifted across a zoning boundary. Their cupidity is creating great animosity with its neighbors.

I ask you to reject Congregation Shearth Israel's request to construct a 14 story tower in our historic neighborhood. Under existing laws and regulations only a six story building is acceptable. Do not make an exception to the established laws. To do so will set a dangerous precedent for historic districts throughout Manhattan. This fourteen story tower will destroy the low rise, brownstone character of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street and the Central Park West skyline. Granting a special allowance will open a pandora box not only for Central Park West but other historic areas in New York City. Developers will love it if you grant them a special permit. Enclosed please find an article about our historic neighborhood.

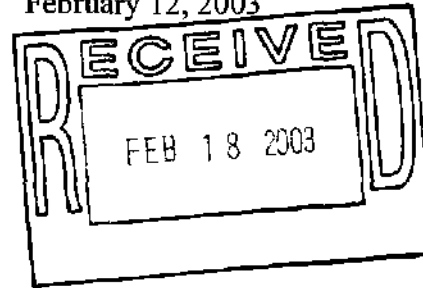
Please reject the building's construction in our neighborhood. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
  
Michael De Cuollo



115 CENTRAL PARK WEST CORPORATION  
115 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023

February 12, 2003



Robert B. Tierney,  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York City, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-storey, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise mid block character of the Upper East Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood mid blocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board # 7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assembly members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects and that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ilene Gotts, President  
115 CENTRAL PARK WEST CORPORATION

IG/reo

cc: Landmark West

# TED, INC.

DT

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Center Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney,

I am opposed to the proposed 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the character of the Upper West Side.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including:

\*Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields  
\*New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman  
New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Ted Kruckel

CC: C. Virginia Fields  
Thomas Duane  
Eric Schneiderman  
Richard Gottfried  
Scott Stringer

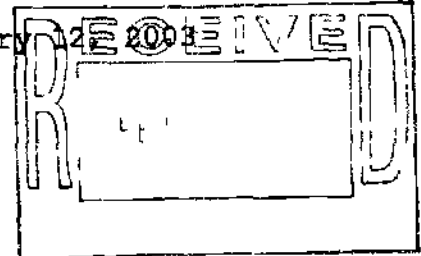
**Barbara L. Michaels**  
**Art Historian/Writer**

**336 Central Park West 6F**  
**phone 212/662-4986**

**New York, N.Y. 10025**  
**fax 212/531-0193**

**BL\_Michaels@msn.com**

February 12, 2003



Mr. Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
Via fax: 212-669-7960

Dear Mr. Tierney:

As a lifelong upper West-sider, I oppose the proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

Because I was unable to attend the recent LPC hearing, I write to urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Sincerely yours,

*Barbara L. Michaels*

In: 2039897, Out ID: 2042179

1500a.txt

attglobal.net

2/10/2003 5:08:34 PM

NYC.gov - Correspondence #1-4380452 Message to the Mayor - QOL

I am opposed to a proposal for a 14-story, 157 foot tower on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenues. I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" developments. I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

==== Original Formatted Message Starts Here =====

Your NYC.gov CRM Correspondence Number is 1-4380452

DATE RECEIVED: 02/10/2003 13:13:40

DATE DUE: 02/21/2003

The e-mail message below was submitted via NYC.gov, the official New York City Web Site. It is forwarded to your agency by the Mayor's Office of Operations. In accordance with the Citywide Customer Service standard, your response is due in 10 business days. \*\*\*\*\*

If this message is to a Commissioner / Agency Head and needs to be re-routed to another agency or cc to another agency, forward the email to [crmrepl@crm.nyc.gov](mailto:crmrepl@crm.nyc.gov). Do not make any changes to the subject line. Include any comments and it will be processed by The Mayor's Office of Operations. All other web forms are to be handled by the receiving agency.

\*\*\*\*\*

-----Original Message-----

From: WebServer@nycGov

Sent: 2/10/03 2:12:13 PM

To: [crmrepl@crm.nyc.gov](mailto:crmrepl@crm.nyc.gov)

Subject:

From: [danamiller@attglobal.net](mailto:danamiller@attglobal.net) (Dana Miller)

Subject: Message to the Mayor

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by

Dana Miller ([danamiller@attglobal.net](mailto:danamiller@attglobal.net)) on Monday, February 10, 2003 at 13:12:13-----

This form resides at

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html>

[http://chgoldie01:800/tc\\_asp/ima\\_text\\_popup\\_v2.asp?xxx=39281.93&oid=2042179&row=24](http://chgoldie01:800/tc_asp/ima_text_popup_v2.asp?xxx=39281.93&oid=2042179&row=24) 2/28/03



www.protectwest70.org

Landmarks

Monday, February 10, 2003

Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Re: The Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel to build a 14 story tower 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

I am a principal partner at Siris/Coombs Architects, an architectural firm which has made the Upper West Side its home for the past 25 years. I am writing to express my strong opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the prevalent low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and, if approved, would pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I am a strong supporter of the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and I oppose all present and future applications for overscaled and inappropriate building developments such as this one.

Westiders I like myself are joined in our opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. Elected officials supporting this effort to disapprove this development include Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Coombs, AIA  
Siris/Coombs Architects  
2112 Broadway, Suite 405  
New York, NY 10024

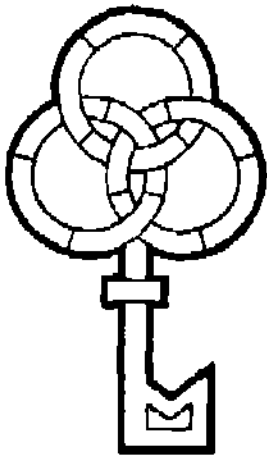
2112 BROADWAY NEW YORK, NY 10023 212 580 2220 FX 212 580 8916  
PETER COOMBS AIA JANE SIRIS AIA  
research@earthlink.net

TOTAL P.01

cept addition 2003, the Commission began  
the appli

Historic District story build

331 WEST 89 ST. NEW YORK, N.Y. 10024 PHONE & FAX (212) 787-9326 [www.protectwest70.org](http://www.protectwest70.org)



# KEY DESIGN & RESTORATION

DECORATIVE ARCHITECTURAL  
GLASS - WOOD - METAL

Feb. 10, 2003

West 89th St. Block Association  
President - Michael Levine  
331 West 89th St.  
New York N.Y. 10024

Dear Sir/Madam;

The often repeated phrase "being a victim of ones own success" in essence sums up the reason for the continues assaults against the life style here on the Upper West Side. <

Thirty six years ago when our neighborhood was not "the fashionable West side" real estate prices did not pose a threat to our wonderful low rise architecture. This low scale coupled with our ornate buildings are at the very heart of our neighborhoods charm and identity.

IT WAS 36 YEARS AGO THAT I as a college student attended school on W 70th St. The now proposed sight for the mid block tower. During the long stretches between classes I explored and ultimately fell in love with the neighborhood and its architecture. The sheer beauty of the area convince me as well The many other people who followed that this is the place I want to live. Please do not allow this high rise atrocity on 70th St. to hlight our neighborhood.

Yours truly

*Michael Levine*  
Michael Levine  
W. 89 St. president

[www.protectwest70.org](http://www.protectwest70.org)

**331 WEST 89 ST. NEW YORK, N.Y. 10024 PHONE & FAX (212) 787-9326**

February 10, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Tierney:

On behalf of the Board members and residents of 24 West 70th Street, I am writing in opposition to the proposed construction of a 14-story apartment high-rise on the site next to the Congregation Shearith Israel on West 70th Street near Central Park West

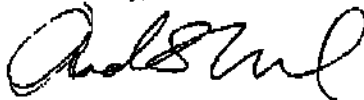
A building of this size would overshadow the beautiful individual Landmark synagogue and the surrounding brownstones on the block. If you have ever been on West 70th Street, you know that it is one of the last remaining quintessential Upper West Side blocks, free of the types of large eyesore buildings that cropped up before current landmarks policies were in place.

As I'm sure you know, the city would need to grant a series of waivers, variances, special permits, and transfers of air rights in order to approve this high-rise. These types of waivers and transfers make a mockery of our Landmarks Law and zoning regulations. More importantly, approving this project would open the door to many other developers seeking to take advantage of "soft sites" owned by non-profits, thereby endangering other historic neighborhoods throughout the city.

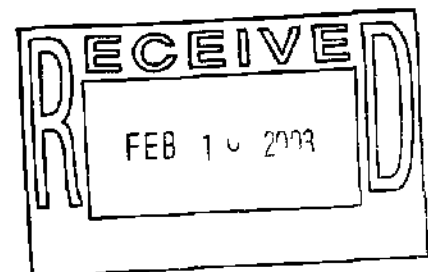
This project is not a "preservation project," but rather it is a fundraising initiative. As a non-profit executive myself, I know first-hand that there are many other ways to raise money. Non-profit status cannot exempt any organization from this city's landmarks and zoning laws.

I implore you to uphold the integrity of the city's Landmarks Law, which was intended to protect neighborhoods from exactly this type of development. Please feel free to contact me at 212-687-1234 if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,



Andrea S. Kapel  
Board President  
24 West 70th Street Apartment Corp.





February 10, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Tierney:

On behalf of the Board members and residents of 24 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, I am writing in opposition to the proposed construction of a 14-story apartment high-rise on the site next to the Congregation Shearith Israel on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street near Central Park West

A building of this size would overshadow the beautiful Individual Landmark synagogue and the surrounding brownstones on the block. If you have ever been on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, you know that it is one of the last remaining quintessential Upper West Side blocks, free of the types of large eyesore buildings that cropped up before current landmarks policies were in place.

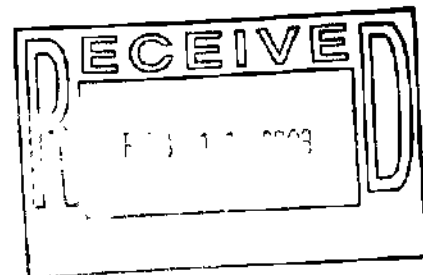
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I implore you to uphold the integrity of the city's Landmarks Law, which was intended to protect neighborhoods from exactly this type of development. Please feel free to contact me at 212-687-1234 if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Andrea S. Kopel  
Board President  
24 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street Apartment Corp.



GRACE H. GLUECK

91 Central Park West  
New York, N. Y. 10023

ST

February 8, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chairman, Landmarks Preservation Committee  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I write to protest the announced intention of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue to add a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) adjacent to its premises on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue.

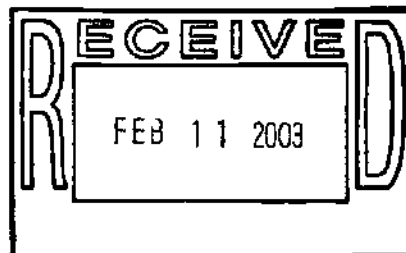
This project threatens the low-rise, midblock character of the Upper West Side, so important in a city where light-killing height seems the paramount objective of developers insensitive to neighborhood quality. It would also, if carried out, open the gates to other, equally inappropriate architectural projects.

In seeking a waiver of existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, the project would violate the hard-won protection provided by that zoning for the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks. I deeply oppose any such block-busting incursions, past, present and future, and hope that a stop may be put to any pending applications that would allow them to happen.

As you are no doubt aware, Manhattan Community Board #7 has already expressed its disapproval of the West 70th St. project, as have other concerned organizations, notably the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic District. A growing number of individuals and local and citywide groups are joining them.

Please help preserve and protect our communities by opposing this wrongly-conceived project, and all other projects that would violate the character of our communities.

Thank you.



Sincerely yours  
*Grace H. Glueck*  
Grace H. Glueck

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by  
Wendy Wolf (wwolf@penguin.com) on Wednesday, February 5, 2003 at 13:07:32-----

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This form resides at  
<http://nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html>

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<APP>CUSTOM  
<ISSUE>OTHER</ISSUE>  
<PREFIX>Ms</PREFIX>  
<FIRST>Wendy</FIRST>  
<MIDDLE>M</MIDDLE>  
<LAST>Wolf</LAST>  
<ADDR1>18 West 70th Street</ADDR1>  
<ADDR2>Apt 5a</ADDR2>  
<CITY>New York</CITY>  
<STATE>NY</STATE>  
<ZIP>10023</ZIP>  
<COUNTRY>United States</COUNTRY>  
<PHONE\_B>2127996911</PHONE\_B>  
<EMAIL>wwolf@penguin.com</EMAIL>  
<MSG>Dear Mayor Bloomberg,

I am writing about my opposition to a proposed 14-story 157 foot tower on West 70th street between Central Park West and Columbus. This proposal, submitted to the NY Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the entire character of the Upper West Side. I support the existing zoning for the UWS Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of these neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for block (and zone) busting developments. I urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and any like it which threaten to disrupt our community's character. Please do not permit the waiving of existing zoning.

Wendy M. Wolf  
18 West 70th St  
New York NY 10023</MSG>  
</APP>

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REMOTE\_HOST: 12.3.61.130  
HTTP\_USER\_AGENT: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.0; Q312461)  
\*\*\*\*\*

ROBERT A. CARO

February 2, 2003

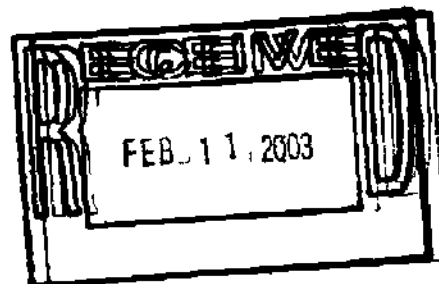
Mr. Robert Tierney  
Chairman, Landmarks Preservation Committee  
One Center Street, Ninth Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street which would violate the zoning codes established for the Central Park West District. I object ~~because it would set a dangerous precedent. If you walk along Central Park~~ West today there are a number of low-rise religious buildings whose membership could, for the same reasons, request the same series of "waivers," "variances," and "special permits" as has been set before you today by the Congregation Shearith Israel. Setting a precedent is often only the first step in changing existing rules and regulations.

Furthermore, if we grant a special exemption to the Congregation Shearith Israel to alter the "contextual zoning district" of the Upper West Side and allow it to construct a building higher than the 125 feet allowed mid-block, it will not only alter the nature Seventieth Street block but will endanger the entire West Side Historic District. It is a district -- a neighborhood -- a fabric whose parts fit together and complement each other. One particularly vital piece of the fabric is the low-rise nature of the mid blocks. This is a key element in the delicate balance between high rise and low rise buildings which make this area so harmonious.

There were, moreover, other excellent reasons for establishing zoning regulations limiting the height of mid-block buildings in this district. None of those reasons have changed. There exist sufficient areas adjacent to the West Side Historic District which have no height restrictions which provide adequate areas for high rise development -- south towards Columbus Circle and beyond, and west of Broadway. If, for no other reason, the area should be preserved as an alternative to high rise neighborhoods.



Cordially,

*Robert A. Caro*  
Robert A. Caro

Dr. Jack Fishman  
101 Central Park West  
New York, New York 10023

January 31, 2003

Mr. Robert Tierney  
Landmark Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

A proposal has been made for a 14 story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission and threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may serve as a precedent for other architecturally incompatible projects.

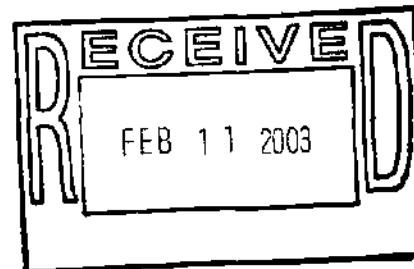
The existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and I oppose all present and future zoning variance applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. Elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning. This can lead to visual and architectural anarchy and seriously distort the quality of life in the neighborhoods of the city.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



01/29/2003 12:25 2127584616

COMMUNITY BD 8M

www.protectwest70.org PAGE 01/01

Charles S. Warren  
Chair

Elizabeth McKee  
District Manager



505 Park Avenue  
Suite 820  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4816 (Fax)  
www.decny.com/cb8 - Website  
CB8M@aol.com - E-Mail

## The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

January 29, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:


I am writing to express Manhattan Community Board 8's concern with a proposal by the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for a 14-story, 157 foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, raises serious issues with regard to the R8B zoning in the midblock.

Community Board 8 fought hard for the enactment of the R8B zoning in our area, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and also fought to make sure that the midblock zoning extended to 125 feet from the Avenues.

It is our understanding that this project will be located beyond 125 feet from Central Park West and that its height will greatly exceed that permitted under the R8B zoning for that area. Our Board is greatly concerned about projects that may set precedents for violation of the R8B contextual zoning.

I urge the Commission to carefully scrutinize this project and all other projects that violate the midblock zoning which protects the character of our midblocks.

Sincerely,

  
Charles S. Warren  
Chair

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg  
Hon. A. Gifford Miller  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney  
Hon. Liz Krueger  
Hon. Pete Grannis  
Hon. Jonathan Bing  
Hon. Eva Moskowitz  
Hon. Amanda Burden  
Manhattan Community Board 7  
Ms. Arlene Simon, Landmarks West  
Ms. Genie Rice, CIVITAS

# WEST 77<sup>TH</sup> ST. BLOCK ASSOCIATION

127 West 77<sup>th</sup> St., New York, NY 10024  
1-212-712-0190

January 27, 2003

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The West 77<sup>th</sup> St. Block Association (between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues) is an long-standing, active membership group of friends and neighbors. We were pleased to be included in the Upper West Side Historic District and recognize that the designation has been important in preserving the character of our neighborhood.

We therefore write to oppose the proposed construction by Congregation Shearith Israel of a 14 story tower which would rise more than 157 feet above the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue at the corner of West 70<sup>th</sup> St. and Central Park West. The proposed tower is completely incompatible with the mid-block, low-rise character of West 70<sup>th</sup> St., a block characterized by low-rise brownstones.

It is important that the Landmarks Commission, the City Planning Commission and our elected officials act to support the existing zoning which was designed specifically to protect the low-rise character of the mid-blocks on the Upper West Side. Approval of this project could be a precedent leading to future proposals for block-busting development along Central Park West. This project undermines the character of the historic district and should be rejected.

Sincerely,



Alberto Antonini  
President

cc: Landmarks Commission  
City Planning Commission  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields  
Hon. Tom Duane  
Hon. Richard Gottfried  
Hon. Scott Stringer  
Hon. Gale Brewer  
Hon. Phil Reed  
Hon. William Perkins  
Landmarks West!

**HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT ALLIANCE, Inc.**

Suite 7-B  
8 East 96th Street  
New York, NY 10128

Phone. 212-427-6472  
Fax. 212-427-6472

DJ

January 7, 2003

The Honorable Robert Tierney, Chairman  
The Commissioners  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
1 Centre Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney and Commissioners:

**RE: Congregation Shearith Israel Application  
Tower – West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District**

Although a Public Hearing is required for this Application, it certainly is not necessary in order to determine that the proposal is not appropriate. Indeed, it is so out of scale, and so unrelated to its context, that to call it merely inappropriate is to flatter it.

At a height of 14 stories and 157 feet, it is more than twice as tall as could be considered appropriate on this block, in this Historic District, or on any other residential mid-block in the Upper West Side. Its design bears no relationship to the buildings to the west and it is at war with the synagogue to the east – an individual Landmark.

Unless creating financial windfalls for owners of designated properties constitutes a “preservation purpose,” this proposal in no way meets the standards required under section 74-711. To approve this proposal would be to grant a license to build towers to every other owner of designated property in the entire city.

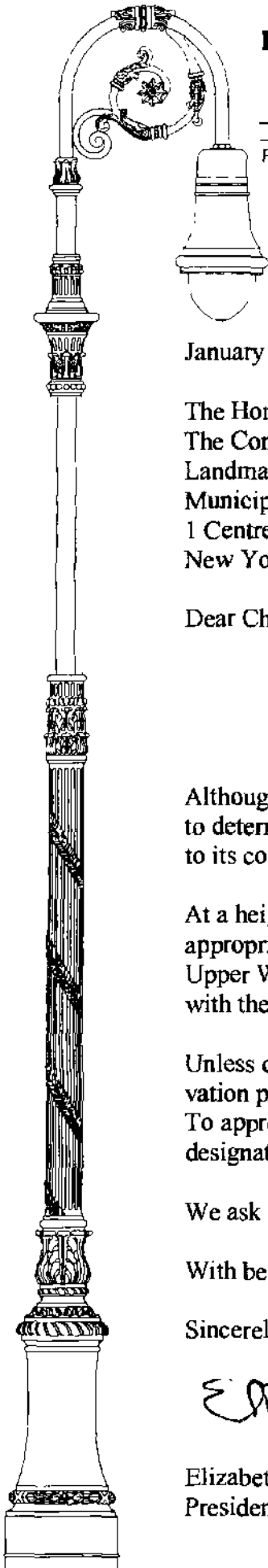
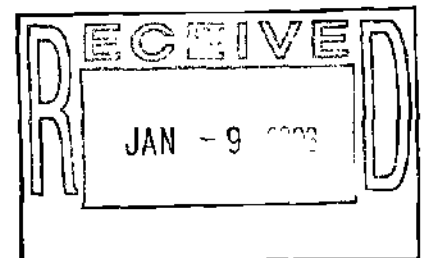
We ask that you deny this unworthy Application.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth Ashby*

Elizabeth Ashby  
President





Landmark

Date: 7/10/03

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 167-unit tower (now including mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally inappropriate projects.

I am further opposing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to preserve the historic character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future incentives for "block-busting" building developments.

In addition to my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board 12, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmarks West and friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local neighborhood groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senator Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assembly members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

*Ron Maurer*

Mr. [illegible]

101 Central Park West  
New York NY 10023

Dear [Official]: *Mike* —

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Cipa and Miriam Dichter*  
Name/Address

*145 Central Park West  
apt 14C*

*Please do something!*

*Thanks,  
Cipa*

Sherida Paulsen  
12/02/2002 10 19 AM

To Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc  
Subject Congregation Shearith Israel

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/02/2002 10 20 AM -----



"Lori Zabar"  
<lorizabar@hotmail.co  
m>

To spaulsen@lpc nyc gov  
cc landmarkwest@landmarkwest org  
Subject Congregation Shearith Israel

12/01/2002 09 29 PM

Sherida Paulsen  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair

Dear Sherida.

I am writing to you to state my opposition to Congregation Shearith Israel's proposal to demolish the existing community house and construct a new 14-story building. This proposed building does not relate appropriately to the Landmark and does not reinforce the character of the surrounding historic district. I urge you to deny both the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and for a 74-711.

Sincerely,

Lori Zabar  
565 West End Avenue # 16D  
New York, NY 10024

---

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<http://join.msn.com/?page=features/virus>

**Sherida Paulsen**

12/02/2002 10:08 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc

Subject: Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/02/2002 10:09 AM -----



**Anna Taam**

**<avtaam@yahoo.com>**

11/28/2002 10:04 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Dear Chair Sherida Paulsen:

I am very concerned about the Congregation's proposal to build a residential tower behind the Synagogue. The proposal sets a dangerous precedent for other landmarked properties to build further, and thereby damage the beautiful West side skyline. The tower would create shadows that will detract from our wonderful neighborhood.

Please support those of us opposed to the Congregation's proposal and vote to disapprove it.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Anna Taam

11 West 69th Street  
New York, NY 10023

---

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<http://mailplus.yahoo.com>

**Sherida Paulsen**

12/02/2002 10:17 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc

Subject: Proposed mid-block construction on W. 70th street of luxury condo tower

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/02/2002 10:19 AM -----

**HinckleyIV@aol.com**

11/29/2002 02:00 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc

Subject: Proposed mid-block construction on W. 70th street of luxury condo tower

Dear Chair Paulsen,

I write to urge that you and the Landmarks Preservation Commission uphold the integrity of the Landmarks Law, which as you know is intended to protect designated buildings and districts. The plan of Congregation Shearith Israel to build a 159' tall, 14 story mid-block luxury condominium building on West 70th Street, if allowed, would irreparably damage the low-rise, brownstone character of the mid-block on that street, which of course is part of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. The planned construction ironically also would harm the individual landmark to which it is to be connected--the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue itself--in that the condo tower's size and shadow will dominate that beautiful building.

Allowing special permits (the plan violates applicable zoning laws) to allow demolition of the existing 4 story community house and replacing it with the proposed luxury condominium tower would set a dangerous precedent where future "non-profit" (the project would provide a huge windfall for the applicant) developments are sought, thus endangering other historic districts throughout the city. Therefore, this is no local issue.

Tax-free institutions should be stopped from reaping financial windfalls by attempting to shift air rights across zoning boundaries through applications for special treatment. In this case, the CPW skyline has been threatened; in the future other city skylines will share that fate if the applications to the Landmarks Preservation Commission and Community Board 7 are granted. Please help prevent this great harm.

I am pleased to report that the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 7 voted unanimously last week to deny the Synagogue's application of a Certificate of Appropriateness. Borough President C. Virginia Fields spoke against the Synagogue's proposal this week at your Commission's first session on this matter.

We urge that you and the Commission deny this ill-conceived application.

Respectfully,

Charles R. Church  
91 Central Park West  
New York, New York 10023

**Sherida Paulsen**

12/02/2002 10:19 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: 70 Street synagogue project

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/02/2002 10:20 AM -----

**"Marc Rakoto"**

&lt;rakoto@alum.mit.edu

&gt;

12/01/2002 06:57 PM

Please respond to  
rakoto

To: <pryan@cb7.org>, <gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>,  
 <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>, <bp@manhattanbp.org>,  
 <gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us>, <strings@assembly.state.ny.us>,  
 <duane@senate.state.ny.us>, <jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov>  
 cc: "Owi \\\(Home\\)" <owi@alum.mit.edu>, <rakoto@alum.mit.edu>,  
 <landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org>

Subject: 70 Street synagogue project

New York, December 1, 2002

> Please note that we are against the 70 Street 14-floor synagogue project  
 > that will change the landscape of that row of townhouses and obstruct the  
 > view.

&gt;

> Thank you for your listening to all which are concerned.

&gt;

> Marc Rakotomalala and Owi Ruivivar

> 135 West 70 St, #7C

> NY, NY 10023

&gt;

&gt;



winmail.dat

Sherida Paulsen

12/03/2002 03:06 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Synagogue Proposal

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/03/2002 03:07 PM -----



"moisha Blechman"  
<mblechman@earthlin  
k.net>

12/03/2002 02:27 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov, landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

cc:

Subject: Synagogue Proposal

Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair

Sherida Paulsen

Dear Ms. Paulsen,

This proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel is inconsistent with the ideals and goals of preservation, as well as the needs of the community to maintain a humane and nurturing cityscape.

Beauty, light, sun and space are human needs. It should not be necessary to *escape* the city. Nor is it affordable for everyone. A civilized government will ensure the development restraint necessary to maintain a livable city.

I therefore call on you to do what you can to be sure that this proposal is rejected.

Moisha K. Blechman

1 West 64th St.

**Sherida Paulsen**

12/03/2002 03:07 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Proposed 70th St Tower

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/03/2002 03:07 PM -----



**DougSchnapp@aol.co  
m**

12/03/2002 02:46 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

Subject: Proposed 70th St Tower

I have lived on the West side for all of my 45 years and presently reside at 18 West 70th Street.

I am vehemently opposed to the proposed tower because I enjoy having as much open air and sunlight as possible projected on the street while walking. Because of this I have always enjoyed living on the West side, rather than the East side, whose buildings are of a much lower height.

When the Lincoln Triangle buildings were proposed, I opposed them for the same reasons.

towers



**Sherida Paulsen**

12/05/2002 10:16 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Thank you.

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/05/2002 10:16 AM -----



**Jonathan Baker**  
<Jonathanbaker@nyc.r.com>

12/04/2002 10:31 PM

To: <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>

cc:

Subject: Thank you.

Dear Ms. Paulsen,

Your continued support of the architectural and historic integrity of West 70th Street is much appreciated. The proposed high-rise condominium would do much to denigrate the historic quality of our neighborhood.

Again, thank you for your support.

Jonathan Baker  
31 West 69th Street 1B  
NY NY 10023  
212-874-7578

Sherida Paulsen  
12/06/2002 08.54 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: Shearith Israel's 14-story proposal

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/06/2002 08.55 AM -----



"Jerry Galison"  
<ggalison@galison.com>  
12/05/2002 01:45 PM

To: <spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: Shearith Israel's 14-story proposal

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

My impression is that the proposed Shearith Israel building on W. 70th Street will be out of character with its environment.

I have lived on the Upper West Side for 40 years and feel strongly that it is important that its unique character be retained to the extent possible.

I hope that you will vote against Shearith Israel's proposal.

Sincerely,

Gerald Galison

**COMMITTEE FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND DEVELOPMENT Inc.**

DJ → Files

Ms. Sherida Paulsen, Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
 1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 New York, N Y 10007

December 28, 2002

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

Zoning for the Upper Westside Historic District protects the midblock from out of scale structures. Please do not give any waivers of existing zoning that would allow Congregation Shearith Israel to construct a 14-story out of scale midblock tower. Moreover, the zoning is well advised. There is far too much density in this part of Manhattan.

The Spanish Portuguese Synagogue at Central Park West and West 70 Street, consecrated in 1897, has been a long time and welcomed institution on the Westside. It has flourished and enjoyed tax-free status, as do all religious organizations. Disregarding the deep felt wishes and the physical character of the neighborhood is hardly the way to repay the residents.

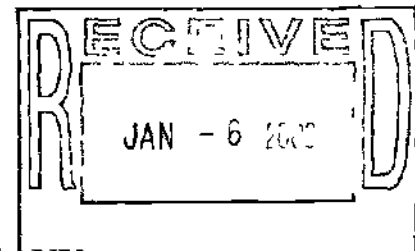
Yours truly,



Olive Freud, Vice President

Copies

Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Councilperson Gale Brewer, City Planning Chair Amanda Burden, Borough President C. Virginia Fields, Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, Assemblyman Scott Stringer, State Senator Tom Duane, State Senator Eric Schneiderman, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, Landmarks West



P.O. Box 20464. Columbus Circle Station, New York, NY 10023-1492  
 Telephone, (212)877-4394; Email CFESD@aol.com

75 Central Park West Corporation  
75 Central Park West  
New York, New York  
10023



January 14, 2003

Sherida Paulsen  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
NYC, NY 10007

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I write to express the opposition of the Board of 75 Central Park West to the proposal for a 14 story, 157 foot tower on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise mid block character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.


We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to retain and protect the character of neighborhood mid blocks, and we oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

We are joined in our opposition to the West 70th Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, the Historic Districts Council, Landmark West!, and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and city-wide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman, and New York State Assembly members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

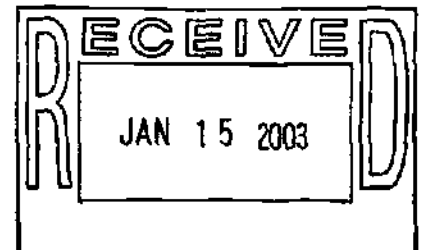
We urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt and devalue our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

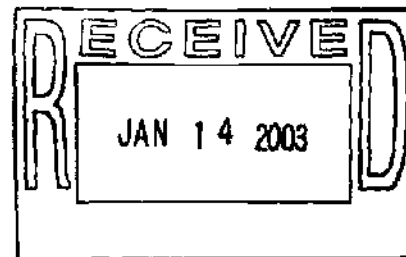
Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Terry L. Andreas,  
President of the Board of 75 Central Park West





Mr. Robert Tierney  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Center Street  
9<sup>th</sup> floor – North  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

**Congregation Shearith Israel's Proposal to  
Build a 14 Story Building in the Mid-block of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
Should not be Provided Special Variances**

As a lifelong resident of New York, I have seen my hometown become more and more unlivable as the years have gone by. As youngsters, my friends and I would bicycle into Manhattan, ride the trains, use the libraries at 42<sup>nd</sup> and 53<sup>rd</sup> Streets, and go to Times Square -- relaxed and without fear of congestion and the dangers ushered in by overdevelopment. Now the city intimidates even the native New Yorker.

New York, like any great city, needs to grow, but when development gets out of hand, irreparable damage can be done to its fabric. It eats away slowly. We are told that one more floor here or ten more feet there won't make a difference. Well, they do and have.

Travel to Amsterdam, Washington, D.C., Paris, or Chicago and you can walk for blocks in certain sections of these great cities and feel "civilized." You can see homes and buildings in proportion to human scale, you imagine living in these areas, and raising children there. You feel safe and unthreatened just because these areas afford a sense of traditional beauty, neighborhood friendliness, light, trees, and flowers.

I recently was walking around on the Upper East Side and became depressingly aware that no such enclave exists even in this "exclusive" neighborhood. Unlike Georgetown, here one cannot say -- this is a really lovely neighborhood I wouldn't wish anything to be different. Now in New York, virtually every north-south street is overdeveloped, and the few remaining wonderful east-west mid-blocks are dwindling in number.

This should stop. Manhattan has few livable, lovely neighborhoods, and if we continue to let them be eaten up one floor, ten feet at a time there will be no place for people who would like to call this home to live -- to want to live.

This is one reason that I believe that developments such as that planned by Congregation Shearith Israel should not be given special variances to erect high-rise buildings in the mid blocks of this city.

I have lived at 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street for 25 years, directly next door to the plan site. I have no personal reasons for wanting to see this project stopped. I rent my apartment and it faces West, away from the development.

However, I love New York and I love the Upper West Side. People, who visit me from other places, love the Upper West Side. It is still a viable, attractive neighborhood that can house those important talents we want to attract to this city to continue to make it great. Unravelling the fabric of this community further (which has undergone heavy overdevelopment in recent years) will only undo one of the last livable neighborhoods we have on this island. Where will the Ned Rorems, Isaac Perlmans, John Candors – or the less well known but important executives of finance, actors, writers, and even young business entrepreneurs go? Georgetown?

The loss of this asset will eventually hurt New York – I know, I have seen it happening for over forty years. I hope that forty years from now, people will look joyously at the Upper West Side in the same way we now look at the once threatened Carnegie Hall – an asset saved -- and not sadly as a lost oppportunity akin to the forever-squandered Pennsylvania Station.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Falk', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Falk  
18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10023  
212.787.0229  
212.647.8981

## West 70<sup>th</sup> Street Museum Block Association

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair Tierney:

1/14/03

We are writing to express our opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise mid-block character of the Upper West Side, and may pave the way for other architecturally incomparable projects.

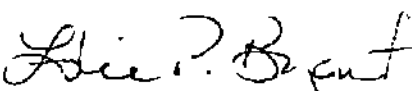
We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood mid-blocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

We are joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West!, and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials such as Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman, and New York Assembly Members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

We are urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank You.

Sincerely,



Leslie P. Bryant, Co-President  
West 78<sup>th</sup> Street Museum Block Association



Carol Bryce-Buchanan, Co-President

Leslie P. Bryant 141 W 78<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10024 (212) 496-0027  
Carol Bryce-Buchanan 131 W 78<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10024 (212) 787-7335

# CIVITAS

A Union of Citizens

1457 Lexington Avenue New York NY 10128-2506

DI

**Founder**  
August Heckisch  
1914-1997

**President**  
Genie Rice  
**Vice Presidents**  
Marcia Fowle  
T. Conant Reilly  
James T. B. Tripp  
**Treasurer**  
Frederic Withington  
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Agustin Rivera  
R. Geoffrey Roesch  
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Hans Silver  
M. Sava B. Thomas  
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Hon. Henry J. Stern  
Margot Wellington  
Anthony C. Wood  
Joanne Woodward

28 January 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Center Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10005

*Re: Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70th Street*

Dear Chairman Tierney:

CIVITAS, an over 22 year old Upper East Side and East Harlem zoning and planning organization is on record for supporting and upholding R8B mid-block zoning regulations.

CIVITAS is appreciative of the needs of institutions for expansion and believes that needed growth is possible while still respecting the spirit of R8B.

The present application, with requests for significant variances, violates the mid-block context, which many communities throughout the city have fought to establish and uphold.

CIVITAS urges that the Commission reject this application because of the adverse effect it will have on the mid-block and because of the precedent it will set for future applications

Sincerely yours,

*Genie Rice*

Genie Rice, President

cc: Amanda Burden, Chairman City Planning Commission  
C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President



---

HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL

---

THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

232 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street New York NY 10003  
tel (212) 614-9107 fax (212) 614-9127 email hdc@hdc.org

January 27, 2003

Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10007

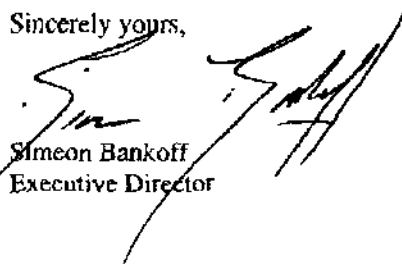
Dear Commissioner Tierney:

The Historic Districts Council opposes the proposal submitted by Shearith Israel Synagogue for a 14-story, 157 tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. A building of this height, in the middle of the block, is totally incompatible with the character of the designated block of the Upper West Side. The block in question was zoned R8B, so that new construction would be compatible with the traditional rowhouses that define the neighborhood, away from the high rise apartment buildings on Central Park West, which is zoned R10A. R10A is in place from Central Park West to a point 125 feet into the midblock. The building proposed is more than 125 feet into the midblock. It is effectively a Central Park West building in the middle of the block.

The contextual zoning was carefully developed to preserve the character of the historic district. There is no way a building can be appropriate in this location at the height proposed. The contextual zoning was designed to balance development with preservation of the built environment. A waiver for the project will upset the thoughtfully crafted balance that has served well to preserve and protect the Upper West Side while allowing for reasonable development.

We urge you to protect the character of this distinctive and desirable historic district by opposing this application.

Sincerely yours,

  
Simeon Bankoff  
Executive Director



Heather McCracken

01/30/2003 03:44 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: W. 70th St. Project - Second Landmarks Hearing on February 11,

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/30/2003 03:47 PM -----



"N. Sclater-Booth"

&lt;nsclaterbooth@nyc.rr.com&gt;

01/30/2003 06:26 PM

To: &lt;rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc: &lt;landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org&gt;

Subject: W. 70th St. Project - Second Landmarks Hearing on February 11,

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you

Neil Sclater-Booth, 50 West 67th Street, New York, NY 10023

DJ

425 Riverside Drive  
New York, NY 10025  
January 25, 2003

Dear Chairman Tierney:


I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

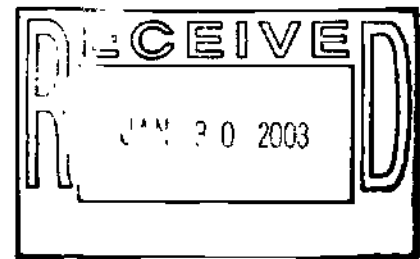
I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,   
Ina Avrich  
425 Riverside Drive  
New York, NY 10025



DT

**GERALDINE E. RHOADS**

185 West End Avenue (21A)  
New York, NY 1002

Mr. Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
York NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney::

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

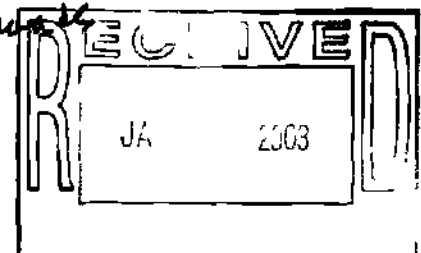
I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Geraldine Rhoads*



January 29, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Fax: 212-669-7960

Dear Commissioner Tierney,

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Patricia W. Sclater-Booth  
50 West 67<sup>th</sup> Street,  
New York, NY 10023

To: Richard H. A. Sugarman, President, 18 West 70th Street  
 NYC, NY 10023

Dear Chairman Henry:

As a resident of the Upper West Side for over six years, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed 14-story tower that Congregation Shearith Israel is trying to construct. The 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Hartnett  
 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, PhA  
 NYC, NY 10023



Heather McCracken  
01/29/2003 03:34 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th St. Project

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/29/2003 03:37 PM -----



"Correa, Anne"  
<acorrea@clinique.co  
m>  
01/29/2003 01:56 PM

To: "rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov" <rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc: "landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org"  
<landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org>  
Subject: West 70th St. Project

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70th Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Anne Correa  
11 West 70th St., 1F  
New York, NY 10023



**Heather McCracken**  
01/29/2003 11:34 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: Tower on West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/29/2003 11:37 AM -----



**AlicePucknat@aol.com**  
01/29/2003 11:29 AM

To: AlicePucknat@aol.com  
cc:  
Subject: Tower on West 70th Street

I am writing to add my name to the list of those opposing the plan submitted by Congregation Shearith Israel for a 14-story, 154-foot tower to be built on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue.

This proposal, which has been submitted to the Landmarks Commission, would endanger the existing zoning regulations that protect the low-rise character of the neighborhood midblocks. It could also pave the way for other architecturally incompatible structures.

I urge you to do all in your power to help preserve the character of our community by opposing this project and any other attempts to bypass existing zoning regulations.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alice Pucknat  
565 West End Avenue  
New York, NY 10024



**Heather McCracken**

01/29/2003 12:38 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Shearith Israel Synagogue building proposal

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/29/2003 12:41 PM -----

**Sandy Levine**

&lt;slevine@hdc.org&gt;

01/29/2003 12:25 PM

To: rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov, gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us,

bp@manhattanbp.org, gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us,

strings@assembly.state.ny.us, duane@senate.state.ny.us,

schneider@senate.state.ny.us, herrold.nadler@mail.house.gov

cc:

Subject: Shearith Israel Synagogue building proposal

January 27, 2003

The Historic Districts Council opposes the proposal submitted by Shearith Israel Synagogue for a 14-story, 157 tower on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. A building of this height, in the middle of the block, is totally incompatible with the character of the designated block of the Upper West Side. The block in question was zoned R8B, so that new construction would be compatible with the traditional rowhouses that define the neighborhood, away from the high rise apartment buildings on Central Park West, which is zoned R10A. R10A is in place from Central Park West to a point 125 feet into the midblock. The building proposed is more than 125 feet into the midblock. It is effectively a Central Park West building in the middle of the block.

The contextual zoning was carefully developed to preserve the character of the historic district. There is no way a building can be appropriate in this location at the height proposed. The contextual zoning was designed to balance development with preservation of the built environment. A waiver for the project will upset the thoughtfully crafted balance that has served well to preserve and protect the Upper West Side while allowing for reasonable development.

We urge you to protect the character of this distinctive and desirable historic district by opposing this application.

Sincerely yours,

Simeon Bankoff  
Executive Director

This e-mail is confidential and intended only for the use of the individuals or entities named above. If you have received this e-mail in error, please delete it and any attachments from your system without making copies, and notify the sender by reply e-mail or by calling (telephone number) so that our address records can be corrected. Thank you.

01/29/2003 12:23 2127584616

COMMUNITY BD BM

Charles S. Warren  
ChairElizabeth McKee  
District Manager

## The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

505 Park Avenue  
Suite 620  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)  
www.dcnyc.com/cb8 - Website  
CB8M@aol.com - E-Mail

January 29, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I am writing to express Manhattan Community Board 8's concern with a proposal by the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for a 14-story, 157 foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, raises serious issues with regard to the R8B zoning in the midblock.

Community Board 8 fought hard for the enactment of the R8B zoning in our area, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and also fought to make sure that the midblock zoning extended to 125 feet from the Avenues.

It is our understanding that this project will be located beyond 125 feet from Central Park West and that its height will greatly exceed that permitted under the R8B zoning for that area. Our Board is greatly concerned about projects that may set precedents for violation of the R8B contextual zoning.

I urge the Commission to carefully scrutinize this project and all other projects that violate the midblock zoning which protects the character of our midblocks.

Sincerely,

*Charles S. Warren*  
Charles S. Warren  
Chair

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg  
Hon. A. Gifford Miller  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney  
Hon. Liz Krueger  
Hon. Pete Grannis  
Hon. Jonathan Bing  
Hon. Eva Moskowitz  
Hon. Amanda Burden  
Manhattan Community Board 7  
Ms. Arlene Simon, Landmarks West  
Ms. Genie Rice, CIVITAS

Post-it* Fax Note	7671	Date	# of pages ▶
To	From		
Co./Dept.	Co.		
Phone #	Phone #		
Fax #	Fax #		

*1069-7797*

11-69 Owners Corp.  
11 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10023

Dear Chairman Tierney:

We are writing to express our opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise mid-block character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood mid-blocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

We are joined in our opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

We urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors  
11-69 Owners Corp.  
11 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street

January 22, 03

Mr. Robert Tierney, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

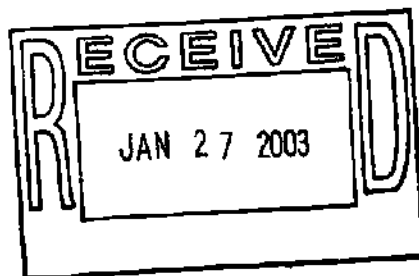
As a longtime resident of 18 West 70th Street in Manhattan, I am writing to express concern about plans proposed by the Spanish Portuguese Synagogue located at 70th Street and Central Park West to erect a 14-story, 157-foot tower on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side, but would set a precedent for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise of neighborhood midblocks, and therefore oppose any present and future applications for developments that would destroy this low-rise character.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70th Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this and all other projects that threaten to destroy our community's character, by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.



Sincerely, *Evalyn Kaufman*  
Evalyn Kaufman  
18 West 70th St.  
New York, NY 10023

160 Riverside Dr. Apt. 8A  
New York, N.Y. 10024-2111  
January 22, 2003

Mr. Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I write to express my opposition to plans to build a 14-story, 157-foot tower (which does not include necessary rooftop mechanical installations) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. If this proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, is approved, it would threaten the low-rise character of most mid-blocks on the Upper West Side by establishing a precedent that may open the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of the neighborhood's mid-blocks, and I oppose all present and future applications for building developments that seek to circumvent (in height or size) the existing zoning regulations.

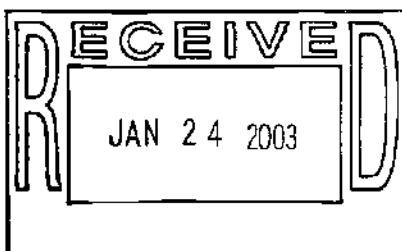
I am joined in my opposition to the West 70th Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, the Historic Districts Council, Landmark West!, and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as by a growing number of other organizations and individuals throughout the city. In addition, elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman, and New York State Assemblymen Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer have all publicly expressed opposition to this proposal because it would violate the current zoning laws and undermine the character of the historic district in which it would be constructed.

I urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project as well as any other such projects that would threaten our community's character by waiving the existing zoning laws.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Joan Rome





Heather McCracken

01/27/2003 04:13 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: Stop the Tower on West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/27/2003 04:16 PM -----



"Schiavoni, Tancred"  
 <TSchiavoni@OMM.com>  
 m>

01/25/2003 07:20 PM

To: "gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us" <gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>,  
 "rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov" <rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov>,  
 "bp@manhattanbp.org" <bp@manhattanbp.org>,  
 "gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us" <gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us>,  
 "strings@assembly.state.ny.us" <strings@assembly.state.ny.us>,  
 "duane@senate.state.ny.us" <duane@senate.state.ny.us>,  
 "schneider@senate.state.ny.us" <schneider@senate.state.ny.us>,  
 "jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov" <jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov>

cc:

Subject: Stop the Tower on West 70th Street

I was absolutely shocked to learn of the proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission by Congregation Shearith Israel, is absolutely inconsistent with the zoning of area. This is a "block-busting" building development. If it is permitted, it will call into question the enforcability of the entire Landmark scheme now in place.

Please stop this project.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tancred Schiavoni

153 W 85th Street

RESIDENTIAL BOARD OF MANAGERS  
THE CENTURY CONDOMINIUM

25 CENTRAL PARK WEST  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023

TELEPHONE 212/265-1608  
TELECOPIER 212/315-3389

January 21, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chairman  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor  
NYC, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney,

I am writing on behalf of the Century Condominium's Board of Managers to express our opposition to a proposal for a 14 story, 157 foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

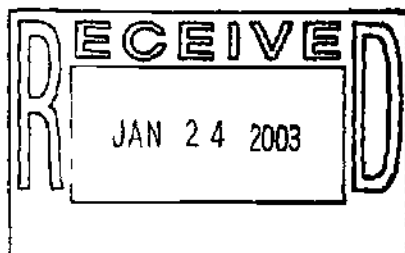
We are joined in our opposition by many individuals and by local and citywide groups, including Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts. In addition, Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assembly Members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer all oppose this proposed project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

We are urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Paul Millman  
President  
Residential Board of the Century  
Condominium



**90<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association  
300 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024**

**Robert B. Tierney Chairman**  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
100 Centre St.  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

We are writing to express our opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, \$576-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

We are joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

We urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

**Diana & Bob Mattson**  
300 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024

**Don Correia & Sandy Duncan**  
61 West 90<sup>th</sup>  
New York, NY 10024

**Ron Bozman**  
300 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024

**Joan Prager**  
300 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024

**Steering Committee Members**



**Donald Correia - Sandy Duncan**  
**61 West 90<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**New York, NY 10024**

January 24, 2003

Mr. Robert B. Tierney  
 Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
 Via Fax #212-~~720-3219~~ 669-7960

Dear Mr. Tierney

I am writing you today not only as a single family midblock townhouse owner, but also a Westside real estate broker and representative of the West 90<sup>th</sup> Street Park West Block Association. My wife, Sandy Duncan, and I wish to express our opposition to the proposed 14 story, 157+ foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

My wife and I are joined in our opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! And Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I urge you to work towards disallowing a waiver to the existing zoning in the Upper West Side Historic District for the current owners of the so called Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, an Individual Landmark. These current owners, Congregation Shearith Israel, are asking the new New York City Landmark Commission and New York City Planning Commission for special treatment and a variance to go ahead with a development project. This project would involve disrupting the character of the district and worst of all set a precedent for future erosion of a well maintained and economically viable part of the city.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Donald Correia

Sandy Duncan

January 29, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

As a resident of the Upper West Side for over 18 years, I wish to convey my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (excluding rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the general low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may create a favorable environment for other such architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks. I oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

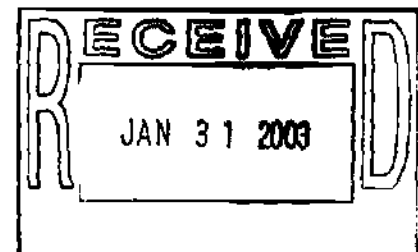
My fellows in opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project include Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Arts Society, the Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. We are fortunate to have the leadership and support of Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer. They all oppose this ill-conceived project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of this historic district.

I urge you to intervene to help us preserve and protect our community by opposing this project and all other projects that likewise threaten to disrupt our community's character by flouting existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Judy Samuels / 116 West 76<sup>th</sup> Street



# Ron Prince

**Marketing Consultant**

18 West 70th Street

Penthouse A

New York, NY 10023

ronprince@worldnet.att.net

212.579.9160 voice

212.579.9158 fax

January 23, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am a ten-year coop owner in the Central Park West/Upper West Side Historic District, and I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue.

This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

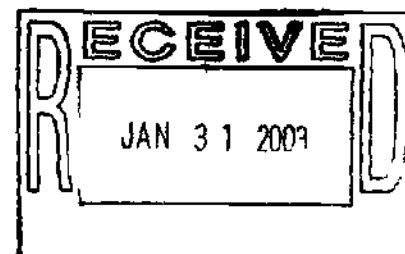
I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Charles S. Warren  
Chair

Elizabeth McKee  
District Manager



505 Park Avenue  
Suite 620  
New York, N.Y. 10022  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)  
www.decny.com/cb8 - Website  
CB8M@aol.com - E-Mail

## The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

January 29, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

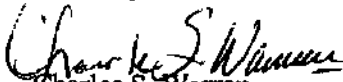
I am writing to express Manhattan Community Board 8's concern with a proposal by the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue for a 14-story, 157 foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, raises serious issues with regard to the R8B zoning in the midblock.

Community Board 8 fought hard for the enactment of the R8B zoning in our area, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and also fought to make sure that the midblock zoning extended to 125 feet from the Avenues.

It is our understanding that this project will be located beyond 125 feet from Central Park West and that its height will greatly exceed that permitted under the R8B zoning for that area. Our Board is greatly concerned about projects that may set precedents for violation of the R8B contextual zoning.

I urge the Commission to carefully scrutinize this project and all other projects that violate the midblock zoning which protects the character of our midblocks.

Sincerely,

  
Charles S. Warren  
Chair

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg  
Hon. A. Gifford Miller  
Hon. C. Virginia Fields  
Hon. Carolyn Maloney  
Hon. Liz Krueger  
Hon. Pete Grannis  
Hon. Jonathan Bing  
Hon. Eva Moskowitz  
Hon. Amanda Burden  
Manhattan Community Board 7  
Ms. Arlene Simon, Landmarks West  
Ms. Genie Rice, CIVITAS

ANDREW SCOTT DOLKART  
116 Pinchurst Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10033  
212-568-2480

January 26, 2003

To: Mayor Michael Bloomberg

**Statement in Opposition to Granting a Variance for the Apartment Building Proposed by  
Congregation Shearith Israel, West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, New York**

I would like to add my voice to the chorus of New Yorkers opposed to the granting of a variance for Congregation Shearith Israel to build a fourteen-story building, including an apartment house, on a midblock site behind the synagogue. I am an architectural historian and adjunct associate professor in the Columbia University School of Architecture where I teach about New York City. I have, over the years, had a special interest in the Upper West Side and I am a founding board member of Landmark West!. I believe that the synagogue's proposal defies the carefully crafted 1984 contextual zoning instituted on the Upper West Side which permits tall buildings on the avenues, but restricts the height of buildings on the low-rise midblocks. Permitting this speculative apartment building with synagogue use at the base, would open the door to additional out-of-scale construction in the low-rise zoning district and within the Upper West Side Historic District. While Congregation Shearith Israel is certainly an institution of great historic significance, it should be abiding by the same zoning rules that regulate all other landowners in the area.

In addition, I oppose any action by the Landmarks Preservation Commission to assist the synagogue in applying for a variance since the synagogue has not established a pressing preservation purpose for this project, except to state that funds from development will assist in maintaining their buildings, something that any building owner is required to do on a regular basis.

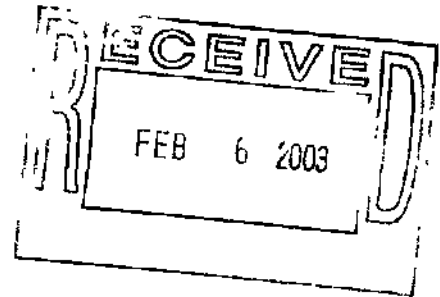
I hope that this proposal is rejected and that Shearith Israel and its talented architects will return with a new proposal to erected an up-to-date community house that fits within the area's zoning.

Sincerely,



Andrew Scott Dolkart

Dianne R. Carr 26 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street New York, N.Y. 10023  
Tel. 212 873-1779 E-Mail: Storytailors@aol.com



February 4, 2003

Mr. Robert Tierney  
Chairman  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street—9<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
New York, N.Y. 10007

**RE: REJECT THE SHEARITH ISRAEL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT**

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to Congregation Shearith Israel's proposal to build a 157-foot building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, next to its landmarked synagogue, in the Central Park West Historic District.

The proposed project is contradictory to preserving the integrity of the neighborhood's historic character and the integrity of the landmarking program itself.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

201 West 70 St, #30A  
New York, NY 10023

3 February 2003

Mr. Robert Tierney, Chairman  
New York Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre St, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assembly members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



David W. Patterson

E-mail: [dwpatters53@hotmail.com](mailto:dwpatters53@hotmail.com)



HARPERLEY HALL  
ONE WEST SIXTY FOURTH STREET  
NEW YORK NY 10022

FEBRUARY 6, 2003

Mr Robert B Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street - 9th Fl  
New York, NY 10007

VIA FACSIMILE. 212 669 7960

RE: PROPOSED MIDBLOCK TOWER ON WEST 70TH STREET BETWEEN

Dear Mr. Tierney,

I am writing on behalf of One West 64th Street, Inc to express our opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 159 foot tower (not including rooftop mechanical equipment) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character for the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character and scale of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-bursting" building developments.

We are joined in our opposition to the West 70th Street Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West' and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individual and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C Virginia Fields, New York Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district

We urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning

YOURS SINCERELY,

*Joseph Catalano* *KS*

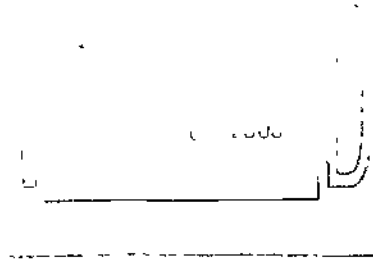
JOSEPH CATALANO  
BOARD PRESIDENT - ONE WEST 64TH STREET, INC





February 2, 2003

Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl.,  
New York, NY 10007



Dear Commissioner Tierney:

Building types create distinctive environments unique to each neighborhood and commercial area of the city. Carefully crafted zoning policy ensures that new construction does not upset the delicate balances that make good living and working places. As 12-year residents of Manhattan, we are deeply troubled by a proposed end run around one of the best, most carefully developed urban zoning plans anywhere. If zoning plans drafted in public processes with community and City Planning Commission support are not upheld the result will be the reversal of those zoning plans. A variance or special permit only opens the door for more of the same.

In particular we write to express opposition to the current proposal for a 14-story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue (8 West 70th Street). The R8B zoning in place on the Upper West Side was designed to allow high-rise construction along the avenues while protecting the low-rise mid-block character of the neighborhood. If built, this proposal would place a 157-foot tall building amidst a block of 60-foot tall brownstones. The proposal threatens the very tools that the City and the community put in place to guide the neighborhood's growth.

This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, does not warrant special exemptions for economic gain at the community's long term expense.

We ask you do everything in your power to oppose this misguided project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt a community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Kathleen Randall*

Kathleen Randall  
33 Convent Avenue, No. 11  
New York, NY 10027

*Richard Ray*

Richard Ray


**The West 85th Street Block Association**

10 W. 85th St

NYC 10023

**President**

Jeffrey Peters

**Secretary**

Tamara Peters

**Vice Presidents**

Clare Beckhardt

Peggy Kane

**Treasurer**

Carol Halebian

**RECEIVED**

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
NYC 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney,

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West<sup>1</sup> and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

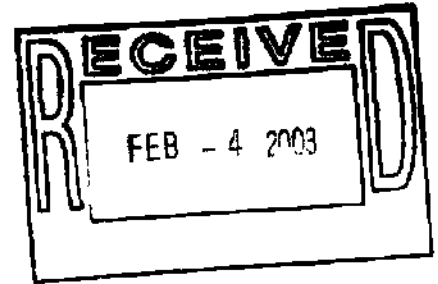
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jeff Peters

President, West 85th Street Block Association

ROBERT F. PETRIE  
425 WEST END AVENUE, APT. 5D  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10024



February 1, 2003

Robert B. Tierney - Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

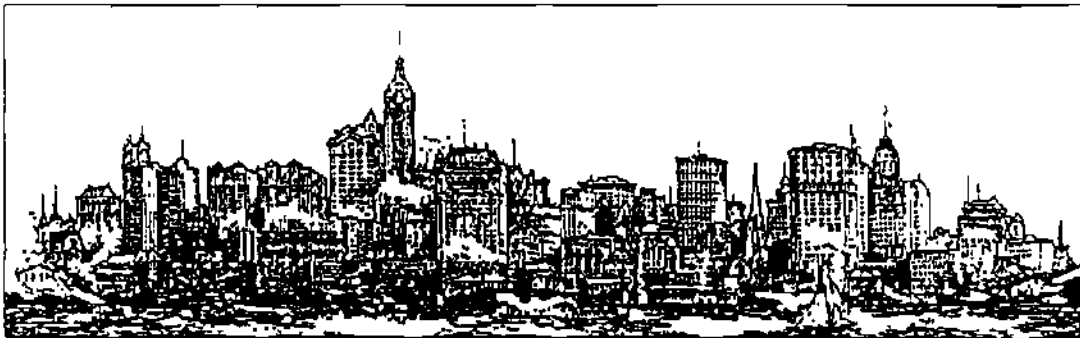
I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

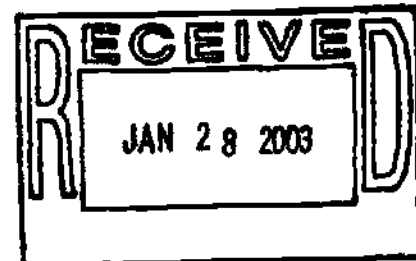


## THE SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY

January 27, 2003

Chairman Robert B. Tierney  
The Landmarks Preservation Commission  
The Municipal Building  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:



Re: The proposed new Shearith Israel Community House

Although this plan is much more modest than what the Episcopal church has proposed for the undesignated Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and although the congregation has been generous in supporting an extensive and well-researched restoration, we are sufficiently troubled about the public policy implications of this application to write to you about it now.

From the outset, the Landmarks Commission has been somewhat independent of zoning. The Zoning Resolution specifically exempts historic districts from some requirements and allows the LPC to apply for exemptions from others. And it is well established that the LPC is not bound to approve bulk and massing it finds inappropriate just because that might be permitted under zoning. Still, to us, such exemptions all tend to encourage conservation, restoration and adaptive re-use of existing buildings, or permit a more contextual massing for a new building in an historic area.

We would be very alarmed to see what to us would be an unprecedented move for the LPC: ignoring the existing zoning to approve a new building whose bulk, height and massing substantially *exceeds* what zoning would allow, in a context of smaller buildings, and in a zoning district that was mapped specifically to limit out-of-context construction and preserve the character of the existing neighborhood.

For many years, preservationists have sought contextual zoning in and around historic districts, especially in neighborhoods of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rowhouses. In response, City Planning has given us a number of districts like the R8B of the community house site, here and on the Upper East Side, and contextual zoning is mapped or under consideration elsewhere. This is a very useful development which should be encouraged, not disregarded. In our experience, most historic district property owners are violently opposed to out-of-scale new construction, including that proposed by community facilities.

Yours sincerely,

Ronald J. Kopnicki, President



New  
York  
Landmarks  
Conservancy

www.protectwest70.org

*preserving  
protecting  
New York*

February 11, 2003

John J. Kerr, Jr., *Chairman*  
Peg Bicen, *President*

**Board of Directors**

John Belle, FMA, RIBA  
William L. Bernhard  
Kathryn McGraw Bercy  
Simon Bienes, FAIA  
Robert W. Burnett  
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Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
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Robert C. Graham, Jr.  
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Susan Henshaw Jones  
Ronald S. Linker  
Mirione Manning MacLachlan  
Liz Smith  
The Reverend Canon  
Frederick B. Williams

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY  
BEFORE THE N.Y.C. LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION  
REGARDING THE PROPOSAL BY CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
FOR A NEW BUILDING ON WEST 70<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN MANHATTAN**

Good morning, Commissioners. I am Roger Lang, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

The Conservancy supports Shearith Israel's proposal. We hope that you will grant it a Certificate of Appropriateness and also agree to invoke the provisions of Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution in order to allow regulatory relief necessary for its construction.

The Conservancy took this position after members of our Public Policy Committee and Sacred Sites Program staff viewed two presentations by the proponents and after they read the briefs in opposition being circulated by Landmark West!

This proposal isn't at all like the blockbusters floated in the 1980's. It does not involve the demolition or removal of any significant structures or features. Nor does it overhang the landmark. At fourteen stories, this new building is realistic, pragmatic, sensible, and modest. It's in scale with the height and bulk of adjacent residential buildings to the north and south. And it is well-designed, with attractive contextual features interpreted in a contemporary idiom.

This building is not being plunked down in the middle of an unbroken row of townhouses. Rather, it is at the end of the block, adjacent to a nine-story building and standing, in part, on a vacant lot and in an R10A district.

This proposal is also good for the landmark synagogue. The new building provides needed ancillary space as well as funds for ongoing restoration of the sanctuary and parsonage. The Restrictive Declaration accompanying this project ensures that the landmark will be maintained in "sound, first-class condition," the highest standard for such care. Moreover, the transfer of some F.A.R. from the temple site to the tower site will diminish development pressure on the landmark.

The transfer of development rights is a hallmark of New York City's Landmarks Law. It was intended to help preserve low buildings by enabling their owners to shift some of the unused bulk to other nearby sites. This provision is a key reason why our law passed constitutional muster and has survived legal challenges.

[Continued]

141 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10010  
Tel: 212 995 5260  
Fax: 212 995 5268  
nylandmarks@nylandmarks.org  
www.nylandmarks.org

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C.  
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSAL BY  
CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL FOR A NEW BUILDING ON WEST 70<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN  
MANHATTAN**

February 11, 2003

Page 2

In this instance, a small fraction of the total floor area available is being shifted westward. The balance remains unused and that situation is unlikely to change. Accordingly, we would prefer that the owner voluntarily renounce use of the remaining F.A.R. as a part of the covenants contained in the Restrictive Declaration.

Finally, we urge this Commission to proceed with confidence to use Section 74-711. In our view, doing so will not set an adverse precedent, either for the Commission or for the preservation community. It's in the Zoning Resolution for this very purpose. It's to be used at your discretion. It will benefit the landmark. And it is rooted in specific findings that apply only to this site and situation. Therefore, Commissioners, we hope that you'll go right ahead and use it!

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Conservancy's views.

GALE A. BREWER

COUNCIL DISTRICT 6  
MANHATTANDISTRICT OFFICE  
120 WEST 70th STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10023  
TEL: 212-637-1234  
FAX: 212-637-1234CITY HALL OFFICE  
100 WALL STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10038  
TEL: 212-637-1234  
FAX: 212-637-1234gale.brewer@nyc.gov  
www.nyc.govTHE COUNCIL  
OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

CHAIR

TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

COMMITTEES

HUMAN RIGHTS

GENERAL AFFAIRS

HIGHER EDUCATION

HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR  
AND OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

PARKS &amp; RECREATION

Testimony of NYC Council Member Gale A. Brewer  
Regarding Shearith Israel Congregation  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission,  
February 11, 2003

My name is Gale Brewer and I represent Council District 6 on the West Side of Manhattan, which includes the Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue at 8 West 70th Street and Central Park West. Due to another commitment that requires me to be in Albany, I have asked my Director of Constituent Services, Lisa M. Boudreau, to present my comments regarding the Congregation's applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness and a Modification of Use and Bulk at 8 West 70th Street, Block 36, 37, lot 1, 2. I am also submitting a written copy of these comments.

Congregation Shearith Israel is one of New York's oldest, most storied and significant congregations. It has earned widespread respect through its commitment to the community and its care and maintenance of the individual landmark it occupies. Previously, the Congregation withdrew a proposal to construct a residential building on a portion of their property after it was widely opposed by the community and various organizations interested in preservation of historic properties and the Upper West Side Historic District.

In the applications at issue today, the Congregation proposes to demolish its existing community house at 8 West 70th Street and to construct on a portion of its property a new community house and a residential building that requires a special permit under the Zoning Resolution.

Over the years, the Congregation has done a superb job of continuing to protect and restore its treasured historic Synagogue and three historic cemeteries that the Congregation maintains in New York City. The Synagogue itself is one of New York's most important landmarks, and occupies a prominent location on Central Park West in the Upper West Side Historic District. Indeed, it was to protect such buildings and their historical, cultural, social, and physical context, and to ensure their preservation that the Landmarks Law was enacted and the Commission acted to create the District.

Congregation Shearith Israel has been an exemplary neighbor on the West Side since construction of its current magnificent home in 1897 and a member of the community of New York City for centuries. In recent years the Congregation has continued its long efforts to honor the place that the Synagogue holds in the community and in the right legacy of all concerned for its historic and architectural significance. This work has come at great expense, and the required costs of restoration, maintenance and repairs will continue to place a significant financial burden on the Congregation for the foreseeable future. A primary trust is placed in the Congregation for the current request is to help meet these obligations.

NYC LPC Testimony of Gale A. Brewer  
Re Shearith Israel Congregation  
February 11 2003

2

The Congregation and some members of the community believe that the Synagogue's proposal represents a plan for development that is modest in scale and sensitive to its surroundings and neighbors. In an effort to address the many concerns about this project the Congregation has chosen to work with respected architects and preservationists in preparing their proposal and design. Part of the design calls for demolition of the existing community house because of the Congregation's need to improve and expand its facilities and better serve the needs of its membership. The residential portion is viewed as the primary generator of needed income.

The Congregation believes that their proposed 14 story, 15" foot building is in context with adjacent buildings of 10 or more stories. And in fact, approximately 5 percent of the Central Park West Historic District mid-block is reportedly occupied by buildings that are larger than permitted under the current zoning.

However, I have several reservations about the current proposal. First, the City Planning Commission created the R8B zoning in 1984 to protect the brownstone character of the mid-blocks of the Upper West Side. The Landmarks Commission reinforced this protective zoning by creating the Upper West Side Historic District in 1991. Second, the M10A zoning district covering Central Park West gives way to the mid-block R8B district at a point 125 feet from the avenue. The proposed building is more than 125 feet into the mid-block, crossing this important boundary. Third, I am concerned that approval of this project would set a precedent threatening to erode the unique brownstone mid-block character of the District and the Upper West Side. Fourth, the exceptional nature of this proposal is evident in the requirement that various city agencies must grant waiver, variances, special permits, and a Certificate of Appropriateness. The proposal is to demolish a structure attached to the Synagogue and alter the visual and aesthetic character of the latter; in addition, it has been noted that this proposal is a form of "spot zoning."

Concerns have been raised that the Landmarks Commission is being asked to support a proposal whose design and envelope could be changed after approval of the proposal. This issue is a serious one but in this case I believe that the perception is mistaken and that the Congregation intends to proceed in good faith with their current proposal.

It is essential to note that this Congregation has worked diligently along with residents, preservationists, and the Landmarks Commission to maintain the integrity of the Central Park West Historic District. All of us will continue to gain immeasurably by assuring its continued presence for years to come.

However, to approve this project would set a precedent and might induce other institutions along Central Park West to seek similar variances. This could lead to a widespread deterioration of the special zoning district. On this basis and the concerns cited above, I recommend to the Commission that the request for a Certificate be denied.

I want to re-emphasize that the Congregation faces significant, long-term financial challenges, as do other religious institutions in my district. Although I realize that this issue is beyond the purview of the Commission, a means to address this challenge must be found while protecting our historic properties and the core characteristics of the West Side.

I thank the Commissioners for their attention to these issues.





THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>th</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL. 212-669-7923 FAX: 212-669-7797

<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

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### PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 3

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Congregation Shearith Israel

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal   x   Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Dan Golub

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Address*

Assembly Member Richard Gottfried

## Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

**If you need additional space, please use the other side.**



# The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FL. NORTH, NEW YORK, NY 10007  
212-669-7700

<http://nyc.gov/html/lpc/>



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DATE: 2/11/03 ITEM NAME: SYNAGOGUE TOWER

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION ☒ AGAINST DESIGNATION ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

<u>AVRA PETRIDES</u>	
NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> OWNER
<u>101 West 78<sup>th</sup> Street</u>	
ADDRESS	
<u>New York, N.Y. 10024</u>	
REPRESENTING	
<u>MUNICIPAL ARTS SOCIETY</u>	

IF YOU WOULD RATHER LEAVE A STATEMENT, COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE RECEPTION DESK, OR MAIL THE FORM TO THE COMMISSION AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE - ATTENTION LORRAINE ROACH-STEELE



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DATE: 2/11/03

ITEM NAME:

SHEARITH ISRAEL NEW BUILDING

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☒ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION    ☐ AGAINST DESIGNATION    ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

<u>ROGER LANG</u>	
NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> OWNER
<u>N.Y. LANDMARKS COMMISSION</u>	
ADDRESS	
REPRESENTING	

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STATEMENT AVAILABLE.



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DATE 2/16/03 ITEM NAME 8 WEST 70<sup>th</sup> St

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION ☒ AGAINST DESIGNATION ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

<u>CHRISTABEL GOULD</u>	
NAME	<input type="checkbox"/> OWNER
<u>45 CHRISTOPHER ST NYC 10014</u>	
ADDRESS	
<u>SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHITECTS OF THE CITY</u>	
REPRESENTING	

IF YOU WOULD RATHER LEAVE A STATEMENT, COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE RECEPTION DESK OR MAIL THE FORM TO THE COMMISSION AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE - ATTENTION LORRAINE ROACH-STEELE

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DATE: 7/11/03

ITEM NAME: WEST STREET SYNAGOGUE

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION    ☐ AGAINST DESIGNATION    ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

<u>P. A. FRANKENBERG</u>	
NAME	C. OWNER
<u>25 CPW, NYC, NY 10013</u>	
ADDRESS	
<u>775 RF</u>	
REPRESENTING	

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DATE: 2-11-03

ITEM NAME: Shearith Israel Tower

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION    ☒ AGAINST DESIGNATION    ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

JAMES PLATT	
NAME	OWNER
91 Central Park West, #7F	
ADDRESS	
SELF	
REPRESENTING	

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DATE: 4/11/02 ITEM NAME: CONG. Sugarman Lease

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION ☒ AGAINST DESIGNATION ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

NAME	<u>GEORGE LITTON</u>	OWNER
ADDRESS	<u>91 CPW</u>	
REPRESENTING	<u>SELF</u>	

IF YOU WOULD RATHER LEAVE A STATEMENT, COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE RECEPTION DESK, OR MAIL THE FORM TO THE COMMISSION AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE—ATTENTION LORRAINE ROACH STEELE

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DATE: Feb 11 2003

ITEM NAME

The Congregation Shalom,  
Israel

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION

☒ AGAINST DESIGNATION

☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

NAME	<u>Laura Lubwig</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> OWNER
ADDRESS	<u>33 West 10<sup>th</sup> St</u>	
REPRESENTING	<u>Warrens City Club</u>	

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Address*

## Representing

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Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 112 E. 11th St. Apt. 2B

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal ☒ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Diane Jackier  
Name

112 E. 11th St. Apt. 2B  
Address

Self  
Representing

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Date            /            /           

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Address*

## Representing

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**

Date \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Board of 18 W 70<sup>th</sup> St (Mancini Ave)

Name

18 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.

Address

Board of 18 West 70

Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date Feb / 11 / 2003

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

ELIZABETH ASHBY

Name

8 EAST 96 ST, NYC 10128

Address

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT

Representing

ALHAMBRA

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

also reading Civitas statement

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DATE: 2/11/2003 ITEM NAME: Grant Thorpe

LP# \_\_\_\_\_

☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION ☒ AGAINST DESIGNATION ☐ UNSURE OF POSITION

George Mark Prosser	
NAME	101 CONNOR PARK WEST <input type="checkbox"/> OWNER (cont)
ADDRESS	
101 CONNOR PARK WEST	
REPRESENTING	Benjamin F. Thorpe - 101 Connor Park West Corp

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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### PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Sharon Israel

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal 7 \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

MYLES WEINTRAUB

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Address*

### Representing

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> ST.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

KATE WOOD*Name*204 W. 106<sup>th</sup> ST.*Address*DR. ELLIOTT D. SLAR*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>TH</sup> ST.\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

MIRIAM FEBUS  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

WEST SIDE FEDERATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD  
Representing + BLOCK ASSOCIATIONS

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> ST.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

RENA ROSEN  
Name

148 W. 80<sup>th</sup> ST  
Address

MARTY GALLANT  
Representing

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### PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 03

Item #

Item Address

8 W 70<sup>th</sup> ST.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal   X   Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

MELISSA BALDECK

Name \_\_\_\_\_

132 ST MARKS

*Address*

## Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 1 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 West 70<sup>th</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

Lucy Belfer

*Name*

91 Central Park West

*Address*

*Representing*

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL 212-669-7923 FAX 212-669-7797

<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 21/11/08

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

ALEXANDER GRAY

Name \_\_\_\_\_

80 CENTRAL PARK WEST

**Address**

## Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

**If you need additional space, please uses the other side.**



## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7933 FAX: 212-669-7797<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

NINA GRAY  
Name

80 CENTRAL PARK WEST  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Representing*

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

BARRY ROSCHBERG  
Name

17 W. 67<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
Address

COMMUNITY BOARD 7  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # 1 Item Address 8 W 70

         In favor of proposal ✓ Against proposal          Other position

Name STEPHEN GOTTIERAddress 160 BLEEKER 10 EE NYC 10012Representing FINE ARTS FEDERATION

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2 / 11 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

RON PRINCE

Name

18 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.

Address

SELF / LANDMARK West

Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2/11 / 0 / \_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 West 76<sup>th</sup> Ave

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

JONATHAN KURTIN

Name

101 CPW

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date FEB / 11 / 2003Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 70<sup>th</sup> STREET TOWER

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

ROBERT GOLDRICH

Name

91 CENTRAL PARK WEST

Address

Representing \_\_\_\_\_

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 02 / 11 / 03Item # Skylight [illegible] Item Address CPU

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Thomas Lynch  
Name

1 West 67 Street  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Shearith Israel\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_Patti Lieberman*Name*101 Central Park West NY, NY 10023*Address**Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL. 212-669-7923 FAX 212-669-7797



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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 6/11/03

Item # --- Item Address 500 7th Ave 18th fl

--- In favor of proposal --- Against proposal --- Other position ---

Diane Jackier  
Name

415 Chambers Street - 10th fl  
Address

Self  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10007 TEL 212 669 7923 FAX 212 669 7797

<http://nyc.gov/landmarks>

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7/11/03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 100 W 70th St Apt 2F

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

MICHAEL WALKER  
Name

100 W 70th St  
Address

SELF  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2 11 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Moisha K. Blechman  
Name

110. 64TH ST. NYC 10023  
Address

110 Block Association  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL 212 669-7925 FAX 212-669-7797<http://nyc.gov/landmarks>

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 2/11/03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 212 11 St\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

Elizabeth M. M. M.  
Name

25 Ave  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address E W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

DEIRDRE STANFORTH

Name

E W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST

Address

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2, 11, 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> ST

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

POLLY COSSON  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address  
ANDREW DELKART  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 5 / 11 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Jamie Lynton  
Name

48 W 70<sup>th</sup> St  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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www.protectwest70.org  
DID NOT PRESENT

## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2, 11, 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> ST.\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_ELIZABETH EVANS

Name

136 W. 78<sup>th</sup> ST.

Address

W. 78<sup>th</sup> ST. MUSEUM BLOCK

Representing

ASSOCIATION

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FL NORTH, NEW YORK, NY 10007  
212-669 7700<http://nyc.gov/html/lpc/>

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN-IN SHEET

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DATE 2/11/03 ITEM NAME Shearith Congregation  
LP# \_\_\_\_\_☐ IN FAVOR OF DESIGNATION ☐ AGAINST DESIGNATION ☒ UNSURE OF POSITION

<u>Lorraine Baum</u>	
NAME	PHONE
<u>91 CPW</u>	
ADDRESS	
<u>N.Y.C.</u>	<u>Apt 811</u>
REPRESENTING	

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the reception desk or mail the form to the Commission at the address above - ATTENTION: LORRAINE ROACH-STEELE

I do not wish to be there people  
you said. I moved to my building for love  
in a beautiful quiet neighborhood. The building was  
same floor. I don't think giving this to  
the exempt status will help any of the people  
I hope we consider my opinion.

Lorraine Baum



## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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<http://nyc.gov/landmarks>

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 2 / 11 / 2003

Item # \_\_\_\_\_

Item Address Spanish Portuguese Synagogue

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal

Against proposal

\_\_\_\_\_ Other position

Susan Cassidy

Name

115 CPW (Majestic)

Address

Board Directors of the Majestic

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

As a member of the Board of a Landmark Building,  
I am here to listen to the arguments made & in  
turn make a recommendation to my fellow members.  
I will strongly recommend that they oppose this  
project - it encroaches on the historic district -  
why have an historic district if you allow  
inappropriate development?

If you need additional space, please use the other side.

We are strongly in favour of preserving the west side  
as it now is. ~~Thank~~ Thank you.



DEC-02-2002 MON 05:13 PM MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY

FAX NO. 2127531818

2/11/03  
M11

Testimony before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Regarding Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue  
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness and 74-711  
November 26, 2002

Good afternoon, Commissioners. I'm Vicki Weiner, Kress Fellow for Historic Preservation at the Municipal Art Society of New York. The Society's Preservation Committee received a presentation by representatives of Congregation Shearith Israel describing their Certificate of Appropriateness and 74-711 zoning applications. They outlined the nature of these requests, the special provisions being sought, and the way they believe the preservation purpose criterion for the 74-711 is met by the proposal. They also presented designs for the new building and made their arguments for its appropriateness. In its discussion, the Preservation Committee identified three issues that we feel are key:

First, the issue of height and massing of the new building: the Committee was divided over whether or not the building height and massing are appropriate to the historic district. A slight majority of members felt that on this particular streetscape, and in this location, a fourteen-story building is appropriate to the neighborhood. Others did not, expressing concern about the tower's relationship to the low rise buildings in the middle of the block.

Second, the issue of design: the Committee found the design to be inappropriate for the historic district. A number of design components appeared to be unresolved, such as the overall fenestration and the penthouse proportions. In addition, the Committee questioned the relationship between the Synagogue entrance and the residential entrance.

Third, the validity of authorizing the shifting of bulk under 74-711: the Committee felt the preservation purpose as described was not compelling enough to warrant this action. The restorative elements mentioned to us, such as replacement of the roof and addressing water damage, appeared to the Committee to be more on the order of routine maintenance. We appreciate the Synagogue's past attention to restoring its building, but would like to be assured that there is a comprehensive preservation program in place. We were not provided with any details regarding a continuing maintenance plan, nor was there any indication of how revenues generated by the proposed project would meet expenses for restoration of the Synagogue.

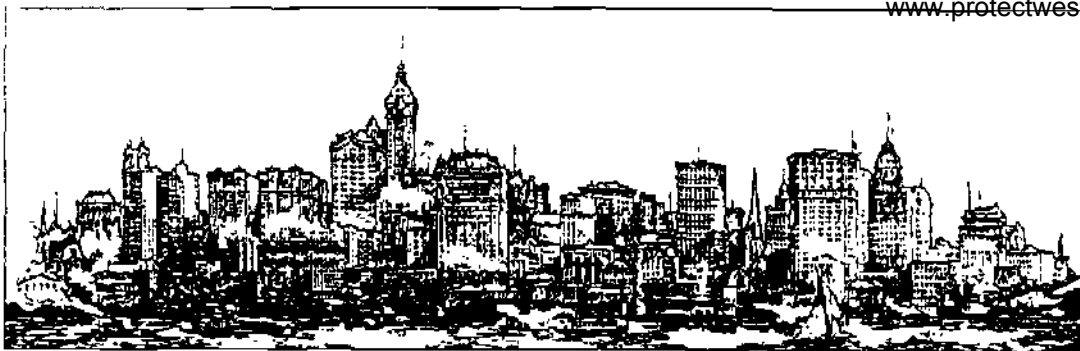
DEC-02-2002 MON 05:14 PM MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY

FAX NO. 2127531818 www.protectwest70.org

Testimony before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Regarding Congregation Shearith Israel  
Page 2

Based upon the Committee's review, we believe that the Landmarks Preservation Commission should not approve the Certificate of Appropriateness or the 74-711 authorization at this time. We look forward to future discussion of this proposal as it evolves.

Thank you for this opportunity to express the Society's views.



## THE SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY

### **8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Congregation Shearith Israel; Continued Hearing of 2/11/03 on an application to demolish the community house, erect a new building, and obtain a report under Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.**

From the outset, there has been a tension between landmarks preservation and zoning, since what zoning would allow can often be inimical to preservation. In 1961, much of New York was zoned to encourage new construction on a much larger scale than the existing cityscape, and defining the overlapping jurisdiction of City Planning was an issue when the landmarks law was enacted. It was established that zoning does not supercede the landmarks law in the sense that the LPC need not approve proposals for inappropriate bulk or massing just because they comply with zoning. But nevertheless over the years, there have been many appeals for City Planning to modify the Zoning Map to bring the available FAR more into line with the historic cityscape where historic districts have been designated.

After years of citizen campaigning led by the owners of small historic properties, City Planning has responded in some areas by mapping contextual districts such as the R8B zone we are looking at in this application. Such zoning tends to encourage conservation, restoration and adaptive re-use of New York's townhouse neighborhoods, reinforce the stability of such neighborhoods, and permit a more contextual massing for any new building in the historic area.

We would be very alarmed to see what to us would be an unprecedented move for the LPC: ignoring existing contextual zoning to approve a new building whose bulk, height and massing substantially *exceeds* what zoning would allow, in a context of smaller buildings, and in a zoning district that was mapped specifically to limit out-of-context construction and preserve the character of the existing neighborhood.

To use Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution to make this possible would be equally alarming. In the past this section has most often been used to enable adaptive re-use of older buildings, for instance by allowing residential or commercial uses in manufacturing zones. It appears to us that the present application would set a precedent that would turn the landmarks law against itself, using preservation tools like 74-711 to enable the kind of inappropriate massing that historic district designation was intended to obviate.

We are sorry that this issue has been raised in connection with a congregation that has done such wonderful restoration work, but the zoning issues involved make it impossible for us to support this application.



33 West 60th Street, 5th Floor  
New York, NY 10023-7905  
website: www.wccny.org

Telephone: 212-353-8070  
Facsimile: 212-228-4665  
e-mail: info@wccny.org

**Testimony to Landmarks Preservation  
Committee Re: Congregation Shearith Israel's Proposal  
February 11, 2003**

The Women's City Club of New York is an 88 year old non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization which works to shape policy in New York City on a broad range of issues.

It is difficult to oppose such a venerable and distinguished applicant as The Congregation Shearith Israel. We do so because of an over-riding responsibility to support the Landmarks Law and contextual zoning regulations which apply to Historic Districts throughout the city.

In applying for a certificate of appropriateness The Congregation seeks to persuade the Landmarks Preservation Commission that its proposed 14 story building should be seen as a Central Park West building.

It is clear to us at the Women's City Club that the proposed structure would be a mid-block building between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. Any building so situated must be governed by R8B zoning which acknowledges and protects the low-rise scale of mid-block brownstone buildings in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

The Historic District zoning regulations were designed to protect the existing westside neighborhoods while allowing for appropriately scaled development. It is essential to preserve the distinction between the R10A designation of Central Park West and the R8B designation of the mid-blocks.

If the Landmarks Preservation Commission approves a certificate of appropriateness and The Department of City Planning follows with waivers, a damaging precedent will be set. This could, in time, compromise the whole contextual zoning plan which has served Historic Districts and the city very well.

We respectfully request the Commission to deny this application.

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT ALLIANCE, INC.

www.protectwest70.org

Suite 7-8  
8 East 96th Street  
New York, NY 10128Phone 212-427-6472  
Fax 212-427-6472**CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL APPLICATION****Landmarks Preservation Commission Hearing  
February 11, 2003**

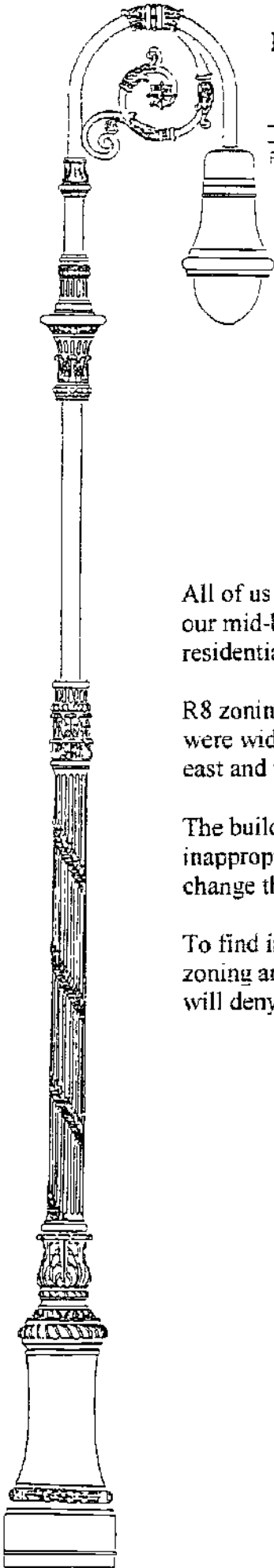
All of us who were around in the early 1980's worked tirelessly to obtain R8B zoning for our mid-blocks. The purpose was to maintain the existing low-rise character of our residential side streets and to keep the spirit and vitality of our neighborhoods alive.

R8 zoning, which prevailed prior to the regulations we now have, permitted buildings that were widely recognized as destructive of this special character. R8 zoning died on the upper east and upper west sides without mourners and not a moment too soon.

The building proposed here harks back to the dark days of R8 zoning. It is by definition inappropriate. If this sort of behemoth were appropriate, there would have been no need to change the zoning to R8B.

To find in favor of the Applicant in this case would be to defy everything that contextual zoning and historic preservation stand for and are supposed to achieve. We trust that you will deny it.

Elizabeth Ashby  
President



# CIVITAS

A Union of Citizens

1457 Lexington Avenue New York NY 10128-2506

Document From NYC LPC To Sugarman July 10 2003

000586

www.protectwest70.org

2/11/03

MH

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28 January 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
One Center Street, 9th floor  
New York, NY 10005

*Re: Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70th Street*

Dear Chairman Tierney:

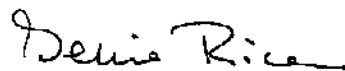
CIVITAS, an over 22 year old Upper East Side and East Harlem zoning and planning organization is on record for supporting and upholding R8B mid-block zoning regulations.

CIVITAS is appreciative of the needs of institutions for expansion and believes that needed growth is possible while still respecting the spirit of R8B.

The present application, with requests for significant variances, violates the mid-block context, which many communities throughout the city have fought to establish and uphold.

CIVITAS urges that the Commission reject this application because of the adverse effect it will have on the mid-block and because of the precedent it will set for future applications.

Sincerely yours,



Genie Rice, President

cc: Amanda Burden, Chairman City Planning Commission  
C. Virginia Fields, Manhattan Borough President

Community Board 7

www.protectwest70.org M17

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Center Street 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

Manhattan Community Board 7 urges the Landmarks Commission to deny the proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel that is before you today. This application for the construction of a 14 story, 159 foot building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue is totally inappropriate in a number of ways.

No one denies the importance of preserving the economic viability of our religious and cultural institutions along Central Park West. However, this cannot be done at the expense of the community, which fought long and hard to establish the mid-block zoning which is designed to protect the character of the neighborhood.

The proposal before you violate the tenants of the "brownstone block." The building is two times the height of what is allowable on the block; does not have a harmonious relationship with the other structures on the block or with the synagogue itself; the visibility from Central Park creates a negative impact and finally, there are many institutions that would like to have the same opportunity. This is a dangerous precedent.

Again we urge the Commission to continue to protect our historic districts and mid-block zoning and reject this application.

Sincerely,

  
Lawrence Horowitz  
Chairman

  
Lenore Norman  
Landmarks Committee Co-Chair

5/11/03  
M11

# COMMUNITY BOARD 7 Manhattan

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## RESOLUTION

**Date: December 3, 2002**

**Committee of Origin: Landmarks**

**Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Central Park West), Congregation Shearith Israel, Application #03-2628.**

**Full Board Vote: 30 In favor 0 Against 4 Abstentions 0 Present**

WHEREAS, Congregation Shearith Israel is an individual landmark and also located in the Central Park Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the Synagogue proposes to demolish its community house, also within the historic district, and replace it with a 14-story building; and

WHEREAS, the proposed building is two times the height of the allowable buildings on the block; and

WHEREAS, the building has a negative impact on the synagogue and does not relate harmoniously to other buildings in the district; and

WHEREAS, the effect on Central Park where the building is clearly visible over the landmark and appears to overpower it is also negative; and

WHEREAS, the building is being developed by a private developer with no guarantee that the terms of the project won't change; and

WHEREAS, there are many institutions along Central Park West that are in need of funds, this project is precedent setting;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan disapproves application #03-2628 to demolish the existing community house and construct a new 14-story building at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Committee: 6-0-0-0, Board Members: 3-0-0-0, Public Member: 1-0-0-0.*



2/11/03  
MH

# COMMUNITY BOARD 7 Manhattan

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## RESOLUTION

**Date: December 3, 2002**

**Committee of Origin: Landmarks Joint with Land Use**

**Re: 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street (Central Park West), Congregation Shearith Israel, Application #03-2652.**

**Full Board Vote: 29 In favor 0 Against 4 Abstentions 0 Present**

WHEREAS, Community Board 7/Manhattan finds the proposed building does not relate harmoniously with the subject landmark or with the surrounding buildings in the Central Park Historic District; and

WHEREAS, Community Board 7 has disapproved application #03-2628 for a certificate of appropriateness for the proposed building at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan disapproves application #03-2652 by Congregation Shearith Israel to request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission issue a report to the City Planning Commission relating to an application for a special permit to allow the construction of a 14-story building adjacent to the synagogue.

*Committee: 6-0-0-0. Board Members: 3-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.*

2/11/03  
NLF

ELIZABETH G. MAYERS  
25 CENTRAL PARK WEST, APT. 31  
NEW YORK, NY 10023  
212.541.9287

February 10, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY

*Congregation Shearith Israel Tierney*  
Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my dismay at Congregation Shearith Israel's request for a variance to allow the construction of a 14-story building on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. This application represents a flagrant exception to existing zoning, which would result in an inappropriate intrusion in a carefully crafted contextual zone. As you know, the R8B zoning prevents such large structures from rising above the surrounding brownstones and other low buildings. It is astonishing that anyone would consider that the zoning, which was created after much deliberation in 1984, should be scrapped for this project, opening precedents for further destruction of this R8B zone.

My extended family has had a long relationship with Congregation Shearith Israel. <sup>and with</sup> My husband's uncle, Harry Bernstein, held the honorary position of custodian of Shearith Israel's cemetery in lower Manhattan for many years, and the family was in the congregation of this august synagogue for two generations. He lived at 25 Central Park West, where I live, and he was always concerned with the character of the area and proud of Shearith Israel as a beautiful and elegant edifice to which he made many contributions. In the current circumstances I feel certain that this relative of ours, whom we remember for his concern for the neighborhood where he had chosen to live, would have encouraged other members of the congregation to play by the existing rules. That was who he was, and given his well-known sense of humor and the esteem in which he was held by his friends and associates, I imagine that he would have been pretty successful at persuading others.

Despite my respect for this congregation and its present home, and the meaning it has had for so many generations of Jewish New Yorkers, I ask that the R8B zoning not be waived for this building, which would so markedly diminish the Upper West Side Historic District.

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth Mayers*  
Elizabeth Mayers

*the Upper West Side Historic District is a beautiful neighborhood. The R8B zoning is a beautiful thing. The R8B zoning is a beautiful thing. The R8B zoning is a beautiful thing.*

LPC Testimony February 11, 2003

www.protectwest70.org

511133  
M14

## DEIRDRE STANFORTH

I'm Deirdre Stanforth, owner of a brownstone on West 83rd St. and an early pioneer on the West Side when it was still considered a slum. We were refugees from the East Side, victims of not one, but two apartment demolitions. In 1966 we were looking for a brownstone to call home so that we would never have to move again - and I never have. Not only did I become a preservationist, I even wrote 2 or 3 books about it. This is one, published in 1975 for the Bicentennial.

By the time Landmark West was founded, I was only too happy to join the effort to achieve Historic District Designation to save the West Side from losing its character to the overbuilding, overcrowding and anonymity that has overwhelmed the East Side. We might have believed the Landmarks Commission would protect our Historic District from all future harm, but new battles arise constantly, with incredibly imaginative excuses for breaking the rules.

The application from Shearith Israel for a Certificate of Appropriateness is an oxymoron if there ever was one. This was clearly demonstrated by the enormous turn-out of protesting neighborhood residents at the Community Board meeting that was held to discuss the subject.

Under the absurd pretense of "preservation" they seek permission to erect a grossly oversized cash cow of a rental building which defaces their own property as well as the important Central Park West profile and the entire Historic District.

A wealthy congregation proposes to finance the maintenance of their fine Greek Revival building by erecting a totally inappropriate tower which will loom over their synagogue, severely damaging the appearance of their house of worship and the low-rise neighborhood surrounding it as well as the elegant Central Park West skyline.

Raising funds for so-called 'preservation' is no excuse for destroying it. In fact, this outrageous proposal is exactly what the Landmarks Commission was designed to protect us against. This application must not be granted.



**American Sephardi Federation**  
**Sephardic House**  
*The Cultural Division*  
**Center for Jewish History**  
**15 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**New York, NY 10011**  
**Tel: 212 294-8350**  
**Fax: 212 294-8348**  
**E-mail: [asf@asf.cjh.org](mailto:asf@asf.cjh.org)**  
**<http://www.asfonline.org>**

**Leon Levy**  
Honorary Lifetime President

**Mike M. Nassimi**  
Chairman of the Board

**Rabbi Marc Angel**  
VP Rabbinic & Synagogue Liaison

**Morrie R. Yohai**  
Vice President, Programming

**Vivienne Roumani-Denn**  
National Executive Director

**Dr. Janice E. Ovadiah**  
Director, Sephardic House

December 14, 2002

Hon. Sherida Paulsen  
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building - 9th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Madam Chair:

As Executive Director of the American Sephardi Federation, I write on behalf of our membership in support of the application of Congregation Shearith Israel, the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of New York, that is currently pending before the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

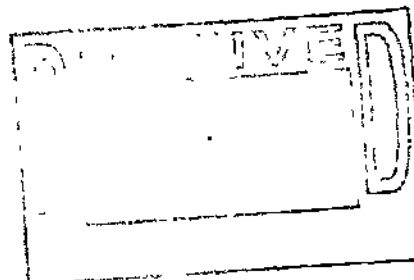
The Congregation is an important member of the West Side, and its Land marked Synagogue is by far one of the most beautiful and well-maintained structures on Central Park West. Its magnificent sanctuary is one of the icons of World Sephardic Jewry, and the congregation and its leadership have long been a major cultural force in the Sephardic world. The institution, which dates to 1654, has been engaged in a continual preservation effort for over 300 years. The congregation now needs City approvals to permit its painstaking devotion to its landmarked building to continue. Its request for permission to build a fourteen-story structure to help its continuing preservation efforts is reasonable. We trust that with your guidance, a building that is appropriate to its surroundings and respectful of both the historic district and the individual landmark can be designed and approved.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our views.

Sincerely,

Vivienne Roumani-Denn  
Executive Director

cc: Gale Brewer



**Brian Hogg**

01/22/2003 02:10 PM

To: Meisha Hunter/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: W 70th Street Tower

Please print these out and put them in the file.

----- Forwarded by Brian Hogg/Lpc on 01/22/2003 02:13 PM -----

**Robert Tierney**

01/22/2003 10:26 AM

To: Brian Hogg

cc:

Subject: W 70th Street Tower

----- Forwarded by Robert Tierney/Lpc on 01/22/2003 10:23 AM -----

**Alber20@aol.com**

01/21/2003 02:23 PM

To: rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov

cc:

bcc:

Subject: W 70th Street Tower

Dear Chairman Tierney

There is a tendency to oppose building just on general principle. Most people don't like change, and some people oppose change even when it's for the better. However, this is not one of those occasions. The change proposed by the Synagogue to the site on Central Park West and 70th Street is a major step backwards.

For years, our neighborhood fought to become a historic district, and finally we achieved that goal. If this fifteen-story tower is approved to loom over the Synagogue, then the historic district will simply be historical fiction. This is not about obstinacy and this is not about opposing progress. This is about opposing regression.

The air and the light are disappearing from Manhattan. Much of the residential Upper East Side is a lost cause and the West Side is slowly being buried alive as well. The towers built around Lincoln Center, the enormous Millennium buildings, and the rising monstrosity that is the AOL Time Warner Tower are all casting their long shadows across the neighborhood.

This building under discussion--as currently described-- is no mega-tower, but it simply does not belong on West 70th Street. What is the meaning of a historic district if this structure is permitted to rise. Why not erect similar buildings on 69th or 71st street, why not a high-rise over the New York Historical Society, or the Museum of Natural History? Bit by bit, the magnificent street front that is Central Park West will simply become a façade, like the Western street on a Hollywood lot.

Let us allow the historic district to be more than just an empty term; let us allow it to remain a neighborhood. A neighborhood of scale and appropriateness, of air and light and beautiful buildings, maintained as they have been for the greater part of a hundred years.

Cordially,

Andrew Bergman  
91 Central Park West

—

Suzanne Herz

Vice President,

Associate Publisher,

Executive Director of Publicity

Doubleday Broadway

212-782-9786

[sherz@randomhouse.com](mailto:sherz@randomhouse.com)



Heather McCracken  
02/10/2003 01:28 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 02/10/2003 01:30 PM -----



"Dana Miller"  
<danamiller@attglobal.net>  
02/10/2003 04:11 PM

To: <gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us>, <rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov>, <bp@manhattanbp.org>, <gottfr@assembly.state.ny.us>, <strings@assembly.state.ny.us>, <duane@senate.state.ny.us>, <schneider@senate.state.ny.us>, <jerrold.nadler@mail.house.gov>, <landmarkwest@landmarkwest.com>  
cc:  
Subject: West 70th Street

110 West 90th Street

#2G

New York, N.Y. 10024

February 10, 2003

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenues. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side; Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70th Street project by Manhattan Council Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York state Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York state Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you

Sincerely,

**Lori Zabar** 565 West End Avenue #16D New York, NY 10024 Phone 212.874.6043 Fax 212.580.0984

January 26, 2003

Mayor Michael Bloomberg  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



565 West End Avenue #16D  
New York, NY 10024



**Columbia University**

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE PLANNING AND PRESERVATION

400 AVERY HALL

January 17, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair  
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street  
New York, New York 10007

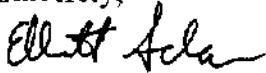
RE: Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan

Dear Mr. Tierney:

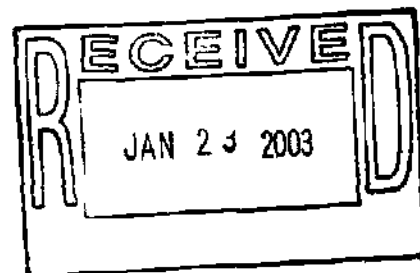
I have attached for your consideration a statement concerning Congregation Shearith Israel's application for a Certificate of Appropriateness and endorsement of a special permit pursuant to Section 74-711 to construct a 14-story building on the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan. This project hits particularly close to home since I conducted a Columbia studio in the spring of 1982 for the Department of City Planning that led to contextual zoning changes on the Upper West Side. In my opinion, the proposed project is inappropriate and should be disapproved by the Commission.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to express my views on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any additional information.

Sincerely,



Elliott D. Sclar  
Professor of Urban Planning  
Director of Graduate Programs in Urban Planning



**Statement of Elliott D. Sclar  
Professor of Urban Planning  
Director of Graduate Programs in Urban Planning  
Columbia University  
January 10, 2003**

**Regarding the Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street**

This statement addresses a proposal that has been submitted to the City for special permission to construct a 14-story building in the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This building would sit in an R8B zoning district. R8B zoning on the Upper West Side is intended to encourage low-rise construction compatible with the traditional rowhouses that define the core characteristics of this fine neighborhood's side streets. I write to express my serious concern about this proposal in part for the damage it will do to one of the finest neighborhoods in the city and in part because it will irreparably harm the balanced land use regulatory policy that has helped to make this area one of America's leading urban neighborhoods.

The very fact that this project will require that various city agencies grant it a series of "waivers," "variances," "special permits" and a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a landmarked structure should set off alarm bells everywhere in the planning and preservation community. The precedent that the granting of these waivers, variances and special permits will create may effectively render the carefully crafted land use development plan for the Upper West Side moot. The contextual zoning and landmark designations that guide this neighborhood's growth and change (and the neighborhood has grown and changed) were thoughtfully designed and democratically adopted policies intended to fairly balance the maintenance of this neighborhood's charms with the real needs for added development. This project will destroy this careful balance.

As a general matter, it is inherently improper for any developer, even a nonprofit institution, to seek special exemption from a zoning policy that was crafted with the meticulous care and community wide support that this one received. I am fully familiar with the background of this zoning. In the Spring of 1982 I directed a graduate studio at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation that was the starting point for this zoning change. The "client" for that studio was the Department of City Planning. The student produced work helped to launch the process that led to the adoption of the City's first "contextual zone" on the Upper West Side. The preliminary studio findings were support work for the 1982 West Side Zoning Study, which was in turn central to the 1984 creation of a "contextual zoning district" on the Upper West Side. In total, eight new districts were created that essentially downzoned the midblocks and upzoned the avenues, in keeping with the existing context of that neighborhood. The new zoning identified the midblocks, in which R8B zones were mapped to replace R7-2, as having a strong and identifiable low-rise scale and coherence. The residential avenues, including Central Park West, are defined by their high 130- to 150-foot streetwalls and were accordingly changed from R10 to R10A zones to promote tall construction with a consistent cornice line.

These building types create distinctive “environments,” as stated in the City Planning Commission’s report (April 9, 1984), and the boundaries between these environments are critical to maintain. The R10A district covering Central Park West gives way to the midblock R8B district at a point 125 feet in from the avenue. A 14-story building that is more than 125 feet into the midblock would destroy this crucial boundary. Indeed, it should be noted that the line between the old R10 avenue zoning and R7-2 midblock zoning used to be drawn at 150 feet. The City Planning Commission called this line “abnormally deep” and reduced it to 125 feet in order to contain tall construction closer to Central Park West. This was not an arbitrary change in policy but a careful and measured response to the Upper West Side’s built environment.

The Upper West Side today is a delicate balance of intense and highly congested urban living, that is granted the necessary respite to remain vital by its lower scaled mid blocks. Once the scale of these mid blocks is breached in one place, the case for preservation in all these others will be severely compromised.

I do not believe that any neighborhood (outside of perhaps Williamsburg Virginia) should be preserved as a museum piece. On the other hand, unless there is a broader set of findings that would suggest that the balance between development and preservation that the Upper West Side enjoys is no longer functional, there is no basis in land use policy for granting the type of ad hoc waivers, variances, special permits that will begin the process of undermining it. To date no such case has been made.

**EXHIBIT COVER PAGE**

[www.protectwest70.org](http://www.protectwest70.org)

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**To :** Robert B. Tierney

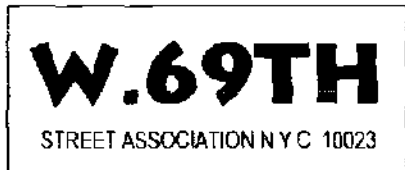
**From :** Ron Kahn

**Sent :** 1/28/03 at 2:04:46 AM

**Pages :** 3 (including Cover)

**Subject :**

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39 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10023  
Tel No: 212.768.0077  
Fax No: 212.768.1723  
E-Mail ronkahn@mylawyeris.com

January 28, 2003

Ms. Amanda Burden, Chairperson  
City Planning Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Application of the Spanish and Portugese Synagogue

Dear Ms. Burden:

I am the president of the West 69th Street Block Association (the Association). The Association has been in existence for more than 30 years. We are concerned with our neighborhood and the life styles of our residents

The block association consists of all residents of West 69th Street between Central Park West and Broadway. As such we have a constituency of approximately 1500! members. Our Board of Directors (a 34 person Steering Committee) met on Wednesday January 22, 2003. A resolution was unanimously passed that directed me to write to you to express our displeasure, lack of support and total opposition to any variance, waiver, special permit or Certificate of Appropriateness to permit the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue (SAPS) to erect any structure more than 5 stories tall on West 70th Street. I remind you that this is a historic district with a very specific low rise zoning that was years in study, creation and adoption. It is that zoning you would tear asunder without any basis or rationale.

It appears to us that over the years, Landmarks and City Planning has abrogated its authority to any developer seeking a variance. The Upper West Side, which has been a cradle and test tube of housing experimentation has been the guinea pig for non conforming uses far too long. We have been the subject of massive development by those who neither consider the community nor its design sensitivities, of which they are a part.

To permit SAPS to erect any such structure is one more assault on our cradle of housing design and experimentation. It is one more assault on a community by violating its zoning rules, attempting to change its basic character and providing loss of light and air, adding higher traffic and higher population density, all of which are the antithesis of our zoning code.

It is time for you to protect the integrity of a community which has provided so much to the life and fabric of the City of New York. Our residents range from the unknown soul to the rich and famous. But one thing we all have in common is the spirit of community which large scale projects have destroyed by virtue of their size and the impersonal anonymity of their residents. This is a brownstone community that you are slowly destroying by permitting non conforming uses to abound all around. And these non conforming uses are not simply a minor 1-2 per cent bulk infringement but a significant assault on the whole fabric of the community.

We beg you to follow the law and not let us down. Our voice is not a solo note but part of a great chorus including our neighbors and elected officials ranging from our Borough President to our State Assemblymembers, Gottfried and Stringer. Opposition is also being voiced by major institutions as diverse as the Municipal Art Society and the Upper East Side Historic District.

Please, deny any variance.

Very truly yours,  
W. 69<sup>th</sup> Street Association



By: Ronald S. Kahn,  
President

cc: Michael Bloomberg Mayor of the City of NY By Fax: 212.788.2460	Gale Brewer City Council Member By Fax: 212.513.7717	Robert B. Tierney Landmarks Preservation Chairperson By Fax: 212.669.7960
C. Virginia Fields Manhattan Borough Pres. By Fax: 212.669.4305	Richard Gottfried NYS Assemblyman By Fax: 212.312. 1494	Scott Stringer NYS Assemblyman By Fax: 212.873.6520
Tom Duane NYS Senator By Fax: 212. 564.1003	Eric Schneiderman NYS Senator By Fax: 212.397. 3201	Jerrold Nadler US Congressman By Fax: 212.367.7356
Landmark West By Fax: 212.875.0209		

TO: ROBERT A. LEEBEY, 1 EAST 85TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10021, Landmarks Preservation Commission

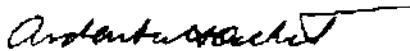
**Statement in Opposition to Granting a Variance for the Apartment Building Proposed by  
Congregation Shearith Israel, West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, New York**

I would like to add my voice to the chorus of New Yorkers opposed to the granting of a variance for Congregation Shearith Israel to build a fourteen-story building, including an apartment house, on a midblock site behind the synagogue. I am an architectural historian and adjunct associate professor in the Columbia University School of Architecture where I teach about New York City. I have, over the years, had a special interest in the Upper West Side and I am a founding board member of Landmark West. I believe that the synagogue's proposal defies the carefully crafted 1984 contextual zoning instituted on the Upper West Side which permits tall buildings on the avenues, but restricts the height of buildings on the low-rise midblocks. Permitting this speculative apartment building with synagogue use at the base would open the door to additional out-of-scale construction in the low-rise zoning district and within the Upper West Side Historic District. While Congregation Shearith Israel is certainly an institution of great historic significance, it should be abiding by the same zoning rules that regulate all other landowners in the area.

In addition, I oppose any action by the Landmarks Preservation Commission to assist the synagogue in applying for a variance since the synagogue has not established a pressing preservation purpose for this project, except to state that funds from development will assist in maintaining their buildings, something that any building owner is required to do on a regular basis.

I hope that this proposal is rejected and that Shearith Israel and its talented architects will return with a new proposal to erect an up-to-date community house that fits within the area's zoning.

Sincerely,



Andrew Scott Dolkart



Heather McCracken  
01/28/2003 01:09 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: 14 Story Tower on West 70th Street b'twn Central Park West & Columbus

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/28/2003 01:12 PM -----



"Sandra M. Wilkie"  
<smwoofette@wilkieitd.com>  
01/28/2003 12:39 PM

To: <rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: 14 Story Tower on West 70th Street b'twn Central Park West & Columbus

Robert B. Tierney - Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl., NYC 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you in advance for hearing my concern, I am.

Respectfully,



**Walter J. Wilkie**

1 West 67 Street

New York, New York 10023

Phone 212/496-2312

Mobile: 305/496-0032

Fax 209/671-6172

Internet: WJWoofy@WilkieLtd.com

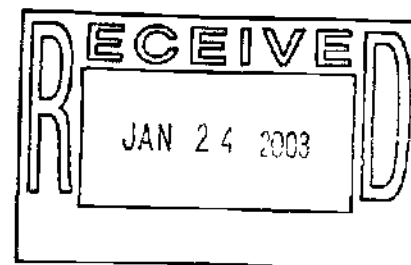
### **Love**

*I have learned that every man lives not through care of himself, but by love.*

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), Russian writer.

*Anna Karenina.*

***Julius Rudel***  
***101 Central Park West***  
***New York, NY 10023***



January 21, 2003

Mr. Robert Tierney  
Chairman  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney;

I am writing to you not only as a lifetime West Sider, but as someone who has spent a career in the arts in New York, a place where beauty is cherished.

It is with the utmost concern that I urge you to reject the proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel to build an apartment tower. Twenty years ago, a similar project was defeated by those who care about our city's beauty. Even if I were not directly affected by this horrific proposal I would speak out against it. In my travels around the world I am often struck by how many countries truly preserve the riches of their past and don't let the greed of over-construction ruin what is beautiful.

Should you fail to stop this heinous project from proceeding, I can easily foresee similar proposals by the other houses of worship that line Central Park West. By doing so you would be opening the door to more construction on 65<sup>th</sup>, 68<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, and 96<sup>th</sup> streets, to mention just the four most obvious targets. It is a slippery slope. Would all that construction be 'preserving' or destroying New York's Landmarks?

For your reference I have enclosed a copy of my November letter to the LPC. I hope in your new capacity you will champion a true preservation movement.

I hope you will work to defeat the proposal.

Sincerely,

November 18, 2002

To the Members of The NYC Landmarks Preservation Committee;

Unfortunately conducting engagements outside of New York City prevent me from attending the Committee meeting. However, I do want to add my voice to the chorus of concerned New Yorkers urging you to reject the variances required for the construction of a mid-block high-rise apartment building on West 70<sup>th</sup> street.

As a more than fifty year resident of the upper West Side I have seen first hand what development, both positive and negative, can do to a neighborhood. This construction would be an outright assault on the heart of a wonderfully historic district of our city. During my career I have had the good fortune to travel to most of the capitals of the world. I am always struck by the pride those cities take in their past, their history, and how they truly preserve the wonderful flavor and special qualities of their historic areas. Cities like Vienna, Paris, Rome, and London treasure their historic districts and find a way to preserve those areas without succumbing to the pressures of developers.

It is ironic and somewhat sad, to read of the plans being circulated now to reconstitute the beautiful Pennsylvania Station, which was torn down during the 1960s for the development of an ugly albatross. Or, more personally to me, I recall the fight to save Carnegie Hall from the wrecker's ball. Had cooler heads not prevailed in that fight, one of New York's greatest musical treasures would have been pulled down and replaced by a high-rise, red, office building, no different than hundreds of others.

The challenge is to preserve the beauty that is our historic district and to fend off developers' 'visions' of what a neighborhood should look like. To give in and allow this project is to take the first steps down a slippery slope. How long will it be before the churches on Central Park West and 68<sup>th</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup> streets also request variance along these lines? Similar proposals were rejected twenty years ago and should be rejected again today.

I urge you to reject the variance requests and save the character of this neighborhood so its beauty can be enjoyed by generations to come. To fail to do so would mean your committee had failed in its mission to preserve. New York would become a far less beautiful place if your organization were to become known as The Landmarks Development Committee.

Sincerely,

  
104 Central Park West



Heather McCracken

01/27/2003 04:13 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: West 70th Street

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/27/2003 04:16 PM -----

David Smiley  
<ds210@columbia.edu>

&gt;

Sent by:  
ds210@columbia.edu

To: rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: West 70th Street

01/26/2003 03:40 PM

Robert B. Tierney - Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
Dear Chairman Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70th Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David Smiley  
301 West 108th Street 8a  
New York, NY 10025



**Heather McCracken**

01/29/2003 01:34 PM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

CC:

Subject: opposition to West 70th street project

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/29/2003 01:37 PM -----



**Susanne Rostock**

<Rostock@bigplanet.com>

01/29/2003 01:05 PM

To: rtiemey@lpc.nyc.gov

cc: landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

Subject: opposition to West 70th street project

Susanne Szabo Rostock

18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street , PHB  
New York, New York 10023

January 29, 2003

Robert B. Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
NYC 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including

Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning.

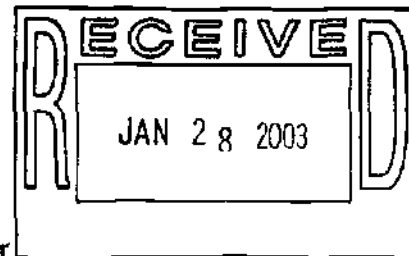
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Susanne Szabo Rostock  
18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, PHB  
New York, New York 10023

---

EMILY F. MANDELSTAM  
285 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10024



January 27, 2003

Robert B. Tierney - Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Fl., NYC 10007

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing as a life-long Upper West Side resident to express my opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower (not including rooftop mechanicals) on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

In an era of "bigger is better" -- an era during which Duane Reades replace small pharmacies, Food Emporiums replace mom-and-pop grocers, Gaps replace idiosyncratic clothing boutiques, and high-rise luxury buildings sprout on so many avenues all around our city -- a stand must be taken against these looming negative changes in the built, physical environment of New York City.

I support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block-busting" building developments.

I am joined in my opposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street project by Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assemblymembers Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

A well-written and well-supported statement of opposition has been prepared by Elliott Sclar, Director of Graduate Programs in Urban Planning at Columbia University. Professor Sclar, a noted scholar of urban planning, directed the original research two decades ago that led to the zoning laws which are now in danger of being eroded. I am attaching his eloquent statement here.

I am urging you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that threaten to disrupt our community's character by waiving existing zoning. We should not risk a downward slide on this slippery slope.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Emily F. Mandelstam

**Statement of Elliott D. Sclar  
Professor of Urban Planning  
Director of Graduate Programs in Urban Planning  
Columbia University  
January 10, 2003**

**Regarding the Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street**

This statement addresses a proposal that has been submitted to the City for special permission to construct a 14-story building in the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This building would sit in an R8B zoning district. R8B zoning on the Upper West Side is intended to encourage low-rise construction compatible with the traditional rowhouses that define the core characteristics of this fine neighborhood's side streets. I write to express my serious concern about this proposal in part for the damage it will do to one of the finest neighborhoods in the city and in part because it will irreparably harm the balanced land use regulatory policy that has helped to make this area one of America's leading urban neighborhoods.

The very fact that this project will require that various city agencies grant it a series of "waivers," "variances," "special permits" and a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a landmarked structure should set off alarm bells everywhere in the planning and preservation community. The precedent that the granting of these waivers, variances and special permits will create may effectively render the carefully crafted land use development plan for the Upper West Side moot. The contextual zoning and landmark designations that guide this neighborhood's growth and change (and the neighborhood has grown and changed) were thoughtfully designed and democratically adopted policies intended to fairly balance the maintenance of this neighborhood's charms with the real needs for added development. This project will destroy this careful balance.

As a general matter, it is inherently improper for any developer, even a nonprofit institution, to seek special exemption from a zoning policy that was crafted with the meticulous care and community wide support that this one received. I am fully familiar with the background of this zoning. In the Spring of 1982 I directed a graduate studio at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation that was the starting point for this zoning change. The "client" for that studio was the Department of City Planning. The student produced work helped to launch the process that led to the adoption of the City's first "contextual zone" on the Upper West Side. The preliminary studio findings were support work for the 1982 West Side Zoning Study, which was in turn central to the 1984 creation of a "contextual zoning district" on the Upper West Side. In total, eight new districts were created that essentially downzoned the midblocks and upzoned the avenues, in keeping with the existing context of that neighborhood. The new zoning identified the midblocks, in which R8B zones were mapped to replace R7-2, as having a strong and identifiable low-rise scale and coherence. The residential avenues, including Central Park West, are defined by their high 130- to 150-foot streetwalls and were accordingly changed from R10 to R10A zones to promote tall construction with a consistent cornice line.



These building types create distinctive “environments,” as stated in the City Planning Commission’s report (April 9, 1984), and the boundaries between these environments are critical to maintain. The R10A district covering Central Park West gives way to the midblock R8B district at a point 125 feet in from the avenue. A 14-story building that is more than 125 feet into the midblock would destroy this crucial boundary. Indeed, it should be noted that the line between the old R10 avenue zoning and R7-2 midblock zoning used to be drawn at 150 feet. The City Planning Commission called this line “abnormally deep” and reduced it to 125 feet in order to contain tall construction closer to Central Park West. This was not an arbitrary change in policy but a careful and measured response to the Upper West Side’s built environment.

The Upper West Side today is a delicate balance of intense and highly congested urban living, that is granted the necessary respite to remain vital by its lower scaled mid blocks. Once the scale of these mid blocks is breached in one place, the case for preservation in all these others will be severely compromised.

I do not believe that any neighborhood (outside of perhaps Williamsburg Virginia) should be preserved as a museum piece. On the other hand, unless there is a broader set of findings that would suggest that the balance between development and preservation that the Upper West Side enjoys is no longer functional, there is no basis in land use policy for granting the type of ad hoc waivers, variances, special permits that will begin the process of undermining it. To date no such case has been made.

**Sherida Paulsen**  
12/03/2002 09:15 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc  
cc:  
Subject: Fwd: DELIVERY FAILURE: User s.paulsen (s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov)  
not listed in public Name & Address Book

----- Forwarded by Sherida Paulsen/Lpc on 12/03/2002 09:16 AM -----



**Dianne Carr**  
<storytailors2002@yahoo.com>  
12/02/2002 05:34 PM

To: spaulsen@lpc.nyc.gov  
cc:  
Subject: Fwd: DELIVERY FAILURE: User s.paulsen (s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov)  
not listed in public Name & Address Book

Note: forwarded message attached.

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----- Message from Postmaster@nyc.gov on Mon, 2 Dec 2002 10:03:07 -0800 (PST) -----

**To:** Dianne Carr <storytailors2002@yahoo.com>  
**cc:** landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org  
**Subject** DELIVERY FAILURE: User s.paulsen (s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov) not listed in public Name &  
: Address Book

Your message

Subject: SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE: PROPOSED 14-STORY HIGHRISE ON  
WEST 70TH ST. BETWEEN C.P.W. AND COLUMBUS AVENUES.

was not delivered to:

s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

because:

User s.paulsen (s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov) not listed in public Name & Address  
Book

Reporting-MTA: dns;lpc.nyc.gov

Final-Recipient: rfc822;s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov

Action: failed

Status: 5.1.1

Diagnostic-Code: X-Notes; User s.paulsen (s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov) not listed in  
public Name & Address Book

----- Message from Dianne Carr <storytailors2002@yahoo.com> on Mon, 2 Dec 2002 10:03:07 -0800  
(PST) -----

**To:** s.paulsen@lpc.nyc.gov  
**cc:** landmarkwest@landmarkwest.org

**Subject SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE: PROPOSED 14-STORY HIGHRISE ON WEST  
: 70TH ST. BETWEEN C.P.W. AND COLUMBUS AVENUES.**

Ms. Sherida Paulsen  
Chairperson  
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing to join my community in expressing  
opposition to the proposed construction of a 14-story  
highrise building on West 70th Street and to support  
the integrity and promulgation of our historic  
landmarking district.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Dianne R. Carr  
26 West 70th Street 1A  
New York, N.Y. 10023  
tel. 212 873-1779

---

Do you Yahoo!?  
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- o The transfer of air rights from the CSI's landmark building to the site behind it – a precedent and a dangerous one!
- o The transfer of air rights across zoning districts – the synagogue (on higher-rising CPW) and the proposed building site (reaching well into residential West 70<sup>th</sup>) are in different zones.
- o Waiver of zoning law in order to allow a building twice the legal height. (The current design is approximately 75% higher than the now-tallest mid-block structure.)
- o Waiver of "rear yard" and "set back" provisions.

*All this in a designated historic district!*

The synagogue maintains that the sale of the development rights will endow its own preservation and other programs. But opening the door to special-permit development by not-for-profits endangers historic areas throughout our city.

There really is a question of policy here – and of appropriateness:

*Should an organization with an historic site be permitted to expand to the great detriment of an historic district? The answer should be no, even for institutions of worship.*

This is a high-stakes case: The integrity of the Landmark Law and of this (and other) historic districts need protection. Please use your voice and prestige to ensure that a building plan of extremely inappropriate scale is defeated.

I look forward to your hearings on this proposal next week, on November 26<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sherida E. Paulsen", written in a cursive style.

To: DJ

Attention: **Ms. Sherida E. Paulsen**

Date: 11/24/2002

**Company:** Landmarks Preservation

Number of Pages: 4

**Fax Number:** 212-669-7960

**Voice Number:** 212-669-7888

From: **Kent Wallgren**

**Company:**

**Fax Number:** 212-769-3312

**Voice Number:** 212-362-5184

**Subject:** Shearith Israel

**Comments:**[illegible]

Kent A. Wallgren  
18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street #8C  
New York, NY 10023  
Tel 212 362 5184 & Fax 212 769 3312  
kawallgren@aol.com

November 22, 2002

Ms. Sherida E. Paulsen, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Ms. Paulsen,

I am writing to gain your personal support for protecting the Upper West Side / Central Park West Historic District.

The Congregation Shearith Israel at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street plans to erect a mid-block high-rise next to the existing magnificent landmarked Synagogue (see below drawing). The plan, as submitted to the Landmark Preservation Commission in late October, involves tearing down its existing four-story congregation center, rebuilding a larger center, and building a residential luxury condo tower on top of the building that would house the new center. It will use its adjacent empty lot, formerly a Brownstone building, torn down by the Synagogue some years ago.

The local community supports the Synagogue's plan for expanding its center, but it is vehemently opposed to the planned residential structure. Their planned residential building will tower over the famous Brownstones on this Upper West Side Historic District block and endanger the character and nature of the neighborhood. The projected tower would not relate harmoniously to the landmarked Synagogue and surrounding Brownstones. It will negatively impact the quality of life in the community and change the skyline of Central Park West. The proposed structure is utterly inappropriate for the Historic District.

The Synagogue wants the City to grant it a series of waivers, variances, and special permits, including a waiver to the zoning law and transfer of development rights across zoning districts, which would be necessary to build a mid-block building twice as tall as the law permits. This sets a dangerous precedent for exploitation of other sites held by non-profit institutions. It raises the issue of ensuring all people and institutions are treated equally and fairly.

The Congregation appears strongly motivated by the large sum of money it stands to make with little effort. It plans to sell the development rights for the residential tower to a developer and could be expected to gross as much as \$100 million. I understand that Shearith Israel is one of the wealthiest Congregations in the region and is not desperate for moneys. The residents in the Historic District would indirectly end up footing the bill and at the same time seeing the character and value of their neighborhood diminished. Such a transfer of wealth and a compromised Historic District would be unacceptable.

I am urging you to uphold the integrity of the Landmark Law and preserve the quintessential character of the Upper West Side Historic District. Please stop this project in its current form.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Kent A. Wallgren

**TODAY**



**TOMORROW?**



Congregation Shearith Israel is planning a 14-story building on 70th Street that would destroy the character of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

**Make sure it does not happen. Get involved. Call Landmark West!, 496-8110!**



# **West 73th Street Block Association**

Amsterdam Avenue to Riverside Drive in the 200 & 300 Blocks on The Upper West Side

January 6, 2003

Sherida Paulsen, Chairman  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

I am writing to express our opposition to a proposal for a 14-story, 157-foot tower on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, submitted to the Landmarks Preservation Commission by Congregation Shearith Israel, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for future inappropriate building projects.

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of the midblocks, and we oppose all applications for "block-busting" developments.

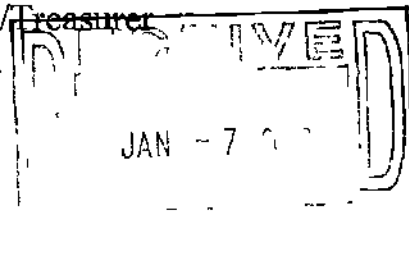
We are joined in our apposition to the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street Project by Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West, and Friends of the Upper West Side Historic Districts, and many private individuals and most of our elected officials.

As an active block association, we urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our neighborhood by opposing this ill-conceived project and all other projects that are similarly disruptive.

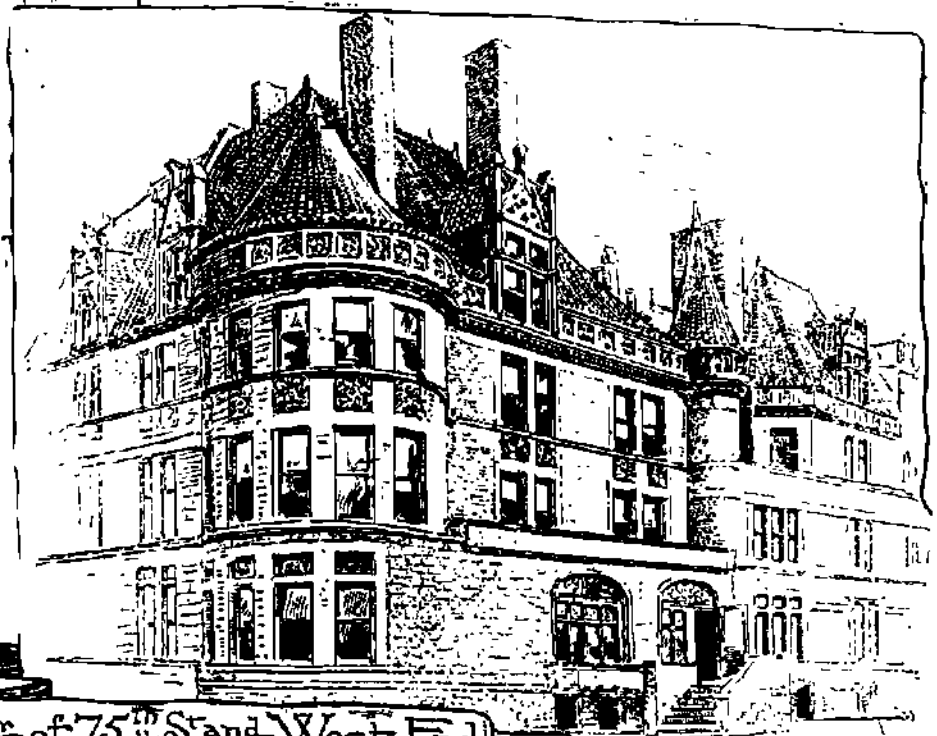
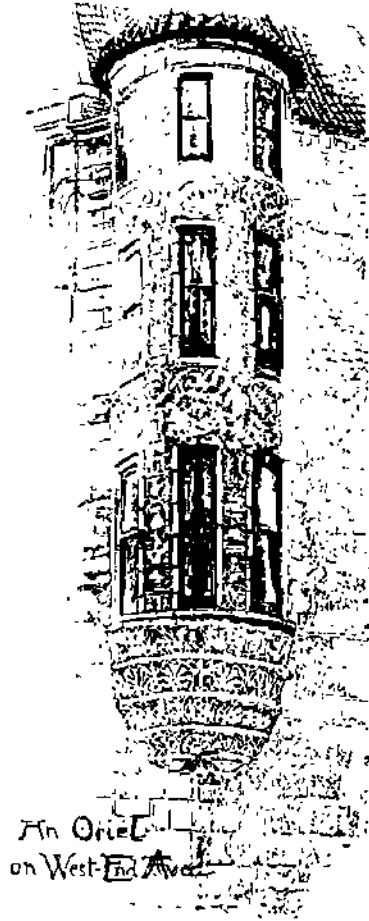
Very truly yours,



Joan S. Franklin  
Secretary/Treasurer  
W 75 BA



# The very old days on West Seventy Fifth Street and West End Avenue



From Harper's Weekly, date unknown

# urgent

---

f a c s i m i l e

**To:** Robert B. Tierney, Chair LPC  
**Company:**  
**Fax Number:** +1 (212) 669-7960  
**Business Phone:**

**From:** Jude hunt  
**Fax Number:** +1 (212) 877 7762  
**Business Phone:**  
**Home Phone:**

**Pages:** 2  
**Date/Time:** 1/19/03 4:59:18 PM  
**Subject:** West 70th Street Proposal for 14 Story Tower

---

Dear Chair Tierney,

We oppose the proposal for a 14 story tower on West 70th Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. This proposal, which has been submitted to the LPC, threatens the widespread low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and may pave the way for other architecturally incompatible projects.

We support the existing zoning for the Upper West Side Historic District, which is designed to protect the low-rise character of neighborhood midblocks, and oppose all present and future applications for "block busting" developments  
.To quote Professor Elliot D. Sclar, Professor of Urban Planning, Columbia University on January 2003, Regarding the Proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70th Street ;

"The very fact that this project will require various city agencies to grant it a series of "waivers", "special permits" and a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish a landmarked structure should set off alarm bells everywhere in the planning and preservation community."

"The upper West Side today is a delicate balance of intense and highly congested urban living, that is granted the respite to remain vital by its lower scaled mid blocks. Once the scale of these mid blocks is breached in one place, the case for preservation in all theses others will be severely compromised"

We attended the CB7 meeting when this proposal was brought forth. Judgeing by the model of the proposed tower, it is not only out of scale and inappropriate, it is ugly...a boring slab.

Please, we urge you to do everything in your power to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill conceived project and all the other projects that threaten to disrupt this community's character by waiving existing zoning.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,

Judith and Robert Hunt  
160 Riverside Drive  
2 D  
New York, NY 10024-2110  
JHunt81289@aol.com



Heather McCracken

01/22/2003 11:35 AM

To: Diane Jackier/Lpc@Lpc

cc:

Subject: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission Review of Congregation  
Shea rith Israel Proposal

----- Forwarded by Heather McCracken/Lpc on 01/22/2003 11:38 AM -----



"Stutzman, David"

<Stutzman@sewkis.co  
m>

01/22/2003 11:12 AM

To: "rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov" &lt;rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov&gt;

cc:

Subject: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission Review of Congregation  
Shea rith Israel Proposal

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I have been a resident of Central Park West for over 12 years and currently serve as the president of the Board of Directors of 80 CPW Apartments Corp. I am writing to express my deep opposition to the proposal of Congregation Shearith Israel (the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue) to construct a 14-story tower overshadowing its magnificent and historic synagogue, the Central Park skyline and the low-scale brownstones on 70th Street, thereby damaging the low-rise midblock character of the Upper West Side and the fabric of the Central Park West Historic District. Approval of this project will inevitably lead to other architecturally incompatible projects.

I, along with many of my neighbors at 80 Central Park West and scores of members of the community surrounding the proposed tower, attended the meeting of Community Board Seven's Landmark Committee on November 21, 2002 and were heartened by Assembly Member Richard Gottfried's impassioned and eloquent rebuttal to the Congregation's battery of P.R. spokesmen. We were pleased to see that the Committee and the Community Board itself later voted unanimously to disapprove the project.

The Congregation has now petitioned the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission for approval of this project.

This Congregation, one of the wealthiest in the city with some of New York's leading and wealthiest citizens among its leaders and congregants, has presented a specious argument for selling out its neighbors and reputation in order to cash out on the currently overinflated luxury housing market. Despite the Congregation's representatives' mantra that the project was essential to the health and survivability of the Congregation and in the interests of "historic preservation," at no point during the Community Board 7 meeting we attended did the representatives provide any proof that the major capital repairs could not be satisfactorily funded out of the Congregation's substantial endowment or the pockets of its members, and the P.R. spokesmen's veiled threats to blackmail the landmarks approval process should the Congregation not get its way was insulting to all present.

I am pleased to see that Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West! and Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, as well as a growing list of individuals and local and citywide groups, oppose the Congregation's project. In addition, we are grateful for the leadership and support of elected officials including Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields, New York State Senators Thomas Duane and Eric Schneiderman and New York State Assembly Members Richard Gottfried and Scott Stringer, all of whom oppose this project because it violates the zoning and undermines the character of the historic district.

I respectfully request that you do everything in your power as Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission to help preserve and protect our community by opposing this ill-conceived project. Permitting such a blatant

grab for cash along one of the city's most picturesque avenues will  
establish a dangerous precedent which we all will live to regret.

Sincerely yours,  
David E. Stutzman  
80 Central Park West  
New York, NY 10023  
[stutzman@sewkis.com](mailto:stutzman@sewkis.com)

**LPC Applications 03-2628 & 03-2653 - 8 West 70th Street**

www.protectwest70.org

**Supporters of Protecting the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District  
from the Proposed 14-Story Tower***List in Formation, 2/11/03***Elected Officials/Community Leaders**

Manhattan Borough President C Virginia Fields  
 NYS Senator Thomas K Duane  
 NYS Senator Eric T Schneiderman  
 NYS Assembly Member Richard N Gottfried  
 NYS Assembly Member Scott Stringer  
 Manhattan Community Board 7  
 Manhattan Community Board 8  
 Phyllis Gunther District Leader 67 A D

**Civic Organizations**

Beachside Bungalow Preservation Association  
 CIVITAS  
 Coalition for a Livable West Side  
 Committee for Environmentally  
 Sound Development  
 The Fine Arts Federation of New York  
 Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts  
 Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation  
 Historic Districts Council  
 Historic Neighborhood  
 Enhancement Alliance, Inc  
 LANDMARK WEST!  
 Municipal Art Society  
 Murray Hill Neighborhood Association  
 Society for the Architecture of the City  
 Women's City Club  
 World Monuments Fund / V Flyer

**Block Associations**

West Side Federation of Neighborhood  
 & Block Associations  
 West 64th Street Block Association  
 West 67th Street Committee  
 (Numbers 2 15 17 27 33 39 40 45 50)  
 West 69th Street Block Association  
 West 75th Street Block Association  
 West 77th Street Block Association  
 Park West 77th Street Block Association  
 West 78th Street Museum Block Association  
 West 89th Street Block Association  
 West 90th Street Block Association  
 West 102-103rd Street Block Association  
 Duke Ellington Neighborhood Association

**Individuals**

Alison Ames  
 Ina Avrich  
 Alain Bankier  
 Jeff Byles  
 Robert A Caro  
 (Historian)  
 Giorgio Cavaglieri FAIA  
 Charles Church Esq  
 Chris Cockfield  
 Peter Coombs, AIA  
 Anne Correa  
 Kathleen Cuneo  
 Marc Daniel, Esq  
 Michael De Cuollo  
 Andrew Dolkart  
 (Architectural Historian)  
 Richard Falk  
 Martin Gallent  
 Tom Giordano, Esq  
 Judy Glassman  
 Carol & William Greilsheimer  
 Mark Hartnett  
 Ashton Hawkins, Esq  
 Joanna Hepworth  
 Suzanne Herz  
 Judith and Robert Hunt  
 Robert Jacobson, Jr  
 Peter Janovsky  
 Peter Jennings  
 Evalyn Kaufman  
 Victor A Kovner, Esq  
 Emily F Mandelstam  
 Dana Miller  
 Michael Mooney, BE, BSC  
 Naomi Paley  
 Stuart M Paley  
 David Patterson  
 Avra Petrides  
 Linda Pogue  
 Ron Prince  
 Alice Pucknat  
 Kathleen Randall

**Individuals (cont.)**

Richard Ray  
 Joan Rome, Ph D  
 Ned Rorem  
 Susanne Szabo Rostock  
 Richard Roth FAIA RIBA  
 Arthur Rowe  
 Julius Rudel  
 Judy Samuels  
 Tancred Schiavoni, Esq  
 Neil Schlater -Booth  
 Elliott Sclar, Ph D  
 (Urban Planner)  
 David Smiley  
 Eliot Soffes, AIA  
 David Stutzman  
 Anna Taam  
 Kent Wallgren  
 Walter J Wilkie  
 Lori Zabar, Esq  
 Marjorie Zucker

**Buildings/Co-op Boards**

1 West 64th Street  
 11 West 69th Street  
 18 West 70th Street  
 24 West 70th Street  
 49 West 72nd Street  
 25 Central Park West  
 75 Central Park West  
 80 Central Park West  
 91 Central Park West  
 101 Central Park West  
 300 Central Park West

RE: Congregation Shearith Israel, 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street

No one seriously questions that a 14-story condominium tower 87% of whose bulk is positioned within the midblock is properly described as a midblock tower. In 1984 the City defined the "midblocks" adjacent to Central Park West as beginning 125 feet into the block. It classified these midblock R8-B, and found 85% of the structures within them to be complying and conforming - a high percentage of compliance!

The pattern of R8-B zoning runs north from 68<sup>th</sup> Street. Now, it is true that the Landmarks Commission is never - and should not be - bound by zoning in considering whether a project is or is not appropriate. Too many historic neighborhoods throughout the city are zoned in ways that directly *undermine* rather than enhance their fabric and character.

But, in this case, the Commission must recognize that the zoning is in such close alignment with the existing fabric and character of the neighborhood that it essentially served as a template for the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District designation in 1990. Reading the 1984 City Planning report and the 1990 Landmarks designation report is like reading two pages out of the same book. The language they use to describe the built character and significance of the Upper West Side is strikingly similar - the discussion of *human scale*, the fact that over 85% of the structures in the midblocks conform to the 'midblock' type, that rowhouses framed by tall buildings on the avenues present a *strong coherency* and are a major element in creating a *special sense of place* particular to this district on Manhattan's Upper West Side. Here, *both* the zoning *and* the designation report should be relied on as sources of essential guidance in a finding of appropriateness.

Nothing presently existing on the 70<sup>th</sup> Street midblock approaches 14 stories. Two non-complying, 9-story apartment houses from the 1920s *alone* break the 60-foot rowhouse character of this midblock.

Both the City Planning Commission when it mapped the R10-A and R8-B zoning pattern in this area and the Landmarks Preservation Commission when it designed the boundaries of the historic district were well aware of these kinds of occasional non-complying buildings in the midblocks. They also knew that some Central Park West apartment houses cut deeper than 125 feet into the midblock. And yet both agencies confirmed that the *predominant* character of the neighborhood was low-rise midblocks framed by high-rise avenues.

Misleading elevation drawings show the proposed 14-story condo tower nestling within a cocoon of 69<sup>th</sup> Street structures. Anyone walking on 70<sup>th</sup> Street would not be so deceived. They would see a tower rising head and shoulders above the Synagogue and its rowhouse neighbors to the north and west. And they would wonder whether this - a Central Park West building on a brownstone block - could happen on *their* block. Isn't this the very kind of non-compliance the historic district designation and the zoning were designed to prevent from spreading deeper into the area's midblocks?

To permit this midblock 14-story condo tower to proceed you must find it appropriate and that it relates harmoniously to the landmark and to buildings in the historic district of which it will become a part

We urge you, instead, to *disapprove* this Certificate of Appropriateness because:

- a) the proposed midblock, 14-story condo tower irretrievably diminishes the landmark - other speakers today will provide testimony on this account.
- b) it replaces a rowhouse scale midblock building with a high-rise tower unprecedented in a historic district midblock.

One final point: the mere availability of a special permit in the Zoning Resolution does not argue for its appropriateness in terms of the individual landmark, the historic district, or the zoning. The 74-711 provision allows flexibility so the new construction may conform more closely to the existing character of a neighborhood. It does not miraculously transform this or any other midblock site into an avenue site. This application should be disapproved.



**Excerpts from Testimony and Letters  
Submitted to the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Regarding 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
as of February 11, 2003**

www.protectwest70.org

**Relationship of the Proposed Tower to the Individual Landmark and the Central Park West Skyline**

**Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields**

"This high structure vastly compromises the individual landmark, and immensely detracts from it at numerous vantage points."

**LANDMARK WEST!**

"Eight floors of approximately 3,500 square feet each, not including mechanicals, would rise up beyond the cornice line of the Synagogue and create a hulking presence that would compete visually with the Landmark as part of the Central Park West streetscape and sever its relationship with the predominantly low-rise midblock."

**Giorgio Cavaglieri, FAIA**

"Any higher structure would not only conflict with the beautiful design of the present building, but also interfere with the skyline of Central Park West which was the determining factor for the designation of that Historic District."

**Relationship of the Proposed Tower to Existing Neighborhood Character**

**New York State Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried**

"The 157-foot building would be 1.5 times the height of the adjacent building. It would be about 3 times the height of the brownstones that make up most of the block. It would be more than 2.5 times the ordinarily-permitted streetwall height for the site. It would also be several times the total bulk or FAR that would ordinarily be permitted for the site. If this building does not flunk the 'harmonious' test, what *does* it take to flunk?"

**Historic Districts Council**

"A building of this height, in the middle of the block, is totally incompatible...The block in question was zoned R8B, so that new construction would be compatible with the traditional roughhouses that define the neighborhood...[The proposed building] is effectively a Central Park West building in the middle of the block."

**Society for the Architecture of the City**

"We would be very alarmed to see what to us would be an unprecedented move for the LPC: ignoring the existing zoning to approve a new building whose bulk, height and massing substantially *exceeds* what zoning would allow, in a context of smaller buildings, and in a zoning district that was mapped specifically to limit out-of-context construction and preserve the character of an existing neighborhood

**Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts**

"[B]oth the East and West Sides share a common and precious characteristic: low rise mid-blocks of residential buildings. This building pattern is essential to preserve in order to maintain the sense of place of both neighborhoods...It is eminently clear that the proposed 14-story building is not harmonious to the landmarked synagogue itself, nor to the dominant character of the mid-blocks in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District."

**Andrew Scott Dolkart, architectural historian**

"Permitting this speculative apartment building with synagogue use at the base would open the door to additional out-of-scale construction in the low-rise zoning district and within the Upper West Side Historic District

**Dr. Elliott D. Sclar, urban planner**

"[The proposal] will irreparably harm the balanced land use regulatory policy that has helped the make this area one of America's leading urban neighborhoods...The contextual zoning and landmark designations that guide this neighborhood's growth and change...were thoughtfully designed and democratically adopted policies intended to fairly balance the maintenance of this neighborhood's charms with the real needs for added development. This project will destroy this careful balance."

"The Upper West Side today is a delicate balance of intense and highly congested urban living that is granted the respite to remain vital by its lower-scaled midblocks. Once the scale of the midblocks is breached in one place, the case for preservation in all these others will be severely compromised."

#### **LANDMARK WEST!**

"A unique and enviable situation exists in the midblocks of the Upper West Side...where Landmarks protection and zoning really go hand in hand. Here, the zoning is perfectly in line with the goals of the historic district, and vice versa [quotes from designation report and zoning report]." -

#### **Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation**

"We strongly believe that contextual zoning and zoning which has been crafted to ensure design compatibility in historic neighborhoods should be strengthened and protected, rather than weakened...It is unclear to us how this standard has been met with this proposal."

#### **The Design of the Proposed Tower**

##### **Historic Districts Council**

"[The proposed building's] orientation is problematic. The entrance to the building is on West 70th Street. Yet, the structure reads as a Central Park West building. The east facade, facing Central Park West, is actually the side facade, not the front, but is designed as such. The west facade, equivalent of the rear facade...is very visible along West 70th Street. This is the facade of the building that would normally face the garden core."

#### **74-711**

##### **Municipal Art Society**

"The Committee felt the preservation purpose as described was not compelling enough to warrant [authorizing the shifting of bulk under 74-711]. The restorative elements mentioned to us, such as replacement of the roof and addressing water damage, appeared to the Committee to be more on the order of routine maintenance

#### **LANDMARK WEST!**

"Essentially, Congregation Shearith Israel is asking the City and the community to accept a "trade-off" - the historic, low-scale character of the district for some direct benefit to the Landmark Synagogue. However, the detrimental impact that the proposed building would have on both the Synagogue and the historic district defeats any preservation purpose that could be served."

##### **New York State Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried**

"CSI has not provided any evidence that the funds derived from the project would support any restoration or maintenance of the landmark beyond what it *has been doing* and will in any event *continue* to do...It cannot be said to 'contribute to a preservation purpose.'"

##### **Ashton Hawkins, Esq**

"The exploitation of soft sites by non-profit institutions, using such aids as air rights transfers and special zoning deals, must not be encouraged if it works to the detriment of neighborhoods."

##### **Julius Rudel, neighbor**

"To give in and allow this project is to take the first steps down a slippery slope. How long will it be before the churches on Central Park West and 68th and 65th Streets also request variances along these lines?"

##### **Norman Marcus, Esq.**

"[T]here are at least half a dozen institutions waiting to apply the precedent [that would be set by an approval of this application]: The Ethical Culture Society, The Holy Lutheran Church, The Second Church of Christ Scientist, The Universalist Church, The New-York Historical Society, The American Museum of Natural History, and The First Church of Christ Scientist. In all of these cases we have significant, underbuilt structures which punctuate the historic Central Park West wall."

North side of W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street between  
CPW & Columbus Ave. – view  
looking west from 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.  
showing “brownstone” block

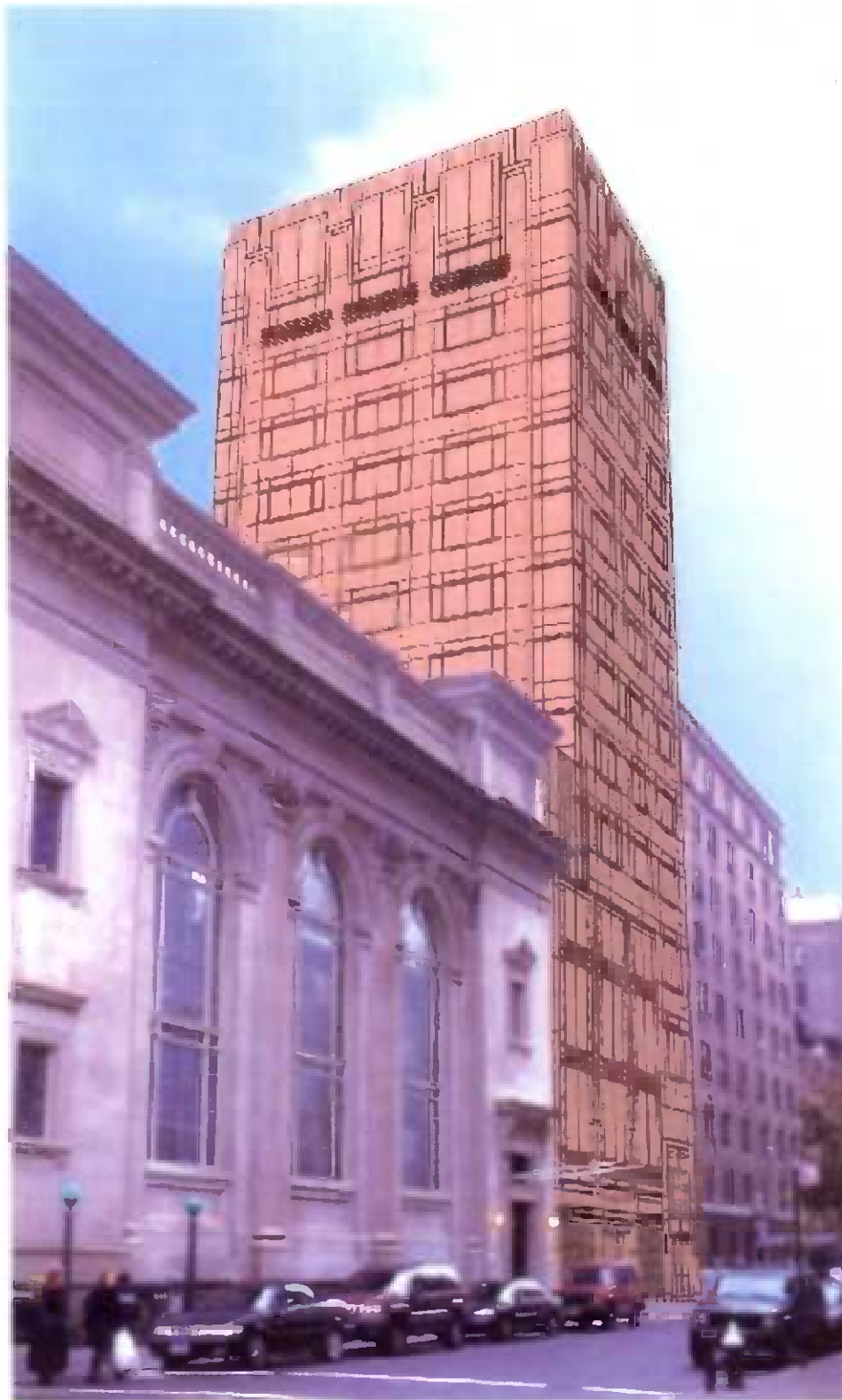
[www.protectwest70.org](http://www.protectwest70.org)



8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. – CURRENT view  
looking west from CPW @ 70<sup>th</sup> St.



8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. – PROPOSED view  
looking west from CPW @ 70<sup>th</sup> St.



8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. – PROPOSED view  
looking east from 70<sup>th</sup> St. midblock





8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. – EXISTING view  
looking east from 70<sup>th</sup> St. midblock





## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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If you wish to speak, please complete this form. In order to give others an opportunity to speak, all speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70 St

In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_  
Assembly Member Richard Gottfried  
*Name*  
242 W. 27 St.  
*Address*  
75th Assembly District  
*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

plus Dale Brewer

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 2003Item # 17 Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal ☐ Other position ☐MARC D. LEIBOW

SOLOLOW, DENNIS MERCADERY CARRERAS LP  
710 LEXINGTON AVE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10021

Address

ATTORNEY FOR  
ALL OPPONENTS TO THIS ITEM  
 Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 13Item # 16 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

CHRISTABEL BOUGIT*Name*46 CHAISTOMER CT NY NY 10014*Address*SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date July / 1 / 2002Item # 17 Item Address 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> St

         In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal          Other position         

Haura Ludwig  
Name

33 West 60<sup>th</sup> St NYC  
Address

Women's City Club of New York  
Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 20th
☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

RABBI MARK Angel  
Name

180 WEST End Ave NYC  
Address

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address Shearith Israel

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Peter Neustadter  
Name

180 West End Ave  
Address

Shearith Israel  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th

✓ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Harriet K. Ainetchi

Name

500 WEST END AVENUE, NY NY

Address

Congregation Shearith Israel

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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### PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 01 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address Congregation Shearith  
Israel 70th St Tower  
\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Charles Church

Name

91 Central Park West

**Address**

New York, NY 10023

## Representing

Family

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address Cong. S.I.

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Alvin Deutsch

Name

205 W 57 ST

Address

Cong. S.I.

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date July / 01 / 2003Item # 17 Item Address 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> St.  
Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue  
70<sup>th</sup> Street TowerIn favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_LISE HILBOUDT  
Name101 CENTRAL PARK WEST NYC 10023  
AddressShareholders at 101 - and family  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 30

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Dan Cohen \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

467 Central Park West, #2F, NYC 10025 \_\_\_\_\_  
Address

Community Board 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address #8 70 ST.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

EUGENE V. NETZER

Name

25 W. 70 ST.

Address

SELF

Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL 212-669-7923 FAX 212-669-7797<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

If you wish to speak, please complete this form. In order to give others an opportunity to speak, all speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # ~~840 Street~~ Item Address \* 8 70 St.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Wendy Ludlum

Name

49 W. 69<sup>TH</sup> St.

Address

my community Block association of W 69<sup>TH</sup> St.

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

This is illegal the street is est. as a  
preserved historical district.

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL. 212-669-7923 FAX. 212-669-7797

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### PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # 16 & 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> ST

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Name Anne Farley  $10+71$  100 / Bal/Dur.

1 101 CENTRAL PARK WEST #14E 10023

Address Terranito

103 CENTRAL PARK WEST Corporation

## Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>TH</sup>
☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position
JEFFREY MOSSERY*Name*351 E 84<sup>TH</sup> ST A 22 E*Address*NEW YORK, NY 10028*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

JAMES O. HERLANDS

Name

115 CENTRAL PARK WEST

Address



Representing

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup>

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Ruth Schulson  
Name

25 W 81  
Address

Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date July 11, 2003Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 10 W 70 St

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal ☒ Other position

Alan D. Sugarman

Name

17 W 70 St

Address

Self

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 2003Item # 7 Item Address SHARITH ISRAEL

       In favor of proposal ✓ Against proposal        Other position

H. ANGER  
Name

107 W 69<sup>TH</sup> ST  
Address

NEIGH BOROHOOD  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 2003Item # 8 w 70 st. Item Address 8 w 70 st

           In favor of proposal X Against proposal            Other position

Libby Evans  
Name

134 w 78 st.  
Address

Scf  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

keeping an open space / last yr.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 8 W 70 ST Item Address 8 W 70

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

BRUCE H. SIMON  
Name

27 W 67 ST  
Address

NY NY 10023  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

McManus Hall Bldg.

Sense of place

Econ. engine / would permit resto of project

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 2003Item # Shequity Israel Item Address 8 W. 20th St.

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

JONATHAN BAKER  
Name

31 West 69th Street  
Address

Sidmar Property Cooperative 31 W. 69 St NYC  
Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date July 1, 2003Item # 17 Item Address 8 W. 70th St.

           In favor of proposal ✓ Against proposal            Other position           

Teri Slater, Co-Chair  
*Name*

Defenders of the Historic Upper East Side  
*Address*  
1382 Third Ave # 210 N.Y. N.Y. 10021  
*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal Y Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

AYRA PETRIDES

*Name*

101 W. 78<sup>th</sup> St. 10024

*Address*

PETER JENNINGS

*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th

         In favor of proposal          Against proposal          Other position

Audrey Lasky  
Name

56 Wintergreen Place East Fishkill, NY 12533  
Address

The spanish and Portuguese Synagogue - Congregation Shearith Israel  
Representing

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other positionGeorge M. Bulow  
*Name*290 West End Avenue  
*Address*Congregation Shearith Israel  
*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_

Item Address C.P.W. + 70

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

David Mantovsky  
Name

91 Central Park West  
Address

Robert A Caro  
Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # 1-1 Item Address 57 W 70th St☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Naomi Neustadt  
Name

180 West End  
Address

Shearman & Sterling  
Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 08 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

SAUL LANIADO

*Name*

160 WEST END AVENUE

*Address*

NEW YORK NY 10023

*Representing*

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th St.In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal ☐ Other position ☐Name Marc DanielAddress 18 W 70th St.Representing Self

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 6, 1, 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_ARI KANTER

Name

56 W 70 #3B

Address

AMY NORMAN AND SELF

Representing

2200 per mo.80 hrs per mo.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>TH</sup> ST         In favor of proposal          Against proposal   X   Other positionPILAR DAVILA*Name*876 PARK AVE.*Address*Carl Kaisermann, Park Slope Civic Council*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

NINA GRAY

*Name*

80 CPW

*Address*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Representing*

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date July 11 / 1 / 2003Item # 17 Item Address SW

           In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal            Other position           

Sugarman Kamp & HUSTON  
Name

91 Canal Paul West  
Address

~~SW~~  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07, 01, 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address IN 70<sup>TR</sup> + CPU

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal   X   Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Tim Davis

**Name**

91 CPW, NYC  
Address

**Address**

Self

## Representing

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address West 70<sup>th</sup> CPW

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Arlene B. Semin  
Name

45<sup>th</sup> W 67  
Address

N.Y.C.  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

Defenders of Historic Upper E. Side

\_\_\_\_\_

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address E. 41<sup>st</sup> St

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Ernest Nomenou  
Name

350 CPW NYC 10025  
Address

Self  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

ANGELO ABDELA

*Name*

115 C.P.W., NY 10023

*Address*

*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W. 70th / Shearith

         In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal          Other position         

Leslie Fitzpatrick

Name

232 East 11th Street, NY, NY 10003

Address

Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

Representing

If you would rather ~~leave a statement, complete~~ and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 215 West 92nd St, NY, NY 10025
☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

DAVID S. NATHAN  
Name

215 WEST 92ND ST, NY, NY 10025  
Address

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

If you need additional space, please use the other side.



# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7923 FAX: 212-669-7797



<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

If you wish to speak, please complete this form. In order to give others an opportunity to speak, all speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

William F. Fields  
Name

29 W. 65th St ✓ 86 yards  
Address

Self  
Representing

1975

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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<http://nyc.gov/landmarks>

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Edgar Nathan  
Name

323 CPW  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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1 CENTRE STREET, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7923 FAX: 212-669-7797



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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 1

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street

☒ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

E. Sherry Miller

309 West 72<sup>nd</sup> Street

NY, NY 10023

Cong. Shear: +4 Israel

*Representing*

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W.

           In favor of proposal            Against proposal            Other position

Kate Wood Name

45 W 67

           Address

Handvale West!

           Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESER

1 CENTRE STREET, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL 212-60

<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

If you wish to speak, please complete this form. In order to give others an opportunity to speak, all speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7/1/03Item # 10 Syuoy Item Address W 70

           In favor of proposal            Against proposal X Other position

Leonard X Favbman

Name

91C PW

Address

So far LSCC

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address Shanath Israel

         In favor of proposal          Against proposal          Other position

Name JAMES PLATTAddress 91 CPWRepresenting self

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 2003Item # ~~88~~ #17 Item Address Susse Shuster

           In favor of proposal ✓ Against proposal            Other position           

Karen Arrich  
Name

91 Central Park West  
Address

Representing

hugo gary  
+

his neighborhood

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_

Item Address CS / proposal       In favor of proposal ☒Against proposal ☐Other position ☐TON PRINCE

Name

18 W 70th St

Address

Self

Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup>

       In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal        Other position       

MYLES WEINTRAUB  
Name

18 W 70  
Address

SELF  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 4/7/1/03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address West 70th + CPW Synagogue

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Daniel Ruzumna

*Name*

18 W. 70th St. #11, New York NY 10023

*Address*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Representing*

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7, 1, 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address West 70<sup>th</sup> + CPW

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal X Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Lauren Belfer  
Name

91 CPW  
Address

nyc 10023  
Representing

(self)

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7/1/03Item # 17 Item Address Shearwater (70<sup>th</sup> CPW)

       In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal        Other position       

Peter Janovsky*Name*91 CPW 4F NY NY*Address**Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date July 11, 2003

Item # 17 Item Address W. 70th St.

In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal ☐ Other position ☐

Robert S. Spirak  
Name

62 W. 69th St  
Address

West 69th St. Block Association  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

Please don't allow the intrusion  
of the proposed Shalom Israel  
building in our historic neighborhood  
district, Manhattan's neighborhoods  
must be protected.

If you need additional space, please use the other side.



## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Modelene Towne  
Name

501 E. 79  
Address

Self  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date July 1, 1, 03Item # 17 Item Address 8W

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position

JOAN ROME

Name

160 RIVERSIDE DRIVE

Address

SELF

Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # 12 Item Address 8W

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position

Ellen Shipley  
Name

40 W 69th St, Apt 3B NY, NY 10023  
Address

Self  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70th☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other positionR. Victor Ancona

Name

45 Sutton Pl South

Address

NYC 10022

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

160 hrs per wk\$10even if they1600ifmake a  
little over minimum  
wage\$6400assumesend only 2200

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 2003

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

ROBERT

GOLDRICK

*Name*

91 CPW NYC 10023

*Address*

HIMSELF

*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 843 75th

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

ESME BERG

Name

262 CENTRAL PARK WEST, NYC 10024

Address

Sharon Tennen

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

I live in the community, and would like  
to show my support for Cary Sherman  
Times 1010 not need to speak

Sharon Tennen

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 01 / 03Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address 8 W. 70 ST

Definitely  
 \_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal ☒ Other position

Name Clarne FriedlanderAddress 30 West 70 Street NYC

West 70<sup>th</sup> St (CPKW + Columbus)  
 Representing \_\_\_\_\_

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

The people who live on the block  
 of 70<sup>th</sup> St (between CPKW + Columbus)  
 vehemently ~~of~~ object to the "tower"  
 which the ~~sephardik~~ temple plans to build  
 for commercial reasons + spoil  
 our beautiful landmark block

If you need additional space, please use the other side.



# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 01 JUL 1 2003

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>ST</sup>

       In favor of proposal   /   Against proposal        Other position

Therese Applebaum  
Name

12 West 72<sup>ND</sup> St  
Address

*Representing*

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THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 01 Jul 2003

Item # 17 Item Address 8W 70<sup>ST</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position

Deborah Winokur  
Name

12 West 72<sup>St</sup>  
Address

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*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 West 70th St.

           In favor of proposal ☒            Against proposal            Other position

Kathryn K Sheehan

Name

12 West 72nd St

Address

self

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

object to height of proposed structurescale inappropriate to other midblock buildingsin areawill set precedent for others to encroach onTownhouse/Residential blocks

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 08 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

YASMINE ERGAS

*Name*

1320 YORK AVENUE, 33F

*Address*

NYC 10021

*Representing*

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**PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET**Date 7 / 1 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

Stan Towne*Name*501 E 79*Address*self*Representing*

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

ANNE Correa  
Name

11 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. , NY, NY 10023  
Address

## Representing

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W. 70<sup>th</sup> St

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position

DAVID JOHNSON  
Name

18 WEST 70<sup>th</sup> ST.  
Address

ROBERT A. CARO  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07 / 1 / 2003

Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup> St.

         In favor of proposal          Against proposal X Other position

Frosty Montgomery  
Name

42 W 70<sup>th</sup> St.  
Address

myself  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

Lamar

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

1 CENTRE STREET, 9TH FLOOR, NEW YORK NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7923 FAX: 212-669-7797

<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

If you wish to speak, please complete this form. In order to give others an opportunity to speak, all speakers are asked to limit their remarks to three minutes.

## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 1 1 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 W 70<sup>th</sup>

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position

Patti Lieberman*Name*101 Central Park West*Address*resident*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7/1/03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 WEST 70 STREET

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position       

AMY NEWMAN  
Name

610 WEST END AVE, NYC 10024  
Address

SELF / COMMUNITY  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7.1.1.03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Robert Eisen  
Name

10 W. 74<sup>TH</sup> ST, #7G 10023  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # \_\_\_\_\_ Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

Name  
Gary Allen

Address  
54 W. 70 ST NYC 10023

Representing \_\_\_\_\_

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 01 / 03Item # 17 Item Address 8 West 70

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position

Name Ben DattnerAddress 11 West 69 Street NY, NY 10023Representing Self

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7 / 1 / 03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 WEST 70<sup>TH</sup> ST

       In favor of proposal ✓ Against proposal        Other position       

ROBERT J. JACOBSON, JR

91 CENTRAL PARK WEST NYC 10023

*Name*

SELF

*Address*

*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7/10/03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 WEST 70<sup>th</sup>

       In favor of proposal X Against proposal        Other position

ANITA JACOBSEN

*Name*

91 CENTRAL PARK WEST

*Address*

SELF

*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date JULY, 1, 2003Item # 17 Item Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_

ERIC MARCUS*Name*357 WEST 20<sup>TH</sup> ST., NY, NY 10011*Address*SELF*Representing*

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 7/10/03  
 Item # 17 Item Address 8 WEST 70<sup>TH</sup> ST  
 \_\_\_\_\_ In favor of proposal ☒ Against proposal \_\_\_\_\_ Other position \_\_\_\_\_  
Lyn JACKSON  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
11 West 69<sup>th</sup> St NYC 10023  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
Self  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Representing**

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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# THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

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<http://nyc.gov.landmarks>

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## PUBLIC HEARING SPEAKERS' SIGN IN SHEET

Date 07/01/03

Item # 17 Item Address 8 US 70th

☒ In favor of proposal ☐ Against proposal ☐ Other position

GLORIA MOSSERI

Name

351 EAST 84TH ST

Address

MYSELF

Representing

If you would rather leave a statement, complete and return to the Reception Desk, or mail the form to the Commission at the above address, attention: Diane Jackier, Director of Community and Government Affairs.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**  
 BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

**C. VIRGINIA FIELDS**  
 BOROUGH PRESIDENT

July 1, 2003

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
 Chairman  
 Landmarks Preservation Commission  
 Municipal Building - 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 New York, NY 10007

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Upper West Side Historic District  
Manhattan

Dear Mr. Chairman:

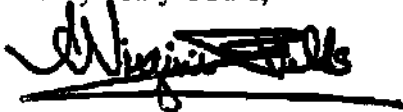
I have recently reviewed the revisions to the application that Congregation Shearith Israel will be presenting to the Commission at its public hearing on July 1, 2003. As you know, I had previously expressed my reservations about the original design. However, I find the revisions to be a significant improvement over the original plans. I now therefore recommend that the Commission approve the requests for a Certificate of Appropriateness and a report to satisfy the requirements of Section 74-711(1) of the Zoning Resolution. I regret that my schedule does not permit me to personally appear in order to elaborate on the reasons for my support.

In reviewing these revisions, I believe that Congregation Shearith Israel has successfully integrated its new building with each of the three important preservation objectives. First, the building is now an elegant partner with the Synagogue, which is an individual landmark. Second, the new building will be a sympathetic and contextual addition to the Central Park West skyline as viewed from Central Park, the City's premier scenic landmark. Thus, the building is appropriate to the context of the Upper West Side Historic District in two important respects. The southeast portion of the Historic District consists primarily of multiple dwellings and commercial structures, and as such the proposed building sits amidst structures of similar height and bulk. And with regard to the eastern edge of the Historic District, the proposed building extends west into the midblock to approximately the same distance as the other Central Park West buildings in the District.

The proposal appears to be suitable candidate for the Commission's assistance in pursuing a Section 74-711 Special Permit. Its stewardship of the landmarked Synagogue has earned praise from preservationists throughout the City. There appears to be more than enough preservation work ahead to warrant the Commission's involvement in pursuing the zoning waivers required to promote a preservation purpose.

I remain concerned, as do many of my constituents, with the fact that over 50,000 sf of zoning floor area remains unutilized in the present development plans. Local residents should not be required to remain in fear of further development on this site, nor of the sale of the unused development rights to another party. I ask the Commission to take whatever steps it can to assure that the remaining development rights cannot be used. I also ask that the Commission require the Congregation to adhere to the best practices for excavation of this site so that the other historic buildings in the Historic District are protected.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Virginia Fields", written over a horizontal line.

C. Virginia Fields  
Manhattan Borough President



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!  
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee  
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Congregation Shearith Israel (the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue)  
Tuesday, July 1, 2003**

LANDMARK WEST! is a not for profit community organization committed to the preservation of the architectural heritage of the Upper West Side.

The Certificate of Appropriateness Committee wishes to comment on the application to demolish the existing community house and construct a new 14-story building, and to request that the Landmarks Preservation Commission issue a report to the City Planning Commission relating to an application for a special permit pursuant to Section 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on this vital issue, which affects the future of this individual landmark, this and other midblocks in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, as well as communities throughout the city striving to protect neighborhood character.

**Slide 1:**

Neighborhood character. Ask ten people to define it, and you'll get ten different answers. No community has a single identity. However, when it comes to historic neighborhoods, it is the role of the Landmarks Preservation Commission to articulate, via the designation report, the distinguishing traits of a built environment.

**Slide 2:**

In the case of the Upper West Side, those traits are reinforced by the 1984 R10-A and R8-B contextual zoning, which laid the foundation for the designation of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District in 1990.

The 1990 designation report and the 1984 zoning report are in complete agreement about the fact that, on the Upper West Side, tall buildings define avenues, and low buildings define side-street midblocks, with few exceptions.

**Slide 3:**

For this reason, the proposal to build a 15-story, 168-foot building in this location is not, and will never be, appropriate. In this side-street midblock location.



**Slide 4:**

The designation report describes the district's side streets as follows:

On most of the side streets of the district, scattered later apartment buildings have interrupted the original rows, but in general the surviving rowhouses present *a strong coherency* and are a major element in creating *a special sense of place* particular to this district on Manhattan's Upper West Side. (p. 46, emphasis added)

**Slide 5:**

Regarding the relationship between the side streets and Central Park West, the report states:

The interplay between the low-scale character of the rowhouse groups which dominate the side streets and the large-scale character of the taller buildings that terminate these blocks on Central Park West reinforces that role of the avenue as an *eastern frame of the district*. (pp. 22-23, emphasis added)

Taller buildings that terminate these blocks on Central Park West. This is the key. To quote one of Commissioner Paulsen's comments from the February 11, 2003, hearing on this matter, the applicant has proposed "a building that could be appropriate in this district." We agree – on a terminating site on Central Park West.

**Slide 6:**

But the proposed building would not be on Central Park West. It would be on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. A side street, a midblock.

**Slide 7:**

Now, admittedly, West 70<sup>th</sup> Street is not a perfectly typical block. Here, the low-rise landmark synagogue, instead of a tall building, terminates this predominantly brownstone block. And as inappropriate as it would be to demolish the synagogue and construct a tall building on its site, or to cantilever a tall building over the landmark, it would be equally inappropriate to erect a tall building behind it. This would essentially reverse the typical relationship between the side street and Central Park West.

**Slide 8:**

It does not help to argue that 101 Central Park West extends 150 feet into the midblock – which, by the way, is less than the 172 feet that the proposed building would cut into the midblock – because 101 is clearly a Central Park West building. Everything about its orientation and massing suggests that it is a Central Park West building. Most importantly, it is a tall Central Park West building terminating a block of rowhouses. This is the defining pattern of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, and the proposed building negates this.

**Slide 9:**

On February 11, Commissioner Paulsen also stated that the designation report "recognizes that there are not two types of buildings in the Upper West Side Historic District, but many." Again, we agree. But, these building types occur in a strongly consistent pattern. The zoning report quantifies this pattern, stating that over 85% of the structures in the midblocks conform to the "midblock" type – "the 3 to 6-story, 55 to 60 foot high 'brownstone'."

**Slide 10:**

In his February 16, 2003, *New York Times* "Streetscapes" column, Christopher Gray confirmed this pattern for West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, calling it "A Block Full of Late-19<sup>th</sup>-Century Row Houses," that "has remained largely unchanged for many decades."

**Slide 11:**

Gray goes on to note that the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street midblock does contain two exceptions to the rowhouse rule. But, as much as these buildings are now part of the fabric of the district, illustrating a short-lived, early 20<sup>th</sup>-century development trend, no one would seriously argue that Numbers 18 and 30 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street – or for that matter, the 14-story building at 19 West 69<sup>th</sup> Street – "relate harmoniously" to their side-street contexts. The proposed building would be no more successful. Shouldn't the Commission work to preserve the district's consistency rather than perpetuate its anomalies?

**Slide 12:**

Last February, the applicant suggested that part of this project's "preservation purpose" was "to permit the replacement of a dysfunctional and commonly viewed unattractive community house which is behind the designated landmark." But one does not have to like the design of the 1953 community house to appreciate the fact that its scale is "contextual." It is approximately the same height as the two rowhouses it replaced. If these rowhouses still stood, would there even be a question about whether a 15-story building in this location would be appropriate? No.

That is not to say that the existing community house must not be changed. However, in terms of form, the existing structure provides a good template for what an appropriately scaled building on this site would look like.

**Slide 13:**

Importantly, the community house gives precedence to the landmark. It is slightly lower in height, respecting Brunner & Tryon's vision to create the sense of a free-standing temple anchoring the corner.

**Slide 14:**

By contrast, the proposed building, with its articulated, overtly primary eastern façade and its "ziggurat" top competes with the landmark for a presence on Central Park West.

**Slide 15:**

It undermines the historic order of the landmark and its siting and thus essentially changes the character of the landmark.

**Slide 16:**

All of which reinforces the plain fact that the proposed building is, fundamentally, a Central Park West building on a midblock site, and the design changes since the last hearing have made it even more so. The building bears no remote relationship to the midblock, even though (using zoning as a guideline) 83% of the site is in the midblock. And it is important to recognize that the 125-foot boundary between the Central Park West zoning and the midblock zoning was set specifically with sites including 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street in mind.

The community felt then and believes now that this site should be developed in keeping with the traditional rowhouse scale of most of the area's midblocks. Why go back on that decision now, when the impacts on the individual landmark and the historic district would be so severe?

**Slide 17:**

This building does not relate harmoniously to the landmark or the historic district. Height and bulk are an issue. This will set a precedent for allowing manifestly out-of-scale development in locations that the zoning and the landmark designation report both clearly state should be developed at a lower scale. It represents a fundamentally unfair trade-off between what may in some, only vaguely articulated way benefit the individual landmark and what will clearly undermine the character of the historic district, as defined in the 1990 designation report. It will violate the contextual zoning that underlies the historic district designation, disregarding every established principle of sound planning for this area from height and bulk regulations to front and rear setback requirements. This is the reason that so many neighborhood groups throughout the city have spoken out on this application. They recognize that if such a building is permitted here, where zoning and landmarks protection are so beautifully in sync, it could be permitted anywhere.

This is your watch. Do not allow this building to be built, this character to be destroyed, this precedent to be set.

**LPC Applications 03-2628 & 03-2653 - 8 West 70th Street  
Supporters of Protecting the UWS/CPW Historic District  
from the Proposed 15-Story Tower**

*List in Formation, 7/1/03*

**Elected Officials/Community Leaders**

Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields  
NYS Senator Thomas K. Duane  
NYS Senator Eric T. Schneiderman  
NYS Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried  
NYS Assembly Member Scott Stringer  
NYC Council Member Gale A. Brewer  
Manhattan Community Board 7  
Manhattan Community Board 8  
Phyllis Gunther, District Leader 67 A.D.

**Civic Organizations**

Beachside Bungalow Preservation Association  
CIVITAS  
Coalition for a Livable West Side  
Committee for Environmentally Sound Development  
Defenders of the Historic Upper East Side  
East Side Rezoning Alliance  
The Fine Arts Federation of New York  
Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts  
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation  
Historic Districts Council  
Historic Neighborhood Enhancement Alliance, Inc.  
LANDMARK WEST!  
Municipal Art Society  
Murray Hill Neighborhood Association  
Park Slope Civic Council, Inc.  
Society for the Architecture of the City  
Women's City Club of New York  
World Monuments Fund / V. Flyer

**Block Associations**

West Side Federation of Neighborhood & Block Associations  
West 64th Street Block Association  
West 67th Street Committee (Numbers 2, 15, 17, 27, 33, 39, 40, 45, 50)  
West 69th Street Block Association  
West 75th Street Block Association  
West 77th Street Block Association  
Park West 77th Street Block Association  
West 78th Street Museum Block Association  
West 89th Street Block Association  
West 90th Street Block Association  
West 102-103rd Street Block Association  
Duke Ellington Neighborhood Association

**Buildings/Co-op Boards**

1 West 64th Street  
11 West 69th Street  
18 West 70th Street  
24 West 70th Street  
49 West 72nd Street  
25 Central Park West  
75 Central Park West  
80 Central Park West  
91 Central Park West  
101 Central Park West  
103 Central Park West  
115 Central Park West  
300 Central Park West

**Individuals**

Alison Ames  
Ina Avrich  
Alain Bankier  
Lauren Belfer  
Julie Blackburn  
Jeff Byles  
Robert A. Caro (Historian)  
Giorgio Cavaglieri, FAIA  
Charles Church, Esq.  
Chris Cockfield  
David Colarossi  
Peter Coombs, AIA  
Louis Z. Cooper, MD  
Anne Correa  
Cathleen Cuneo  
Marc Daniel, Esq.  
Michael De Cuollo  
Suzanne H. Dickerson  
Andrew Dolkart (Architectural Historian)  
Richard Falk  
Gerald Galison  
Martin Gallant  
Tom Giordano, Esq.  
Judy Glassman  
Grace Glueck  
Alex Gray  
Carol & William Greilsheimer

**Individuals (continued)**



Jay Greer  
Michelle Harman  
Mark Hartnett  
Ashton Hawkins, Esq.  
Joanna Hepworth  
Suzanne Herz  
Florence Hodes  
Judith and Robert Hunt  
Robert Jacobson, Jr.  
Peter Janovsky  
Peter Jennings  
Daniel Kennedy  
Evalyn Kaufman  
John and Jane Kauffmann  
Victor A. Kovner, Esq.  
Patty Lieberman  
Emily F. Mandelstam  
Norman Marcus, Esq.  
Stephen Margolies  
Michael Marsh  
Elizabeth Mayers  
Barbara Michaels  
Dana Miller  
Michael Mooney, BE, BSC  
Naomi Paley  
Stuart M. Paley  
David Patterson  
Avra Petrides  
Linda Pogue

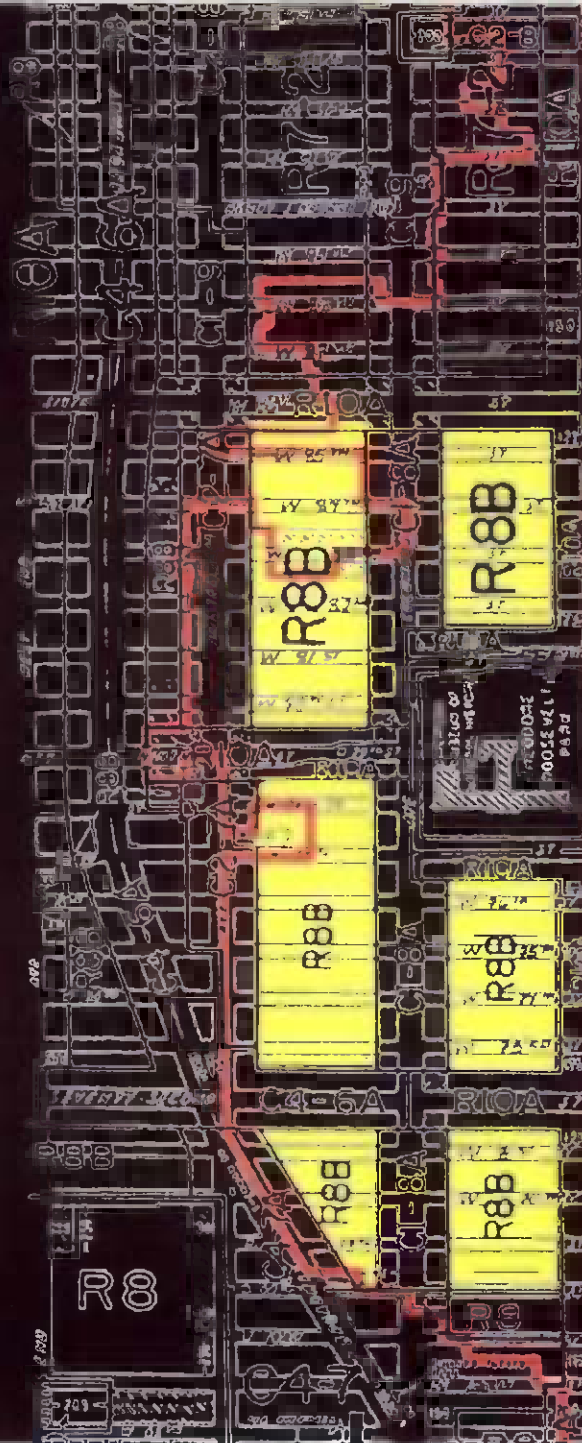
Ron Prince  
Alice Pucknat  
Marc Rakotomalala  
Kathleen Randall  
Richard Ray  
Eliane Reinhold  
Joan Rome, Ph.D.  
Ned Rorem  
Susanne Szabo Rostock  
Richard Roth, FAIA, RIBA  
Arthur and Carola Rowe  
Julius Rudel  
Owi Ruivivar  
Judy Samuels  
Tancred Schiavoni, Esq.  
Neil Schlater -Booth  
Elliott Sclar, Ph.D. (Urban Planner)  
Casey Shane  
David Smiley  
Eliot Soffes, AIA  
Deirdre Stanforth  
David Stutzman  
Anna Taam  
Naomi Usher  
Kent Wallgren  
Walter J. Wilkie  
Lori Zabar, Esq.  
Marjorie Zucker



## Upper West Side: Predominantly Low-Rise Midblocks

### Protective Mechanisms

-  Upper West Side/Central  
Park West Historic District
-  R8-B Contextual  
Zoning Districts



W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street midblock – south side



W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street midblock – north side



# **Proposed 15-Story Building: View looking east from W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street**





## Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District: Side-Street Character



## Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District: Central Park West Character



“Avenue” buildings – view north along  
Central Park West



101 Central Park West – view east  
from 70<sup>th</sup> Street

70th STREET

R8-B R10-A

EXISTING COURTYARD

EXISTING SYNAGOGUE

EXISTING PARSONAGE

EXISTING PARSONAGE

CENTRAL PARK WEST



Proposed 15-story building behind  
Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

## Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District



Typical side street profile = tall building on CPW



W. 70<sup>th</sup> St. profile with proposed tower  
= low building on CPW, tall building on midblock

## 101 Central Park West



View from Central Park



View from W. 70<sup>th</sup> St.

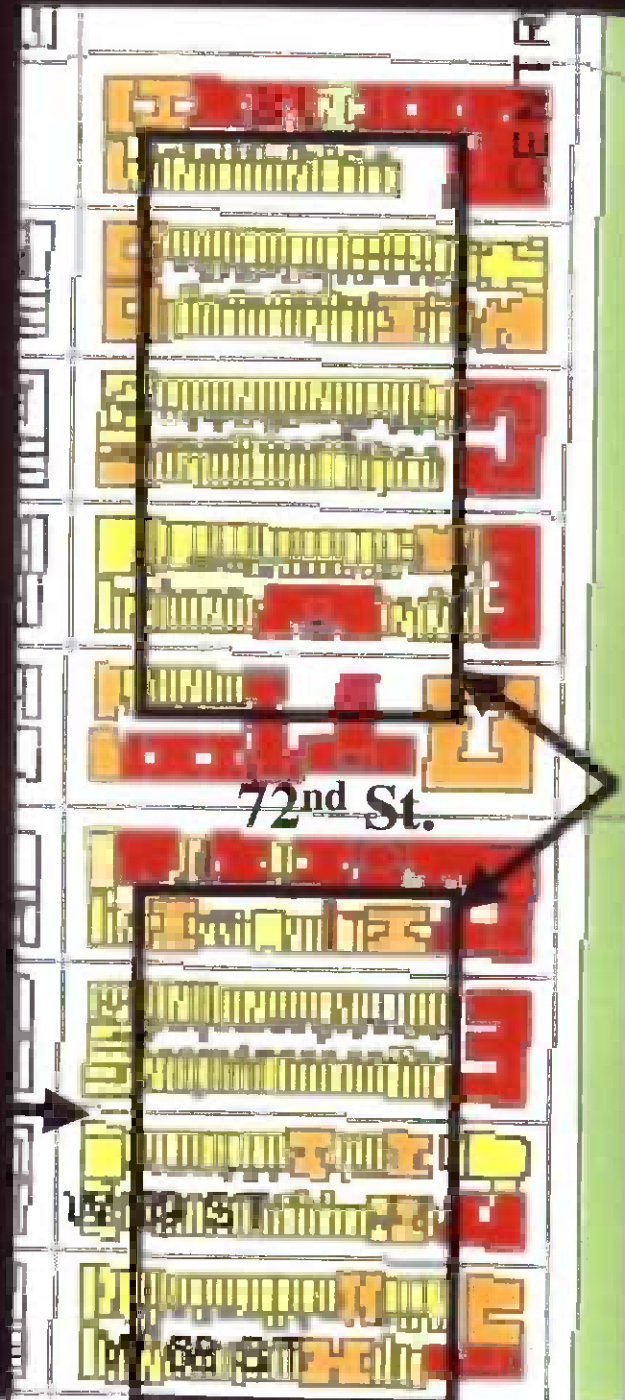


## Upper West Side Building Heights

### Number of Stories

- 1 – 6 stories  
(typ. rowhouse)
- 7 – 12 stories  
(typ. tenement)
- 13 – 36 stories (typ.  
apartment building)

West 70<sup>th</sup> Street



72<sup>nd</sup> St.

### R8-B Zoning Districts

R8-B zoning encourages buildings that are compatible with existing low-rise buildings, typically traditional rowhouses.

Max FAR = 4.0

Max streetwall height = 60 ft.



20-40 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street, 1910  
Office for Metropolitan History

## “A Block Full of Late-19<sup>th</sup>- Century Row Houses”

— *New York Times* columnist  
Christopher Gray, 2/16/03



W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street, 2003

## Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District: Height Anomalies



19 W. 69<sup>th</sup> Street



18 W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street





Former rowhouses on site of  
existing community house  
(Tax Photo ca. 1940)



Existing community house  
June 2003

## Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue: “Temple” Anchoring the Corner



## Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue: Proposed 15-Story Building Rising Up Behind the Landmark



## Proposed 15-Story Building: A Central Park West Tower



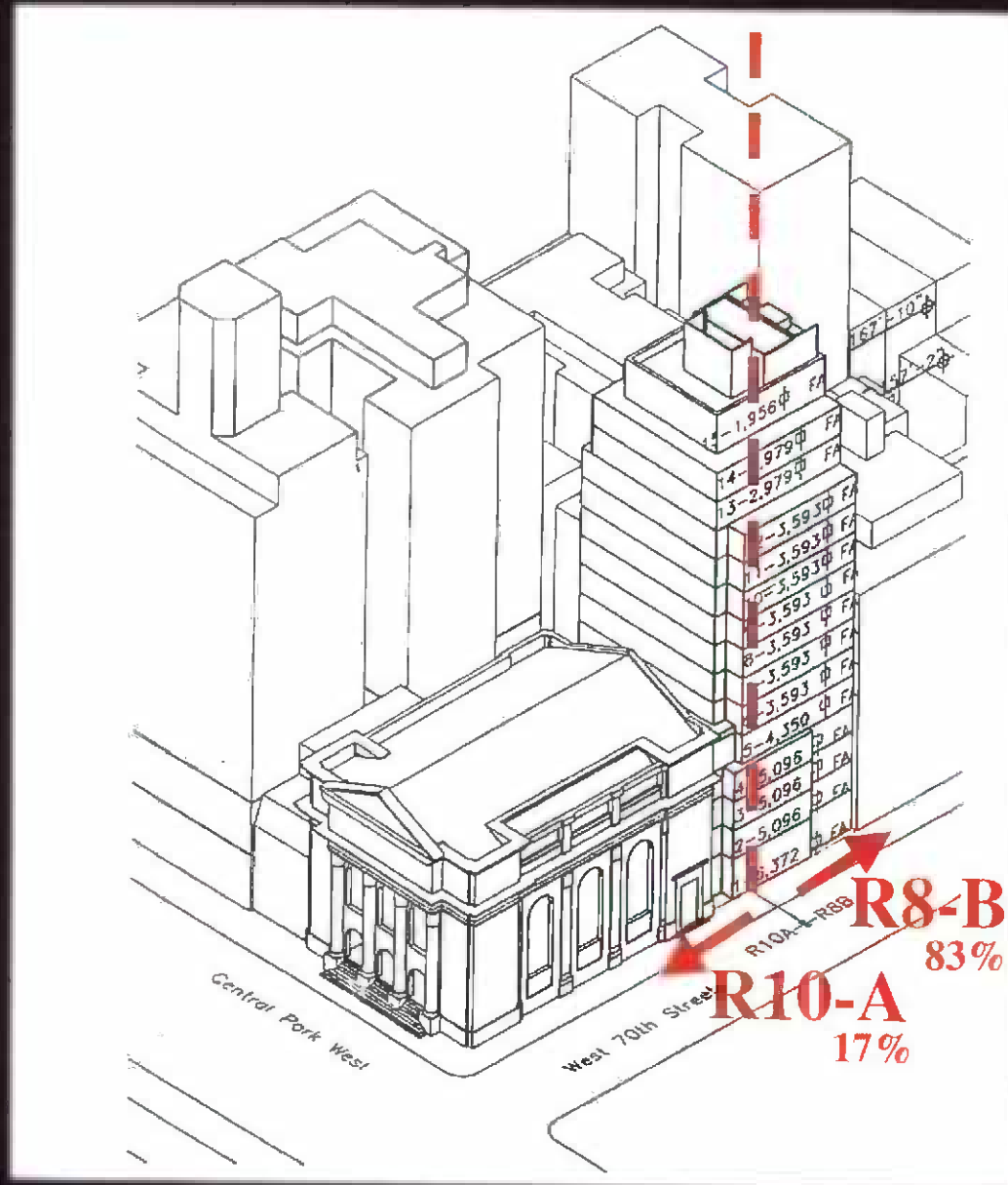
Proposed building: Central Park West elevation



View from Central Park West



# Proposed 15-Story Building: 83% in Midblock



## **Proposed 15-Story Building: 100% Inappropriate**



*News from ...*

# SENATOR THOMAS K. DUANE

29TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT • NEW YORK STATE SENATE

## **TESTIMONY FROM STATE SENATOR THOMAS K. DUANE BEFORE THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL'S SPECIAL ZONING PERMIT REQUEST**

Good morning, my name is Senator Thomas K. Duane and I represent New York State's 29<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District, which includes much of the Upper West Side. I am testifying today in response to Congregation Shearith Israel's current building plans for 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Block 36, 37, lot 1122. This proposal calls for the demolition of the existing community house at 8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street and construction on the property of a 14-story community house/residential tower. This residential building requires a special permit under the current Zoning Resolution.

Congregation Shearith Israel is one of New York's oldest and most valued congregations. It should be noted that when previous applications for constructing a residential building were met with opposition from both the community and landmarks preservation organizations, Congregation Shearith Israel withdrew the applications.

Congregation Shearith Israel, in restoring and preserving its own Synagogue, has shown a commitment to preserving New York City's landmarks. The Congregation also handles the upkeep of its three historic cemeteries throughout New York City in meticulous fashion.

The congregation has shouldered much of the synagogue's restoration and preservation expenses. This has come with a financial commitment on the part of the synagogue and its congregants. The lower portion of the planned residential building would serve as a new community house for the congregation. The upper portions would serve as an immediate source of income for the synagogue.

While I am sympathetic to this goal, I am unable to endorse their proposal. The proposed building violates R8B zoning and goes against the original reasons for selecting the Upper West Side for this special zoning. R8B zoning was enacted in 1984 to protect the mid-block sections of the Upper West and Upper East sides from the influx of high-rise buildings that was becoming commonplace in Midtown and parts of lower Manhattan. The West Side is a gem in our city that is worth protecting. Unfortunately, the proposed building extends past a 125-foot line created as a buffer between Avenue R10A and Mid-Block R8B zoning. The zoning code thus protects the mid-block buildings of the district from the looming buildings that both obstruct light and views and threaten to take away from the historic district's low-rise core.

We cannot ever allow spot zoning that will permit a mid-block tower to be constructed and damage the special zoning that has preserved the wonderful mid-block character of the Upper West Side. This proposed building must not be allowed to establish a precedent for future proposals that would further encroach upon the district. The more buildings that are allowed to circumvent the zoning by extending past the 125-foot buffer into mid-block, the harder it will be to maintain The Upper West Side and Central Park West as historic districts.

Congregation Shearith Israel must prove to the Landmarks Preservation Commission that the proposed real estate development both "contributes to a preservation purpose" and "relates harmoniously" to the existing landmark synagogue before it is approved. On the contrary, I believe that it takes away from preservation goals and if approved would greatly disrupt the harmony that currently exists between the synagogue and the Upper West Side.

While I value Congregation Shearith Israel as a valued member of New York City and the West Side, and while I sympathize with their economic goals, I cannot endorse this proposal.





**Richard N. Gottfried**  
75th Assembly District

Chair  
Committee on Health

## NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

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### REJECT THE SHEARITH ISRAEL REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

Testimony by Assembly Member Richard N. Gottfried  
Before Landmarks Preservation Commission  
July 1, 2003

My name is Richard N. Gottfried. I am the Assembly Member representing the 75th Assembly District, which includes Congregation Shearith Israel (CSI) and the site of the proposed building.

Once again, I urge the Commission to reject the proposed project on the grounds that the project does not "contribute to a preservation purpose," nor does it "relate harmoniously" to the landmarked synagogue and the historic district. Under the law, CSI must prove both, but it does not pass either test. The Congregation has not demonstrated that its real estate development will contribute to the preservation of the synagogue landmark, and the building is grossly out of scale and conflicts with the historic district.

A growing and prosperous congregation can and should support its mission without damaging the surrounding community and violating the law.

#### The project does not "contribute to a preservation purpose"

Under Section 74-711(a) (1) of the zoning code, the City Planning Commission may not approve this proposal unless the Landmarks Preservation Commission issues a report finding that the proposal "contributes to a preservation purpose." This project is a plan to yield an extraordinary amount of money for CSI. CSI says it needs this income to restore the synagogue, but it has not documented this financial need nor proposed any mechanism to ensure that the income will be devoted to restoring the synagogue.

It is not enough for the Commission to conclude that the Congregation will preserve the landmark. The law requires the Commission to conclude that the development will actually "contribute" to the preservation. There must be some link between the development and the preservation.

I understand that the Commission is not in the business of financial auditing. But in order to justify a statutory finding that a real estate project will "contribute" to a preservation purpose, there must be something the Commission and the public can rely on to establish the necessary link. For example, the proceeds of the development could be deposited in an endowment or trust, dedicated to the preservation purpose. There might be an annual accounting by an independent auditor.

The Commission should not issue a favorable report for a 74-711 waiver unless the

million dollar asset for the synagogue "contributes to a preservation purpose," then enlarging the asset would contribute even more. They will argue that if a new 15 -story building is "harmonious" with a brownstone block, then surely a few more stories would not make a big difference.

The Commission should think ahead to that prospect and consider this: When CSI or a commercial partner comes back for more, on what basis will the Commission be able to turn them down?

CSI has said that this project will benefit the preservation of the synagogue and the scale of the district because it will "freeze" the unused development rights over the synagogue, so that they cannot be developed or transferred elsewhere. But they have not legally bound themselves to this promise. If the Commission believes that this "freezing" of development rights contributes to a preservation purpose, then it should insist that CSI legally bind itself to this commitment.

MS

### **Damaging precedent**

Approving this real estate development would set a dangerous precedent that would seriously undermine the protection for landmarks and historic districts. When the law is ignored, diminished, or distorted for one applicant, other applicants will insist on – and likely receive – similar exemptions, because the Commission will have no legal basis for turning them down.

If this real estate development is approved, then in this and other historic districts we will soon have churches, synagogues, schools, and even ordinary property owners coming up with countless real estate schemes to make money by multiplying the height and bulk of a building. They will all be able to point to the example of CSI. And the Landmarks Preservation Commission will have given up its ability to insist on a meaningful contribution to a preservation purpose or to apply any meaningful standard of what is harmonious with a historic district.

New York City has not headed down that road and should not. The laws protecting landmarks and historic districts help strengthen the roots that hold our City together. These laws should not be ignored, diminished, or distorted.

### **The better alternative**

CSI is a growing congregation with extraordinary resources. It has a magnificent building and sanctuary that require restoration and maintenance. The congregation has been honoring its centuries-old tradition and its religious mission by raising the necessary funds to preserve the synagogue.

Now, CSI also wants to build a new, expanded community house and support its programming. A new community house – without a real estate development component – could certainly be designed in a way that would not conflict with the landmarks and historic districts laws and applicable zoning.

CSI can and should preserve the synagogue, and build and run the new community house, by raising the necessary funds, primarily from among its members. It is not a simple matter, but that is what congregations do across New York City and across the country. And CSI is better



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I understand that the Commission is not in the business of financial auditing. But in order to justify a statutory finding that a real estate project will "contribute" to a preservation purpose, there must be something the Commission and the public can rely on to establish the necessary link. For example, the proceeds of the development could be deposited in an endowment or trust, dedicated to the preservation purpose. There might be an annual accounting by an independent auditor.

The Commission should not issue a favorable report for a 74-711 waiver unless the

Congregation provides a detailed accounting of the projected income from the development, how this income will be devoted to improving the preservation of the synagogue, and its financial inability to pay for the restoration without the proposed development.

I believe CSI is committed to restore its landmark. It may also have the resources to restore the synagogue without this real estate development. If the preservation can and will happen without the development, then the development is not contributing to the preservation, in any meaningful sense.

Even if the commission determines that development would contribute to a preservation purpose, it must determine the projected income of the development and the estimated cost of restoring the synagogue. It may well be that a much smaller and more appropriate building would satisfy the preservation purpose. If so, then the excess height and bulk would have no statutory justification.

### **Violation of statutory standard**

The proposal involves a landmark building and is located in a historic district. Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission can act favorably on the project under Section 74-711(a) (2) of the zoning code, it must find that it "relate(s) harmoniously to the subject landmark building (and) buildings in the Historic District."

The proposed building would be on West 70th Street, a side street of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. This and many other side streets of the historic district are characterized primarily by decades-old brownstones and small apartment buildings. The proposed building would be dramatically out of scale with the buildings on the side street.

The ~~186-foot~~ building would be one and one half times the height of the adjacent building. It ~~would~~ be about three times the height of the brownstones that make up most of the block.

It would be more than two and a half times the street wall height ordinarily permitted for the site.

It would also be several times the total bulk or FAR that would ordinarily be permitted for the site.

Nearly a hundred residents of this part of the Historic District have taken their time to contact my office and the Commission to argue that the proposed building is out of context with the district they call home. Almost no one without a direct connection to the Synagogue has weighed in to argue that the building would be appropriate.

If this building does not flunk the "harmonious" test, what *does* it take to flunk?

### **The plan will get worse**

If this real estate development is approved, CSI or a commercial developer may, in the future, see the potential for profiting by adding more floors to the building.

CSI or the developer could then argue that since LPC had found that creating a multi-

million dollar asset for the synagogue "contributes to a preservation purpose," then enlarging the asset would contribute even more. They will argue that if a new 15 -story building is "harmonious" with a brownstone block, then surely a few more stories would not make a big difference.

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CSI can and should preserve the synagogue, and build and run the new community house, by raising the necessary funds, primarily from among its members. It is not a simple matter, but that is what congregations do across New York City and across the country. And CSI is better

able to that than the vast majority of other congregations.

There are also foundation and government grants available to religious congregations for historic preservation.

### **Community input into design elements**

I hope the Commission will reject this proposal. If, however, the Commission intends to permit CSI to build the project, I would ask the Commission to pause before issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Please allow CSI to present its design plans to a meeting of community members and civic organizations, and receive and respond to comments about design choices that might make the building more contextual with the historic district. Then, if CSI chooses to revise its design in light of these comments, it can present the revised plan to the Commission.

### **Conclusion**

The Landmarks Preservation Commission should stand by the law and reject the proposed real estate development. It does not "contribute to a preservation purpose" and it is not "harmonious" with the historic district. CSI should stand by its purpose and honorable tradition and turn away from the promotion of real estate development.

Bruce H. Simon  
Statement to the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
regarding Congregation Shearith Israel  
July 1, 2003

I have lived on West 67<sup>th</sup> Street for 35 years. 67<sup>th</sup> Street is in the Historic District, and separately listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. I work in the old McGraw Hill Building, an individual landmark, and also on the State and National Registers.

Neither my view, air or light would be affected by this proposal. But my sense of place, my historic district, will be violated. And for no legitimate purpose.

When religious institutions begin to think of themselves, or their property, as “economic engines”, and seek the assistance of government to fund their “economic engine” – all three interests (the religious, the economic and the governmental) are demeaned and diminished. Our social, religious, and political systems are built upon a careful balance – and separation – of the interests of church, politics, and money, for reasons deeply rooted in the Judeo – Christian and democratic traditions.

Rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesars, evicting the money lenders from the Temple, and ending the practice of the sale of indulgences to public figures, are concepts graven in our modern sensibilities not because they are poetic or dramatic images but because they speak to the reality of what happens when the boundaries of those powerful interests are permitted to blur.

We urge this Commission to pause and reflect upon its mission – which is to enforce the Landmarks law even-handedly and with due respect for its purpose – its governmental purpose – and not to be seduced into the notion that it is somehow here to provide fuel for this particular religious institution’s desire for an economic engine – when that economic engine requires the

sacrifice of the broader community public interest in the even handed administration of the landmark laws – and, with this Commission as the gatekeeper, our broader land use regulations.

There is a hardship provision in the law. There is not an economic engine provision. And that is not accidental.

Our system of government protects against our system of general landmark preservation laws having the unintended consequence of causing the demise of a religious institution. So we provide a hardship provision as a shield, to protect religious institutions. There is no comparable societal interest in encouraging religious institutions to exploit their tax-free property as a sword – an economic engine – at the expense of the general community.

I will now address the question of whether this is an application that warrants 74-711 Relief.

First, I want to dispel the motion that this is just a “garden variety” application – that this sort of thing is done all the time – or as Mr. Friedman put it on February 11, “74-711 has been used the Commission many times in the past. In some cases, simply to remove air rights from over a landmark so that it can no longer be developed, and that is also in play here”. I will get back to the “air rights” arguments in a minute, but is it true that the Commission has used 74-711 many times in the past?

Landmark West’s research, covering the 10-year period up to the Commission’s hearing in November, disclosed a total of thirty-six 74-711’s granted by the City Planning Commission. Only 3 involved modifications to permit new construction. The vast majority were for use modifications – on the West Side, allowing a catering establishment in the Park Royal to convert to a physical culture establishment; allowing residential uses in So Ho, and Tribeca; legalizing



veterinary use on East 64<sup>th</sup> Street.

Not one of the 3 new building applications of 74-711 are even close to this application.

The first was to add a partial 5<sup>th</sup> Floor to a Nursing Home in Cobble Hill. The community board unanimously approved this application. No one opposed this partial 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

The second was to permit construction of the building now part of the Republic National Bank on 40<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue. A lot can be said about the exercise, but here I will simply note that there was no Historic District involved. This was a single building on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The third, St. John's Baptiste, also did not involve an Historic District. The new building was being erected on a vacant lot, located on the Third Avenue end of east 76<sup>th</sup> Street, not really affecting the landmarked church located at the Lexington Avenue end of the block. In fact, there is an intervening building between the landmarked church and the new building. And the new building was to be constructed within the avenue depth of Third Avenue at the time it was originally filed.

Lawyers could have a field day arguing whether the Republic Bank or St. Jean's Baptiste are particularly relevant precedents, or are easily distinguishable – but no one can argue with a straight face that this The Spanish Portugese 74-711 is just business as usual.

But make no mistake . . . Grant this, and it will be business as usual.

#### Back to the Air Rights Issue

While 9,000 feet of development rights will be transferred for this project, 82,000 feet of developable Central Park West FAR is being retained by the Synagogue. There is no legally binding assurance that the 82,000 feet will not be developed in the future. That is one reason that Mr. Friedman's reference to them being "in play" is especially worrisome.

So, if this application is not “garden variety, we do it all the time,” the question remains whether it should be done here and now.

What are the Landmarks justifications stated for asking the City Planning Commission to grant the variances, waivers and special permits sought in the 74-711? We all know you do not have jurisdiction over the zoning issues, as some are quick to point out when seeking to diminish your role. But you are the gatekeeper. And those waivers, special permits and variances can not be granted unless you certify three things. This project must present:

1. A program for continued maintenance.
2. A preservation purpose.
3. That the modifications relate harmoniously to the landmark and the Historic District.

I want to emphasize the impact on the Historic District that this project threatens.

Your role is to honor the Historic District, not to cynically seize upon the admitted anomalies in the district – the 15% exceptions to the overwhelming low-rise, brownstone character that pre-existed designation. It is simply Orwellian to call this project “harmonious” because of the few exceptions.

If you grant this application, there will not come before this Commission in the future a 74-711 application that will not assert with a sneer and nod and wink, “if The Spanish Portugese mid-block High Rise was harmonious, why surely this is harmonious.” Worse, they will be right. It turns logic on its head to argue that something clearly out of scale and character with an Historic District (that was designated in part because of its low-rise character), is harmonious because there are a few, pre-designation, anomalies also out of scale.

Now, I would like to address briefly the argument that penetrating the mid-block is justified by the fact that there already exist Central Park West buildings that run deeper than 125 feet.

First, this Commission may not avert its eyes to the significance of the 125' limit by saying that is a zoning question for the City Planning Commission.

This developer, here and now, before this Commission, argues that other Central Park West buildings – our glorious CPW towers – penetrate the side streets as deeply as this project would. But it was to prevent further incursions that the 125 foot limit was adopted – precisely because the pre-existing 200' limit permitted these incursions into mid-block. As a matter of public policy expressing both zoning and landmark Historic District policy, it was determined not to have future incursions into the mid-block.

As with the cynical reliance upon the 15% preexisting non-conforming mid-block high rises, reliance upon the pre-existing 200' CPW depth structures is simply assbackwards.

Summing up –

Economic engines are not your area of expertise. This is the Landmarks Preservation Commission not J.P. Morgan Chase.

This is not a garden variety 74-711. But if you grant this egregious proposal, you will in a very real sense open the door to the wholesale degradation of historic districts throughout the City.

The proposal before you is measurably worse than the original proposal. It is not harmonious with the historic district, it is not appropriate for the historic district, or the individual landmark it would loom over.

Do the right thing. Deny this application.

Remarks to Landmarks Preservation Commission by Anne Farley,  
President of the Board of Directors of 103 Central Park West Corporation,  
regarding applications by Congregation Shearith Israel  
July 1, 2003

Good afternoon. I am Anne Farley, the new President of the Board of Directors of 103 Central Park West Corporation. We are the building directly north of Congregation Shearith Israel. Our building spans the block between 70<sup>th</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup> Streets, and approximately 100 families live in our building.

I appear here today on behalf of our co-op's board of directors to express the collective opposition of our board and the majority of our shareholders to the Congregation's Applications. We regret that we must oppose our long-time, highly-valued neighbor on this matter; however, as you must know, virtually all of the neighbors have responded negatively to this project. I attended the November meeting of the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 7 shortly after this project was unveiled. The opposition there was overwhelming, and, in fact, the Committee voted unanimously to oppose the project. I urge you to respect the recommendation of the Community Board.

The overwhelming opposition is not simply a knee-jerk reaction to a big construction project. Our opposition reflects a thoughtful, caring view of what represents an appropriate, harmonious addition to a lovely area of a designated historical district. The residents of our neighborhood care about and take pride in their historical district, and they care about the relative uniformity of the mid-block townhouses. This proposed project is neither consistent nor harmonious with the mid-block scheme. Furthermore, the tower will overwhelm the existing landmark temple and diminish rather than enhance its beauty.

The planners of this project seek to build this tall tower by shifting the allowable bulk of the existing synagogue building to a new structure that will occupy a portion of the mid-block area. This is an interesting approach to obtaining the necessary zoning for the proposed building, but I implore you as Commissioners to consider what the zoning law as written is designed to achieve. Do we want to encourage new mid-block towers? I think not. The approval sought is not a minor matter. Your approval will establish an unfortunate precedent and may encourage the further erosion of the historical district.

I'd also like to address the intended purpose of the project. I acknowledge the Congregation's stated desire and need to construct a new community house. But, we must also acknowledge the inclusion of residential units in the project for what it truly is – simply a fund raising endeavor. The Congregation urges the fund raising aspect of the project as constituting a preservation purpose – namely that the funds raised will allow them to maintain their landmark building. Perhaps so, but I ask, at what cost to the surrounding and equally worthy neighborhood at large? Furthermore, the financial details of the preservation project have not been disclosed to the general community. We do not truly know whether a sacrifice by the neighborhood is essential to the preservation of the synagogue.

In sum, I and my fellow directors urge you, the Commissioners to do all in your power to protect our community's unique character by denying these applications.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James J. Scurry". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the "Thank you." text.



**GVSHP**

GREENWICH VILLAGE  
SOCIETY FOR  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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Calvin Trillin

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Anne Marie Wiener-Summer

Anthony C. Wood

**STATEMENT OF THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SOCIETY**  
**FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**  
**REGARDING CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL'S PROPOSAL**  
**TO CONSTRUCT A 15-STORY, 168-FOOT TOWER**  
**ON WEST 70<sup>TH</sup> STREET**  
**JULY 1, 2003**

In response to Congregation Shearith Israel's proposed 15-story building in the midblock of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation has several concerns. As you may know, this is a block dominated by 60-foot rowhouses. We feel that the proposed tower is entirely inappropriate for the current scale of the block, as well as the Upper West Side Historic District.

This proposal is of particular importance, as its approval would set a dangerous precedent that could affect historically significant neighborhoods throughout the city. In considering such a proposal, it is imperative that we respect and retain contextual zoning, particularly with regard to matters of scale.

Also troubling to GVSHP is the broad array of special permissions being asked for in this case. We feel that this proposal must be held to the highest standards, and it is unclear at this time how this will be achieved.

I urge you to join GVSHP, Manhattan Community Board #7, the Municipal Art Society, Historic Districts Council, Landmark West!, Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts, and a growing list of others in opposition to this proposal. We ask that you help us work to preserve and protect this community, and to help us prevent future developments that threaten the character and scale of our historic neighborhoods.

Thank you.



THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

232 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street New York NY 10003  
tel (212) 614-9107 fax (212) 614-9127 email hdc@hdc.org

Statement of the Historic Districts Council  
Certificate of Appropriateness Hearing

July 1, 2003

Item 17

03-2628-Block 36, 37, lot 1122-

8 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street – Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue – Individual Landmark, Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

An Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts style synagogue, designed by Brunner & Tryon and built in 1896-97. Application is to demolish the existing community house and construct a new 14-story building.

The Historic Districts Council is the advocate for New York City's designated historic districts and neighborhoods meriting preservation. Its Public Review Committee monitors proposed changes within historic districts and changes to individual landmarks and has reviewed the application now before the Commission.

HDC does not support this proposal. Shearith Israel Synagogue is an individual landmark that is also in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. The proposed new building affects both the distinguished individual landmark and the historic district in which it is located. Regrettably, the effect on both is negative. Putting aside the reasons and focusing instead on the aesthetics, a 14-story building that might be appropriate at that height on an avenue, is being proposed for mid-block. The designation report for the district notes that rowhouses on the side streets that form the heart of the district are the predominant residential building type. Eighty-five per cent of the buildings in the district are rowhouses. The character of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District is defined by the rows of brownstones on the side streets. A contextual zoning district, R8B, in which the proposed building is located, reflects the low-rise character of the mid-blocks that the both the zoning and the historic district are supposed to protect, to the extent that the north side of W. 70<sup>th</sup> Street, between Central Park West and Columbus Avenues looks almost exactly like the illustration for R8B districts in the zoning handbook. If this building were proposed for a site, say, two lots further toward Columbus Avenue, there would be no question about its inappropriateness. The building proposed is an avenue building on a mid-block. On this basis alone, it should not receive a permit. Rising above the synagogue, the 14-story tower will disrupt the iconic skyline of Central Park West, by looming over the synagogue itself.

In very general terms, the design of the proposed building, as well as its height, raises additional concerns about its appropriateness. Its orientation is problematic. The entrance to the building is on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. Yet, the structure reads as a Central Park West building. The east façade, facing Central Park West, is actually the side façade, not the front, but is designed as such. The west façade, equivalent of the rear façade, at a right angle to West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, is very visible along West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. This is the façade of the building that would normally face the garden core.

More specifically, the design shows insufficient deference to the landmark and to the major avenue of the historic district. It is unlike any other building on Central Park West in terms of ornamental massing or bold detailing, such as a pediment at the roof that characterizes buildings on that avenue. Neither is it a bold, modern design that would afford a lively contrast to the other buildings in the historic district. With its open glass corners, it does not relate well to the streetscape. On 70<sup>th</sup> Street, we question the choice of exterior grilles rather than interior blinds for the privacy of the offices. The asymmetrical treatment of the lower floors of the façade do not relate to the brownstones on the street. A more carefully thought-out design that would allow the building to make a contribution to the historic district is needed.

As for the special permit being sought under 74-711 of the Zoning Resolution, we wonder exactly what preservation purpose beyond maintenance is being served. The congregation has been a wonderful steward of this extraordinary building and has substantially restored the building. We know that they need to repair the roof, but that seems to fall into the category of maintenance rather than restoration. Neither does the transfer of a small percentage of development rights off the landmark meet the definition of "preservation."

To conclude, applying avenue zoning to the side street will result in an erosion of the character of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District that the Landmarks Preservation Commission is supposed to protect. The applicant has tried to orient the building to Central Park West, but, in fact, its entrance is on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street. When the character of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street is considered, everything that is inappropriate about the design becomes clear.

Without any waivers or variances, the synagogue could construct a 6-story building. If the design were appropriate, a building of that height would be supportable. This one is not. We ask the Commission to deny the application.

Thank you for your attention.





## THE SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY

6 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street, Congregation Shearith Israel, Items 16 & 17

July 1, 2003

The Zoning Resolution specifically exempts historic districts from some massing requirements and allows the LPC to apply for exemptions from use requirements. And it is well established that the LPC is not bound to approve bulk and massing it finds inappropriate just because such a form might be permitted under zoning. The purpose of such exemptions is to encourage conservation, restoration and adaptive re-use of existing buildings, and to allow contextual massing for a new building in an historic area.

For many years, preservationists have sought contextual zoning in and around historic districts, especially in neighborhoods of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rowhouses. In response, City Planning has given us a number of districts like the R8B of the community house site, here and on the Upper East Side, and contextual zoning is mapped or under consideration in many other locations. This is a very useful development which should be encouraged, not disregarded.

It is very retrogressive for the LPC to take the opposite tack and approve a new building whose bulk, height and massing substantially *exceeds* what zoning would allow, in a context of smaller buildings, and in a zoning district that was mapped by City Planning specifically to limit out-of-context construction and preserve the character of the existing neighborhood.

The design changes that are under consideration today do not mitigate the out of scale massing, rather they emphasize it by making the profile of this mid-block building ape an early Central Park West skyscraper. Approval of such a building would be a huge setback for historic preservation.

**Alan D. Sugarman, Esq.**  
Attorney-At-Law

17 W. 70 Street  
Suite 4  
New York, NY 10023  
212-873-1371  
212-496-4138 (fax)  
sugarman@sugarlaw.com

June 26, 2003

Via fax 212-669-7960 and e-mail at [rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov](mailto:rtierney@lpc.nyc.gov)

Robert B. Tierney -  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair  
1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

RE: Certificate of Appropriateness  
03-2628- Block 36, 37, lot 1122-  
8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - Individual  
Landmark,  
Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

Dear Commissioner Tierney:

I am writing concerning a number of matters relating to the hearing I have heard was scheduled for July 1, 2003 relating to Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - proposed W. 70th Street luxury condominium. Yet, of this moment, there is no notice for the hearing posted on the Commission's web site. I also question why a hearing is being held during the July 4th Week.

And, as discussed below, the Commission has made no opportunity for the public to review the latest application.

Moreover, from my understanding, the Commission intends to allocate as much as 75% of the time of the hearing to presentations by the Congregation including the members of the Congregation and the attorneys, architects, and officers of the Congregation. Each member of the Congregation has a substantial financial interest in the outcome of this hearing -- they are not members of the general public or community at large and the time allocated to comments from the general public should not be diverted to the applicants.

I also raise below other significant issues as to the standards being applied to the determination, the status of the record, and the real possibility of extensive ex parte contacts with the Synagogue.

As you are a lawyer, I am sure you share my concern as to the importance of fair and impartial procedures as it relates to the operation of the Commission, especially with respect to a matter as significant as this. I do not believe that the practices of the Commission promote a fair and balanced review and determination of the issues.

I. Availability of Information To The Public Prior to Hearings:

It is difficult if not impossible for a member of the general public to obtain copies of submissions to the Commission in support of applications. On February 27, 2003, I filed a request for information with the Commission asking for, among other things, copies of the applications filed on behalf of the synagogue in this matter. This information has not been made available to me. I have never seen an administrative agency or court that is so unwilling to share written information with members of the public. Your web site as of today at 2:43 PM states:

Presentation materials for each item on the Public Hearing agenda are available for review on the Friday before the Public Hearing from 10 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Commission's Hearing Room on the ninth floor of the Municipal Building, 1 Centre Street. This month, the viewing day will be Friday, July 18th.

Thus, the Commission is making available the materials for the July 1 meeting 17 days AFTER the meeting. Moreover, the Commission staff seems to be unwilling to make the entire file open for review. This is truly extraordinary. The public is entirely cut-off from information, and, as is discussed later, has to glean information at a public hearing and then must respond in a limited presentation.<sup>1</sup>

I would very much appreciate receiving a copy as soon as possible of ALL previous and current filings made by the Synagogue to the Landmarks Commission on this matter.

This would to me seem to be the very minimum obligation of the Commission, and, I should not have to beg, scream, or shout to obtain this information.

II. Ex Parte Contacts

In my request of February 27, 2003, I also asked for a list of contacts between Commission members and staff on one hand and the Synagogue and its lawyers, architects, and members on the other hand. The Commission has not responded to this request. I made this request because it seemed that the Commissioners might have made up their minds prior to the February meeting, which, to me indicated substantial prior discussions with the Congregation and its advisors. I think it is important for a fair process that the nature of these contacts be revealed. I must say that whereas Commission members and staff have had tours and meetings at the Synagogue, on the

---

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps as well, the Commission should consider requiring that all applications be submitted in a digital format such as Acrobat together with digital photos of all large exhibits. Thus, information could be made easily available to the public. This is a simple matter - and this would facilitate making information available to the public.

other side, I am not aware of similar quality time with neighbors and those opposed to the Synagogue's request.

I respectfully request that each Commissioner disclose in writing all contacts had with the Synagogue and its representatives.

### III. Transcripts

In my February 27, 2003 request, I also asked for transcripts of hearings because there was a court stenographer at the last hearing. I have received no response to this request.

If a transcript was prepared and made available to the Commission or any member or staff of the Commission, then I would like to have a copy of that transcript. At the same time, I would also advise you that I would wish to bring a stenographer to the next hearing.

### IV. Standards Before the Board

As a lawyer, it is confusing to me as to what standards and procedures are being applied by the Commission. Although there may be Commission rules, these rules and procedures, oddly enough, are not posted on the Commission's web site.

I am most troubled by the Commission's willingness to consider testimony considering the "economic engine" that this project is supposed to represent, without regard to any facts relating to the costs of the project, the surplus income generated, building assets to be made available at no cost to the congregation, and the ability of the congregation to make necessary repairs to the landmark. Unless the Congregation comes clean with the economic facts, the Commission should not entertain any argument by the Congregation as to the so-called economic engine.

I would ask you under what authority can the Landmark Commission even consider the economic engine argument as to the funding of interior repairs, new educational and social feasibilities, and private condominiums.

While at the same time that the Commission is considering factors that are outside of its purview, it is ignoring and not requiring information as to factors that are relevant on what we will know will be the ultimate determination by the City Planning Commission. These factors included:

- (b) In order to grant a special permit, the City Planning Commission shall find that:
  - (1) such *bulk* modifications shall have minimal adverse effects on the structures or *open space* in the vicinity in terms of scale, location and access to light and air; and

It would be highly improper for the Landmarks Commission, by approving the Synagogue's luxury condominium, to suggest thereby to the City Planning Commission that the Landmarks Commission has reviewed these factors as to the Synagogue condominium project. Quite clearly, the Landmarks Commission has relied primarily on distorted presentations by the applicant and has not required a study of the effect of sunlight that the building will have on the surrounding area including Central Park. Moreover, the Landmarks Commission has relied on elevation drawings with a perspective of hundreds of feet in the air, drawings that have no relevance to light and air impact at the street level on W. 70th Street. Indeed, at the last hearing, one Commissioner was not even aware that 70th Street was a narrow street - this is troubling and suggests among other things that the Commission members have entertained ex parte contacts with the Synagogue including tours, but have not shown similarly openness to the opponents.. Thus, unless the Landmarks Commission creates an identifiable record that it has reviewed light and air, then the City Planning Commission may not rely upon the Landmarks Commission in making the determination required above.

Thus, I ask that the Landmarks Commission require the applicant to prepare a complete and fair presentation on the light and air issues and perspective drawings showing the present situation and the proposal from the viewpoint of someone standing on the street, not hanging from a helicopter..

#### V. FAIRNESS TO ALL VIEWS AT THE HEARINGS

At the prior Landmarks (and Community Board hearings), a pattern was established whereby the Congregation's President, Lawyers, and Architects would expound at length over matters we believe were already discussed with individual Commission members, and would repeat claims and provide comments unrelated to the legal issues before the boards. Then, having effectively utilized most of the time available, the hearing would be thrown open to the public who were told to limit their comments to 2 minutes. Even persons of great experience in these issues were basically shut down and confined to short statements and no one was able to rebut in any effective manner the carefully and lengthy presentations of the Congregation. Thus, no opponent or opponent group is able to mount a cogent opposition.

Then, the Congregation members -- whose elected and paid spokespeople had already spoken and dominated the hearing -- were considered part of the "public" and "community", further limiting the opportunity of opponents to completely express their views. This is also important, because each and every member of the Congregation stands to benefit personally from the income from the sale of the condominiums. Assuming a Congregation with 500 members, then each member would benefit to the amount of \$2000 for each million of income derived from the condominium sales, and, the profit after the cost of the condominium segment of the building is considered, will be in the tens of millions of dollars. The Congregation members will stand to benefit in the free construction of a multi-story private club building. Although designated a "Community Building", the Community being served are the members of the

"Congregation Community," who may or may not be a member of the community who live and work in the area.

Thus, at the next hearing, I request that the Congregation members who wish to speak have their time included in the time allocated to the applicant, and that opponents of the project have time allocated to their presentations and objections that equal the combined time made available to the Congregation through its officers, lawyers, architect, and members.

I hope that as a new chairman of the Commission that you will endeavor to make the Commission proceedings more transparent, to make Commission documents truly available to the public, to assure that the Commission keeps an appropriate record of all information considered by the Commission, that Commission contacts with applicants be made public, that the Commission not consider issues which are beyond its authority, and that the hearings be conducted in a manner to promote fair and equitable airing of the issues.

Sincerely,



Alan D. Sugarman

Michael Bloomberg – Mayor  
City Hall, NYC 10007  
<http://nyc.gov/html/mail/html/mayor.html> (link to an e-mail form)  
phone: 212-788-8600 fax: 212-788-2460

Gale Brewer - City Council Member  
2374 Broadway, NYC 10024  
[gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us](mailto:gale.brewer@council.nyc.ny.us)  
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Amanda Burden - City Planning Commission Chair  
22 Reade Street, NYC 10007  
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C. Virginia Fields - Manhattan Borough President  
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Jerrold Nadler - Congressman  
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phone: 212-367-7350 fax: 212-367-7356

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## Thank You For Filling Out This Form

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Name of Fields	Data
Message Type:	Request for Information
Topic:	Other
Contact Info:	Yes
M/M:	Mr.
First Name:	Alan
Middle Name:	D
Last Name:	Sugarman
Street Address:	17 W. 70 St.
Address Number:	4
City:	New York
State:	NY
Postal Code:	10023
Country:	United States
Work Phone #:	212-873-1371
Email Address:	sugarman@sugarlaw.com
	RE: 8 West 70th Street - Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue - Applications for MODIFICATION OF USE AND BULK and CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS Please provide to me, or make available to me for my inspection and or copying, as soon as possible the following: 1. All written submissions of any type by the



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Page 2 of 2

**Message:**

Congregation and its lawyers, architects, and members to the Commission or to any Members of the Commission concerning the application. 2. The written transcripts of the November 26, 2002, and the February 11, 2003 meetings relating thereto. 3. A listing with dates and nature of contact of all contacts between any of the Commissioners and the Synagogue and/or its lawyers, architects, and members or agents of the Synagogue concerning the application of the Synagogue above. This may be considered to be a request for ordinary review of public files as well as a Freedom of Information Request.

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**PETER JENNINGS**

July 1, 2003

Dear Mr. Tierney:

You do make it tough. For the second time a hearing on this issue is being held on a day when so many people in the neighborhood can be expected to have other plans. Some of us are unable to leave work; I am one of those. Others with a deep interest in the outcome believe that the hearing has again been held conveniently close to a national holiday when they have long standing plans to be somewhere else. I regret that in my case this letter must suffice.

First may I say that if the synagogue is permitted to build, my view of Central Park will not be affected. Much more importantly, I write as a neighbor, who grew up believing that when neighbors wished to do something that would have an effect on other neighbors, they would discuss it with the neighbors.

It has not happened in this case. The synagogue gives the impression of having worked to bypass the neighbors, to have its way whatever the neighbors think.

No wonder that I find the neighbors frustrated, even angry, feeling as if they don't matter.

In New York City we pride ourselves on a sense of community, the strength of which is a collection of communities. There is no sense of community in this case – and I am afraid that the synagogue's behavior appears to be the reason.

Here's what else I hear on the street: That people have lost faith in the process – the governing process – because they believe "the fix is in." It's a horrible phrase, but many of my neighbors are convinced it is true.

2/

In this case my neighbors believe that people over whom they have no influence have been working against the best interest of the neighborhood, even though the neighborhood is overwhelmingly, overwhelmingly opposed to the project.

Jack Rudin's name comes up a lot. He's done a great deal for New York City but in this neighborhood these days I hear him discussed as a member of the synagogue who wishes to have his way, and the synagogue's, no matter what the neighbor's think. ~~Surely not.~~

Sherida Paulsen's name comes up. Is it true that she is carrying out some commitment that former Chair Jennifer Raab made to the synagogue, as many are speculating? Can she tell the neighbors what the Landmark Commission's basis is for supporting the synagogue's building plan?

The neighbors don't understand.

I was really surprised to hear a member of the City Council tell me that she thought the fix was in.  
So many neighbors believe that they have been kept in the dark deliberately.

I am certainly not an expert in city planning, but people keep telling me that twenty years ago the City Planning Commission changed the zoning precisely to prevent this kind of project that will so alter a neighborhood. What has happened to change this? Why then? Why now?

I realize we may all be a bit paranoid at the moment, but I must tell you that those of us who harbor productive feelings about government - and the governing process - feel that in this instance our rights - yes, it is not too strong a word - are being ignored by people who wish to serve their own interests at the expense of the community.

07/01/2003 12:36 2128750209

LANDMARK WEST

www.protectwest70.org

PAGE 03

3/

Recently I asked one of the more activist neighbors if anyone in the neighborhood was in favor of this. "Other than the congregants," she said, "no." Other people ask me how many members of the congregation live in the neighborhood. I do not know the answer. May I petition you to have these questions answered publicly?

*MORE*

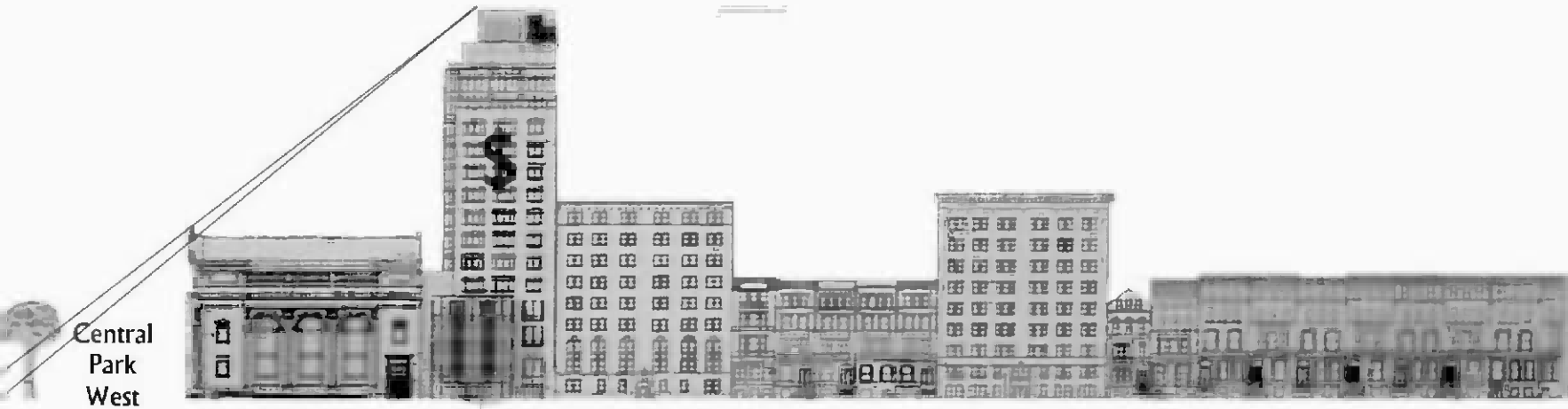
I know there are many questions, but I have taken your time. It will be very sad if in wanting to have things their way members of the synagogue, and perhaps city officials involved, ignore and alienate so many people, so many neighbors, so many citizens of a city that holds itself up as a symbol of the democratic process.

Respectfully...

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Robert Tierney', written over a large, loopy, circular flourish.

Mr. Robert Tierney  
Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
New York, NY 10007

Proposed Luxury Apartment Building - 2003



Facility for Use by Synagogue members  
 funded by proceeds from sale of luxury condominiums.

Note: To the West, the remain-  
 ing buildings on W. 70th St. are  
 brownstones. All buildings on  
 the North Side of W. 70th St.  
 are brownstones except for the  
 corner buildings.

Facade Demolished by Synagogue in 1954 Demolished by Synagogue ~ 1970



1953

Proposed North Context Elevation (Looking South)  
 As Presented by Synagogue at Community Board June 19, 2003  
 Modified To Show Context in 1953 Before  
 Synagogue Commenced to Deface and Demolish Brownstones

A206

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
March 19, 1974, Number 3  
LP-0832

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL (the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue), 99 Central Park West, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1896-97; architects Brunner & Tryon.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1122, Lot 36 in part, consisting of the land on which the described building is situated.

On November 27, 1973, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of Congregation Shearith Israel (the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue) and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. One witness spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. Congregation Shearith Israel has indicated its support of the proposed designation of its main building. It opposed the designation of its Parsonage building next to the main building, and the Commission has decided not to consider the Parsonage for designation.

#### DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel was built in 1896-97 from plans by the architectural firm of Brunner & Tryon. This masonry building, referred to as the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, is the fourth synagogue erected by the Congregation since 1729. The first building, located on what is today South William Street, provided a permanent house of worship for the Jewish settlers who had been meeting together for nearly a hundred years. Prior to the erection of the present building, the Congregation had built two other synagogues; one at 56 Crosby Street in 1833-34 and another at 5 West 19th Street in 1859-60.

The synagogue architects, Arnold W. Brunner and Thomas Tryon, had also designed the Chemistry Building of New York City College, among other important projects. This synagogue is a striking example of the monumental neo-Classical style, popular at the turn of the century for public and ecclesiastical architecture. The imposing front facade facing Central Park West is composed of four large, engaged Composite columns that embrace three round-arched openings, enclosed by elaborate bronze gates, and three round-arched windows with balustrades. The openings, which produce the effect of a loggia, lead into a porch containing the two primary entrances which are located at either side. The front columns are surmounted by an entablature with a modillioned cornice, which is also found above the two smooth ashlar surfaces flanking this central area.

Above the entablature is a high attic with smooth-faced pilasters, positioned to correspond with the columns. They enframe panels with classical wreath motifs and support a handsome low pediment with foliate detail in the tympanum, crowned by the conventional anthemion-shaped acroteria.

The 70th Street facade has end pavilions, the easternmost of which forms a part of the main massing of the front, further unified by the continuation of the front entablature along this side and the paneled attic treatment above the two pavilions. The recessed central portion has three large arched windows separated by Composite pilasters and is crowned by a handsome balustrade. The end pavilion nearest Central Park West is pierced by two windows; a square-headed window with projecting cornice and a window above it of similar proportion surmounted by swags and a pediment. An identical window with pedimented enframing appears above the side entrance at the rear pavilion. This 70th Street entrance is composed of large double doors and a transom with a handsome grille surmounted by a full entablature with foliate consoles.

Shearith Israel

### FINDINGS AND DESIGNATIONS

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Congregation Shearith Israel has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the synagogue of the Congregation Shearith Israel is a handsome example of the monumental neo-Classical style of architecture popular at the turn of the century, that it is a distinguishing feature of the Central Park West streetscape and that it symbolizes the three centuries of religious activity of the Congregation.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 63 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Congregation Shearith Israel, 99 Central Park West, Borough of Manhattan and designates as its related Landmark Site that part of Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1122, Lot 36 which contains the land on which the described building is situated.

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

1-7 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1123/29

See: 101 Central Park West

9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 21 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/26, 25, 24, 123, 23, 22

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1893-94 [NB 295-1893]

TYPE: Rowhouses (6 of 6)

ARCHITECT: Thom &amp; Wilson

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Michael Brennan

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABCC'CB

Facade(s): Brick and stone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Box

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(S)

No. 9 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 11 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 17 West 70th Street

First two stories stripped.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 19 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.



## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

23, 25, 27, 29, 31 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/21, 20, 19, 118, 18

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1891-92 [NB 1483-1891]

TYPE: Rowhouses (5 of 5)

ARCHITECT: Gilbert A. Schellenger

OWNER/DEVELOPER: John D. Taylor

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABABA

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Box

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(S)

No. 25 West 70th Street

Facade stripped/resurfaced.

No. 27 West 70th Street

Ground story resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 29 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 31 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

33, 35, 37, 39, 41 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/17, 16, 15, 114, 14

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1891-92 [NB 1192-1891]

TYPE: Rowhouses (5 of 5)

ARCHITECT: Gilbert A. Schellenger

OWNER/DEVELOPER: John &amp; George Ruddell

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABABA

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Straight and box

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 41 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

43, 45, 47, 49, 51 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/13, 12, 111, 11, 10

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1890-91 [NB 1851-1890]

TYPE: Rowhouses (5 of 5)

ARCHITECT: Gilbert A. Schellenger

OWNER/DEVELOPER: George Ruddell

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival with Romanesque Revival elements

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABABA

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

43, 45, 47, 49, 51 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/13, 12, 111, 11, 10

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Straight and box

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 43 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 51 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

53, 55 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/9, 8

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1890-91 [NB 1257-1890]

TYPE: Rowhouses (2 of 2)

ARCHITECT: Charles Buek &amp; Co.

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Charles Buek &amp; Co.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: Mirror image

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

53, 55 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/9, 8

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 53 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created, ornament stripped.

1959: Alt 1258-1959 [Source: Alteration Application]

Architect -- Frank S. Lindgren

Owners -- Samuel Pugatch & Benjamin Hackel

Cornice removed.

Projecting bay extended and joined with No. 55; facade resurfaced and ground story refaced.

No. 55 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created, ornament stripped.

1959: Alt 1259-1959 [Source: Alteration Application]

Architect -- Frank S. Lindgren

Owners -- Samuel Pugatch & Benjamin Hackel

Cornice removed.

Projecting bay extended and joined with No. 53; facade resurfaced and ground story refaced.

57, 59, 61, 63 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/7, 6, 105, 5

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1890-91 [NB 845-1890]

TYPE: Rowhouses (4 of 4)

ARCHITECT: Charles Buek & Co.

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Charles Buek & Co.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival with Queen Anne elements

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABAC

**WEST 70TH STREET**

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

57, 59, 61, 63 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1123/7, 6, 105, 5

**ORIGINAL ROW DATA (continued)**

Facade(s): Brick, stone, and ironwork

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood  
Arched transoms/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

**ALTERATION(S)**No. 57 West 70th Street

Cornice removed. Ground story refaced, facade resurfaced,  
and one transom filled in.

1959: Alt 1069-1959 [Source: Alteration Application]

Architect -- Frank S. Lindgren

Owners -- Samuel Pugatch & Benjamin Hackel

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 59 West 70th Street

Ground story refaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 61 West 70th Street

Ground story refaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 63 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

65 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1123/1

See: 221-223 Columbus Avenue

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

2-4 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/36

See: 99 Central Park West

8 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/37 in part

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): Polonies Talmud Torah School

DATE: 1949 [NB 160-1949]

TYPE: School

ARCHITECT: Kahn &amp; Jacobs

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Trustees of Cong. Shearith Israel

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Modern

Facade(s): Stone

Number of Stories: 4

Window Type/Material: Two-over-two/Steel

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: Two five-story brick-fronted rowhouses

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

8 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/37 in part

## ALTERATION(S)

Cast-stone facade installed.

1953: Alt 679-1953 [Source: Alteration Application]

Architect -- Cole & Liebman Owner -- Congregation Shearith Israel

10 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/37 in part

DATE: 1970

VACANT LOT

Site formerly occupied by: One rowhouse

## ALTERATION(S)

One rowhouse demolished (NB 351-92, Buchman & Deisler)

1970: Demo 467-1970 [Source: Demolition Application]

Owner -- Congregation Shearith Israel Wrecker -- Demex Corp.  
Demolition

12-18 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/40

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1926 [NB 590-1925]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: George F. Pelham

OWNER/DEVELOPER: 16 West 70th Street Corp.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance with neo-Romanesque elements

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

12-18 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/40

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Brick and limestone

Number of Stories: 9

Window Type/Material: Six-over-six double-hung/Wood

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: Four stone-fronted rowhouses of four stories with  
basements

20 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/43

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1892 [NB 351-1892]

TYPE: Rowhouse (1 of 6)

ARCHITECT: Buchman &amp; Deisler

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Mary A. Collieran

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(S)

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.



**WEST 70TH STREET**

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

22, 24, 26, 28 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1122/44, 45, 145, 46

**ORIGINAL ROW DATA****DATE:** 1892 [NB 736-1892]**TYPE:** Rowhouses (4 of 4)**ARCHITECT:** Thom & Wilson**OWNER/DEVELOPER:** Bernard Kavanagh**STYLE/ORNAMENT:** Renaissance Revival with Romanesque elements**ROW CONFIGURATION:** ABBA**Facade(s):** Brownstone**Number of Stories:** 4 with basement**Window Type/Material:** One-over-one double-hung/Wood**Basement Type:** Raised**Stoop Type:** Box and straight**Roof Type/Material:** Flat and pitched/Tin and slate**Method of Construction:** Masonry bearing walls**ALTERATION(S)**No. 26 West 70th Street

Basement and parlor stories stripped/resurfaced, cornice and  
 pitched roof removed, and one fourth-story window filled in.  
 Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

30-36 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/47

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1916 [NB 15-1916]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Schwartz &amp; Gross

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Julius Fishman &amp; Sons, Inc.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance

Facade(s): Brick, stone, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 9

Window Type/Material: Paired nine-over-nine double-hung/Wood  
Tripartite nine-over-nine/Wood  
(with six-over-six sidelights)Method of Construction: Steel frame construction  
FireproofSite formerly occupied by: Four brick-fronted rowhouses of four stories with  
basements

38 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/50

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1888-89 [NB 1397-1888]

TYPE: Rowhouse (1 of 5)

ARCHITECT: Charles W. Clinton

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Addraetta Goodwin

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance/Romanesque Revival

WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

38 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/50

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Brick and stone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood  
Leaded-glass transoms/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Box

Roof Type/Material: Gabled &amp; pitched/Tile

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1122/51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 157, 58, 59

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1891-92 [NB 937-1891]

TYPE: Rowhouses (10 of 10)

ARCHITECT: Thom &amp; Wilson

OWNER/DEVELOPER: J.T. &amp; J.A. Farley

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival with Neo-Grec elements

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABABABABAB

Facade(s): Brick and stone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Straight and boxed

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 40 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 54 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

**WEST 70TH STREET**

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

40, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50, 52, 54, 56, 58 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1122/51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 157, 58, 59

**ALTERATION(s) continued****No. 56 West 70th Street**

Ground story refaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

**No. 58 West 70th Street**

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

60, 62, 64 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1122/60, 160, 61

**ORIGINAL ROW DATA**

DATE: 1886-89 [NB 904-1886]

TYPE: Rowhouses (3 of 3)

ARCHITECT: Hubert &amp; Pirsson

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Sarah J. Doying

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Queen Anne

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABA

Facade(s): Brick, stone and ironwork

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Roof Type/Material: Pitched and gabled/Slate

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

**ALTERATION(s)****No. 60 West 70th Street**

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

**No. 62 West 70th Street**

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [South Side]

60, 62, 64 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1122/60, 160, 61

## ALTERATION(s) continued

No. 64 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

68 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/62

See: 219 Columbus Avenue

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [North Side]

101 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1142/32

See: 220-228 Columbus Avenue

103, 105, 107, 109 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/31, 30, 129, 29

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1885-86 [NB 1186-1885]

TYPE: Rowhouses (4 of 4)

ARCHITECT: Thom &amp; Wilson

OWNER/DEVELOPER: John Farley &amp; Son

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Queen Anne/Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABBC

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [North Side]

103, 105, 107, 109 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/31, 30, 129, 29

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 103 West 70th Street

First two stories extended to building line; storefront installed.

No. 105 West 70th Street

Ground story resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 107 West 70th Street

Ground story resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 109 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

111, 113 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/28, 27

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1885 [NB 593-1885]

TYPE: Rowhouses (2 of 4)

ARCHITECT: Gilbert A. Schellenger

OWNER/DEVELOPER: George C. Edgar &amp; Son

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: AB

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [North Side]

111, 113 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/28, 27

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 111 West 70th Street

Ground story partially stripped/resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 113 West 70th Street

First two stories partially stripped/resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

115-123 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1142/24

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): The Stratford Arms

DATE: 1928 [NB 414-1927]

TYPE: Hotel

ARCHITECT: C. Howard Crane &amp; Assocs.

OWNER/DEVELOPER: N.C.H. Security Co.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance with Gothic elements

Facade(s): Brick, stone, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 10

Window Type/Material: Six-over-six double-hung/Wood

Two-over-two double-hung/Wood

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Site formerly occupied by: Five stone-fronted rowhouses of four stories with  
basements

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [North Side]

125, 127 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/23, 22

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1886 [NB 222-1886]

TYPE: Rowhouses (2 of 5)

ARCHITECT: Gilbert A. Schellenger

OWNER/DEVELOPER: George C. Edgar &amp; Son

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

ROW CONFIGURATION: AB

Facade(s): Brownstone and ironwork

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Unknown

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 125 West 70th Street

Ground story refaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 127 West 70th Street

Ground story refaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.



WEST 70TH STREET  
Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [North Side]

129, 131, 133 West 70th Street  
Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/21, 120, 20

#### ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1884-86 [NB 600-1884]  
TYPE: Rowhouses (3 of 8)  
ARCHITECT: Thom & Wilson  
OWNER/DEVELOPER: George W. Hamilton  
STYLE/ORNAMENT: Queen Anne with Neo-Grec elements  
ROW CONFIGURATION: ABB  
Facade(s): Brownstone  
Number of Stories: 4 with basement  
Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood  
Basement Type: Raised  
Stoop Type: Straight  
Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

#### ALTERATION(s)

##### No. 131 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

##### No. 133 West 70th Street

Building raised one story and mansard roof added.  
1902: Alt 1142-1902 [Source: Alteration Application]  
Architect -- Ross & McNeil Owner -- Lafflin L. Kellogg  
Former entrance at parlor story sealed, area resurfaced.  
Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [North Side]

135-145 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1142/1001-1087

#### ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): (former) Pythian Temple

DATE: 1926-27 [NB 204-1926]

TYPE: Club Building

ARCHITECT: Thomas White Lamb

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Pythian Temple Association

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Exotic/Neo-Babylonian

Facade(s): Stone, brick, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 8

Window Type/Material: Multipane/Steel

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: Six four-story rowhouses

#### ALTERATION(s)

Building converted to apartment building; windows cut into facade, terra cotta removed.

1979: Alt 1311-1979 [Source: Alteration Application]

Architect -- David Gura

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Amsterdam Avenue [North Side]

147-153 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1142/61

See: 146-150 West 71st Street

155-157 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1142/1

See: 2040-2052 Broadway

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Amsterdam Avenue [South Side].

100-106 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1141/1001-1084

See: 210-216 Columbus Avenue

112-116 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1141/37

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1922 [NB 44-1922]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Sommerfeld &amp; Steckler

OWNER/DEVELOPER: 114 West 70th Street Corp.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance

Facade(s): Brick, stone, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 8 with basement

Window Type/Material: Paired six-over-six double-hung/Wood

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: Three rowhouses of four stories with basements

WEST 70TH STREET  
Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [South Side]  
  
118-126 West 70th Street  
Tax Map Block/Lot: 1141/39

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1917 [NB 429-1916]  
  
TYPE: Apartment Building  
  
ARCHITECT: Rouse & Goldstone  
  
OWNER/DEVELOPER: Brixton Realty Corp.  
  
STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Georgian  
  
Facade(s): Brick, stone, and terra cotta  
Number of Stories: 8 with basement  
Window Type/Material: Paired six-over-six double-hung/Wood  
Four-over-four double-hung/Wood  
Method of Construction: Steel frame construction  
Fireproof  
Site formerly occupied by: Five rowhouses of four stories with basements

## ALTERATION(s)

Parapet wall and portions of facade repointed.

128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140 & 142 West 70th Street  
Tax Map Block/Lots: 1141/43, 44, 144, 45, 46, 47, 48

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1881-83 [NB 953-1881]  
  
TYPE: Rowhouses (8 of 16)  
  
ARCHITECT: Charles H. Lindsley  
  
OWNER/DEVELOPER: Charles H. Lindsley  
  
STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Grec/Queen Anne  
  
ROW CONFIGURATION: AAA'BBBBC

WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [South Side]

128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140 &amp; 142 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1141/43, 44, 144, 45, 46, 47, 48

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Brownstone and brick

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Straight

Roof Type/Material: Mansard and flat/Slate and tin

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(s)

No. 134 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 136 West 70th Street

Lintels resurfaced.

No. 138 West 70th Street

Lintels resurfaced.

Parlor-story ornament stripped.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 140 West 70th Street

Facade partially stripped/resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

No. 142 West 70th Street

Cornice removed, facade partially stripped/resurfaced.

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

## WEST 70TH STREET

Between Columbus Avenue and Broadway [South Side]

144, 146, 148 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lots: 1141/49, 149, 50

## ORIGINAL ROW DATA

DATE: 1888-89 [NB 31-1888]

TYPE: Rowhouses (3 of 3)

ARCHITECT: Christian Steinmetz

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Christian Steinmetz

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Queen Anne

ROW CONFIGURATION: ABB'

Facade(s): Brownstone

Number of Stories: 4 with basement

Window Type/Material: One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised

Stoop Type: Straight

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(S)

No. 146 West 70th Street

Stoop removed; basement entrance created.

150-154 West 70th Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1141/51

See: 2028-2032 Broadway

## WEST 71ST STREET

Between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue [North Side]

1-15 West 71st Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1124/27

See: 115 Central Park West

17-23 West 71st Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1124/21

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1923 [NB 607-1922]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: George F. Pelham

OWNER/DEVELOPER: 17 West 71st Street, Inc.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance

Facade(s): Brick and stone

Number of Stories: 9

Window Type/Material: Paired six-over-one double-hung/Wood

Six-over-one double-hung/Wood

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: Three rowhouses of four stories with basements  
and one vacant lot

25 West 71st Street

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1124/20

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1890-91 [NB 636-1890]

TYPE: Rowhouse (1 of 4)

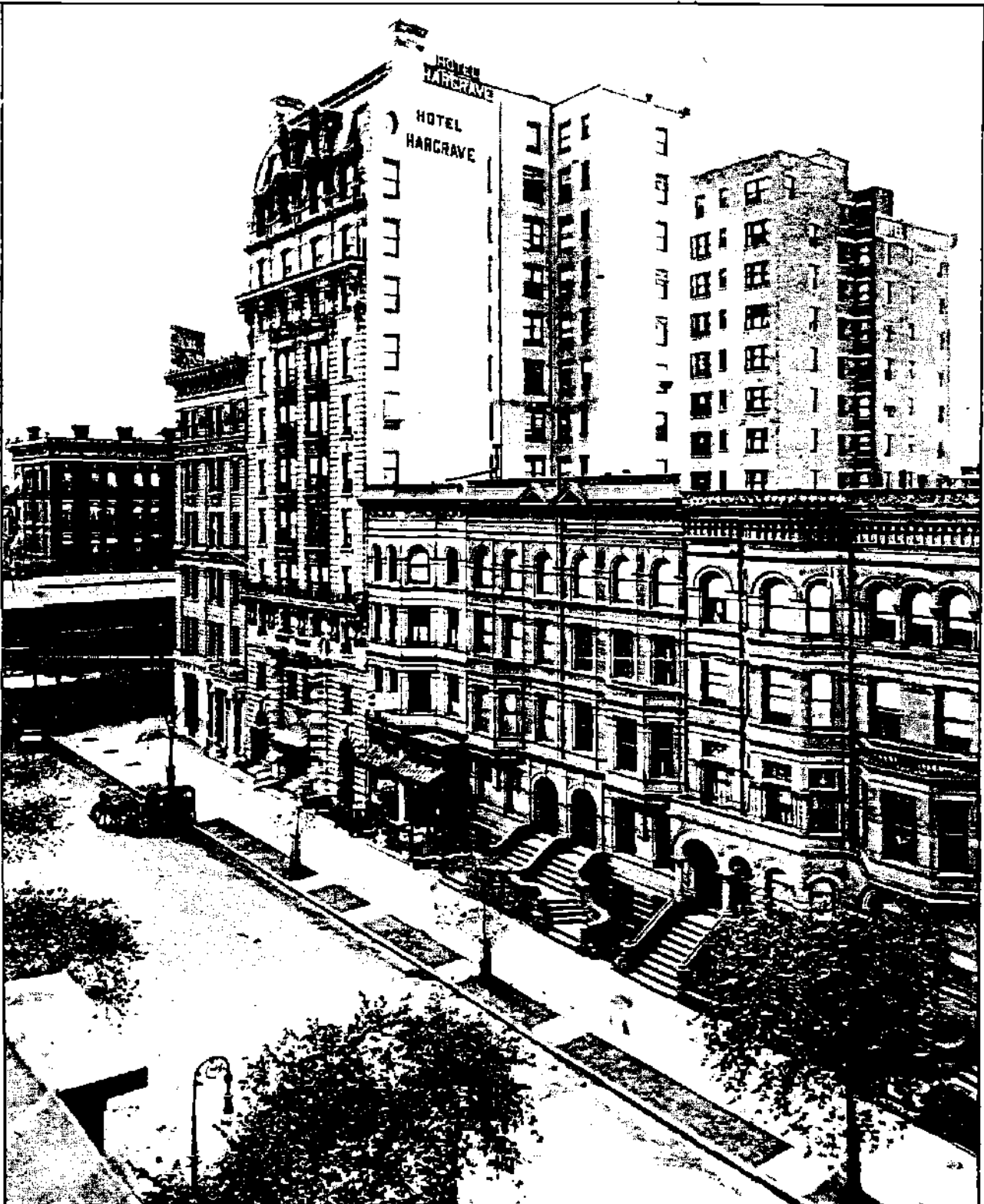
ARCHITECT: Cleverdon & Putzel

OWNERS/DEVELOPERS: Belle Levy and Estelle Putzel

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Renaissance Revival

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

UPPER WEST SIDE/CENTRAL PARK WEST  
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REPORT  
VOLUME I: ESSAYS/ARCHITECTS' APPENDIX  
April 24, 1990

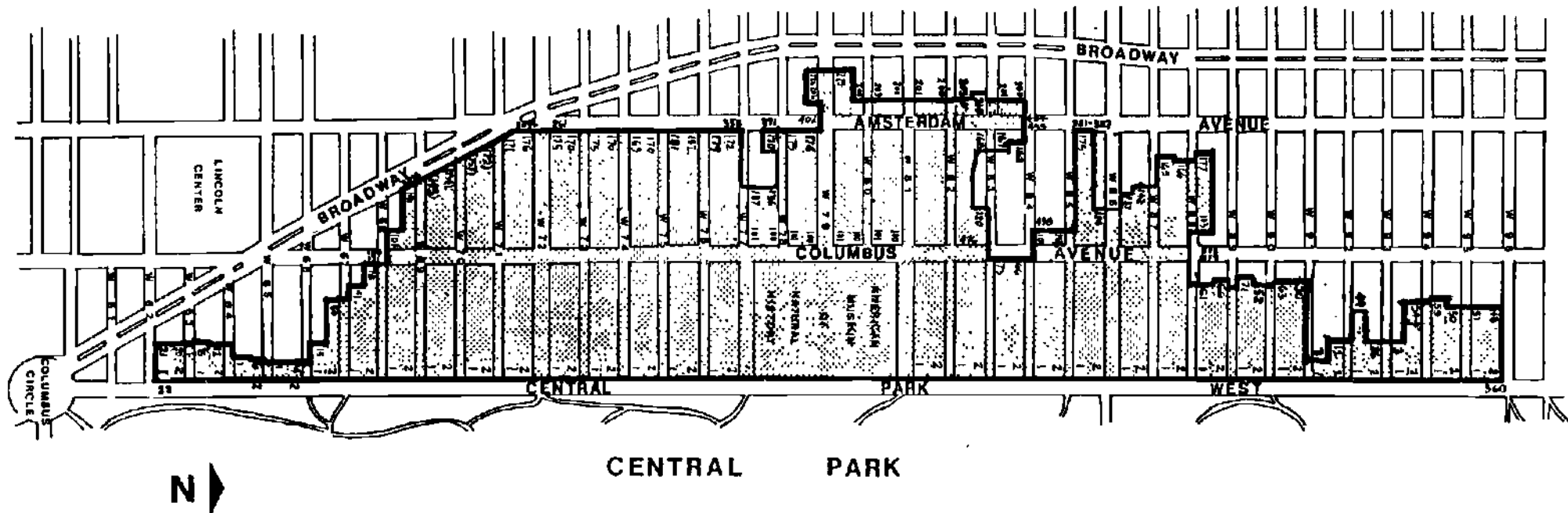






# UPPER WEST SIDE / CENTRAL PARK WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

DESIGNATED APRIL 24, 1990  
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION



NUMBERS INDICATE BUILDINGS WITHIN BOUNDARIES OF HISTORIC DISTRICT

N.Y.C. Landmarks Preservation Commission

UPPER WEST SIDE/CENTRAL PARK WEST  
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION REPORT

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Cover Photo: 100 Block of West 72nd Street (c. 1913)  
[New York Historical Society]

### Acknowledgements

The study of a potential historic district along Central Park West and research on the area required the participation of many people over the course of many years. In 1981 Commission Chairman Kent Barwick directed the staff to begin the process of survey and analysis of the entire Upper West Side from 59th Street to 110th Street in order to recommend potential landmarks and historic districts. The Urban Cultural Resources Survey and then the Bronx-Upper Manhattan staff turned its efforts to this area in 1981-82; many community residents, volunteers, and student interns participated in this preliminary survey and research process, which was carried out at the same time and coordinated with a study of the area's zoning by the Manhattan office of the Department of City Planning. During the summer of 1982 staff member Jay Shockley was assisted by student intern Lisa Schroeder in completing a building-by-building field survey of the Upper West Side. Based on this survey, the Bronx-Upper Manhattan staff (Charles Hasbrouck, Edward Mohylowski, Gina Santucci, Jay Shockley, Marjorie Thau, Jeremy Woodoff) made a set of recommendations to the Chairman. Attention was at first focused on the area west of Broadway in 1983, the first district designation being the West End-Collegiate Historic District in 1984. After the Commission's staff was reorganized in July 1984, the Research Department (Marjorie Pearson, Anthony Robins, Janet Adams, James T. Dillon, Jay Shockley) made further recommendations which culminated in public hearings and designations of landmarks and historic districts west of Broadway and, later, hearings on individual buildings to the east. The Commissioners began a series of field trips to and discussions on a potential historic district in the area of the Upper West Side east of Broadway in 1985.

In 1983 following study by the New York State Historic Preservation Office, the Central Park West Historic District consisting of the buildings facing on Central Park from 61st to 96th Streets was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Commission wishes to thank its student interns and volunteers of this period, among them: William Bernstein, Patra Cogan, Evelyn Costa, Anita Jacobson, Robert Jaeger, Jonathan Kuhn, Jeanne Martowski, Glenn Naumowitz, Dennis Pidgeon, Thomas Reynolds, Sarah Williams and Albert Winn.

Assisting in the public hearing and public hearing/designation notification process were Research Department staff members Marion Cleaver, Alec Hemer, Lisa Koenigsberg, and Susan Strauss. Alex Herrera, Director of Preservation, and Laura Alaimo, Deputy Director of Preservation, participated in the study of the commercial architecture of the district.

The Commission expresses its appreciation to the residents of the Upper West Side who have assisted the Commission in its efforts to identify and designate those buildings and districts which have architectural, historic, cultural and aesthetic significance. The Commission also thanks Landmark West!, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the New York Landmarks Preservation Foundation for their support, particularly Robert Nieweg of Landmark West! who assisted in the coordination of the photography of the district.

# Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District

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### Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District Boundaries

The Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District consists of the property bounded by a line beginning at the southwest corner of the intersection of Central Park West and West 96th Street, extending southerly along the western curb line of Central Park West, westerly along the northern curb line of West 62nd Street, northerly along the western property line of 25 Central Park West, northerly across West 63rd Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 63rd Street, northerly and easterly along the western and northern property lines of 13-15 West 63rd Street, northerly along part of the western property line of 3-11 West 63rd Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 64th Street, northerly across West 64th Street, northerly and easterly along the western and part of the northern property lines of 41 Central Park West, northerly along the western property line of 50 Central Park West, easterly along the southern curb line of West 65th Street, northerly across West 65th Street, northerly along the western property line of 51-53 Central Park West, westerly and northerly along part of the southern and the western property lines of 55 Central Park West, northerly across West 66th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 66th Street, northerly along part of the western building line of 8 West 67th Street, westerly along the southern property lines of 26-50 West 67th Street, northerly along the western property line of 42-50 West 67th Street, northerly across West 67th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 67th Street, northerly along the western property line of 39-41 West 67th Street, westerly along part of the southern property line of 60-66 West 68th Street, westerly along the southern property lines of 68-76 West 68th Street and 171-179 Columbus Avenue, northerly along the eastern curb line of Columbus Avenue, northerly across West 68th Street to the northeast corner of Columbus Avenue, westerly across Columbus Avenue, westerly along the northern curb line of West 68th Street, northerly along the western property lines of 180-188 Columbus Avenue, westerly along the southern property lines of 108-120 West 69th Street and the irregular southern property lines of 122-128 West 69th Street and 2016-2018 Broadway (as determined by the City Surveyor's Map), northwesterly and northerly along the eastern curb line of Broadway, northerly across West 72nd Street, northerly along the eastern curb line of Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along the southern curb line of West 77th Street, northerly across West 77th Street, northerly and easterly along the western and part of the northern property lines of 137 West 77th Street, northerly along the western property lines of Lot 148 and 136 West 78th Street, northerly across West 78th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 78th Street, southerly across West 78th Street, southerly along the eastern property lines of 371-375 Amsterdam Avenue, westerly along the southern property line of 371 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly along the eastern curb line of Amsterdam Avenue to the southeast corner of West 79th Street, westerly across Amsterdam Avenue, westerly along the southern curb line of West 79th Street, southerly



along the eastern property line of 206 West 79th Street, westerly along the southern property lines of 206-226 West 79th Street, northerly along the western property line of 226 West 79th Street, northerly across West 79th Street, northerly along the western property line of 225 West 79th Street, easterly along the northern property lines of 225-203 West 79th Street, northerly along the western property lines of 410-416 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly across West 80th Street, northerly along the western property lines of 203 West 80th Street and 428-434 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly across West 81st Street, northerly along the western property lines of 440-446 Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along part of the northern property line of 444-446 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly along the western property lines of 448-454 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly across West 82nd Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 82nd Street, northerly along the western property lines of 460-466 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly along part of the western property line of 208 West 83rd Street, northwesterly along part of the southern property line of 208 West 83rd Street and the southern property line of 210 West 83rd Street, northerly along the western property line of 210 West 83rd Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 83rd Street, northerly across West 83rd Street, northerly along the western property lines of 480-486 Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along part of the northern property line of 486 Amsterdam Avenue, northerly along the western property lines of 488-494 Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along the southern curb line of West 84th Street, southerly along the eastern property lines of 495-489 Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along part of the northern property line of 487 Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along the northern property lines of 173-167 West 83rd Street, southerly along the eastern property line of 167 West 83rd Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 83rd Street, southerly across West 83rd Street, southerly along the eastern property line of 471-475 Amsterdam Avenue (aka 168 West 83rd Street), southeasterly along part of the northern property line of 159 West 82nd Street and the northern property lines of 157-137 West 82nd Street, northerly along part of the western property line of 135 West 82nd Street, easterly along the northern property lines of 135- 113 West 82nd Street, northerly along the western property line of 120 West 83rd Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 83rd Street to the southeast corner of Columbus Avenue, northerly across West 83rd Street, northerly along the eastern curb line of Columbus Avenue to the northeast corner of West 84th Street, westerly across Columbus Avenue, westerly along the northern curb line of West 84th Street, northerly along the western property lines of 498-504 Columbus Avenue and 102-104 West 85th Street, northerly across West 85th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 85th Street, northerly along the eastern curb line of Amsterdam Avenue, easterly along the northern property lines of 521-527 Amsterdam Avenue and 173-163 West 85th Street and part of the northern property line of 159-161 West 85th Street, southerly along part of the eastern property line of 159-161 West 85th Street, easterly along part of the northern property line of 159-161 West 85th Street and the northern property lines of 157-119 West 85th Street, northerly along the western property line of 124 West 86th Street, northerly across West 86th Street, westerly along the northern curbline of West 86th Street, northerly along the western property line of 137 West 86th Street, westerly along part of the southern property line of 140 West 87th Street and the southern property line of 142 West 87th Street, northerly along the western property line of

142 West 87th Street, northerly across West 87th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 87th Street, northerly and westerly along the western and northern property lines of 169 West 87th Street, northerly along the western property line of 166 West 88th Street, northerly across West 88th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 88th Street, northerly along the western property line of 177 West 88th Street, easterly along the northern property lines of 177-103 West 88th Street, southerly along the eastern property line of 103 West 88th Street, southerly across West 88th Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 88th Street and continuing easterly after crossing Columbus Avenue, northerly across West 88th Street, northerly along the western property line of 61 West 88th Street, westerly along part of the southern property line of 64 West 89th Street, westerly and northerly along the southern and western property lines of 66 West 89th Street, northerly across West 89th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 89th Street, northerly along the western property line of 71 West 89th Street, easterly along the northern property lines of 71-65 West 89th Street and part of the northern property line of 63 West 89th Street, northerly along the western property line of 52 West 90th Street, northerly across West 90th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 90th Street, northerly and easterly along the western and part of the northern property lines of 63 West 90th Street, northerly along the western property line of 70 West 91st Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 91st Street, northerly across West 91st Street, northerly along the western property line of 315 Central Park West, westerly and northerly along part of the southern and the western property lines of 320 Central Park West, northerly across West 92nd Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 92nd Street, northerly along the western property line of 49 West 92nd Street, easterly along the northern property lines of 49-35 West 92nd Street, northerly along part of the western property line of 4-36 West 93rd Street (aka 3-33 West 92nd Street), easterly along the southern curb line of West 93rd Street, northerly across West 93rd Street, northerly along the western property line of 333 Central Park West, westerly along part of the southern property line 336 Central Park West and the southern property lines of 20-54 West 94th Street, northerly along the western property line of 54 West 94th Street, northerly across West 94th Street, westerly along the northern curb line of West 94th Street, northerly and easterly along the western and part of the northern property lines of 59 West 94th Street, northerly along the western property line of 46-50 West 95th Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 95th Street, northerly across West 95th Street, northerly along the western property lines of 51 West 95th Street and 46-48 West 96th Street, easterly along the southern curb line of West 96th Street to the point of beginning.

### Testimony at the Public Hearing

On January 12-13, 1988, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of this historic district (Item No. 1). The hearing, duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law, was held at the Universalist Church, Central Park West and West 76th Street, and lasted from 10:45 a.m. to 1:17 a.m. One hundred twenty-four people offered testimony; ninety-four spoke in favor of designation, and thirty spoke in opposition to the designation of the district in whole or in part. The Commission has received over 350 letters expressing support for the district, approximately two dozen against, and several expressing uncertainty.

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The Commission voted to designate the district the day Laurie Beckelman's appointment to the Commission was affirmed by the City Council. The vote was taken before she took her place on the Commission.

## INTRODUCTION

The Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, encompassing some 2000 buildings, extends from 62nd Street to 96th Street along Central Park West, from 68th Street to 88th Street along Columbus Avenue, from 69th Street to 72nd Street along Broadway, from 72nd Street to 84th Street and the northeast corner of 85th Street along Amsterdam, and includes side street blocks connecting the avenues and portions of two 79th Street blockfronts west of Amsterdam Avenue. Central Park West with its high wall of buildings and dramatic skyline facing Central Park West forms a regular edge at the eastern boundary. The lower portion of Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway, also with high walls of buildings, form a similar regular edge at the western boundary.

The district evokes the distinctive qualities of the Upper West Side, from its powerful iconography of twin towers along Central Park West to its active commerce along Columbus Avenue to its residential side streets. The initial development of the neighborhood reflects a concentrated boom in the city's expansion, supported by transportation improvements on the avenues. Although later construction, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s, replaced some of the original buildings, it has enhanced the vibrant quality of the Upper West Side both socially and architecturally.

The district is defined by its large concentration of architecturally distinctive and high quality buildings which characterize the development of the Upper West Side east of Broadway over a fifty year period from the 1880s to the 1930s. The district encompasses a number of residential building types, as well as related institutional and commercial buildings. The complex historical and architectural interrelationship among these buildings is one of the factors which helps to define the character of the district. Speculatively-built three-, four-, and five-story rowhouses, designed as harmonious groups, were constructed within a relatively short span of years (1880-1910)<sup>1</sup> that ended in the first decade of the twentieth century. These rowhouses, the predominant residential building type in the district, are located on the side streets throughout the district and survive in isolated groups on Central Park West and the cross streets of West 72nd, West 79th, and West 86th Streets. Contemporaneous with the rowhouses are five- and six-story neo-Grec and Romanesque Revival style tenements and flats building which are predominantly located on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. Many were built in conjunction with side street rowhouses, and are related to the rowhouses in height, scale, material, and architectural detail. Somewhat taller eight to twelve-story apartment hotels and studio buildings, found on both avenues and the streets, began to be built in the 1890s. Larger twelve- to seventeen-story apartment buildings, which are particularly prevalent along Central Park West and the major cross streets, were constructed during two phases, before and after World War I. These were

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<sup>1</sup>A few rowhouses were constructed in the early 1870s, prior to the Panic of 1873.

designed by a number of prominent architects, among them Rosario Candela, Mulliken & Moeller, Neville & Bagge, George F. Pelham, and Schwartz & Gross. Many of the multiple dwellings, particularly the tenements, flats, and apartment hotels, were designed with commercial space at street level. A few specially designed commercial buildings are located on the avenues and West 72nd Street. Throughout the period of development of the district, a variety of specialized buildings designed by some of the city's most prestigious architects have been constructed to meet the social, educational, and religious needs of the residents, and these complement the residential buildings and enhance the architectural character of the area.

The development of the district was affected by several factors. Plans for Central Park in the 1850s led to the first wave of land speculation on the Upper West Side, particularly along Central Park West. A small flurry of rowhouse construction which began in the early 1870s, was halted by the financial Panic of 1873. The 1880s were the first major decade of development in the area, signalled by the opening of the Ninth Avenue El in 1879 and the opening of a cable car route along Tenth Avenue. Development of both rowhouses and multiple dwellings tended to cluster around the stations of the El. By the end of the decade, these two building types, which help define the character of the district, had been firmly established.

The unusually long side street block which form the heart of the district were initially built up with long rows of houses which present a picture of the final years of rowhouse construction in Manhattan. These rows unify the streetscapes by consistent height, setback, and overall form, although the rows are stylistically varied and there is often a great deal of variety in form and ornamental detail within each row, thus producing a multiplicity of configurations (for example, ABCDCBA). High stoops and the earth tones of brick and brownstone facades are other qualities which unify the rowhouses. While over 100 architects designed rowhouses within the district, certain of them made a major impact, including Henry J. Hardenbergh, Neville & Bagge, Gilbert A. Schellenger, and Thom & Wilson and the presence of their work is another unifying characteristic. The avenue ends of the side street blockfronts contain flats and tenements which relate to the rowhouses in height, scale, material, and architectural detail, and were often designed by the same architects. In the years following World War, apartment buildings began to interrupt rows of houses on the side streets. The resultant eight- to ten-story buildings relate to the rowhouses in materials and architectural details even though twice the height of the rowhouses.

The 100-foot wide cross streets of the district, West 72nd Street, West 79th Street, and West 86th Street, are individually distinctive. Like the side streets, the wider cross streets were initially built up with rowhouses, often grander and more elaborate than those on the narrower side streets. Isolated groups of these survive on all three streets. The blockfronts of West 72nd Street and West 79th Street closest to Broadway began to be transformed for commercial use in the early years of the twentieth century. In some instances, extensions containing commercial storefronts were inserted into the lower two stories of existing rowhouses

and brought out to the building line. In other instances, particularly on West 72nd Street, this transformation resulted in the replacement of rowhouses by small commercial buildings or the complete alteration of rowhouses with new facades at the building line; both types of alterations maintained the rowhouse scale. Taller apartment hotels, often ten or more stories, were introduced in the early years of the twentieth century on the easterly blockfronts of West 72nd Street, West 79th Street, and along West 86th Street, as well as on the commercial blockfronts of West 72nd Street. On the same non-commercial cross-street blockfronts most of the 1880s rowhouses were replaced by tall apartment buildings in the years following World War I, and these buildings, in many ways similar to those found on Central Park West, play an important part in defining the character of these cross streets in the district.

Central Park West developed more slowly and unevenly than the side streets and avenues to the west, although the Dakota (1880-84) at West 72nd Street was the first major residential building constructed in the area. The character of Central Park West is enhanced by such major institutional buildings as the American Museum of Natural History and the New-York Historical Society, begun in the nineteenth century, as well as several turn-of-the-century religious buildings. The Central Park West that we know today as one of New York's grandest residential streets was largely built in the twentieth century, and its tall apartment buildings fall roughly into three stylistic categories: Beaux-Arts inspired from the first decade of the century and designed by such architects as Clinton & Russell, Robert T. Lyons, and Townsend, Steinle & Haskell; neo-Renaissance from the 1920s and designed by such architects as George & Edward Blum, Emery Roth, and Schwartz & Gross; and Art Deco towers from the late 1920s and early 1930s designed by such architects as Irwin Chanin, Emery Roth, and Schwartz & Gross. Among the latter two categories are the highly characteristic multi-towered buildings, all of which are designated New York City Landmarks. The side street facades of the Central Park West apartment buildings impact on the side street blocks, usually displaying materials and details that are compatible with the rowhouses. Built over the entire development span of the district, the stylistically diverse buildings of Central Park West create a streetscape and a skyline which is exuberant and varied as to scale, height, and form. Its silhouette when viewed from Central Park is a special and unique feature of New York City. Incorporated within this district are two pre-existing districts which focused on Central Park West and the adjacent side street blocks: Central Park West-West 73rd-74th Streets and Central Park West-76th Street.

Columbus Avenue retains a character which reflects its historic nature as a transportation route. It was largely built up with flats and tenements which incorporated commercial storefronts at street level during the same years that rowhouses were being constructed on the side streets. This commercial role has survived to the present, making the avenue a strong spine in the district. Little original storefront fabric survives, but stretches of facades of relatively uniform height and scale give the avenue its distinctive character. In some cases, the flats and tenements have been interrupted by twentieth-century apartment buildings, but these buildings also have storefronts at street level which reinforce the avenue's

commercial character.

Amsterdam Avenue shares a number of characteristics with Columbus Avenue. Like that avenue, it was built up with tenements and flats over a roughly ten-year period (1885-1895), and these buildings were designed with storefronts at street level. These buildings share a relationship with the rowhouses on the side streets which is similar to that between the flats buildings on Columbus and the side street rowhouses. Along the stretch of the avenue between West 80th and West 84th Streets, this character is retained on both sides. On the east side of the avenue, south of 79th Street, the earlier flats buildings have been interrupted by taller twentieth-century apartment buildings, also with street-level storefronts. Despite the avenue's consistent commercial character, the storefront fabric has undergone a lesser degree of change than storefronts on Columbus, and shows a greater harmony with the architectural character of the upper stories of the buildings.

South of West 79th Street on Amsterdam, the wall of apartment buildings on the western boundary of the district may be seen as a counterpart to the wall along Central Park West on the eastern boundary of the district. Along both Central Park West and Amsterdam, the apartment buildings are similar in height, scale, and detail, were often designed by the same architects, and were built during the same time period. Here too, the side street facades of the Amsterdam Avenue apartment buildings interact with the rowhouses on the side streets. The portion of Broadway within the district, south of 72nd Street, is effectively a southern continuation of Amsterdam Avenue, and with its twelve-story apartment buildings and nineteen-story hotel building, continues the role of Amsterdam in defining the western boundary of the district.

Thus Central Park West, Broadway, and Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues are linked by the side street blocks and several cross streets. All have a rich variety of interrelated buildings which produce a complex urban area constituting a distinct section of the city.

Marjorie Pearson

## THE GENERAL HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UPPER WEST SIDE/CENTRAL PARK WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

### Prelude to Development

The area of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District developed primarily as a residential neighborhood over a roughly fifty-year period from the 1880s to the 1930s. The appearance of the Upper West Side is a reflection of economic and speculative building patterns and the collaborative efforts of speculators, developers, and architects. The rowhouses within the district, built within a relatively short span of years that ended in the first decade of the twentieth century, present a picture of the final phase of single-family rowhouse construction in Manhattan. Multiple dwellings of various kinds, beginning with tenements and flats and followed by apartment hotels, studio buildings, and apartment buildings, were constructed throughout the period of development in the district. The result, little changed since the 1930s, is a complexly interwoven urban neighborhood characterized by a mix of residential building types.

The documented history of the Upper West Side begins soon after the colonial Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam in the seventeenth century. Prior to its urbanization, the Upper West Side was known as Bloomingdale, or "Bloemendaal" to the early Dutch settlers, in recollection of a flower-growing region of Holland. In the early eighteenth century, Bloomingdale Road (later renamed the Boulevard and finally Broadway in 1898) was opened through the area, following the course of an old Indian trail, and provided the northern route out of the city which was then concentrated at the southern tip of Manhattan Island. Rural lodges and broken-down shanties, interspersed with large outcroppings of rock, dotted the landscape of Bloomingdale. Working farms and colonial estates were established and small hamlets, such as Harsenville near West 72nd Street, were settled on or near Bloomingdale Road during the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. However, the Upper West Side, including the area within the boundaries of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, remained largely undeveloped until the 1880s.

New York City's population rapidly increased throughout the colonial period and into the nineteenth century. As a result, development in the city expanded northward, with growing commercial interests continuously transforming and displacing residential communities. Neighborhoods were established further uptown away from spreading commercial development. By the 1850s, the city's northern urban limits had reached today's midtown. As development continued to push northward, it was largely concentrated on the East Side, following the transit lines, which included steamboat service on the East River and several horse car lines.

The Upper West Side was included in the Randel Survey (known as the Commissioners' Map of 1811) which outlined a uniform grid plan of broad avenues and narrow cross streets to be imposed upon the rolling hills of Manhattan. Many years elapsed, however, before most of the avenues and



streets in rural Bloomingdale were actually laid out (some streets as late as the 1870s and 1880s) and the land subdivided into standard twenty-five by 100 foot building lots.

The creation of Central Park (a designated New York City Scenic Landmark), begun in 1857, spurred growth in areas around the Park's perimeter, and set off the first wave of real estate speculation on the Upper West Side. Trading in Upper West Side building lots was active, particularly on the avenues, during an extensive period of New York real estate speculation which lasted from 1868 until the financial panic of 1873.

The opening of avenues and improved public transportation to the Upper West Side (beginning in the 1860s but particularly in the 1870s) contributed to the first wave of growth in the area. In 1864, the horse car line on Eighth Avenue (renamed Central Park West in 1883) was extended from midtown to West 84th Street. In 1865, the Commissioners of Central Park were authorized to complete the laying out of the streets west of the Park. The Boulevard (the main artery of the Upper West Side and the route linking the city to the south with points north) was widened in 1868-71 and designed to receive central, planted malls from West 59th to 155th Streets.

Transportation improvements that were planned and carried out by private companies at the end of the 1870s further enhanced the potential of the area. In 1878, horse car service was started on Tenth Avenue (renamed Amsterdam Avenue in 1890) and Broadway, and the horse car lines on Eighth Avenue were replaced by street rail service up to West 125th Street. In 1879 the Elevated Railway on Ninth Avenue (renamed Columbus Avenue in 1890) was completed with stations at West 72nd, 81st, 93rd, and 104th Streets.

The earliest rows of houses in the district were built in the 1870s, before the panic of 1873, following the initial promise of the great development prospects in the area. These houses were situated in proximity to the El stations already proposed at that time. Two long rows, portions of which still exist, were situated between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue: a thirteen-house row on West 83rd Street (of which six survive) and a twenty-house row on West 92nd Street (two of the surviving seven are within the district). Another five-house row (of which four survive) was built on West 71st Street near Broadway.

The Ninth Avenue El served as the primary impetus to sustained development in the area of the district. There was a direct response on the part of speculative builders to the presence of the El, and between 1879 and 1887 development clustered within a two-block radius of its stations in the blocks between Central Park West and Amsterdam Avenue. The peak of this boom came in 1886; architects, developers, and builders active elsewhere in the city were now focusing their attention on the prime real estate opportunities of the Upper West Side.

### Building Types

Single-family houses, the first choice of upper middle-class families locating in the area, were only profitable for their developers on the side

streets, where property prices never rose as high as they did on the avenues during the era of real estate speculation. Built over a relatively short span of years, the rowhouses on the Upper West Side represent the final years of construction of single-family dwellings in Manhattan. Although the majority of these houses were constructed in the 1880s and 1890s, scattered groups continued to be built in the area of the district until as late as 1910. Generally, however, the construction of rowhouses declined after 1895 when the cost of owning and maintaining a private home rose out of reach of the majority of New Yorkers.

Property on the avenues with greater commercial potential was not developed with private houses. The avenues were also too busy and noisy due to the transportation lines to be preferred house locations. Columbus Avenue was an unpaved, undeveloped road before 1879, but with the introduction of the El it was transformed into a bustling thoroughfare. Tenements and flats were built on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues during the first phase of development in the district and were also initially clustered around the El stations. These buildings were designed to have commercial businesses at street level and residential units above, and catered to less prosperous families than those who could afford single-family houses. Flats without storefronts were sometimes built on the side streets, usually in rows that terminated on the avenue.

Various solutions were attempted in the effort by architects and developers to provide acceptable housing to a growing middle-class population who could not afford rowhouses but who desired many of the features of life in rowhouses. Many of these people had lived in hotels, boarding houses, or subdivided houses and were accustomed to life in multiple dwellings, and all were familiar with the ubiquitous tenements for the working classes. But for various reasons those places did not satisfy the demand for self-contained private quarters that the middle class considered suitable for family life. There were precedents for multiple-family living in Europe, especially in London, Paris, and Vienna, but in New York City its image was tainted by association with overcrowded working-class tenements, and no completely satisfactory model existed.

During the period of the construction of multiple dwellings in the area of the district developers and architects experimented with existing forms: "second-class dwellings" for the working class were recast as "French Flats" for the middle class (called "French Flats" because of their association with Parisian prototypes); a new building type, the apartment building, took various forms including the studio apartment; and the apartment and the hotel were merged into a new type, the apartment hotel. By the turn of the century, the standard, accepted form of housing for the middle class on the Upper West Side and throughout the city was the apartment building.

The district is enhanced by several institutional buildings which display design qualities that complement the residential character of the area. Religious institutions have played an important role in serving the population of the Upper West Side from the time that development began in earnest, and their histories are inextricable from the development of the district. Other institutions also arrived to address the various

intellectual, social, and physical needs of Upper West Side families. Some of these institutions not only provide services to New York City residents, but are also significant on national and international levels, such as the American Museum of Natural History. For more information on the institutional buildings located within the district, see the sections of this report which follow.

### Zoning and Tenement Laws

Numerous, sometimes overlapping, conditions and sets of regulations have affected the construction of buildings since the earliest surviving structure in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District was erected. The street plan, the parcelization of blocks into twenty-five by 100 foot lots, and the roughly northeast-southwest orientation of the majority of those lots common to much of Manhattan produced a narrow range of possibilities for orienting densely-built urban dwellings to sunlight and fresh air. Starting in 1867, a series of Tenement House Laws (discussed more fully below in the section of this report on Multiple Dwellings) sought to insure wholesome conditions in all residential buildings for three or more households (applicable to all multiple dwellings but primarily aimed at improving conditions for low and middle income households living in tenements and flats). Two primary concerns of these laws were the provision of light and air through light wells, light courts, and rear yards, and the provision of adequate plumbing.

Later, some of these same concerns were addressed for different types of buildings in a very different way through the Building Zone Resolution of 1916.<sup>2</sup> The Building Zone Resolution, which overlaid but did not supersede the Tenement House Law, was concerned with three issues -- height, use, and area of lot coverage -- in order to minimize congestion, increase light and air, and segregate incompatible uses. The height regulations, established primarily in response to congestion caused by dense construction of office buildings in lower Manhattan involved "setback" rules for buildings which exceeded in height a multiple of the street width. The entire area of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District was within an area where buildings were allowed to be one and one-half times the width of the street (the widest street if on a corner), with an increase in height of three feet for every foot the building set back from the building line above that point. Provisions of the Tenement House Law effectively eliminated setbacks for residential buildings such as apartment buildings, but did not affect hotels or apartment hotels. Thus the roughly uniform height of tall apartment buildings of the 1920s on such streets as West 79th and West 86th Streets was the result of building all to the same multiple of the street width. Throughout the area the same provisions meant higher walls of buildings on relatively wide cross streets like 79th and 86th than on the narrower side streets where some large-scale building also occurred. West 67th Street, narrow in width and developed before 1916 with tall studio buildings which exceed the standards of the Building Zone Resolution, is the

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<sup>2</sup> New York City Board of Estimate and Apportionment, Building Zone Resolution, 1916, with amendments 1920, revised 1927.

most canyonlike street in the district. At the same time, the Building Zone Resolution regulated lot coverage, largely through formulas for rear setbacks from the property line, and use, by restricting commerce to Columbus, Amsterdam, and Broadway, with only residences on the side streets.<sup>3</sup>

### Building Laws

Parallel to these regulations, which are intended to maintain "quality of life" standards, are the building laws whose intent is more with safety through sound construction and resistance to fire. At the time that the first buildings were constructed in the area of the district, a basic provision of the building laws was the requirement that buildings within certain areas could not have exterior walls of wood. By 1882, all such buildings were excluded below West 140th Street. In 1885 height limits were established by a separate ordinance<sup>4</sup> for residential buildings for the purpose of fire protection (seventy feet maximum on streets up to sixty feet wide and eighty feet maximum on streets over sixty feet wide). Between 1871 and 1885 the principal application of the laws was in the details of the construction of brick buildings, such as the thickness and bonding of walls, the spacing of wood floor joists and roof beams, and the design and height of chimneys. In 1885 the building laws were thoroughly revised; they included the requirement that hotels over thirty-five feet in height be fireproof, that other dwellings up to five stories have a fireproof basement, and that dwellings over five stories (to a maximum of seven stories or eighty-five feet) be fireproof at the basement and first two stories, which meant the substitution of wood floor structures with brick or terra-cotta arches. In 1892, the 1885 laws were revised, for the first time specifying the use of iron and steel skeleton construction.

In 1901, a new, still more comprehensive building law, for the first time called the "Building Code," took effect. Most new buildings constructed in the district after this time had fireproof, steel-skeleton construction and were equipped with a variety of modern technologies: electric light, elevators, gas for light and cooking, sophisticated and extensive plumbing systems, mechanical ventilation systems, and boilers for hot water and steam heat. None of these features were new but now almost every building would be equipped with all of them, and all were regulated by the Building Code. By the time the Code was revised in 1916, advances in fireproofing, the use of new materials and the associated adoption of new technologies, notably reinforced concrete, and the elimination of masonry bearing walls in large buildings all had an impact on the way in which the multiple dwellings were constructed after that time in the district. Later, particularly in the 1920s, the Building Code was applied to the design of

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<sup>3</sup> By 1920, amendments to the Building Zone Resolution permitted businesses on 68th, 72nd, 83rd, and 89th Streets within the area of the district.

<sup>4</sup> New York State, Law Limiting the Height of Dwelling Houses (Albany, 1885).

curtain walls, including their thickness and means of attachment to steel skeletons.<sup>5</sup>

### Development Patterns<sup>6</sup>

With the opening of the El in 1879, a pattern of development emerged with rowhouses on the quiet side streets and multiple dwellings of various kinds on the avenues. The pattern was, if not established, given conspicuous and coherent expression in the building campaign around 1879-1882 undertaken by Singer Sewing Machine Company president and Upper West Side promoter, Edward S. Clark, and architect Henry J. Hardenbergh on West 72nd and West 73rd Streets from Central Park West to Columbus Avenue. The Dakota, a large apartment building occupying about twenty house lots, was built on the most desirable site facing Central Park between West 72nd and 73rd Streets; rowhouses were built on the north side of West 73rd Street away from traffic; and less desirable and more densely occupied flats were built on Columbus Avenue with its noisy elevated railroad. Most residential construction in the area followed exactly this pattern through the turn of the century: five-story flats and tenements on the avenues, larger flats and apartment buildings on corner sites, particularly on Central Park West, and three- to four-story rowhouses on the side streets. The rowhouses and the multiple dwellings that date from this period of development relate to one another in terms of overall scale, style, and materials, and it is the interplay between the characteristic building types of the side streets and avenues that gives the district its cohesive quality.

Professional relationships between land-owning speculators, building developers or builders, and architects -- like that of Clark and Hardenbergh -- resulted in the clustering of rowhouses and flats erected by developers and their associated architects. Elsewhere in the district, businessman and real estate speculator D. Willis James and his architect John G. Prague designed multiple dwellings on the avenues anchoring side street blocks of rowhouses; this can be seen on the north side of West 85th Street which is lined with rowhouses and has the Brockholst, an apartment hotel, on the Columbus Avenue corner and the Sunset, a flats building, on the Amsterdam Avenue corner. Prominent real estate developer Bernard S. Levy collaborated with the Spanish architect, Rafael Guastavino, building rows of houses on opposite sides of West 78th Street between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues in

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<sup>5</sup> New York State, Laws Relating to the Construction of Buildings in the City of New York (Albany, 1882, 1887, 1892, 1897). New York City Bureau of Buildings, Building Code (New York, 1901, 1916, 1930). New York City building laws were the province of the State until Consolidation in 1901.

<sup>6</sup> The analysis of development patterns in the district is primarily based upon the examination of records of the Department of Buildings. Statistical data -- such as date, building type, architect, original owner, and style -- were compiled in databases, sorted, and cross-referenced. The information compiled in the databases serves as the primary component of the row and building entries which follow in this report. (The databases and computer programs were designed by Marion Cleaver of the LPC staff).

the 1880s. The houses built by Francis Crawford in the vicinity of West 72nd Street between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues (listed in records of the Department of Buildings as owned by Margaret Crawford, presumably his wife) are almost exclusively designed by the architect Gilbert A. Schellenger. This particular architect worked for several developers and his houses and flats are found throughout the district.

Rowhouses and flats designed by the firm of Thom & Wilson from the late-1870s through the 1890s are found in great numbers in the district. Although the firm worked for many developers, Thom & Wilson were the exclusive architectural firm for the various members and partnerships of the Farleys, a family of developers which included John T., James A., Terence, and Patrick Farley. Likewise, the Halls, another Upper West Side real estate dynasty, often retained the firm of Thom & Wilson, although they also commissioned the architectural firm of Welch, Smith & Provot for some of their later building campaigns.

Although less frequent, the clustering of flats and rowhouses designed by one architect for different owners occurs in the district. This can be seen on the block bounded by West 80th and 81st Streets between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. The firm of Neville & Bagge, and George A. Bagge on his own, designed most of the rowhouses and flats on this block, as well as an apartment building, all constructed between 1890 and 1913 (a total of thirty-four buildings are extant). Here, the architects worked with five different developers.

Development on Central Park West, like Riverside Drive further to the west, lagged behind that on nearby side streets and avenues; during the early years of speculative trading in Upper West Side property, the high cost of Central Park West lots had reflected the desirability of being located on the Park, and ultimately the land was valued too high for speculative development with rowhouses. In addition to the Dakota, there were scattered flats and rowhouses built on Central Park West in the 1880s and 1890s (of which only a few remain), but the bulk of the Central Park West property was not extensively developed until the introduction of electricity into the area in 1896 allowed for the construction of luxury elevator apartment buildings.

Manhattan Square was one of the few parks allocated by the 1811 Commissioners' plan; it is the only park area within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District boundaries. Located between West 77th and 81st Streets, Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, this eighteen-acre park was acquired by the city through condemnation and opened in 1840, and annexed to Central Park in 1864. Its purpose as an open public space superseded by the creation of Central Park, Manhattan Square was provided as the site for the American Museum of Natural History (begun in 1874) and subsequently was landscaped. The museum itself enhanced property values

surrounding the square.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the block between West 72nd and 73rd Streets near Central Park West where the Clark/Hardenbergh development was located, the perimeter of Manhattan Square became a fashionable area in the mid-1880s. Unlike Central Park West, by the late 1880s and 1890s the block-long north and south frontages of Manhattan Square were built exclusively with "large and expensive" rowhouses. Except for a single twenty-five foot wide house at No. 33 West 81st Street (one of an original row of three, 1885-86, Henry L. Harris, architect), all of these houses were later replaced by apartment buildings. However, the multiple dwellings that date from a slightly later period, situated across Columbus Avenue from Manhattan Square (the Evelyn, the Hotel Orleans, the Warwick Arms, and the Endicott), are still extant.

### Large-Scale Development and Redevelopment

In 1898, the surface transportation lines on Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway were electrified, and finally, in 1904, the Broadway IRT subway line was completed with stops at West 72nd, 79th, 86th, 91st, and 96th Streets. These transportation improvements, together with the growing population and the rising cost of housing, were factors in bringing about a number of changes in the early years of the twentieth century: the construction of single-family rowhouses, tenements, and flats ended (housing for the upper and lower ends of the social spectrum); the construction of taller elevator hotels and apartment buildings increased, especially on Broadway, Amsterdam Avenue, and Central Park West; and the first development of large elevator buildings occurred on a side street — a group of four studio buildings on West 67th Street — followed after 1910 by the construction of many large elevator buildings on side streets, including a group of apartment hotels on West 72nd Street.

Apart from a few notable early exceptions, such as the Dakota, apartment buildings were not generally constructed on the Upper West Side before 1900. The erection of most apartment buildings had been postponed until the running of electrical lines on the Upper West Side was completed in 1896, which allowed for elevators (the Dakota had its own power source). A relatively new type of multiple dwelling in New York, these buildings were often planned around light courts or a central courtyard (following the 1901 Tenement House Law) and differed from the flats buildings specifically in the luxury of the appointments and in the number of amenities that they offered. Designed for the upper-middle class, the earliest luxury apartment buildings were erected primarily on Central Park West, which was prime for high-profit development, where they could rise to the maximum allowed height of twelve stories or fifteen stories, depending on the height of the

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<sup>7</sup> "Manhattan Square has taken on a new significance to the adjacent property owners since the new wing [of the Museum] was constructed. No uncertainty now attaches to its future. It will be a popular establishment, the center of fashionable and constantly augmenting interest," in "West Side Number," Real Estate Record & Guide Supplement, 51, no. 1300 (Feb. 11, 1893), 23.

ceilings.<sup>8</sup>

In anticipation of the increased accessibility and convenience that the IRT would provide to the area, Broadway, which had always been the main artery of the Upper West Side, began to be developed with grand apartment buildings and hotels at the turn of the century, such as the Ansonia and the Apthorpe (both are designated New York City Landmarks and not included within the boundaries of the district). The Spencer Arms (1904-05) and the Embassy (1899-1900) are two examples in the district of this development trend. Most of these buildings, like those on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues, also accommodated small commercial interests at street level.

The apartment hotel became a moderately popular building type throughout New York City during the 1880s and 1890s and was profitable for investors. In the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, this building type is generally found on Columbus Avenue, Broadway, and the wide cross streets, such as West 72nd Street, which were most convenient to public transportation. While residential hotels had been a fixture in the lifestyles of some well-to-do families since before the Civil War, apartment hotels were primarily designed for small families who wished to live in a suite of rooms, but to avoid the cost and domestic responsibilities of house ownership. Apartment hotels would invariably have a hotel dining room, but some of the suites might be outfitted with small kitchens, like those of the Endicott at West 81st Street and the Brockholst at West 85th Street, both on Columbus Avenue and dating from 1889. Apartment hotels were built in the district into the third decade of the twentieth century. An example of the later group is the Oliver Cromwell at 12 West 72nd Street (designed by Emery Roth for Washington Square, Inc. in 1927).

During the nineteenth century, a new variation of multiple dwelling, the studio building, was developed to meet the specialized demand for studios to accommodate artists living in New York. Studio buildings contained duplex units incorporating living and working spaces, often oriented toward the north, with large industrial sash windows to allow the maximum natural light into the interior. Frequently conceived as a specialized form of apartment hotel, these buildings often provided dining room facilities for residents. Interestingly, the studio buildings in the historic district are clustered along the north side of West 67th Street (the southern-facing units also have duplex arrangements). It has been suggested that restrictive covenants governing the side streets from West 68th Street northward, allowing only low-scale development in the form of first-class single-family dwellings, may have been the impetus for developing the north side of West 67th Street with studio buildings because

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<sup>8</sup> The Tenement House Law of 1901 allowed for maximum building heights for multiple dwellings of one and one-half times the width of the street on which they fronted.



uninterrupted northern exposure at the rear was guaranteed.<sup>9</sup> The first studio building to appear in the historic district was erected in 1902-03 at No. 27 West 67th Street. Unable to find financial backing, this building was organized as a cooperative by the artist residents themselves; it proved so successful that the Real Estate Record & Guide suggested that there was a profit to be made in this sort of venture and that speculators should take heed.<sup>10</sup>

During the period between World War I and the Depression, a wave of redevelopment substantially modified the character of the area. Most noticeable was the huge boom in apartment building construction of nearly ninety buildings between 1919 and 1931, concentrated on Central Park West; Amsterdam Avenue; the broad streets of West 72nd, West 79th, and West 86th; and West 77th and West 81st Streets around Manhattan Square. These buildings are representative of a much larger development boom in the city, spurred by favorable economic conditions and commercial expansion. Also, many rowhouses were converted to multiple-family dwellings during the 1920s following a 1919 amendment of the Tenement House Law allowing for such conversions (prior to the change in the law, a number of rowhouses in the district were already occupied as rooming houses which had not required substantial interior alterations). In general these changes responded to the need in New York for an increase in housing for the growing number of small middle-class families. The high-density redevelopment that took place in the area also enabled developers to maximize profits.

These apartment buildings were generally larger than those constructed before World War I and contained smaller apartments with lower ceiling heights, and therefore could accommodate many more families. These later buildings were taller (over twelve stories) and occupied more ground area (few sat on less than four standard lots and many occupied more than twice that number) than the twenty- to thirty-year-old buildings they replaced.

Many rowhouses were demolished for the construction of apartment buildings in the mid-1920s. Speculators were buying dwellings on the Upper West Side toward this end, anticipating enhanced property values upon completion of the Eighth Avenue Independent (IND) subway. Whereas the earliest developers in the district tended to be individuals or family-related firms, in the 1920s most development was by real estate companies often formed for the purpose of a single project; the costs of constructing even one apartment building had risen out of reach of the resources or risk-taking ability of all but a very few.

With the onset of the Depression in 1929, construction in the district all but halted with a few exceptions, notably the four twin-towered apartment buildings on Central Park West -- the San Remo, the Eldorado, the

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<sup>9</sup> Conversation with architectural historian Andrew S. Dolkart, March 22, 1990. Dolkart is the author of the National Register Nomination for the West 67th Street studio buildings.

<sup>10</sup> Real Estate Record & Guide 72, no. 1865 (Dec. 12, 1903), 1077.

Majestic, and the Century -- which benefited from the 1929 Multiple Dwelling Law<sup>11</sup> allowing "skyscraper" apartment buildings for the first time. This law superseded the Tenement House Law of 1901 and supplemented the amended Building Zone Resolution of 1927. Under this law most multiple dwellings, which by this time usually meant apartment buildings, were restricted in total height, including setbacks, to about one and three-quarters times the width of the widest street up to 100 feet. This would result in a building of 178 feet -- approximately nineteen stories. Exceptions were made for buildings, such as those mentioned above, occupying very large sites (over 30,000 square feet), in which one or more towers could rise from large bases up to three times the street width.

Although there was a slowdown of new building activity during the Depression it did not have a significant impact upon the development in this district until 1931. In the six-year period between 1931 and 1937 only seventeen buildings were erected in the district, as compared to thirty-three in the two-year period between 1927 and 1929. Significantly, of the buildings constructed in the 1930s, only a few were large apartment buildings, the majority being either service, utilitarian, or public buildings, which included two funeral homes and a school.

The 100 block of West 72nd Street and the 200 block of West 79th Street were subsequently adapted for commercial uses, primarily with one- and two-story alterations and additions to existing rowhouses, and also with the reconstruction of rowhouses extended to the building line and given new facades. The commercial transformation of these streets in the blocks near Broadway was spurred by the proximity to the Broadway IRT subway stations and revisions in the zoning of these streets to allow for changes in use. Along West 72nd Street these alterations figured prominently in the 1920s, whereas the alterations along West 79th Street generally appeared in the 1930s and 1940s. These wide cross streets had initially been developed with the finest class of houses and later with apartment buildings nearer to Central Park. The residential upper stories of these altered rowhouses are still intact above many of the commercial bases.

Activity resumed slowly after the Depression, and although a few large apartment buildings were built in the 1940s changes were reflected primarily in the houses of the side streets. From the 1920s to the 1970s, but mostly after World War II, there were alterations of rowhouses (many of which had been subdivided into rooming houses earlier in the century) into the equivalent of small apartment buildings; these conversions were frequently associated with stoop removals. Another type of post-war alteration that had an impact on the the district was the reconstruction and consolidation of one or more rowhouses into small apartment buildings with new facades and sometimes additional stories.

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<sup>11</sup> New York State, The Multiple Dwelling Law of the State of New York (Albany, 1930).

### Subsequent History and Planning Changes

During the 1960s and 1970s portions of the Upper West Side were the focus of Federal and State Urban Renewal activity. The most famous urban renewal project in this area was the construction of Lincoln Center in the lower West 60s. In 1962 (plan amended in 1966), the area between West 87th and 97th Streets, Central Park West and Amsterdam Avenue was also identified as a West Side Urban Renewal area. This project involved the erection of two public schools; the refurbishing of flats, tenements, and rowhouses; the issuance of federal loans for the refurbishment of apartment buildings on Central Park West; and the demolition of most of the existing flats and tenements along Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues between West 87th and 97th Streets, which were replaced by federally-subsidized low- to middle-income apartment buildings. Encouraged by the 1961 revision to the zoning code, most of these buildings take the form of large towers on open plazas and are a much different size and scale than those in the district. South of West 87th Street, private developers purchased and renovated many of the existing buildings along Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues using J-51 and other incentive programs. The high-rise buildings that resulted from urban renewal are incompatible in height, scale, date, and style with the buildings in the district and the northwestern and southwestern boundaries of the historic district, in particular, are drawn to exclude the areas in which they are located.

In the early 1980s, the buildings that had resulted from the twenty-year old zoning revision were coming increasingly under attack for their non-contextual relationship with the existing Upper West Side building stock. Strong community activism and a growing awareness of the benefits of retaining and enhancing the area's historic fabric were responsible to a large extent for bringing about zoning changes (implemented in 1984 to cover the area from West 59th Street to West 86th Street, Central Park West to the Hudson River) that require new buildings to conform to the street wall and set back above a prescribed height in an effort to retain a contextual relationship with the mostly low-to medium-rise buildings on the avenues and streets of the Upper West Side. These zoning provisions have been important in helping to maintain the scale and character of the area of the historic district.

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## THE CHARACTER OF CENTRAL PARK WEST

Central Park West, the northern continuation of Eighth Avenue, runs along the western edge of Central Park. As it extends through the district, the avenue is characterized by a varied skyline rising above a uniform street wall. Constructed over roughly a fifty-year period, 1880-1930, low-scale institutional buildings, medium-scale apartment buildings, and soaring twin-towered apartment buildings designed in a number of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century styles define Central Park West as a grand proscenium to the architectural variety of the district.

Today one of New York's finest residential streets, Eighth Avenue (renamed Central Park West between 59th and 110th Street in 1883) in the mid-nineteenth century was ungraded, unpaved, and led through a rural area spotted with rocky outcroppings, roaming goats, and modest wood-frame houses. As the city's population expanded during this period, demand for a public park increased to ameliorate crowding and benefit all of the people of New York. Land was set aside for a large park between Fifth and Eighth Avenues, extending from 59th to 110th Street. With the creation of Central Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux after their "Greensward" plan of 1857-58, as well as a series of transportation improvements such as the Eighth Avenue street rail line, opened from midtown to 84th Street in 1864, and the Ninth Avenue Elevated Railway (1879), the Upper West Side in general experienced a period of intense real estate speculation which lasted into the early 1880s before development began in earnest. Olmsted correctly predicted that the land immediately adjacent to the park would quickly rise in value and that the area would develop into a prime residential neighborhood. Initially, however, the west side opposite Central Park, unlike the more fashionable east side, did not attract the wealthy people who could afford the inflated prices of the land bordering the park. On the other hand, land prices along the park rose to such a degree that most speculative builders shied away from rowhouse and tenement construction, for which they would receive relatively modest returns. While the side streets of the district were built up with rows of speculatively-built houses during the 1880s and 1890s, Central Park West remained largely undeveloped.

A few of the buildings constructed during this early period of speculation and development remain on the avenue, such as the three surviving single-family houses of an original row of nine at 247, 248, and 249 Central Park West (Edward L. Angell, 1887-88), two houses of an original row of five at Nos. 354 and 355 (Gilbert A. Schellenger, 1892-93), and the Lolita, a flats building at No. 227 (Thom & Wilson, 1888-89). However, the early character of the avenue was really established by two great monuments: the Dakota, the pioneering luxury apartment building at West 72nd Street (Henry J. Hardenbergh, 1880-84), and the American Museum of Natural History between West 77th and 81st Streets in Manhattan Square (first building designed by Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould, begun 1874), both designated New York City Landmarks. On the heels of these initial farsighted efforts came a number of low-scale institutional buildings during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Among them were the Synagogue of

Congregation Shearith Israel at 99 Central Park West (Brunner & Tryon, 1896-97), a designated New York City landmark, and the Church of the Divine Paternity (now the Church of the Fourth Universalist Society) at the southwest corner of Central Park West and West 76th Street (William A. Potter, 1897-98), in the Central Park West - West 76th Street Historic District. Concurrent with this period of development several apartment hotels and apartment buildings were constructed in the 1890s, including the Hotel Beresford at the northwest corner of Central Park West and West 81st Street, the Majestic at West 71st Street, the El Dorado at West 90th Street, and the San Remo at West 75th Street, all later replaced by their towered namesakes of the 1920s and 1930s. Several grand luxury apartment buildings constructed prior to World War I increased the prestige of Central Park West, including the Prasada at the southwest corner of West 65th Street (Charles William Romeyn, 1905-07) and the Kenilworth at the northwest corner of West 75th Street (Townsend, Steinle & Haskell, 1906-08, in the Central Park West-West 76th Street Historic District). This phase of development was effectively halted by the war.

The next and last phase of development to have a major impact on Central Park West accompanied the economic prosperity of the 1920s, and was enhanced by the anticipation of the opening in 1932 of the new Independent subway line (IND) which runs below Central Park West with stops at West 72nd, 81st, and 86th Streets. At roughly the same time, the city widened the avenue bed from forty-eight feet to sixty-three feet. This period saw the construction of large-scale apartment buildings, in particular the towered buildings that give Central Park West its special skyline silhouette. With the enactment of the Multiple Dwelling Law in 1929, which allowed residential buildings of large ground area greater height and the use of towers, it became possible to build skyscraper apartment buildings. (For more information on the Multiple Dwelling Law, see the section of this report on multiple dwellings). The Beresford Apartments between West 81st and 82nd Streets (Emery Roth, 1928-29, a designated New York City landmark), with its roofline animated by the prominent treatment of the water towers at three corners, presaged the appearance of the twin-towered apartment buildings that followed in the next three years. These distinctive buildings, all of which occupy entire blockfronts along Central Park West, include the Century Apartments between 62nd and 63rd Streets (Irwin S. Chanin and Jacques L. Delamarre, Sr., 1931), the Majestic Apartments between 71st and 72nd Streets (Irwin S. Chanin, 1930-31), the San Remo Apartments between 74th and 75th Streets (Emery Roth, 1929-30), and the Eldorado Apartments between 90th and 91st Streets (Margon & Holder with Emery Roth as consultant, 1929-31); all are designated New York City Landmarks. With the Great Depression, the heyday of construction on Central Park West came to an end; the dynamic twin-towered buildings serve as a brilliant climax to the last great surge of development activity on the avenue.

The large buildings fronting on Central Park West extend back from the avenue into the side street blocks of the district and have an impact on these streetscapes. The side street facades of these buildings, while displaying materials and details that are compatible with the rowhouses on the side streets, are erected on the building line in contrast to the rowhouses which are set back from the street behind areaways. The interplay

between the low-scale character of the rowhouse groups which dominate the side streets and the large-scale character of the taller buildings that terminate these blocks on Central Park West reinforces that role of the avenue as an eastern frame of the district.

The buildings lining Central Park West demonstrate the use of exuberant styles and materials as varied and picturesque as the avenue's skyline. As seen from Central Park this distinctive silhouette -- composed of buildings of differing scale and style richly clad in brick and stone and punctuated by an assortment of roofline treatments such as gables, mansards, and soaring towers -- presents a picture of architectural variety unique in New York City.

The surviving late-nineteenth century buildings, such as the Lolita designed in the Renaissance Revival style with neo-Grec and Queen Anne elements, employ contrasting materials to achieve polychromatic effects. The Queen Anne style rowhouses at 247, 248, and 249 Central Park West, executed in brick and finely-carved stone, are crowned by prominent slate roofs punctuated by gables and chimneys. The first great apartment building in the district, the Dakota, is an unusual example of the German Renaissance Revival style combining a bold massing of forms and a free use of historical detail in contrasting brick, stone, and terra cotta. The Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church at 51-55 Central Park West (Schickel & Ditmars, 1902-03) is an example of the neo-Gothic style in striking rusticated stone, while the Synagogue of Congregation Shearith Israel, faced in smooth stone, is a more formal example of Academic Classicism. A rare example of the Art Nouveau/Secessionist style in the district is the Society for Ethical Culture Auditorium at 33 Central Park West (Robert D. Kohn, 1913, a designated New York City Landmark). This building adds a special note of interest to the variety found in the district.

At first the designs of the apartment buildings of the early twentieth century continued to utilize polychromy and contrasting materials, even as massing became more formal and regularized. An example is the Beaux-Arts style Kenilworth, which is faced in red brick with white stone trim and crowned with a slate mansard roof pierced with dormers. As the neo-Renaissance style proliferated toward the end of the first decade of this century, facade composition and the use of contrasting materials became more restrained. The Brookford, at 315 Central Park West (Schwartz & Gross, 1911-12) reflects this aesthetic; its tripartite composition features a facade faced in brown brick with stone and terra cotta trim concentrated at the base and upper stories. Terra cotta would assume greater importance as a building material during the construction boom of the late 1920s and early 1930s.

The buildings on Central Park West designed in the late 1920s by noted architect Emery Roth illustrate his distinctive aesthetic which combines modern massing with ornament inspired by Italian Renaissance and Baroque sources. The work of this architect reflects the transition from the neo-Renaissance aesthetic, in which classically-inspired ornament is applied to the facade, to the stylized detail and bold massing of the Art Deco style. One of Roth's works, the Beresford, is an example of the large-scale

apartment buildings constructed on Central Park West beginning in the late 1920s. Faced in brick and stone, it is embellished with Renaissance- and Baroque-inspired elements, while the top stories are stepped back, influenced by zoning laws, and given emphatic treatment in a manner characteristic of buildings designed in the current Art Deco style. The neo-Renaissance style reached a culmination in Roth's design for the twin-towered San Remo Apartments, faced in light brick with Italian Renaissance details executed in monochromatic stone, terra cotta, and metal. As Art Deco style apartment buildings proliferated, the use of contrasting color and materials gained a new importance in architectural design, emphasizing texture, pattern, and stylized motifs from a variety of sources. The Ardsley (Emery Roth, 1930-31), located at 320 Central Park West, is faced in brick with bold, linear cast-stone trim derived from Mayan sources. The Century and the Majestic, both with sophisticated twin-towered designs by Irwin S. Chanin, are among the most notable residential buildings in New York that embrace the Art Deco aesthetic.

The character of Central Park West is the result of two major development phases extending over a period of roughly fifty-five years, from 1880 to 1930. Only two buildings have been constructed on the avenue in the past twenty-five years, thus Central Park West remains much the same as it was in the 1930s, and retains the architectural variety and dramatic silhouette that make it a unique presence in New York City.

Kevin McHugh

## THE CHARACTER OF THE SIDE STREETS

The unusually long side street blocks that form the heart of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District have a character which is determined in part by the relatively narrow, sixty-foot street width, and the standard size of the New York City building lot, 25 feet wide by 100 feet deep, arrayed on blocks which are 200 feet wide and 800 feet long. (The short side street blocks between Columbus Avenue and Broadway are a modification of this pattern.) Developers of rowhouses purchased several lots at a time, combining them and then subdividing them into narrower widths so that, for example, five or six houses could be built on a 100 by 100 foot plot. Development in the area initially focused on the side streets which achieved their predominant architectural character between 1880 and 1895, as the blockfronts were built up with long rows of houses that unified the streetscapes by consistent height, setback, and overall form. These houses are usually four stories high above raised basements, approached by straight or box stoops, or less frequently, five stories high with American basements, set back from the building line behind areaways, and faced with brownstone or brick with contrasting stone or terra-cotta trim. The rows are stylistically varied and there is often a great deal of variety in form and ornamental detail within each row, thus producing a multiplicity of configurations (for example, ABCDCBA). While over 100 architects designed rowhouses within the district, the character of the side streets is further unified by the work of several prolific architects and firms. Sometimes this work is concentrated within a few blocks as that of Henry J. Hardenbergh on two blocks of West 73rd Street, John G. Prague on West 85th and West 87th Streets, and Neville & Bagge on two blocks of West 88th Street. George F. Pelham's houses are found on many side streets, and those of Gilbert A. Schellenger and Thom & Wilson are located on virtually every street of the district.<sup>12</sup>

While rowhouses are the predominant building type on the side streets, other types are also important. Contemporaneous with the construction of the rowhouses are tenements and flats buildings at the Amsterdam and Columbus Avenue ends of the side street blocks. Built in rows, like the single-family houses, these multiple dwellings could be oriented to either the avenue or the side street. When a row extended to the corner, at least one building in each group had its entrance on the side street. Many flats buildings were constructed in conjunction with side street rowhouses; examples include the flats building designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh at 281-287 Columbus Avenue (a/k/a 67 West 73rd Street) built in 1882-84 with the row at 41-65 West 73rd Street, and three flats buildings designed by Gilbert A. Schellenger at 72-76 West 69th Street (a/k/a 191-199 Columbus Avenue) built in 1892-93 with a row of eight houses at 48-70 West 69th Street. Even when designed as separate projects, these flats buildings have a number of characteristics which relate them to the rowhouses: a uniform height of five

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<sup>12</sup> For further information on the rowhouses and their architects, see the section on "The Architectural Development and Character of Single-Family Dwellings" and the "Architects' Appendix" below.



stories which is roughly equivalent to the four stories with basement of the rowhouses, a slight setback (not as pronounced as the setback for rowhouses) which serves to make the flats buildings act as pavilions for the rowhouses, and similar materials and ornamental details.<sup>13</sup> This interrelationship is among the qualities which help to establish the character of the historic district.

Apartment buildings and apartment hotels began to be introduced to some of the side street blocks south of West 72nd Street as early as the 1910s. Two apartment buildings, designed by Rouse & Goldstone and built in 1912, 117-121 West 71st Street and 138-140 West 71st Street, are examples. Most apartment buildings on the side streets were built during a second phase of apartment building construction after World War I. While some of these buildings were constructed on lots that had been previously vacant, most replaced existing rowhouses. These apartment buildings generally range in width from fifty to 100 feet and rise from six to twelve stories. Constructed at the building line, rather than set back, the apartment buildings, nonetheless, relate to the rowhouses in use of materials and architectural details. Larger apartment buildings of twelve to fifteen stories fronting onto Central Park West and the avenues impact on the side street blocks with side street facades, which often display materials and details that are compatible with the rowhouses. In some cases the building has an address on the avenue or Central Park West, but has its main entrance on the side street.

Studio buildings represent a more specialized type of multiple dwelling on the side street blocks. While nine buildings of this type, built between 1902 and 1929, are concentrated on West 67th Street, other examples are scattered throughout the district. Similar in height, material, and architectural detail to the apartment buildings, these buildings are distinguished by their double-height studio windows.

Small apartment buildings, converted from existing rowhouses by joining one or more buildings, rebuilding the interiors, extending out the fronts, and erecting new facades, generally of unadorned brick, are less than sympathetic intrusions onto the side street blocks.

Throughout the period of development of the district, religious organizations and other institutions have constructed their buildings on side street blocks. Churches, synagogues, schools, and similar structures, designed by some of the city's most prestigious architects and scattered throughout the district, enhance the district's character and relate to the residential buildings in materials, scale, and architectural detail.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For further information on tenements, flats buildings, and apartment buildings, see the section on "The Architectural Development and Character of Multiple Dwellings" below.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on religious and institutional architecture in the district, see the section on "The Architecture of Religious and Other Public and Private Institutions in the Upper West Side/Central Park West

Commerce has had a minimal impact on the side streets. A New York Telephone Company office building (1920, McKenzie, Voorhies & Gmelin) is located at 121-139 West 73rd Street. An ABC office building (Kohn Pedersen Fox & Assocs., 1978-79) at 28-32 West 67th Street is located adjacent to the former Durland Riding Academy (Henry F. Kilburn, 1900-01) which has been converted to ABC studio and production use. The predominant building type, rowhouses, have not been commercialized save for the addition of storefronts in a few rowhouses, for example those at 65, 102 and 103 West 73rd Street which are related to commerce on adjacent Columbus Avenue.<sup>15</sup> Of the numerous flats and apartment buildings located on the side streets, only a small number have shops in their bases.

David Breiner  
Marjorie Pearson

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Historic District" below.

<sup>15</sup> The commercial transformation of rowhouses on West 72nd Street and West 79th Street is discussed in the sections on "The Character of the Cross Streets" and "The Commercial Architecture of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District" below.

## THE CHARACTER OF THE CROSS STREETS

### Residential Cross Streets

The cross streets of the historic district, West 72nd Street, West 79th Street, West 86th Street, and the sections of West 77th Street and West 81st Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, derive their character in part from the greater width of the streets themselves, 100 feet as opposed to the sixty-foot width of the side streets. All had similar initial development patterns. These blockfronts were filled with large and elegant rowhouses which followed the pattern of four stories above a high basement or five stories with an American basement seen elsewhere in the district, although the houses tended to be wider, twenty to twenty-five feet. West 77th Street and West 81st Street fronted onto Manhattan Square, which made houses on those streets particularly desirable. By the turn of the century, apartment hotels and apartment buildings of twelve to fourteen stories began to go up at the Central Park West and avenue ends of the cross street blocks. Changing socio-economic conditions and changes in zoning which allowed buildings to be constructed to the height of one-and-a-half times the width of the street gave impetus to the construction of larger apartment buildings of fourteen to eighteen stories during the 1910s, prior to World War I, and in the 1920s. Today the predominant character of the cross streets is defined by walls of tall apartment buildings interspersed with isolated groups of surviving rowhouses, although sections of West 72nd Street and West 79th Street have taken on more specialized characters relating to commerce in the district.

### Commercial Cross Streets

#### West 72nd Street

Originally part of the Harsen Estate, which was subdivided into 500 lots identified for residential use due to restrictive covenants, West 72nd Street developed into a fashionable street. Its generous width and proximity to an entrance to Central Park gave this street advantages over other streets nearby. Furthermore, as early as 1866, West 72nd Street fell under the jurisdiction of Central Park; its landscaping was planned and maintained by park employees, while commercial traffic was severely limited. Edward S. Clark initiated development on West 72nd Street opposite Central Park with the construction of the Dakota (1880-84) designed by Henry J. Hardenbergh. After a period of real estate speculation, rowhouses were erected here during the mid-1880s in the exuberant styles of the day. So ostentatious were these houses, in fact, that an unappreciative critic writing for the Real Estate Record & Guide called them "positively vulgar and inartistic."<sup>16</sup>

The opening of the IRT subway station at West 72nd Street and Broadway in 1904 and changing socio-economic conditions of the early twentieth

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<sup>16</sup> "West Side Illustrated," Real Estate Record & Guide, Nov. 16, 1889.

century eventually altered the character of West 72nd Street.

The blockfronts east of Columbus Avenue saw the replacement of almost every rowhouse by apartment buildings between 1925 and 1929. The Dakota was joined by facing rows of mid-to-late 1920s apartment buildings and apartment hotels, typically of sixteen stories, and by the side facade of Irwin S. Chanin's Majestic apartment building (1930-31).

West of Columbus Avenue the street was commercialized. During the first two decades of the twentieth century, three hotels (now with commercial bases) were built on the south side of the street; between 1911 and 1926 several residences were demolished for four apartment buildings with street-level shops. However, the transformation that gave this block of West 72nd Street its distinctive ambiance was the alteration of existing rowhouses for commercial use, beginning in 1909 but most prevalent in the 1920s.<sup>17</sup> On this street there were two methods, equally popular, of converting the four-story rowhouses with raised basements: (1) removing the stoop, extending the lower two stories to the building line, and inserting a shopfront and street-level entrance, thus accommodating businesses on the lower two stories and apartments above and (2) extending the entire front to the building line, erecting a new facade, and inserting commercial space at the first and/or second story with residential units above.

The resultant streetscape, which survives today, is created by the alternation of largely intact nineteenth-century residential facades, set back from the street, above twentieth-century extended two-story commercial bases,<sup>18</sup> and 1920s facades, erected at the building line. Also scattered along the north and south blockfronts are the aforementioned hotels and apartment buildings with storefronts at street level and several small commercial buildings from the 1930s, some of which survive relatively intact. Because of the popularity of West 72nd Street for retail and service functions throughout the twentieth century, storefronts with their attendant signs and awnings have been continually replaced, often without regard to the overall architectural character of the buildings which contain them. The only major alterations of recent years involve three 1930s commercial structures: two buildings (120-122 and 159 West 72nd Street) were refaced in the 1970s and one edifice (143 West 72nd Street) received additional stories in the 1980s. The total effect is a diverse commercial street which contains a mix of surviving historic storefronts from the 1920s and contemporary vernacular storefronts.

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<sup>17</sup> An amendment to the Building Zone Resolution in 1920 permitted businesses on West 72nd Street.

<sup>18</sup> For further information on the characteristics and qualities of these converted rowhouses, see the section on "The Commercial Architecture of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District" below.

## West 79th Street

A wide cross-street at the center of the historic district which extends from Columbus Avenue (at Manhattan Square) to Broadway, West 79th Street was developed with rowhouses in the 1880s and, especially, in the 1890s. Proximity to the IRT subway station at West 79th Street and Broadway and altered socio-economic conditions helped bring about a series of changes beginning in the early years of the twentieth century. Between Columbus and Amsterdam avenues on West 79th Street, almost every structure was replaced in two waves of apartment house construction; built from 1909 to 1914 and from 1923 to 1935, they rise from twelve to seventeen stories. There is also an apartment building erected in the 1980s. Few of these buildings have storefronts, and this portion of the street is almost exclusively residential.

The blockfronts between Amsterdam and Broadway saw a different kind of change. The Hotel Lucerne was constructed at the northwest corner of 79th Street and Amsterdam Avenue in 1903-04. The five-story rowhouses with American basements on the northern blockfront had been erected as an ensemble<sup>19</sup> in 1895-97. Some received professional offices at the basement level soon after construction; during the 1930s they all were transformed by the removal of the low stoops (in most cases) and the insertion of one- and two-story shopfronts, some of which protrude to the building line.<sup>20</sup> Despite the varying heights of commercial alterations and the erection of projecting and flush shopfronts, the buildings retain a unified appearance by virtue of projecting bays, continuous stringcourses, and other repetitive architectural features intrinsic to the design of the rowhouses. The four easternmost rowhouses were reconstructed in the 1970s into a small apartment building with street-level shops.

On the south side of the street between Broadway and Amsterdam, a group of eleven rowhouses had been built in 1894. The three-story structures with raised basements were altered for commercial use in the 1930s. The commercial alterations are of several types. Some rowhouses simply had alterations (of different degrees) to the raised basements and businesses inserted at that level. Others had the stoop removed, a street-level entrance inserted, and a storefront erected at the new first story. A third group of rowhouses had two-story commercial extensions that project to the building line. Projecting neon signs have been added to the upper portions of several rowhouse facades. A unified appearance is preserved, however, by the pavilions at the ends of the row, projecting bays, the continuous stringcourses and other architectural details of the surviving portions of

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<sup>19</sup> The twelve buildings were actually built under two New Building Applications, but the rows were designed by the same architect to complement each other.

<sup>20</sup> For further information on the character of these alterations and those on the south side of the street, see the section on "The Commercial Architecture of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District" below.

the residential facades above the commercial bases.

Changes have taken place over time in the infill of the storefronts on both sides of the street, but change generally has not occurred above the storefront level. The storefronts themselves show a degree of regularity in retaining transparency, the modularity of the rowhouses, and the plane of the facade.

David Breiner  
Marjorie Pearson

## THE CHARACTER OF COLUMBUS AVENUE

Beginning in 1879, development on the Upper West Side was encouraged and influenced by the Ninth Avenue Elevated Railway (or El) which had stops at West 72nd, 81st, 93rd, and 104th streets, the last one beyond the northern boundary of the historic district. Ninth Avenue (changed to Columbus Avenue in 1890) began to fill up with five-story flats. Often erected in conjunction with side street rowhouses, the flats contain street-level shops which provide goods and services to residents of the neighborhood and residential units above. Averaging five stories, these flats demonstrate a relatively uniform height and scale which combine with continuous commercial storefronts at street level to give Columbus Avenue its character as the neighborhood's main shopping street. As with the single-family houses on the side streets, the flats and tenements, often designed in the neo-Grec and Romanesque Revival styles, were built in rows and a small number of architects were responsible for a majority of the buildings, a characteristic which unifies the avenue and helps establish its relationship to the side streets.

Between 1879 and the mid 1890s, Columbus Avenue largely assumed its present architectural character, which is that of flats interspersed with tenements, apartment hotels, and a handful of small commercial buildings. Several apartment buildings were built in the early years of the twentieth century. These building types share many exterior architectural characteristics, such as street-level storefronts and masonry facades which strongly define the street wall.<sup>21</sup>

By the time the IRT, New York's first subway line, began service along nearby Broadway in 1904, Columbus Avenue had become a fully developed, bustling thoroughfare. Among Columbus Avenue's famous commercial establishments was the J.M. Horton Ice Cream Company at No. 302 (the name remains on the flats building with a street level store). Founded in 1870, the company became nationally famous, supplying desserts to a number of presidential inaugural balls; by 1893 it furnished three-fifths of all the ice cream consumed in New York City.<sup>22</sup> This store, as well as the Horton dairy store at 371 Amsterdam Avenue, were among a city-wide chain. Other notable businesses were Hellman's Deli, originator of the famed mayonnaise (the site is now a school yard just outside the district), and Park & Tilford, purveyors of fancy groceries since 1840 whose large commercial building at the southwest corner of Columbus Avenue and West 72nd Street was designed by McKim, Mead & White and erected in 1892-93. In general, the shops along Columbus Avenue catered to the daily needs of local residents.

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<sup>21</sup> For more information on the architectural character of these buildings and their commercial aspects, see the sections below on "The Architectural Character and Development of Multiple Dwellings" and "The Commercial Architecture of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District."

<sup>22</sup> Moses King, King's Handbook of New York (Boston, 1893), 984.

Regularly throughout the twentieth century, virtually every shopfront on Columbus Avenue (in contrast to Amsterdam Avenue) has been altered to some degree, yet the upper stories of these buildings remain intact, as does the rhythm established by the significant features -- the structural columns and supports which, together with the surviving lintels and cornices, define the masonry openings which contain the street-level stores on most of the structures. The appearance of a masonry mass floating above a transparent base, as originally intended, is thereby preserved. The storefront infill has been regularly changed in accordance with the needs of commerce and now displays a wide variety of materials and design.<sup>23</sup> An unusual original basement-level storefront retaining its cornice, window frames, and doors remains at No. 380-384 Columbus Avenue.

The only major intrusions into the avenue's historic streetscapes are two small commercial buildings at Nos. 211-213 and 215-217 from 1987, two small apartment buildings at No. 324 and No. 386-390, converted in 1971 and 1981 respectively from earlier flats buildings, both with street-level shops, two larger apartment buildings at No. 407-409 and No. 560-568, built in the 1980s with street-level shops, and a commercial building at No. 462 that resulted from a 1961 alteration.

Planned and built as a major transportation route with its elevated train tracks, Columbus Avenue, lined by multiple dwellings and shops, retains its active character as a retail and service artery -- although the elevated trains, discontinued and their tracks and structure demolished in 1940, have been replaced by increased vehicular traffic. Although changes have occurred to the street-level storefronts, resulting from the avenue's ever-changing commercial character, these changes have generally respected the original fabric of masonry-fronted multiple dwellings and apartment hotels, as well as that of the small, exclusively commercial buildings.

David Breiner

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<sup>23</sup> In a few cases portions of original or historic storefront components survive: a paneled frieze at No. 255; double-height storefronts at No. 260 which retain bandcourses, and second-story window sash and lintels; storefront cornices and transoms at Nos. 483 and 485; a cornice at No. 522; and portions of projecting bulkheads and window-framing members at No. 561-567. Instances of largely unchanged storefronts from the 1920s-1940s survive at No. 273, No. 526, No. 529, and No. 570.



### THE CHARACTER OF AMSTERDAM AVENUE

Without the impetus of the El, Tenth Avenue (changed to Amsterdam Avenue in 1890) had a different developmental history than Columbus Avenue. Although the construction of flats on Amsterdam also began in 1879, most of the flats date from 1886 to 1900. Built with street-level shops, these buildings are concentrated in the stretch of the avenue north of West 79th Street. Several groups of tenements, all built in 1894-95 and containing street-level shops, are also located along the upper portion of Amsterdam Avenue within the district. Besides the Hotel Lucerne (Harry B. Mulliken, 1903-04) at the northwest corner of West 79th Street and Amsterdam Avenue and an apartment building (1927) on the east side of the avenue that actually is the terminus of a continuous string of similar buildings along West 79th Street, the uniform street walls created by flats and tenements with street-level storefronts is broken only by a three-story library (1905-06) and an eleven-story warehouse (1922-23).

The southern portion of Amsterdam Avenue, between West 72nd and West 79th streets, is dominated by apartment buildings. Although two, the Van Dyck and Severn between West 72nd Street and West 73rd Street, were erected in 1905, possibly with street-level shops, the majority date from the mid-to-late 1920s and have always had commercial bases. The only exceptions to the characteristic apartment buildings are several four-story rowhouses (1886) with commercial bases added, three five-story flats buildings with shops (late-1880s and early-1890s), a hotel with street-level shops (1911), and a commercial building (1887-88) at No. 371 — described as a stable, store, and flats in its New Building application. This last building was owned by Lorton Horton of the J.M. Horton Ice Cream Company and probably supplied the company's shop on Columbus Avenue. Horton also commissioned the groups of flats buildings immediately to the north of this. Other businesses, too, were established to serve the needs of the immediate community.

Serviced by a horse car line opened in 1878 and then an electric street car line after 1898, Amsterdam Avenue was not subject to the commercial pressures brought to Columbus Avenue by the El. On the other hand, Amsterdam has seen less physical alteration of its historic fabric at street level: shopfronts retain more of their original elements than those on Columbus Avenue and are more closely related to the design of the upper stories of the buildings in which they are found.

David Breiner

### THE CHARACTER OF BROADWAY

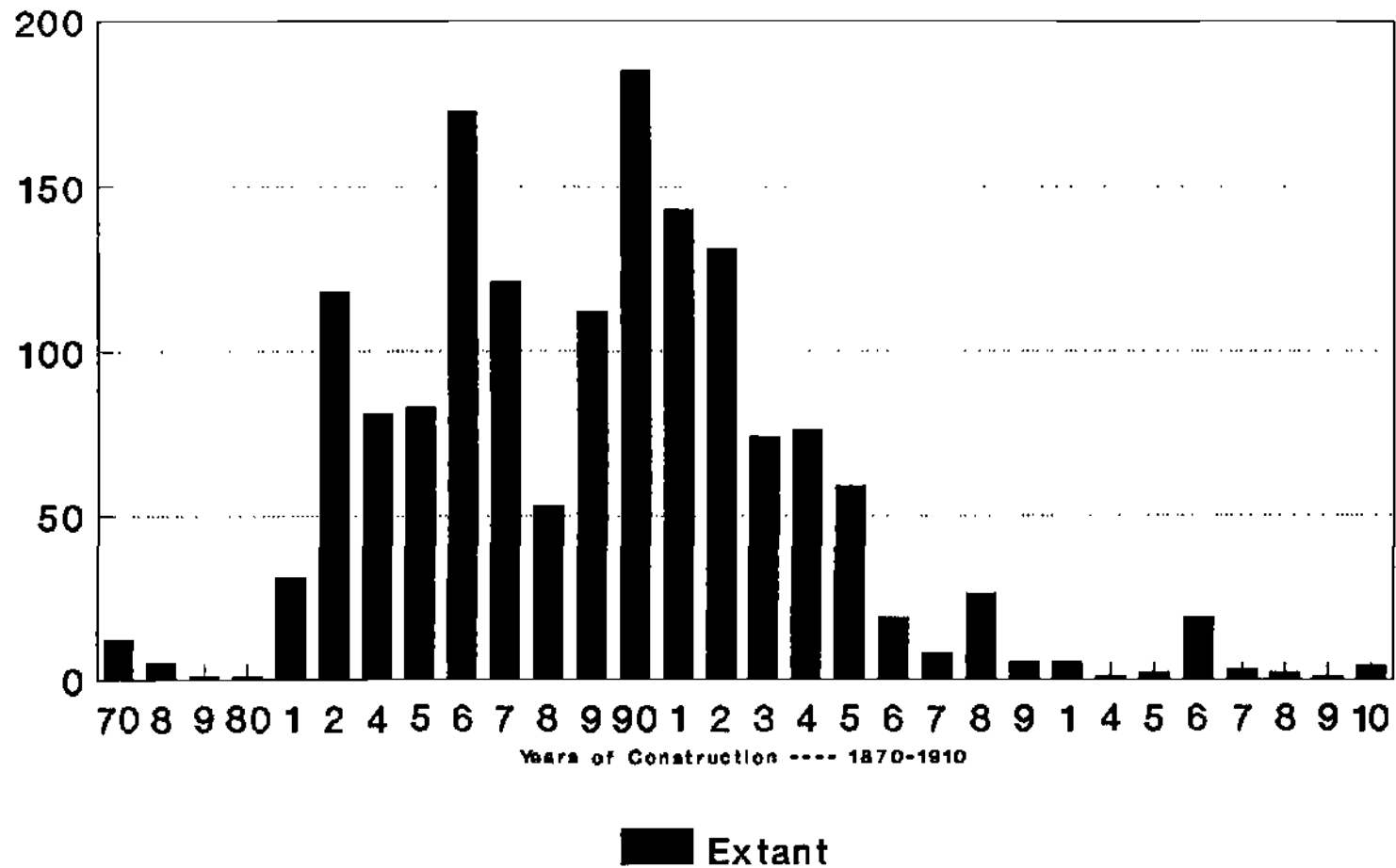
Although the entire length of Broadway south of the district had always been a major thoroughfare, the blockfronts included in the district remained undeveloped long after other streets in the area because of the uncertain plans for the type of public transportation to be built there. This section of Broadway finally blossomed into a busy street in anticipation of the IRT subway that was eventually completed beneath it in 1904. The three-and-a-half blockfronts of Broadway included within the district contain large buildings (with one exception), all of which were originally constructed with street-level shops or eventually received them. These are three twelve-story apartment buildings dating from the turn of the century -- the Dorilton at 71st Street (Janes & Leo, 1900-02), the Embassy, at 70th Street (Robert Maynicke, 1899-1900), the Spencer Arms at 69th Street (Mulliken & Moeller, 1904-05) -- and the Coronado from the late 1980s; one seven-story flats building at 69th Street (Ware & Styne-Harde, 1895); and the nineteen-story Hotel Alamac (Maynicke & Franke, 1922). These buildings create a street wall which relates to the diagonal of Broadway; the buildings also relate to the side street blocks (all have major facades on the side streets), and to each other. Of particular interest is the Embassy, built three years later than the adjacent flats building and designed by a different architect, but using the same design elements. A two-story commercial building dating from 1938 is located at the southeast corner of West 72nd Street and Broadway.

David Breiner



# Rowhouses

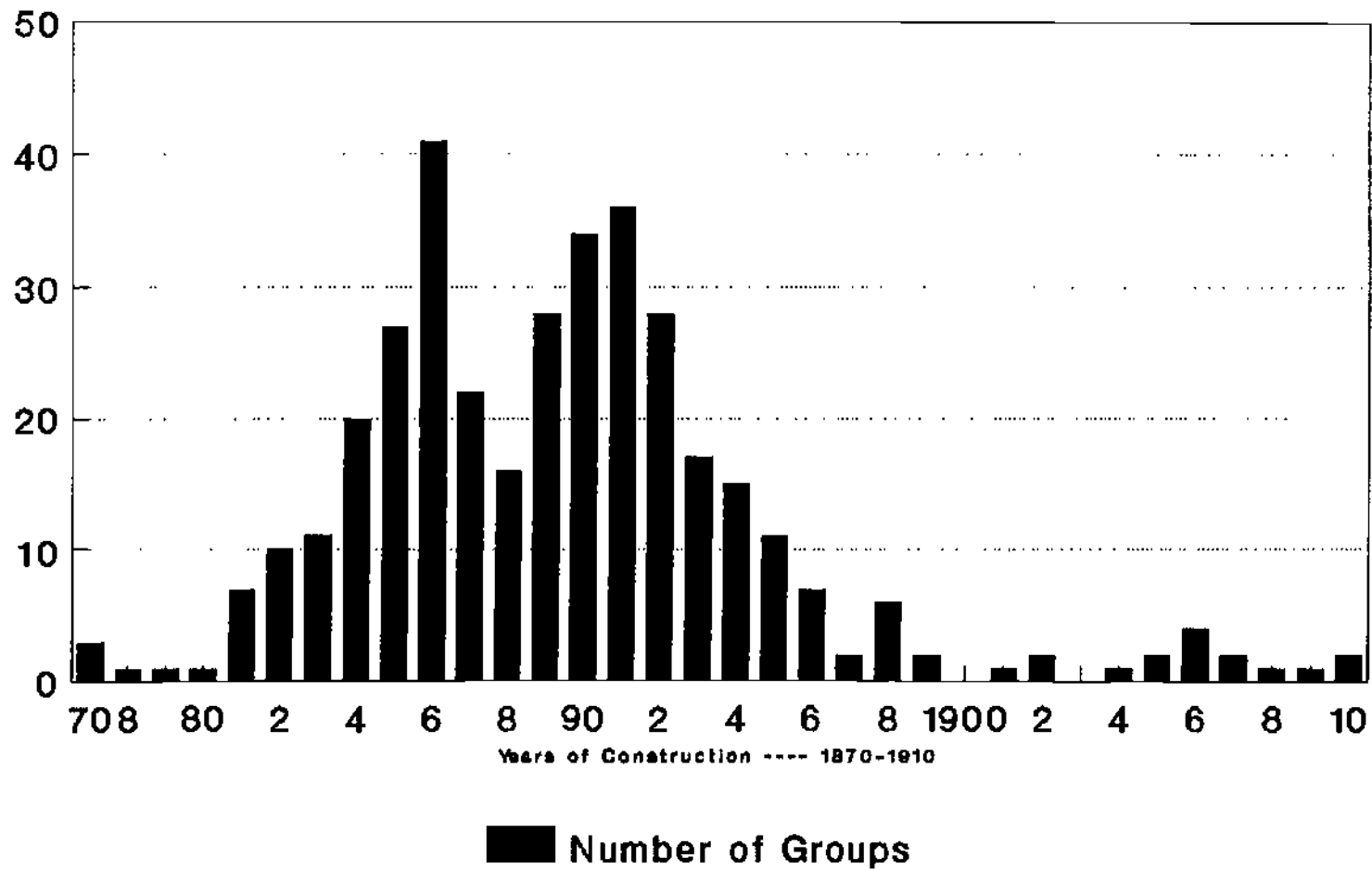
## Upper West Side/Central Park West



Numbers are based on analysis of data  
for existing buildings

# Groups of Rowhouses

Upper West Side/Central Park West



Numbers are based on analysis of data for existing buildings.

## THE ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTER OF SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS

The year 1868 inaugurated one of the greatest periods of speculation that has ever affected New York real estate. At that time, the Upper West Side was nothing more than a wilderness of rocks spotted with broken-down shanties and sprawling farms. Apart from a few farm houses and rural inns, the area remained largely a vast open space prime for building. When development began in earnest in the early 1880s, spurred by new transportation lines linking the area to developed parts of the city further south and the continuing movement uptown of the rapidly-growing middle class, speculative builders seized the opportunity to develop the side streets of the district with rowhouses designed for middle- and upper-middle class families. While part of the earliest phase of development in the district, these speculatively-built rowhouses actually represent the final years of construction of single-family houses in Manhattan. Although the earliest houses surviving in the district date from 1870 and the latest from 1910, as a whole, this large concentration of rowhouses was built during a short span of years, the 1880s and 1890s; therefore they display a unified and harmonious use of late-nineteenth century architectural styles. Anchored by the multiple dwellings on the avenues, which appeared from the time of original development in the area, the rowhouses create the low-scale domestic character that largely defines the side streets of the district.

The basic pattern of development of these side streets lined with rowhouses was a product of the emerging accessibility of the area to employment and shopping districts downtown brought about by the rapid travel possible on steam railroads. The earliest remaining rowhouses located within the district were begun in 1870 in anticipation of the improved public transportation to be brought to the area by the Ninth (Columbus) Avenue El (eventually opened in 1879) which was in the planning stages. These first rowhouse groups were built in proximity to the proposed El stations at 72nd, 81st, and 93rd Streets: Nos. 159 to 165 West 71st Street (four of an original row of five), Nos. 35 to 39 West 83rd Street and 49 to 53 West 83rd Street (six of an original row of thirteen), and Nos. 47 and 49 West 92nd Street (two of a row of twenty of which a total of seven survive). A financial panic hit in 1873 and by 1874 there was a complete cessation of building operations. Wages and material prices fell. Development stagnated and the building industry did not fully recover until 1879, at which time it was the completion of the El that really spurred Upper West Side development. Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues, with its busy transportation lines, were developed with flats and tenements providing commercial space at street level and the erection of first-class single-family dwellings was reserved for the side streets.

Surviving from this early stage of development is a row of five houses designed by Christan Blinn at Nos. 64 to 72 West 71st Street built in 1878. In other early projects, the architect Henry J. Hardenbergh designed a row of twenty-five houses built in 1879-80 on the north side of West 73rd Street between Columbus and Amsterdam (only one survives) in conjunction with a

flats building on Columbus Avenue. Two years later, Hardenbergh designed another range of rowhouses on the north side of West 73rd Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue (a total of seventeen remain). From then on, in the 1880s, rowhouse construction soared from one rowhouse group in 1880, to twenty-one in 1884 to a climactic increase of forty-two in 1886. In the Real Estate Record & Guide in 1884 the optimism could be felt: "...the West Side is going up rapidly; of that there is no doubt...whole blocks of dwellings are occupied by citizens of good social standing."<sup>24</sup> From 1886 to 1890 the number of rows built fluctuated, and after 1890 decreased gradually to zero in 1899 and 1900. From 1900 to 1910 there was a slight increase in rowhouse construction, and the last two existing rows constructed in the district were begun in 1910. These late groups are clustered in the blocks between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, on West 73rd, 74th, and 86th Streets.<sup>25</sup>

During the periods of heaviest construction in the early- to mid-1880s, rowhouse development in the district occurred primarily on the side streets of 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 78th, 82nd, and 83rd obviously clustering around the El stops at West 72nd and 81st Streets. The year 1885 brought the development of twenty-nine rows to the areas near the El stops, as well as construction on West 90th and 94th Streets near the 93rd Street stop. The forty-two rows built in 1886, the apex year of rowhouse construction, continued the clustering pattern. It was not until the late 1880s and 1890s that rowhouse development began to spread throughout the district.

Following the general model existing on the East Side and downtown, single-family houses were built in three- to five-story rows, some with two- to three-story kitchen and stairway extensions at the rear. At the front they were set back from the lot line only enough to accommodate an areaway and a stoop. The houses were set back from the rear lot line according to changing requirements in the building laws and the desired size of the house. These houses were built to the lot lines on the sides, often sharing the party walls of the adjacent houses. Party walls (single walls that straddled the lot line and carried the floors of houses on both sides) achieved an economy of means, a saving of space, and most importantly, lowered costs so that the unit cost of a house in a large row was lower than that of the same house in a small row or alone. Until some of the late rowhouses were built in the district, all were constructed with load-bearing brick side walls and self-supporting brick front and rear walls, with the front walls clad in various facing materials (brick, brownstone, limestone, sandstone, cast stone, and terra cotta). In most cases the side walls supported wood beams with wood joists at each floor level. Some of the late

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<sup>24</sup> "Some West Side Residences," Real Estate Record & Guide 34 (Oct. 25, 1884), 1080.

<sup>25</sup> These statistics are based on an analysis of data on surviving rows found in records of the Department of Buildings; the information was compiled in databases in which it could be sorted, cross-referenced, and further studied.

rowhouses had iron or steel beams with brick or concrete floor arches<sup>26</sup> but virtually none of the houses were considered fireproof. One group of eighteen houses on West 74th Street, designed by Percy Griffin for Frederick Ambrose Clark and built in 1902-04, were steel-frame, fireproof buildings that also contained elevators, an extremely unusual feature in rowhouse construction.<sup>27</sup>

Developers involved in rowhouse construction on the Upper West Side purchased groups of the standard twenty-five foot by one hundred foot lots; in order to maximize the number of houses built in one row, they often constructed residences narrower than twenty-five feet. Thus, five twenty-foot wide houses could be built on four lots. Another common occurrence was the construction of six houses, each roughly sixteen-and-one-half feet wide, on four lots.<sup>28</sup> Some houses in the district are as narrow as fifteen feet, such as Nos. 6 and 8 West 83rd Street (Christian Blinn, 1881-82).

The middle- and upper-middle class families that choose to live on the Upper West Side were usually those of professionals, such as bankers, merchants, lawyers, manufacturers and other types of well-to-do businessmen. The average home was occupied by approximately three to fifteen people, depending on the number of children, other family members, servants, and boarders to help pay for expenses.<sup>29</sup>

The majority of the rowhouses in the district were designed and constructed with three to four stories above raised basements and the high stoops placed at one side, a characteristic of earlier nineteenth-century houses found in New York. They followed, with some variation, a basic formula for interior planning, accommodating the informal dining room in the front of the basement level with the kitchen and laundry at the back, the

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<sup>26</sup> A notable exception is the house at No. 122 West 78th Street, designed by architect Rafael Guastavino using his innovative terra-cotta arch vaulting system. A more complete discussion of Guastavino's work in the district is found in Sarah Bradford Landau, "The Row Houses of New York's West Side," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 34, no. 1 (Mar., 1975), 24-26. Guastavino is further discussed below.

<sup>27</sup> These features were not required by the building code but were evidently the choice of the developer, a member of the prominent Clark family whose real estate activities are further discussed below. See also Landau, 30.

<sup>28</sup> LPC, Riverside-West End Historic District Report, report prepared by the Research Department (New York, 1989), 20, and Landau, 21. Few rowhouse groups in the district were built on full twenty-five foot wide lots. These are generally among the latest houses constructed.

<sup>29</sup> Based on a survey of portions of West 69th, 73rd, 81st, 85th, and 87th Streets; United States Census, 1900. Landau discusses more fully the income levels of rowhouse buyers. It was also common on the Upper West Side to offer houses as rentals.



front and back parlors on the first floor (the rear one being used as a more formal dining room) along a side hall and the stairs leading to the upper floors which contained the family bedrooms and bathrooms, and the servants and boarders at the top story. An entrance to the basement, which was convenient for accepting deliveries of goods, was located beneath the stoop and accessible by an entryway cut into the side of the stoop. The common straight stoop was widely used, but in the 1880s the box stoop, with a right-angle turn and an intermediate landing, gained in popularity. The box stoop was constructed with a wall at the building line so that one entered the steps from the areaway at the side, allowing for a more private approach to the house. Often rows were designed with a combination of raised and box stoops, enhancing the variety among the houses in the row.

The 1890s witnessed an innovation in interior planning that affected the placement and design of the stoop; the high straight or box stoops were replaced by a low stoop at ground level fronting on an American basement and the entrance was frequently located at the center. Typically, these houses were wider than most of those with raised basements, usually twenty-five feet wide. In the American basement plan, the dining room, which had been at the front of the basement level, was now placed at the second story running the full width of the house. A reception hall at the ground story was created allowing more privacy and elegance for entertaining upstairs. The now more elaborate staircase was placed at the rear of the wider and deeper entrance hall. The whole entrance was not only more spacious but more showy as well. Architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler felt, in 1906, that:

...there is a practical consensus to the effect that the 'American basement,' with the full frontage available on the second floor, is the most convenient arrangement and the most economical in reality in spite of the 'waste' of the entrance hall.<sup>30</sup>

The American basement plan was popularized in the 1890s by the architect Clarence True, although it is said to have been introduced at least a decade earlier but not widely adopted.<sup>31</sup> True was a prolific rowhouse developer and Upper West Side promoter who concentrated his work in the area near Riverside Drive (only a few rowhouse groups and two other buildings surviving in this district were designed by True).

The rowhouse groups constructed in the district range in number from two to as long as twenty-five in a row. The long blockfronts of rowhouses in the district help to create a strong, harmonious side street character that contributes to the district's special sense of place. The rows vary

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<sup>30</sup> Montgomery Schuyler, "The New York House," Architectural Record 19 (Feb., 1906), 89.

<sup>31</sup> Landau points to architectural critic Russell Sturgis as an early advocate of this type of interior planning, 28. See Russell Sturgis, "The City House [the East and South]," Scribner's Magazine 7 (June, 1890), 693-713.

stylistically and often incorporate different facade designs within a given row. In these cases, the individual houses within the row were designed to work together as a cohesive unit while featuring certain characteristics to make them individually distinctive and appealing to their owners. Uniformity and variety together were the key to producing the diversified streetscapes found in the district. Unlike the uniformity of design typically found in brownstone-fronted rowhouses of the earlier part of the nineteenth century, the houses in these later rows on the Upper West Side were purposely meant to be distinguished from each other, while together forming picturesque ensembles.

The architects and speculative builders active on the Upper West Side felt the public was tired of the "monotony" characterizing the numerous Italianate brownstones, such as those on the Upper East Side, and wanted to design houses accordingly — using a mixture of materials and revival styles. Schuyler wrote in 1906: "It was the development of the West Side which struck the first blow at the tyranny of the brownstone front."<sup>32</sup> Brownstone was still used, but with a new emphasis on its sculptural and textural qualities and often in conjunction with other materials. Houses were now faced in materials with contrasting colors and textures, brick in various shades, and terra cotta. Brick especially was readily available and proved more economical and more durable than brownstone.<sup>33</sup> Rhythm produced by the often asymmetrical massing of the rowhouses on the Upper West Side also played a role in distinguishing them from their brownstone predecessors which had flat facades. Devices such as projecting bays, oriels, gables, and recessed arches were used to create patterns of light and shadow. Facade designs frequently alternate in a particular rhythm or function as mirror images within the configuration of a given row; in certain instances, the houses which terminate the rows are treated as end pavilions, with projecting end bays that extend almost to the building line and give the row a sense of closure. The building entries in this report address this special aspect of rowhouse design in the category of "Row Configuration." Facade designs are assigned letters which are used to indicate the overall pattern of the row, for example: ABCB'A'. The use of the "prime" (') indicates that the A' design varies slightly or is the mirror image of the A design.

The distinctive patterns, the unusual asymmetrical massing, and the alternation of architectural elements within the rowhouse groups found in the district are features that are intrinsic to the picturesque trends characterizing American architecture of the 1880s and 1890s. The side streets of the district are a remarkable assemblage of diverse architectural styles and provide an inventory of this era of creative experimentation. Patterns, designs, and styles drew on a number of historical sources. The neo-Grec, Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, and Renaissance Revival styles were freely employed, sometimes eclectically blending features from a variety of sources into the design of one row. This new mixture of

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<sup>32</sup> Schuyler, "The New York House," 84.

<sup>33</sup> Landau, 21.

materials and styles was considered very modern and the Upper West Side of Manhattan was promoted accordingly, with brochures and pamphlets published by developers touting the fashionable newness of the architecture. Architects and builders active in the district, some of whom were also developers, made use of the architectural pattern books and design guides that proliferated in the late-nineteenth century, often mixing and matching elements at will and producing engaging combinations of architectural forms.

The rowhouses which give the side streets of the district their particular character relate in their overall scale and architectural style to the multiple dwellings on the avenues constructed in the same period. These buildings, predominantly flats and tenements, were also frequently constructed in rows, and were sometimes built in conjunction with adjacent rowhouse groups on the side streets. The interplay of the side-street rowhouses and the avenue buildings is a result of the concentrated efforts of architects and developers active on the Upper West Side during the relatively short span of years of the area's initial development. This cohesive quality is one of the factors that gives the district its strong sense of place.

While the earliest rows constructed in the district, dating from around 1870, were designed in the popular mid-century Italianate style, by the time development resumed at the end of that decade taste had turned against the somber brownstone-fronted rowhouses found elsewhere in the city where they create monumental uniform blockfronts with their ornate, classically-inspired window and door treatments and weighty cornices. The first challenge to the Italianate style in the design of rowhouses was the neo-Grec.<sup>34</sup> A reaction to the established tradition of imitating classical forms and adapting classical prototypes to satisfy the programs of modern building types, the neo-Grec style sought to reflect an architectural vocabulary appropriate to the modern, industrial civilization of the nineteenth century through the use of pared-down geometric massing and forms and stylized, almost mechanically precise ornament. As interpreted for the design of rowhouses in New York, the neo-Grec style is characterized by bold, rectilinear window and door enframements in stone with incised ornamental detail of stylized foliate forms and vertical channeling. Neo-Grec rowhouses are often executed in smooth brownstone, maintain a uniform

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<sup>34</sup> Conceived at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts during the 1840s, the French Neo-Grec style is often associated with the work of the architect Henri Labrouste, who is best known for his designs of two important libraries in Paris: the Bibliotheque Nationale and the Bibliotheque Ste. Genevieve. A more direct source for the neo-Grec style as it developed in America is the mid-nineteenth century vernacular residential architecture of Paris. Landau discusses the influence that Richard Morris Hunt, one of the first Americans to study at the Ecole, had on the popularization of the neo-Grec style for house design in this country, see Landau, "Richard Morris Hunt: Architectural Innovator...", in The Architecture of Richard Morris Hunt, ed. Susan R. Stein (Chicago, 1986), 47-77. See also Charles Lockwood, Bricks & Brownstone: The New York Row House, 1783-1929 (New York, 1973), 227-28. Lockwood provides a useful survey of architectural styles.

cornice line, and are usually unvaried in the design of a given row; in these aspects they do not differ much from their Italianate predecessors. However, some neo-Grec groups, such as a number located in the district, employ projecting bays or rusticated stone commonly associated with the Romanesque Revival style. A highly decorative version of the neo-Grec style is found in rows designed by Christian Blinn which are located on West 71st and West 78th Streets between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, and on West 78th and West 79th Streets between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues.

During the 1880s, the Queen Anne style emerged in rowhouse design on the Upper West Side and brought with it the fashion for treating houses as individually distinctive components of the streetscape. This style, most often associated with the work of English architect Richard Norman Shaw, appeared in the United States in the mid-1870s. Shaw's work in freestanding suburban villas drew upon eighteenth-century Georgian precedents and was characterized by textured brick, picturesque asymmetrical massing, pitched roofs with gables, prominent chimneys, and white trim. In the United States, the appearance of this style accompanied a growing appreciation for America's colonial heritage that was particularly strong following the celebration of the Centennial in 1876. American architects adapted Shaw's Georgian-inspired aesthetic and incorporated elements derived from American colonial architecture, such as applied pilasters and foliate friezes. Popular Queen Anne features found in rowhouses are recessed archways that form small porches, three-sided bays, bracketed oriel windows, multipane window sash and transoms, and ornamental sunflower and sunburst motifs.<sup>35</sup> The Queen Anne style rowhouses found in the district very often incorporate neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, and Renaissance Revival elements. Noteworthy examples include a row of five houses at Nos. 31 to 39 West 84th Street, designed by Henry L. Harris for Anna McDonald, and a group of ten houses (surviving from a row of fourteen) at Nos. 53 to 67, 73 and 75 West 85th Street, designed by George H. Griebel for Alfred C. Clark; both groups were built in 1886-87.

The Romanesque Revival style was also used for rowhouses built in the district dating from the 1880s and shared certain characteristics with the contemporaneous Queen Anne style: the combination of various building materials and textures and picturesque massing. This style in the United States is most often associated with the work of the important architect Henry Hobson Richardson, who drew upon the medieval Romanesque architecture of France and Spain for inspiration and created a highly inventive aesthetic that went beyond the mere imitation of historical forms.<sup>36</sup> Although adapted for a number of different building types, the most characteristic feature of the Romanesque Revival style is the use of round arches for door and window openings given emphatic treatment in molded brick and carved stone. Romanesque Revival rowhouses, such as those found in the district, are typically executed in brick, brownstone, and sandstone in various colors and textures, and in many cases make expressive use of robust rusticated

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<sup>35</sup> Lockwood, 231-32.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 233-34.

masonry, particularly at the basement level. Another feature of this style is densely carved ornament of interlaced naturalistic forms, often placed to emphasize the structural components of the facade, such as at the springing line of the arches. This style is very often used in conjunction with Queen Anne and Renaissance-inspired elements. A common design solution found in the rowhouses of the district is the blending of Renaissance and Romanesque Revival style features. Examples of Romanesque Revival style rowhouses in the district include a row of five (originally six) located at Nos. 152 to 160 West 76th Street, built in 1883-86 and designed by the firm of Demeuron & Smith with Justus J. Smith acting as the developer, and a pair of houses located at 130 and 132 West 82nd Street, built in 1887 for Nathan W. Riker and designed by the notable firm of Lamb & Rich who often worked in this mode.

The rowhouses dating from the 1890s reflect a predominant use of Renaissance forms and details. American architects in general, influenced by the principles of the French Ecole des Beaux-Arts and the architecture of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, shifted their attention during this period toward interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque prototypes of Italian, French, and German origin that were at the crux of the Beaux-Arts curriculum. The resurgence of neo-classicism in the 1890s had its roots in the broader cultural movement of the "American Renaissance"; American architects drew parallels in their design aesthetic between their own society, the American neo-classical past, and the enlightened Greco-Roman and Renaissance civilizations.<sup>37</sup> Leading architects such as McKim, Mead & White had a great influence on the design of residential architecture in this period through their commissions for mansions for the wealthy, in which they turned to these sources for inspiration. These stylistic influences, which symbolically expressed the prestige and affluence of the upper class, soon found their way to more modest speculatively-built rowhouses, such as those found in the district. The facades of these houses were often executed in materials of a lighter color than were previously used, such as limestone, yellow brick, and buff brick, although within the district brownstone is still the prevalent material for the Renaissance Revival style. Rather than display the irregular massing and animated rooflines associated with the Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival styles, these houses are generally flat-roofed or have small mansards, are characterized by a more regular alternation of architectural elements within a row (sometimes the houses are identical), and mark a return to more uniform blockfronts. Applied classically-inspired ornamental details, such as carved friezes, festoons, Ionic or Corinthian pilasters, and balustrades atop projecting oriels, add richness to these facades. The work of prolific architect Gilbert A. Schellenger, among the most avid adherents to the Renaissance Revival style for rowhouse design on the Upper West Side, is found throughout the district.

The rowhouses constructed in the district in the first decade of the twentieth century display the continued growth in popularity of the Beaux-

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<sup>37</sup> Richard Guy Wilson, "The Great Civilization," The American Renaissance, 1876-1917 (New York, 1979), 11-16. See also Lockwood, 234-38.

Arts style and the Federal and Georgian Revival styles blended with Renaissance elements. The several groups in the district that date from this late phase of rowhouse development represent the final era of single-family house construction in Manhattan. The row of eighteen houses designed by Percy Griffin for Frederick Ambrose Clark, located at Nos. 18 to 52 West 74th Street, and a number of houses on the south side of West 86th Street designed by the firm of Welch, Smith & Provot for the Halls, a family of active Upper West Side real estate developers, date from this period. All of these houses are large and sumptuous; only wealthy families could have afforded such grand houses in this period, a time when apartment dwelling was becoming the norm for urban life.<sup>38</sup>

As a whole, the stylistic influences on the rowhouse designs of the Upper West Side were so profuse and varied that, while the old Italianate style had certainly fallen out of favor, this new architecture was accepted with mixed feelings in critical circles. The Real Estate Record & Guide of November 1889 attacked the brownstones of the past:

It is a mark of the advancement that has been made in a very short time that to-day [sic] most of us recognize and also freely admit that there is very little in those miles of brown stone [sic] monotony that even colloquially we dare assert to be mildly, distantly artistic.<sup>39</sup>

While this same journal declared the architecture of the Upper West Side "sometimes positively vulgar" it proclaimed at the same time that "beyond doubt there is no more charming residential section than the west side in any of the commercial capitals of the world."<sup>40</sup> Schuyler initially criticized the eclecticism of the side streets of the Upper West Side and then re-examined its merits. In 1899, he found "this bad architecture...an atrocity -- crude suggestions of good things," for in attempting to present variety, designers had sacrificed purity of style for "the wildest of wild work" to the point of making one contemporary architect "seasick."<sup>41</sup> By 1906 however, Schuyler applauded the freedom from "the brownstone boredom" when he exclaimed "the wildest of the wild work of the new West Side had its uses in promoting the emancipation [of rowhouse design]."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> According to Landau, the houses designed by Percy Griffin contained seventeen to nineteen rooms and had four or five bathrooms each, in addition to elevators; "The Row Houses....," 30.

<sup>39</sup> "The West Side Illustrated," The Real Estate Record & Guide, supplement (Nov. 16, 1889), 1.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>41</sup> Schuyler, "The Small City House in New York," Architectural Record 8, no. 4 (Apr.-June, 1899), 376.

<sup>42</sup> Schuyler, "The New York House," 84.

A total of over 100 architects and builders are represented in the rowhouse designs within the district, yet only a handful stand out as being particularly prolific. Of the existing rows, George F. Pelham designed eleven and Neville & Bagge designed fourteen, predominantly in the Renaissance Revival style. John G. Prague, an architect/developer, designed eighteen rows, in which he incorporated the Romanesque and Renaissance Revival styles with Queen Anne elements. Gilbert A. Schellenger designed forty-five of the existing rows in the district; his designs are characterized primarily by the Renaissance Revival style, but often blended with neo-Grec, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne, and Northern Renaissance features. The firm of Thom & Wilson made the largest contribution with fifty-one rows designed in a variety of styles including neo-Grec, Queen Anne, Chateausque, and Renaissance Revival. Many of the firm's rows are highly inventive in detail, incorporating features from a wide variety of historic sources. Thom & Wilson and Schellenger were also the most prolific architects of flats found in the district.

While certain architectural styles are prominently represented in the district, other unusual design approaches make their appearance as well. In conjunction with the pioneering luxury apartment building, the Dakota, prominent architect Henry J. Hardenbergh conceived of the two aforementioned rows located on the north side of West 73rd Street in an unusual picturesque German Renaissance Revival style. Commissioned by Singer Sewing Machine Company president Edward S. Clark, these buildings were constructed on a large tract of land owned by the Clark family who were instrumental in promoting the real estate potential of the Upper West Side. These houses are characterized by bold massing of geometric forms, gabled roofline treatments, and ornamental detail inspired by German architecture of the second half of the sixteenth century and display on a smaller scale the chateausque qualities of the monumental design of the Dakota.

Hardenbergh's teacher, European-born and -trained architect Detlef Lienau used a French Rationalist aesthetic incorporating Northern Gothic elements in his designs for four houses at Nos. 48, 50, 52, and 54 West 82nd Street, built in 1886-87. Of the four houses, Lienau acted as the developer of one, Elizabeth Lienau is listed as the owner of another, and the remaining two were built for Mary M. Williams whose family sponsored the construction of two nearby rows designed by Lienau which have been demolished.<sup>43</sup> These houses are characterized by a simple, pared-down facade treatment, prominent gables, and stylized drip moldings at the lintels.

Spanish architect Rafael Guastavino was responsible for two imaginative Moorish Revival style rows on opposite sides of West 78th Street between Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues: Nos. 121 to 131 (1885-86) and Nos. 118-134 (1886). Commissioned by prominent Jewish real estate developer Bernard S. Levy, Guastavino adapted a style that was most often associated with the design of synagogues for these unusual rows. The architect was also responsible for the design of the B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue on Madison Avenue

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<sup>43</sup> Landau illustrates plans of these houses and discusses how they vary from common interior planning; "The Row Houses...", 21.

near 65th Street (1884-85, demolished) in which he also drew on the Moorish heritage of his native Spain for inspiration. Guastavino is most often noted as the innovator of a lightweight tile-arch vaulting system that was a breakthrough in fireproof construction. In the house at No. 122 West 78th Street, Levy permitted the architect to utilize his vaulting methods. Levy also lived in a house across the street, at No. 121, for a number of years.<sup>44</sup>

Most of the single-family houses constructed in the district have been converted to multiple dwellings. These range in occupancy from having one unit per floor to as many as three per floor. Some have been converted for institutional use. These changes in use have been accompanied by alterations to the exteriors of the houses including replacement of original doors and windows, rooftop additions, and painting and refacing of the brick and brownstone. A common alteration associated with conversions of houses to multiple dwellings has been the removal of stoops and the establishment of entrances at the basement level, usually by remodeling the existing basement entrance located beneath the stoop. As a whole, the external character of these rowhouses remains little changed. On most of the side streets of the district, scattered later apartment buildings have interrupted the original rows, but in general the surviving rowhouses present a strong coherency and are a major element in creating a special sense of place particular to this district on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Lynne Marthey  
Elisa Urbanelli

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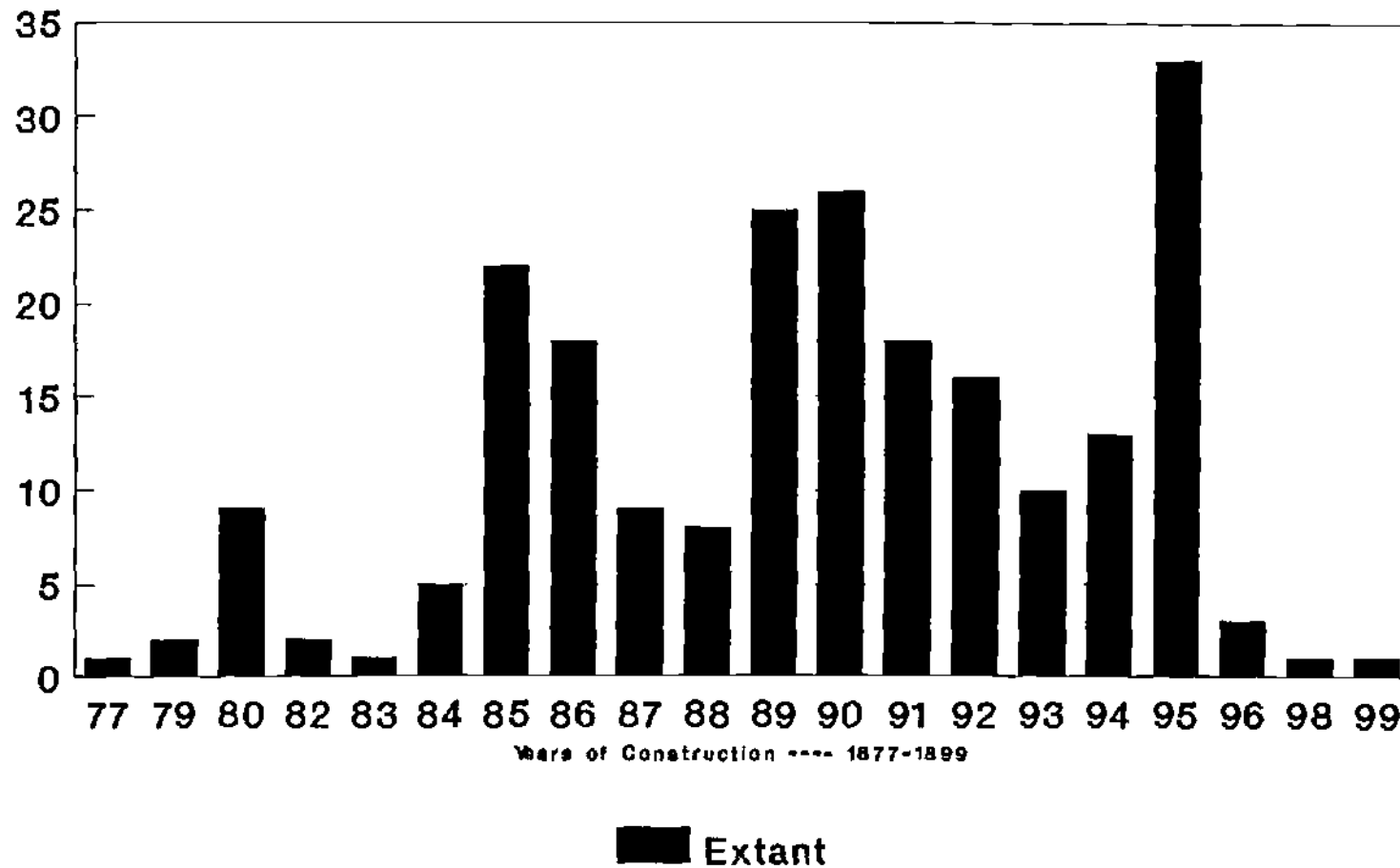
<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 24-25.





# Multiple Dwellings - Flats/Tenements

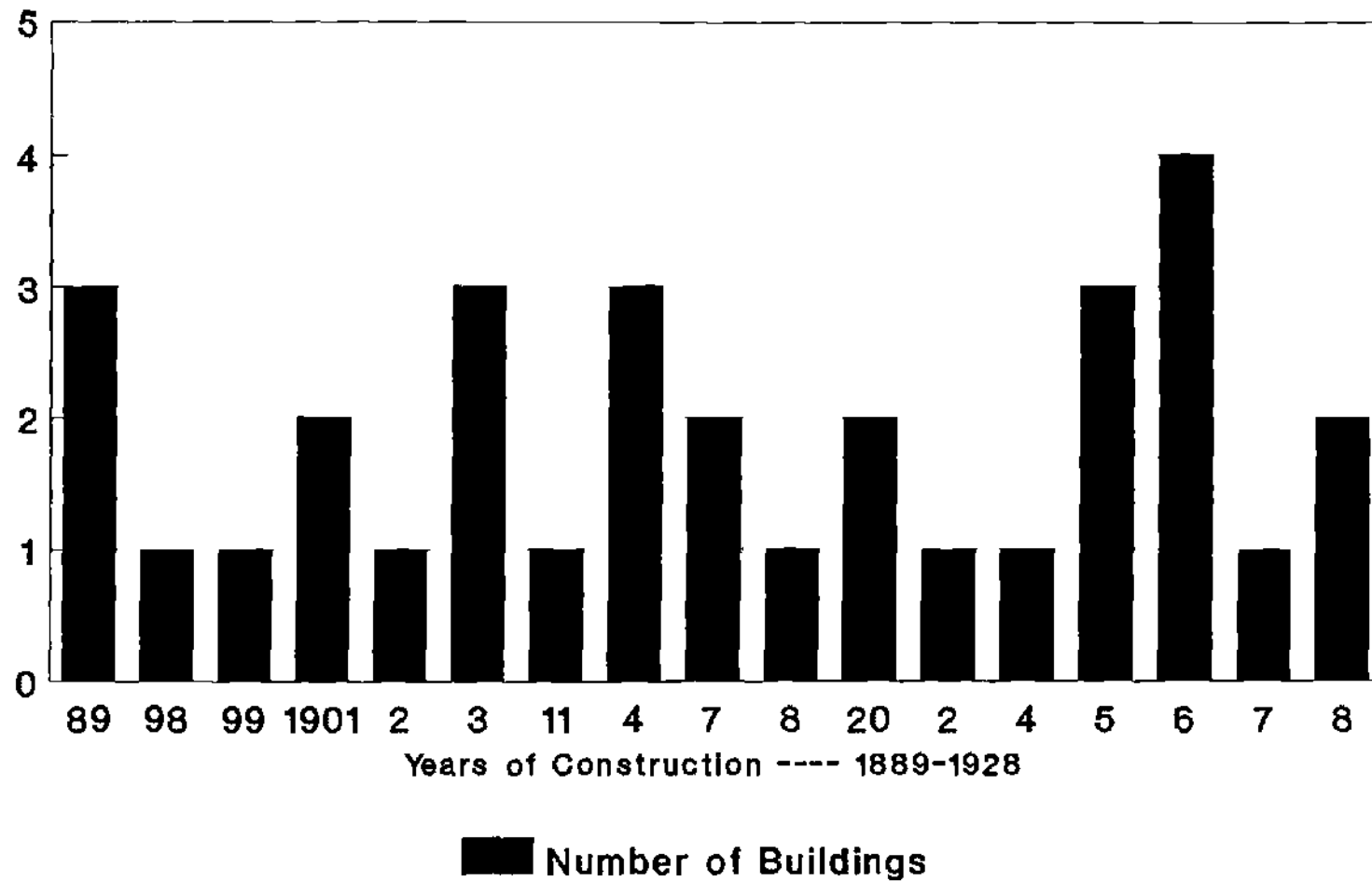
## Upper West Side/Central Park West



Numbers are based on analysis of data  
for existing buildings

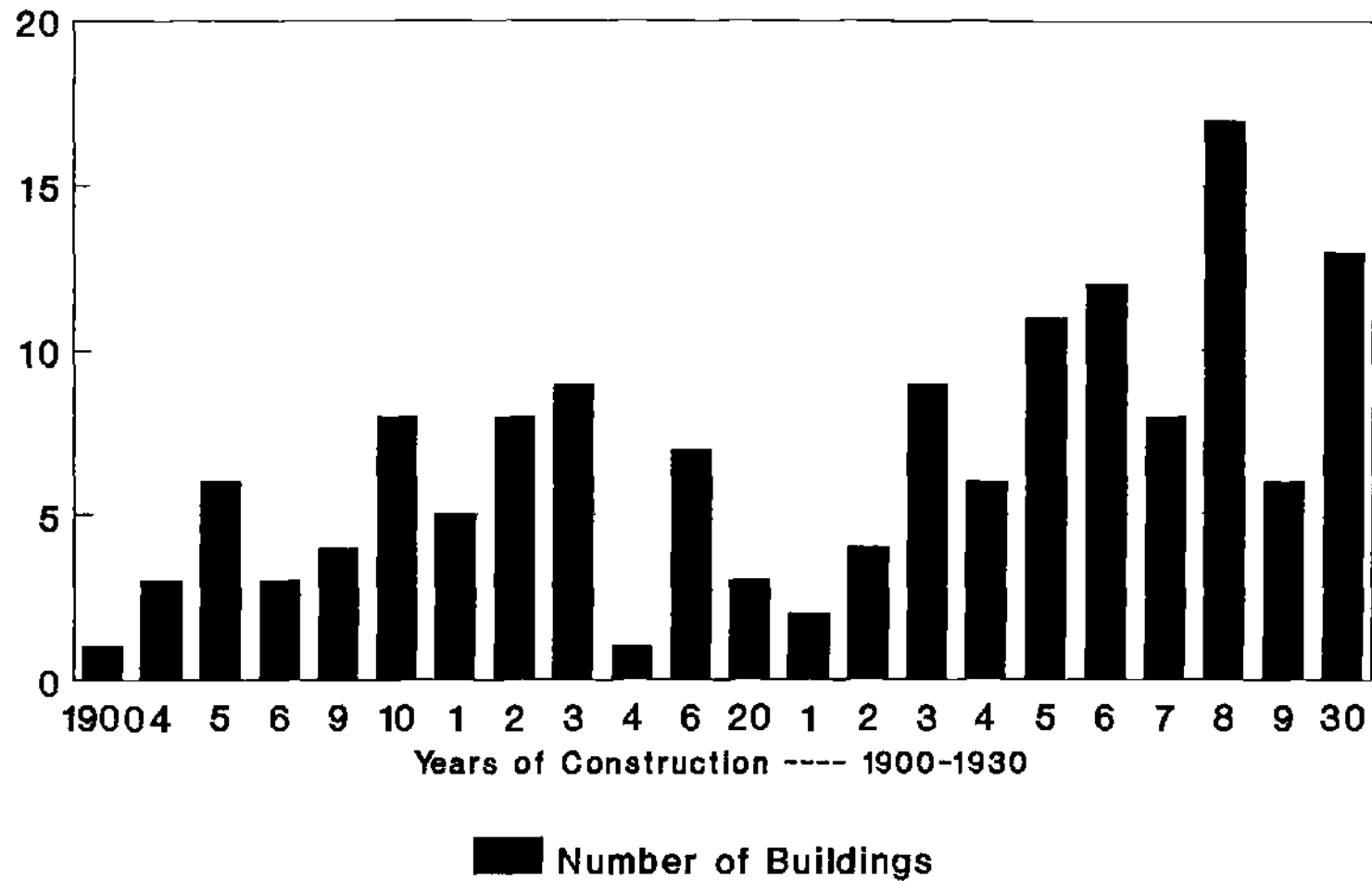
# Apartment Hotels/Hotels

## Upper West Side/Central Park West



# Apartment Buildings

## Upper West Side/Central Park West





## THE ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTER OF MULTIPLE DWELLINGS

Most of the area of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District was initially built up with the single-family rowhouses which exist in greater numbers than multiple dwellings in the district. However, from the beginning a substantial proportion of the population lived in multiple dwellings<sup>45</sup> and, by 1900 if not well before, the majority of the population lived in multiple dwellings.<sup>46</sup> Although the area was always promoted as a middle-class neighborhood, the initial wave of construction, especially before 1895, provided as well for residents of lower income levels.

Six types of buildings originally constructed as multiple dwellings have been identified within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District: tenements, flats, apartment hotels, apartment buildings, studio buildings, and hotels, all distinctions made in building permit applications. Although New Yorkers had lived in shared and multiple dwellings since well before the 1860s when the Department of Buildings was established and records kept for building construction in New York,<sup>47</sup> their particular forms, in the sense of size, structure, plan, appearance, and organization of space, were the subject of experimentation and debate in the years when the area of the district was developed.

Likewise, the names used to refer to these various types were sometimes imprecise and flexible until the period of experimentation ended. Their use in building permit applications and in the press changed over time and at any given time was subject to interpretation. In practice, these six types are not always completely separate from one another. In particular, there is at times a blurring at the edges among the categories of tenements, hotels, and flats; flats, apartment buildings, and apartment hotels; and hotels and apartment hotels.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Robert A.M. Stern, et al., New York 1900 (New York, 1983), 287.

<sup>46</sup> The first generation of multiple dwellings in the area, scattered wood-frame tenements and lodging houses built before 1879, were completely replaced during the initial phase of the development in the district, and later generations of multiple dwellings, such as many flats and tenements of the period 1879-1900, were subsequently replaced by apartment buildings, especially in the 1920s.

<sup>47</sup> Elizabeth Collins Cronley, "The Development of the New York Apartment: 1860-1905," Ph.D. dissertation (City University of New York, 1982), 13.

<sup>48</sup> Certain criteria, based on an analysis of records at the Department of Buildings as well as contemporary articles in the architectural press, have been used to identify the various types of multiple dwellings found in the district. Tenements date from roughly 1877-1896, are typically twenty-

All multiple dwelling types except hotels and apartment hotels were subject to regulation by the Tenement House laws. Hotels and apartment hotels were excluded because under the building laws they were considered commercial rather than residential buildings.

### Tenements

Under the Tenement House Laws the term tenement applied to any structure with three or more dwelling units. In common practice the term was used to refer to residential structures without private baths or toilets in individual living units, and which were occupied by low-income residents. The Tenement House laws of 1867, 1879, and 1901 were primarily aimed at improving conditions in these buildings. Such efforts were supported by a variety of civic-minded groups for both sanitary and moral reasons: sanitary because overcrowded conditions were thought to breed disease and endanger public health, and moral because of the absence of privacy.

Before 1879, there were wood-frame tenements built scattered within the area of the district above West 86th Street. These buildings housed a population of low-income residents in the area before the more permanent development of multiple dwellings began in the late 1870s. Although none survive today, they were torn down only as they were replaced by brick buildings over the next thirty years.

The oldest surviving multiple dwelling in the district is a tenement at 460 Amsterdam Avenue, built in 1877 under the original Tenement House law of 1867. This is the only surviving tenement in the district built under that law, which had only minimal requirements: a fire escape, the provision of at least one privy for every twenty residents, and the elimination of horses, cows, sheep, and goats from the premises. In plan, the building probably consisted of two- or three-room suites reached from stair landings or public corridors. As no interior toilet facilities were required, the likelihood is that a privy was probably originally in the back yard. The building was of brick masonry construction with wooden floor joists and had an open stairwell. This is a neo-Grec style building which in height, scale, and general appearance was similar to rowhouses in the neighborhood and was designed by the prolific architect John G. Prague for B. Schaaf &

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to twenty-five feet wide, have four to five residential stories above stores at street level, and have more than two families per floor. Flats typically date from 1880 to 1900, range in height from five to eight stories and often have street-level stores, range in width from twenty to 100 feet, and generally have one or two families per residential floor in narrower buildings (averaging twenty-five feet in width) and the same ratio of residential units to building width in wider buildings. Apartment buildings typically post-date 1900, are bigger in scale and plan than flats, have over eight stories, and contain elevators. Apartment hotels, studio buildings, and hotels fit different criteria which are outlined below.

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In 1879 a new Tenement House law was passed, later called the "Old Law," which in plan produced "dumbbell" shaped buildings on standard twenty-five by 100 foot midblock sites after proposals by James E. Ware and others. The dumbbell plan was narrower in the middle than at the front and rear due to light courts that brought light and air to every room in the building. For a twenty-five by eighty-nine foot building on a standard lot (with the required rear yard), a tenement at the high end of the scale typically contained two baths with toilets accessible from the public corridor on a four-unit floor, with the baths and staircases situated at the center of the neck of the dumbbell. Most had four residential floors above stores at street level. A typical unit in such a building had three rooms with the "living room" of each unit at the front or rear, and bedrooms opening onto the light court that were reached only by passing directly through the rooms without the benefit of a separate corridor. The living room contained a wash tub and cold water and a chimney or flue for a coal stove. Legally limited to eight stories, none in the present historic district are over six.<sup>49</sup> The dumbbell plan was not required for tenements but it was the only workable solution for midblock buildings on standard lots, as most were. Corner buildings, with ample light and air from two street frontages, were typically larger than midblock tenements and were not in the dumbbell plan. "Old Law" tenements were of brick masonry construction with wood floor joists, and were not considered fireproof. The majority were built in rows with party walls which brought the cost per building down below individually constructed buildings.

At the low end of the scale two adjoining tenements shared a single rear yard privy, and water was only available in the rear yard. Owners of all tenements were required to clean and whitewash every room twice a year and to report cases of serious disease and deaths.<sup>50</sup> Within the district, such tenements were occupied by rent-paying households whose heads worked in traditional trades or jobs. For example, in 1900, in a group of tenements on the west side of Columbus south of 83rd Street, the following occupations were represented: tailor, day laborer, stable man, carpenter, janitor, dressmaker, clerk, coachman, porter, servant, meat dealer, cook, watchman, and plumber.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> This was in part due to the building laws which by 1895, if not before, required buildings over eighty-five feet in height (usually eight stories) to be fireproof. This is an illustration of the overlapping provisions of the Tenement House Law and the building laws and the necessity of a close reading of each to find the more restrictive regulations, which took precedence.

<sup>50</sup> While "Old Law" tenements were popularly considered undesirable places to live by the middle class, they were better than other kinds of residences in the city such as lodging houses, which were governed by Lodging House Laws, and tenements built under the 1867 Tenement House law.

<sup>51</sup> United States Census, 1900.



There are nearly forty existing "Old Law" tenements built between 1879 and 1896 in the district. Five of these were constructed as individual buildings, with the remainder built in rows ranging from two to eight structures. Almost all of these were built on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues, usually adjacent to flats of similar size and appearance from the same period. Indeed, although tenements were at the bottom end of the socio-economic scale for multiple dwellings in the area, and often were less expensively or elaborately embellished than flats, the difference between flats and tenements in the district is not obvious by their exterior appearance.

In style, the earliest tenements in the district are neo-Grec. After 1890, they were all designed in variations of the Romanesque or Renaissance Revival styles. In all cases their designs followed the trends established by rowhouses, presumably to suggest to their renters stylishness and prestige and the image of a New York City middle-class home. Among the more prolific designers of tenements in the area were Gilbert A. Schellenger for the Gordon Brothers, Babcock & McAvoy for Borkel & McKean, and Ernest W. Schneider for Lorenz Weiher.

Under the Multiple Dwelling Law of 1929, owners were required to upgrade Old Law Tenements by replacing outside privies with a minimum of one indoor water closet for every two families, and improving fire safety with sprinklers and alterations to public corridors and stairs. Although some argued that these provisions would prove such a hardship on owners that many buildings would be torn down, it does not appear that such was the case, at least to any great extent, in the area of the district.

### Flats

The term "flat" was first used in Edinburgh and London early in the nineteenth century to denote living units that were all on one floor in larger buildings, often after those buildings were subdivided. In New York it may have been applied to rowhouses altered in the mid-nineteenth century to contain separate living units on each of its floors. By the time the Department of Buildings began keeping records of new building applications in 1866, a common type of new structure consisting of three or four stories, each with a separate living unit, above street-level stores, was classified on the basis of construction and use as a "second-class dwelling." At some point both these second-class dwellings and the living units within them began to be referred to as flats. The units were larger than those in tenements and each contained baths and toilets. These buildings had fewer tenants per floor than tenements.

These buildings were referred to by the Department of Buildings, at first loosely and after 1874 officially, as "French Flats." In the area of the district, French Flats or, sometimes simply flats, were built for a range of tenants. None of these buildings had elevators and all were limited by the Tenement House Law to eight stories. The more prestigious flats were often named with carved and decorated inscriptions on the buildings. Entered on side streets where there were no storefronts, they

were treated differently from flats at the low end of the scale.

Whereas the low-end flats often occupied midblock avenue frontage, were built adjacent to tenements, and were indistinguishable from tenements in appearance and the level of architectural embellishment, the high-end flats, although built in rows on the same standard city lots, were often treated architecturally as single larger buildings resembling apartment buildings, either with one or several entrances, and were more elaborately embellished. For example, at the low end is a group of three flats at 488, 490, and 492 Amsterdam Avenue built in 1889-1890 for William Bell by the architect Jacob H. Valentine. They are articulated as three separate buildings like the tenement row adjacent to them. They are entered through narrow doors next to storefronts, where a narrow corridor leads back to a stair, and have more than one unit on each of the four upper-level residential floors.

Better classes of flats were built on larger than standard lots on corner sites with more light and air. One such example is 221-223 Columbus Avenue, designed by Arthur Donovan Pickering for George W. Rogers in 1887. Given a prestigious name, "The Tuxedo," and a modest entry hall, its developers hoped to attract middle-class tenants and to distinguish their building from less commodious places. Like less prestigious buildings, however, this was of non-fireproof, brick construction with wood floor joists, and it admitted light to inner rooms by means of narrow rear light courts in conformance with the Tenement House Law.

At the top of the scale were buildings like "The Aylsmere" at 331-333 Columbus Avenue, designed by Henry Andersen for Leopold Kahn in 1892. This was conceptually a different type of building, built on several assembled lots with a central court for light and air instead of narrow side or rear light wells. It was entered through a spacious, ornamented lobby. Structurally this later building was a step up, with a fireproof basement and first floor, as required in the building law, and steel girders on upper floors. In plan, a typical flat might include a parlor, dining room, several bedrooms, a kitchen, one or more bathrooms, and one or more servants' rooms, all linked by private corridors.

At the lower end, flats were occupied by people with such occupations as clerk, salesman, and civil servant, and by retired people and widows, the latter frequently with boarders or lodgers in the household. At the Aylsmere, on the other hand, in 1900 its twenty-five households included people in the occupations of physician, banker, engineer, ship broker, real estate agent, merchant, insuranceman, and salesman. Seventeen of the households had servants.

Of the existing flats in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, fewer than a dozen were built before 1885 and about 185 more were built by 1900, with only two erected after 1900. These buildings were constructed on Columbus Avenue, on Amsterdam Avenue north of West 80th Street, on portions of Central Park West, and on the side streets immediately adjacent to the avenues. The older and more modest flats tend to be north of 80th Street, and the more commodious flats are south of 80th Street, although there are numerous exceptions. Most of the flats

originally built on Central Park West were equivalent in size and character to the Aylsmere; these were replaced by larger apartment buildings in the 1920s.

The two most prolific designers of surviving flats in the district are Thom & Wilson and Gilbert A. Schellenger, also the most prolific rowhouse architects in the district. Thom & Wilson were active for almost the complete period of flat building, from 1883 to 1896, and Schellenger's buildings date from 1886 to 1900. While flats resembled rowhouses in scale and adopted the architectural styles used in rowhouses, such as neo-Grec, Queen Anne, Romanesque, and Renaissance Revival, they were built closer to the lot line and were generally less expensively finished. Unlike contemporaneous rowhouses, which are often designed to be distinguished from one another and whose facades are frequently articulated by projecting bays, oriels, and various picturesque roof treatments, flats are generally regular in their massing and define a uniform street wall, most apparent on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. An interesting example of a flats building designed to harmonize with both neighboring flats on the avenue and rowhouses on the adjacent side street is the Greystone at 286-294 Columbus Avenue (southwest corner of West 74th Street), which has a planar neo-Grec facade in brick and limestone on Columbus Avenue and a more robust Romanesque Revival facade in rusticated limestone on West 74th Street.

#### Apartment Hotels

In the effort to develop a suitable middle-class multi-family dwelling, at least for bachelors and newly married couples, an early invention in New York was the apartment hotel which combined features of the new apartment house type and the hotel, an established kind of residence for middle-class living. As discussed in the architectural press,<sup>52</sup> the apartment house was considered to lack the privacy of a house and the amenities of a hotel, whereas the hotel lacked the spaciousness and sense of permanence of an apartment. Filling the gap, the apartment hotel contained suites of rooms including, at first, a parlor, dining room, bedrooms, private baths, and servants' rooms -- everything to be found in an apartment house except a kitchen (in some cases there would have been a small "housekeeping" kitchen without a stove<sup>53</sup>). Instead, a dumbwaiter connected a serving pantry in each apartment to a large kitchen on the ground floor or basement for delivery of food to each apartment, or tenants could eat in a restaurant on the ground floor.

The first apartment hotels in the area of the district were: the Beresford, the San Remo, the Majestic, and the El Dorado, all built on Central Park West between 1889 and 1893 and all later replaced in the 1920s

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<sup>52</sup> Described in Cromley, Chapter 5, 150-160.

<sup>53</sup> Stoves were not allowed in living units of apartment hotels under the law but the law was not always strictly enforced. This situation became a matter of public controversy in the mid 1920s.

by apartment buildings with the same names;<sup>54</sup> and the Endicott at 440-456 Columbus Avenue designed by Edward L. Angell, and the Brockholst at 520-526 Columbus Avenue designed by John G. Prague, both built in 1889 and both still standing. The Endicott and the Brockholst were for a distinctly upper middle-class clientele and had very similar features. Both were designed in the Romanesque Revival style and had commercial avenue frontages. At the Brockholst the rest of the ground floor was taken up by a large entrance hall, a reception room, a dining room, a cafe, and a barber shop, all richly embellished and furnished. Both an ornate iron stairway and an elevator led to upper floors where there were suites of rooms of various sizes. The building was planned around a large central court and two smaller courts. It is of load-bearing brick construction with a non-fireproof interior iron frame.

In 1900 there were seventeen households at the Brockholst, including an architect, a manager of a foreign company, a cigar manufacturer, a construction engineer, a railroad supplier, an editor, an accountant, a banker, a doctor, a member of the corn exchange, a shipper, and several widows. Seven of these had live-in servants.

While several such buildings were erected in the district in the nineteenth century, only a few survive. As an article about the Endicott stated at the time it opened,<sup>55</sup> a new kind of building such as this involved a greater risk on the part of its developer than flats for which there was a proven market.

Subsequent concentrations of apartment hotel construction took place during the periods 1902-1907, 1914-1917, and 1922-1929; this resulted in a group on West 72nd Street and others scattered throughout the area of the district. A wider range of tenants were accommodated than before, in small inexpensive units in most cases and in large and very expensive units in a few cases. These later apartment hotels circumvented the height restrictions of the Tenement House Law, and after 1916, the Building Zone Resolution, under both of which an apartment hotel was considered, like a hotel, a commercial building. A case in point, the Oliver Cromwell, designed by Emery Roth and built in 1927 for Washington Square, Inc., is considered the first "skyscraper" on the Upper West Side. In at least some cases, buildings may have been altered in the process of design from apartments to apartment hotels for this reason. Financial conditions provided a particular incentive for developers to push against the limits of the laws.

In the period 1914-17 three nearly identical apartment hotels were designed by Buchman & Fox for Edward West Browning and built in the area of 72nd Street, and a fourth was designed by Robert T. Lyons for the same developer. The three Buchman & Fox buildings are faced in elaborate terra-

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<sup>54</sup> Like all apartment hotels, the Dakota of 1880 also had a dining room and full hotel services; unlike them, it had full kitchens in each apartment.

<sup>55</sup> "The Hotel Endicott," Real Estate Record & Guide (1889), 44.

cotta sheathing executed in a neo-Gothic style. In the 1920s, Emery Roth designed three apartment hotels, including the Oliver Cromwell, and the firms of Sugarman & Berger and Sugarman & Hess also designed a total of three.

#### Apartment Buildings

Of the several multiple dwelling types within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, apartment buildings, although not the most numerous, are the most conspicuous by virtue of the size and location of the buildings. There are about 150 apartment buildings and 200 flats, but the apartment buildings occupy more area, they are much taller, and they house many more people. Whereas the flats are concentrated along Columbus Avenue and portions of Amsterdam Avenue where they are generally related in scale to both neighboring tenements and rowhouses, the apartment buildings form a high eastern boundary to the district along Central Park West and a western boundary that extends from 69th Street along Broadway and continues up Amsterdam Avenue between 72nd and 79th Streets. They create several distinct streetscapes, notably on West 72nd, 77th, 79th, 81st, and 86th Streets; and they are scattered throughout the district so that there is at least one in almost every block of the district.

Only two apartment buildings, the pioneering Dakota of 1880, and La Rochelle at 321-329 Columbus Avenue of 1895-1898 (designed by Lamb & Rich for G.H. Merriman), were built in the district in the nineteenth century. It was after 1900 and especially after World War I that the construction of apartment buildings transformed the look and character of the district. The large majority of apartment buildings in the district replaced existing "permanent" brick buildings, some of them being flats and tenements, whereas the development of the area up until this time occurred either on vacant land or replaced small wood-frame structures. In the search for an appropriate housing form for the middle class, the apartment building was gaining acceptance in New York City in the 1890s, but it was only in the decade after the IRT subway along Broadway opened in 1904 that many were built in the area of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District — nearly forty being built during that period.

One could reasonably argue that apartment buildings were already common here in the form of the higher class of flats since around 1890 and that the distinction is largely semantic. However, changes in the building laws and the Tenement House Law in 1901 together with other conditions (electricity, necessary for elevators, was available from a power substation in 1896) altered the framework in which these structures were built so that, by and large, different kinds of multiple dwellings were built before and after 1901. Under the Tenement House Law of 1901, a multiple dwelling on a standard lot was impossible to build, courtyard buildings on multiple lots being the only alternative. The costs of construction and providing amenities in a more mechanized building, the introduction of fireproof buildings mandated by codes and encouraged by insurance companies, and the change in rent structure that was the result of elevators produced a new kind of building that became the standard solution.

In the period from 1904 to 1914 most new apartment buildings were U- or H-shaped in plan or had central courts. Typically built to the maximum under the Tenement House Law of about twelve to fifteen stories in height, they were serviced by elevators from large and elaborate public lobbies and were mostly steel-frame fireproof or "semi-fireproof" construction (some exposed steel members). These luxury buildings were intended for upper middle-class tenants and had living units organized with public rooms grouped together near the entry, private and sleeping rooms grouped separately, and service rooms with separate circulation. Mulliken & Moeller and Schwartz & Gross were the two most prolific architectural firms associated with these buildings in the district. Several of them were built on Central Park West and others on prominent corner sites elsewhere in the district.

In the years just before construction stopped during World War I, apartment buildings began to appear more frequently on midblock sites. Although these were much larger buildings, in plan they recalled the dumbbell and rear light well plans of midblock flats and tenements of the previous twenty years.

The biggest wave of development of apartment buildings took place after World War I, from 1919 until construction stopped in 1931 because of the Depression. In this period there were nearly ninety new apartment buildings constructed in the district, including a number of them substantially larger and taller than anything in the neighborhood before, with several in the range of thirty stories. The largest of these buildings, built after 1929, were shaped by the amended Building Zone Resolution of 1927 and the Multiple Dwelling Law of 1929, and their set-back towers were a new form in the area. In plan, as before, midblock buildings tended to have side and rear light courts, like large dumbbells, and corner buildings, while maintaining the street wall, were U- or E-shaped in the rear. These buildings were intended for a broader range of income levels than the luxury buildings of the pre-World War I years. At the low end living units were smaller and had lower ceilings: "efficiency" apartments (efficient because their rooms were used for multiple purposes) had one or two rooms, and three- and four-room units omitted servants rooms. At the high end they were at least as large and lavish as they had ever been: buildings like the Beresford and San Remo included apartments of sixteen or more rooms on two or three floors (called duplex or triplex apartments) with ceilings of twelve feet and higher and wood-burning fireplaces. Among many prolific architects, George F. Pelham built the largest number of buildings in this period and Emery Roth built several of the largest and most prominent.

When most of the larger buildings were constructed after the turn of the century, a basic compositional format was utilized for almost every building, on which ornamental details derived from different stylistic sources — Renaissance, Baroque, Georgian, and Gothic — could be placed. Most facades of large buildings by 1900 had two- or three-part vertical compositions with a two-story base and an articulated upper section when there were three parts. These compositions might be embellished with articulated end bays, balconies, or other features in the broad midsection. The facades of these buildings were generally brick, embellished with trim

of stone, terra cotta, and ornamental ironwork. Among the earliest were those most richly ornamented, often in the elaborate Beaux-Arts style, such as the St. Urban at 285 Central Park West (1904-05, Robert T. Lyons, architect) with its prominent mansard roof.

Until 1930, the overwhelming choice of style for these buildings was neo-Renaissance. In the last few years before construction ended, some of the largest buildings in the district, including a few located along Central Park West, notably, the Century (1931, Irwin S. Chanin and Jacques L. Delamarre, Sr., architects) and the Ardsley Apartments (1931-31, Emery Roth, architect), were designed in the Art Deco style. These buildings were treated somewhat differently than neo-Renaissance buildings; they have articulated bases and other features that helped relate them visually to their neighbors, but have soaring towers whose designs emphasized verticality rather than visual termination. Typically clad in brick with stone, cast-stone, and terra-cotta decorative trim, the facades of these buildings incorporate stylized, often geometric, and often polychromatic ornamental features that tend to emphasize the massing of the building.

### Studio Buildings

Studio buildings were a form of apartment building or apartment hotel, initially designed specifically to provide living and working space for artists. The precedent for this building type in New York was set in 1857-58 by Richard Morris Hunt in his Studio Building (15 West Tenth Street, demolished). Because they were expensive to build, many studio buildings were financed as cooperatives.

To accommodate artists, these buildings generally had north-facing, double-height studio rooms with large industrial sash windows, and one or two floors of sleeping and service rooms behind the studio. To utilize the space in the buildings where there were double-height units on the north side, some had smaller, ordinary living units on twice as many floors on the south side. Like the best of other varieties of contemporary apartment buildings, they are of fireproof, steel-frame construction with concrete floor and roof arches.

To obtain adequate light of the right exposure, most studio buildings in New York were built on the south sides of streets facing open spaces. The first of these in the area of the district and the largest concentration of them, on the north side of West 67th Street, are an exception, ensuring northern light to studio units at the rear of the building by virtue of the low-rise rowhouses on West 68th Street.<sup>56</sup> From 1902 to 1907 several studio buildings were erected on West 67th Street by the same developer-architect

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<sup>56</sup> It has been suggested that restrictive covenants initially governed the development of 68th Street and the side streets further north, allowing only single-family rowhouses to be built, conversation with architectural historian Andrew Scott Dolkart, March 22, 1990. Examination of deeds and conveyances, however, has turned up no specific indication of covenants.

team: William J. Taylor and Simonson, Pollard & Steinam (and variations); two others were added on this block in 1915 and 1919. All but two of the twelve studio buildings located in the district were erected by 1915. Apart from West 67th Street, the others were built on scattered locations on and south of 77th Street, including the Studio Building at 44 West 77th Street (1907-09, Harde & Short, architects) facing Manhattan Square.

Stylistically, these buildings generally stand out among contemporary apartment buildings. Most have an Arts and Crafts era character in the use of clinker brick with polychrome terra-cotta trim and their facades incorporate Gothic, Northern Renaissance, and Tudor details, all of which has an immediate association with the production of art by the tenants. These features are overlaid on conventional two- or three-part compositional frameworks.

### Hotels

Within the range of building types called hotels that were built in New York City during the years when the Upper West Side developed, those in the district appear to be all of one general type. Neither the first-class, luxury hotels of midtown near the city's principal visitor attractions, nor the lower end hotels that catered to seasonal laborers or unattached working men, these were middle-priced hotels for middle-class professionals and business people. They provided food and shelter on a temporary or long-term basis for bachelors, traveling salesmen, newly married couples and others who did not want the commitment of a permanent residence with its investment in furniture, costs of servants, and daily responsibilities. At least two, the Orleans at 410-416 Columbus Avenue designed by Buchman & Deisler for the Imperial Construction Company, and 291 Central Park West designed by Clarence True for Eppenstein & Mathews, offered a boarding plan including meals. Although they were open to tourists and other short-term visitors, they were widely considered by the middle class to be a residential option and had been since before the middle of the nineteenth century.

Of the dozen odd hotels built in the area of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, nearly all were built between 1898 and 1913, with a few between World War I and the Depression. Except for one on Central Park West at 89th Street, all were built on West 81st Street or below. The earlier group were generally more richly embellished than contemporary multiple dwellings of other types because they had a more urgent need to attract new guests. In fact five of the earliest hotels in the district were designed in the Beaux-Arts style, both because of its sumptuousness and its associations with cosmopolitan Parisian life. After 1911, the image of most hotels in the district was more restrained, generally in the neo-Renaissance style.

Except for the Hotel Colonial at 441-449 Columbus Avenue (1903-05, Frederick C. Browne, architect) with its central court, generally a sign of higher quality and cost, all of these hotels were built with side or rear light courts where there were lower cost rooms. When they opened, all of these hotels probably had spacious lobbies and restaurants and provided varied services to guests. In the earliest hotels typical living units



probably consisted of rooms with private baths and pairs of rooms with a shared bath. By the post-World War I period, most rooms had private baths.

Commissions for hotels were considered prestigious and developers typically selected well-known architects for these highly visible projects. Almost every designer of a hotel in the area was a prominent member of the profession. Buchman & Fox, Harry B. Mulliken, Schwartz & Gross, Maynicke & Franke, Clarence True, and George F. Pelham all designed hotels in the area.

Unlike most other multiple-dwelling types which before 1916 were regulated by both the building laws and the Tenement House Law, hotels were only regulated by the building laws until 1916 after which they were regulated by the Building Zone Resolution as well. However, in the building laws they were more strictly and specifically regulated than many other building types, and their fire insurance costs were higher because of the nature of their use.

### Subsequent History

There has been relatively little new construction of multiple dwellings in the area of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District in the nearly sixty years since all construction of such buildings came to a halt in the early years of the Depression. The little activity that has occurred has been as follows: conversion of rowhouses into apartment buildings, conversion of non-residential buildings into residential buildings, conversion and remodeling of public spaces such as lobbies and dining rooms of multi-unit buildings, construction of new apartment buildings, and the alteration of the interiors of various buildings to adjust to shifting markets.

Continuing a development that had begun in the 1920s, several groups of rowhouses were joined and remodeled as single apartment buildings in every decade through the 1970s, reaching a maximum of nine such conversions in the 1960s. As part of these conversions the stoops were removed and the facades were usually stripped of original decorative detail and remodeled as single designs. Sometimes the building was extended to the building line and a new facade was constructed, usually Moderne or modern in style. Generally speaking these changes seem to reflect a decline in the economic value of rental property in the neighborhood up to the 1970s. Almost all of the rowhouses in the district, whether or not they have had exterior alterations, are now occupied as apartments. Relatively few are occupied as single-family dwellings.

In at least one case, the old Pythian Temple on West 70th Street, a non-residential building (in this case a clubhouse) has been converted to residential use.

An important behind-the-scenes change has been the remodeling of public spaces such as lobbies, dining rooms, and reception rooms of apartment buildings, hotels, flats, and apartment hotels. Some such spaces have become commercial, reflecting both economic pressure and changing social needs. Others have been remodeled, perhaps in efforts to attract new

business and some have been converted as part of modernization efforts that might include air conditioning and new elevators.

There were very few apartment buildings erected in the district between 1931 and the end of World War II. Then two to four were built in each decade until the 1980s when seven were constructed. Since World War II, modified building codes, improved lighting, heating and ventilating technology, and new zoning regulations (since 1961) have changed the long-time practice of designing buildings around light courts. In this period, most new buildings were designed as solid blocks, and sometimes were set back from the building line, as at 15 West 72nd Street, creating inharmonious streetscapes. In the 1980s, revised zoning has encouraged new construction more sympathetic to its context; an example of this trend is the Coronado at Broadway and West 70th Street.

Some of the biggest changes in the area of the district have been imperceptible from the street. While most buildings have undergone interior remodelings, their basic use has remained constant. In the case of flats and tenements, however, since the 1970s, many have been thoroughly upgraded to modern apartment buildings with full kitchens and baths in every unit. Related to these changes have been the imposition of rent control and rent stabilization laws throughout New York City on the one hand and the conversion of much rental property to cooperatives and condominiums on the other.

#### Current Conditions

Most street-level stores in multiple dwellings have been remodeled. Doors to upper-level flats and tenements, particularly when they face the avenues, are somewhat less likely to have been remodeled. In apartment buildings, many new entrances have been installed. A significant change to multiple dwellings in the district has been the replacement of original wood- or steel-framed windows with aluminum sash, often in a pattern new to the building which is not as sympathetic to its overall architectural character. Often this alteration has been associated with the conversion of rental property to cooperatives and condominiums. Window replacement has had an impact on substantial numbers of every building type in the district.

Despite these changes, however, the multiple dwellings of the district are in largely original condition. A few cornices have been removed and parapets altered, but the overwhelming character of the buildings is little changed since the 1930s.

Michael Corbett

## THE COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE UPPER WEST SIDE/CENTRAL PARK WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

### Individual Building Types with Commercial Uses<sup>57</sup>

Very few buildings in the district were erected purely for commercial purposes; however, many were constructed to contain mixed uses or were residential buildings later altered for commercial use. The relevant building types found in the district are: tenements and flats with street-level shops, apartment buildings and hotels, rowhouses converted to commercial use at the street level, small commercial buildings, and other specialized commercial structures. Although the shopfronts contained in these buildings survive in various states of integrity, the remaining historic features are significant to the character of the streetscapes.

### Tenements and Flats with Street-Level Storefronts<sup>58</sup>

In most cases, the masonry upper wall of a tenement or flats building is separated from the street-level storefronts by a cornice or bandcourse of pressed metal, wood, or stone. Often these horizontal elements contained frieze bands designed to accommodate commercial signage. Supporting this feature are masonry or cast-iron piers, normally ornamented, which divide the ground story into storefront modules.<sup>59</sup> Surviving in various states of integrity (sometimes details are missing although the piers remain *in situ*), these piers and pilasters frame the storefront openings. Cast-iron columns often occurred within the opening and were sometimes placed inside the storefront. These are in most cases visible today; in a few instances the original elements are intact, *in situ*, but hidden behind modern materials. Nonetheless, they reveal that often the structural divisions of the street-

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<sup>57</sup> This section is based on the following sources: Atlas of the Entire City of New York (New York, 1879); Atlas of the City of New York and Part of the Bronx (New York, 1885); M. Christine Boyer, Manhattan Manners (New York, 1985), 193-219; James Trager, West of Fifth (New York, 1987), esp. 23, 38, 132, 144ff; New York City, Manhattan Department of Buildings, Plans, Permits, and Dockets; New York Public Library, Photographic Views of New York City 1870's-1970's from the Collections of the New York Public Library (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1981), microfiche nos. 0599, 0608, 0675, 0807, 0808.

<sup>58</sup> Buildings of this type were constructed on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. While little original storefront fabric survives on Columbus Avenue, that on Amsterdam Avenue has undergone a lesser degree of change and shows a greater harmony with the architectural character of the upper stories of the buildings.

<sup>59</sup> This description of storefronts is based on a survey of Photographic Views... New York Public Library, and Department of Taxes Photograph Collection, Municipal Archives and Records Center.

level commercial openings did not necessarily align with the bay divisions of the upper facade. This non-alignment was architecturally resolved through the employment of a heavy lintel or architrave which visually acted to support the load of the masonry and which provided a convenient frieze for the inclusion of signage. When the narrow side of the multiple dwelling faced onto the commercial avenue, the one or two shopfront modules per building alternated with the residential entrance. When the long side of the building stretched along the avenue, residential entrances were either located between the more numerous shops, or on the side street, or both. The residential entrances, normally reached by a low stoop (many of which have since been removed) contained a door surmounted by a transom.<sup>60</sup>

The typical shopfront designed for these building types was often tripartite in composition: a recessed doorway with a transom flanked by, or in some cases, to the side of, show windows that were bracketed between an upper transom and lower bulkhead. Bulkheads, sometimes elaborately decorated, were built of iron or wood painted in solid colors. Transoms were typically composed of several small glass panes (sometimes several dozen) and were sometimes partially operable. Signs were most often boards or lettering attached to or painted on the frieze of the shopfront cornice; often they were back-painted directly onto the show window glass. Another popular method was projecting signs extended from the upper part of the facade, mounted on metal brackets. Many of the shopfronts were shaded by retractable awnings mounted within the masonry opening and conforming to the shape of the opening; at times the second-story shopfronts also had them. Two prevalent first-story types were: (1) those attached to the bar between the transom and door or show window, which allows natural light to illuminate the display windows; and (2) those installed above the transoms which often gave the awning a steep slope. Sometimes they also served as additional signage.

Multiple dwellings located along the avenues (with the main entrance on the side streets), typically two per blockfront, were erected with narrow yards between them that opened to the avenue. Over time this short gap between the two buildings was filled in with one or two narrow one-story structures; they normally continue the architectural motifs, in brick or stone, of the adjacent buildings and include shopfronts.

#### Apartment Buildings and Hotels

Along Columbus and Amsterdam avenues are a number of apartment buildings, most of which were designed with street-level shops. The apartment buildings on West 72nd Street between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue, on West 79th Street between Columbus and Amsterdam avenues, on West 86th Street, on Central Park West, and on side streets throughout

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<sup>60</sup> While the low stoops have been removed, many original entrance doors and transoms survive on Amsterdam Avenue; others survive on Columbus Avenue at No. 182, No. 188, No. 207-209, No. 244, No. 302, No. 304-306, No. 463, and Nos. 483, 485, and 487.

the neighborhood typically do not have shopfronts. Apartment hotels, found most often on the avenues and West 72nd Street, resemble the apartment buildings in exterior appearance. Typically these were built with storefronts at street level; if not, shops were often added soon after construction.

In general, the facades of these buildings are articulated by large masonry piers; clearly separating the ground-story shopfronts into discrete units, the piers, through their vertical continuity, also allow the shopfronts to be integrated with the arrangement of the facade at the upper stories. Historically, these shopfronts resembled those in the tenements and flats: separated from the masonry wall above by a decorative cornice and/or bandcourse, they often had show windows with bulkheads flanking a central doorway, the entire glassy span surmounted by transoms, a sign, and (often) a retractable awning. In apartment buildings and hotels the residential entrance is normally grand, with decorative treatment or structural piers clearly separating it from commercial fronts.

#### Rowhouses Converted to Commercial Use

Rowhouses were altered for commercial use on West 72nd Street between Columbus and Amsterdam avenues and on West 79th Street between Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway. A few rowhouses underwent commercial alterations as early as 1909; however, the overwhelming majority of conversions occurred in the 1920s.

In a few cases, the residential entrance remained unaltered and a shopfront was inserted into the front of the raised basement, for example at 104 West 73rd Street, where the areaway with steps leads down to the shopfront. In other cases the basement and first-story levels were raised to permit the shopfront to be at grade. Typically these commercial fronts, surmounted by a pressed metal cornice, contained a doorway, one or two show windows with bulkheads, and transoms.

More commonly, the rowhouse was stripped of its stoop, and shopfronts were inserted into the raised basement, first story (as at 217 West 79th Street), or (in the case of rowhouses with American basements) first and second stories. While these shopfronts vary in detail, they share some common features: commercial and residential entrances are located to the side of wide display windows.

Another common alteration, seen along West 72nd and West 79th streets, was the erection of a one- or two-story extension out to the building line to accommodate commercial tenants. Often the first-story shopfront, its show windows and doors framed in cast iron in the early twentieth century and steel or aluminum later on, consisted of a side doorway and wide show window resting on a low bulkhead. The residential entrance would be on one side of the shopfront, unless two or more contiguous rowhouses had been converted simultaneously, thus permitting one residential entrance to serve all the apartments. The front extension, often originally faced in stone or brick,

also contained businesses at the second story, where large windows, or a fixed central sash flanked by smaller, operable windows and surmounted by transoms, would be installed. (A number of these storefronts, generally added in the 1920s, still survive.)

The most extensive commercial alteration of rowhouses in the district, a popular change on West 72nd Street, involved the erection of a totally new facade at the building line. In these instances, a commercial base with piers and a cornice, often faced in stone or brick, would frame the first-story shopfront (resembling those described above) and the entrance to upper stories, as well as the second-story commercial window arrangement, typically a fixed sash of metal or wood flanked by double-hung or pivoting sash side windows.

### Small Commercial Buildings

Scattered along the shopping streets in the district there are a handful of small buildings designed solely for commercial use. Columbus Avenue has two from the 1890s (Nos. 424 and 426), one rebuilt in 1961 (No. 466-468), and two from the 1980s (Nos. 211 and 215). West 72nd Street contains four examples dating from 1909 to 1920 and a few from the 1930s. Typically one or two stories, these buildings have facades composed of large display windows surrounded by frames which reveal their period of construction through bold stylistic references. Except for the most recent examples, these buildings share a common building plane and degree of transparency with their larger neighbors. Today, the design integrity of these small commercial buildings varies, but they are clear examples of vibrant commercial design spanning the history of the district.

### Other Commercial Structures

The historic district contains a building related to the livery business, a stable at 2 West 90th Street built in 1906-07 (now converted to residential use). A large complex erected in 1900-01 on West 66th and 67th streets near Central Park West, consisting of a clubhouse and stables (both now demolished), and the architecturally grand Durland Riding Academy, still standing at 8 West 67th Street, attests to the recreational aspect of the horse industry at the turn of the century. One of the largest equestrian schools in the world and home of the New-York Riding Club (organized in 1873),<sup>61</sup> the riding academy was later converted into a television center.

Another specialized building type found in the district is represented by the Riverside Memorial Chapel (1925-26), a four-story building in the Neo-French Renaissance style. Located on Amsterdam Avenue between West 75th and 76th streets, it contains a mortuary chapel, offices, and residential space. The six-story Renaissance Revival edifice erected on the southwest corner of Columbus Avenue and 72nd Street for the firm of Park & Tilford, first-class grocers, was designed by McKim, Mead & White (1892-93); it is

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<sup>61</sup> King (1893), 297, 569.

one of the few large buildings in the district intended for purely commercial use. A six-story dry goods store and warehouse (now converted to residential use) in the neo-Renaissance style (George H. Griebel, 1902-03) erected on Columbus Avenue at 73rd Street and the eleven-story Metropolitan Storage Warehouse, designed in the Beaux-Arts style and built at 471-475 Amsterdam Avenue (1922-23), point to further commercial activity in the district. More recently, as part of the American Broadcasting Company Television Center, a fifteen-story office-and-studio building was erected on West 67th Street (1978-79).

David Breiner

## THE ARCHITECTURE OF RELIGIOUS AND OTHER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN THE UPPER WEST SIDE/CENTRAL PARK WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

### Religious Institutions and their Architecture

The rich and varied religious architecture in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District plays an important role in defining the district's character. These buildings are often organized into complexes to serve the various needs of a congregation: a house of worship; a building for congregation functions (called variously a parish house, church house or community center), a school, and living quarters for the minister, priest or rabbi. These varied buildings for a multiplicity of denominations within the Judeo-Christian tradition reflect, in part, the diverse population of the district during its period of major development. A number of distinguished architects have addressed the challenge of designing religious buildings for this densely-built residential neighborhood. Many are located on midblock sites and relate to the neighboring rowhouses in scale and materials. Others, on Central Park West, are grander in scale as befits their more generous sites and the greater width of the street. In responding to this challenge, the architects have employed a broad range of materials in a wide range of architectural styles.

Grace and St. Paul's Lutheran Church, originally St. Andrew's Methodist Church, at 123-125 West 71st Street, built in 1879-80 and designed by Stephen D. Hatch, is a unique essay in the district in the High Victorian Gothic style. Two Romanesque Revival churches survive: St. Andrew's Methodist Church, now the West Side Institutional Synagogue, at 122-138 West 76th Street, designed by J.C. Cady & Co. and built in 1889-90, and renovated after a fire in 1966; and the Church of the Third Universalist Society, now the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, at 140-144 West 81st Street, built in 1892-93 and designed by John F. Capen. The West End Synagogue (Congregation Shaaray Tefila), now the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church of St. Volodymyr, at 160 West 82nd Street, built in 1893-94 and designed by Brunner & Tryon, shares many of the same architectural elements of the two Romanesque Revival buildings, such as the coupled windows and the arcading at the doors and windows, although Sharaay Tefila was cast in the Moorish/Byzantine Revival mode considered appropriate for synagogues. The similarities in form between Capen's church and Brunner & Tryon's synagogue are particularly striking. Both have arcades flanked by towers and are approached by a double flight of steps.

Three religious complexes on Central Park West represent turn-of-the-century stylistic interpretations that occurred within the classical canon. Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue and Rectory at 99 Central Park West was designed by Brunner & Tryon in the monumental Academic Classical style and built in 1896-97. From colonial times, Congregational Shearith Israel had built houses of worship in the prevailing classical style. Nonetheless, the shift in Brunner & Tryon's work from the Moorish/Byzantine Revival of the West End Synagogue to the classicism of Shearith Israel is striking. The Second Church of Christ, Scientist at 77



Central Park West was designed by Frederick Constock in an Academic Classical mode based on Beaux-Arts principles and built in 1899-1901. It is likely that the Christian Scientists wished to establish a palpable presence on Central Park West. The New York Society for Ethical Culture at 2 West 64th Street was designed by Robert D. Kohn in the Secessionist style, a variation of the Art Nouveau, and built in 1909-10. Although Kohn scaled his building to sympathize with the Society's adjacent school, built in 1902-03 and designed in a variation of the more traditional neo-Renaissance style by Carrere & Hastings with Kohn as associate architect, he chose a contemporary although classicizing style for the new religious sect.

Four churches and synagogues within the district display different facets of the Gothic style. The Church of the Fourth Universalist Society church, at West 76th Street and Central Park West, was built in 1897-98 and designed by William A. Potter in the style of late English Gothic churches. The adjacent school building is contemporary and integral to the design of the church. In the design of the Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church at Central Park West and West 65th Street, built in 1899-1901, Schickel & Ditmars created a church based on late-thirteenth-century northern European prototypes. The Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament at 146-150 West 71st Street, built in 1916-17, was designed by Gustave E. Steinback to evoke thirteenth-century French Gothic church architecture. It is constructed of cast stone as are the adjacent rectory and the school, behind the church at 147-153 West 70th Street, both contemporary with the church. The two buildings of the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue/ Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion at 28-36 and 38-44 West 68th Street, were begun in 1939-41 and finished in 1948-49. Designed by Bloch & Hesse, they are unified through the consistent use of a neo-Medieval style with Gothic elements and executed in Fordham gneiss and limestone.

The architects of this century have tended to organize the components of the typical religious complex as a single structure. This is seen in three examples in the district. The Jewish Center at 131-135 West 86th Street, built in 1917-20, was designed by Louis Allen Abramson to incorporate a synagogue and educational and recreational facilities within a ten-story neo-Renaissance style structure. Congregation Rodeph Sholom at 7-21 West 83rd Street incorporates a synagogue, community and meeting rooms, and living quarters behind a massive facade with deeply cut arches that evoke Romanesque and Byzantine prototypes. Designed by Charles B. Meyers, the structure was built in 1928-29. The most recent religious structure in the district is the St. Matthew and St. Timothy Church and Center at 26-32 West 84th Street, built in 1967-68 and designed by Victor Christ-Janer and Associates. Behind the high, reinforced-concrete street screen reminiscent of Le Corbusier's late Brutalist work, Christ-Janer has juxtaposed the sanctuary, parish hall, school and living quarters. The Rodeph Sholom School at 10-16 West 84th Street, built in 1973-77, as designed by William Roper echoes this aesthetic.

The changing demographics of a growing metropolis were responsible for the Upper West Side's development and religious institutions both anticipated and followed their congregations uptown. The chronology of the construction of religious buildings within the Upper West Side/Central Park

West Historic District reflects the patterns of development within the area. The earliest religious buildings were constructed near the intersection of Broadway and West 72nd Street, the site of old Harsenville, the hamlet that grew at the intersection of the old Bloomingdale Road (now Broadway) and Harsenville Lane (now West 71st Street) which connected the Bloomingdale Road to the Boston Post Road on Manhattan's East Side. These include what is now Christ and St. Stephen's at 124 West 68th Street, first organized in 1879 as the Chapel of the Transfiguration, an uptown branch of the Church of the Transfiguration at 1 East 29th Street ("The Little Church Around the Corner"); Grace and St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 123-125 West 71st Street, originally built as a chapel for a growing congregation of Methodists by that denomination's Extension and Missionary Society in 1880; and the Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament which established itself at Broadway and West 71st Street in 1887 in a building which preceded the present one.

A second wave of religious buildings further to the north followed in the 1890s. The growing congregation of Methodists on West 71st Street sold its chapel to Grace Lutheran and moved as St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church to 122-138 West 76th Street in 1890. The Third Universalist Society built its new church at 140-144 West 81st in 1892-93. A second Episcopalian congregation left its chapel at Columbus Avenue and West 83rd Street to become the newly organized St. Matthew's at 26 West 84th Street in 1892-93. The first synagogue in the district was Congregation Sharaay Tefila, built 1893-94, at 160 West 82nd Street by a congregation that had moved up from West 44th Street.

As Central Park West was developed later than the side street blocks with residential structures, this was also the case for religious buildings. However, in the 1890s and in the first decade of this century, six religious denominations built places of worship on Central Park West. The Scotch Presbyterian Church moved up to Central Park West and West 96th Street from West 14th Street in 1894. The city's oldest Jewish congregation, Shearith Israel, moved to Central Park West and West 70th Street from West 19th Street just west of Fifth Avenue in 1897. The Fourth Universalist Society built its Church of the Divine Paternity at Central Park West and West 76th Street in 1896-97. A Lutheran congregation, Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, moved uptown to Central Park West and West 65th Street in 1902. Two sects of relatively recent foundation, the Second Church of Christ, Scientist, and the New York Society for Ethical Culture, joined the more traditional denominations already established on Central Park West; the Christian Scientists at Central Park West and West 68th Street, in 1898-1901, and the New York Society for Ethical Culture at Central Park West and West 64th Street in 1910. Congregation Shearith Israel and the New York Society for Ethical Culture are designated New York City Landmarks.

Following World War I, the prosperity of the 1920s was manifested in the construction of large apartment buildings along the avenues, especially Central Park West. Taking advantage of this trend, in 1928 the Scotch Presbyterian Church, leased its site to a developer on the condition that accommodation be provided for the church in a new sixteen-story apartment building. Other newer houses of worship were constructed on midblock sites

on the side streets. Some replaced rowhouses, as in the case of the several building campaigns of the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue/Jewish Institute of Religion-Hebrew Union at 28-36 and 38-44 West 68th Street and Congregation Rodeph Shalom at 7-21 West 83rd Street. In other cases, rowhouses were refaced and interiors adjusted, as with the Society for the Advancement of Judaism (1937) at 13-15 West 86th Street. In the case of the Romanian Orthodox Church of St. Dumitru at 50 West 89th Street, the interior was renovated in 1940 to accommodate the church but the facade was left essentially intact.

Several denominations have chosen to reuse available religious buildings now located within the district. At least four examples may be cited. Grace Lutheran (now Grace and St. Paul's Lutheran) purchased its chapel from St. Andrew's when the latter moved to West 76th Street in 1890; the West Side Institutional Synagogue purchased this West 76th Street building when St. Andrew's merged with St. Paul's in 1937. Three denominations have been housed in the Church of the Third Universalist Society: the Disciples of Christ in 1910; the Mormons in 1945; and recently the Mount Pleasant Baptists. In 1958 Congregation Sharaay Tefila sold its building to the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church of St. Volodymyr.

#### Other Public and Private Institutions and their Architecture

The Upper West Side's growing population and increase in residential development during the late-nineteenth century triggered a parallel increase in the construction of a variety of institutional buildings to serve the area. Later, as transportation improved and the reputations of some of these institutions spread, services were made available to a much wider audience. Some have even gained national and international significance. The initial isolation of the area necessitated the construction of schools and libraries to meet educational needs, clubs to meet social and cultural aspirations, and fire and police stations to meet citizens' requirements for protective services within their own self-sufficient neighborhood. The story of the history and development of the institutions in the district is a long one and covers periods of establishment, growth, and reorganization for some major New York City institutions.

Many of the institutions in the district are housed in buildings designed by architects specifically for the institution. In some cases, institutions which were originally housed in pre-existing structures were later moved to such specialized structures. In a few cases pre-existing structures, typically rowhouses, adequately serve the needs of some smaller institutions. Institutions located on Central Park West, including the American Museum of Natural History and the New-York Historical Society, are typically larger and more grandiose in scale and/or ornamental treatment than the institutional buildings located on side streets. This character corresponds to that of the larger apartment buildings and religious institutions located on the avenue. Institutional buildings on the side streets are typically smaller in comparison and often occupy two lots rather than entire blockfronts. In this way they conform to the residential character of the side streets. There are exceptions, however. The

buildings housing the Young Men's Christian Association and the Pythian Temple, located on side streets, are grand structures with exuberant detail. These buildings were erected during a later phase of development and were constructed amidst other larger development. These blocks are not primarily residential in character. Another exception is Junior High School No. 44, whose building program called for an unusually large building on a residential block.

Most of the architects who designed buildings specifically for institutions in the district were not involved in any residential design and development in the area. The only exception is the firm of Lamb & Rich which designed several rowhouses in addition to their school building. In addition to their work at the American Museum of Natural History, the architectural firm of Cady, Berg & See designed St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church (now the West Side Institutional Synagogue) within the district boundaries. Of the architects whose only work in the district was institutional, many were large, well-established New York City firms like Trowbridge & Livingston; Napoleon LeBrun & Sons; York & Sawyer; Babb, Cook & Willard; and Thomas White Lamb. These architects were active throughout the city designing other residential and institutional structures. For more information on the architects represented in the district, see the Architects' Appendix.

#### PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

I) The history of institutions in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District began long before the first institutional cornerstone was laid. It commenced in the late-eighteenth century when cultural, educational, and service institutions were being organized throughout the city. Institutions founded during the span between the late-eighteenth and late-nineteenth centuries represent nationally-recognized organizations such as the American Museum of Natural History, the Young Men's Christian Association, and the Knights of Pythias (a fraternal organization), as well as early educational institutions, such as the Columbia Grammar School and Sachs Collegiate Academy for Boys. Most of these organizations were originally housed elsewhere in the city and later moved into the area of the district as they expanded or required new facilities.

The first phase of development in the district includes the earliest construction of institutional buildings. The year 1877 saw the completion of the first building for the American Museum of Natural History, which was the first permanent building on Central Park West and the first institution to be constructed in the district. With little residential development in the area and the inadequate transportation of the time, the museum's exhibits had few visitors in its early years. It would be another five years before substantial residential construction was begun in the area, and an additional six years before another institution was constructed.

Engine Company No. 74, the second institution built in the district, was erected in 1888-89 at 120 West 83rd Street. By this time, a boom in residential construction had occurred in the area. Numerous rows of houses and flats were built and the new residents of the community needed

protection from fire. The construction of this fire station symbolizes the great growth of the period. Educational needs of area residents were addressed by the close of the nineteenth century, as well. The Veltin School at 160-62 West 74th Street was constructed in 1893. The school building would later be occupied by the Baldwin and Calhoun Schools, the latter established as the Jacobi School for Girls in 1896. The St. Agnes Free Circulating Library (originally located at 121 West 91st Street, outside the district boundaries), was established in 1893, and the New York Public Library and its branch system was established in 1895. The St. Agnes Branch would later occupy a building at 444 Amsterdam Avenue, within the district boundaries. Thus, the first phase of institutional development in the district saw the establishment of several organizations as well as the first stages of construction for institutional purposes.

II) The second phase of institutional development in the district was a more intense period of construction. The first decade of the twentieth century saw much of this activity. The Progress Club (later occupied by the Walden School, demolished c. 1987-88), the Central Park West building for the New-York Historical Society, the Swiss Home, and the St. Agnes Branch of the New York Public Library were all constructed early in the decade. Also built at this time were rowhouses at Nos. 20 through 46 West 74th Street, some of which would later be converted to institutional use.

The second and third decades of the twentieth century saw continued institutional establishment and construction. The Walden School and the Jewish Guild for the Blind (which would later have a branch of its services located within district boundaries) were both organized in 1914. The Franklin School, the Pythian Temple (a lodge of the Knights of Pythias), and the West Side Branch of the YMCA were also constructed during this period.

III) The third phase, from the 1950s through the 1980s, was a transitional period for institutions in the district. Many organizations merged, expanded, or relocated at this time. The Knights of Pythias vacated its lodge building, the Columbia Grammar and Leonard Schools merged, the Stevenson School moved to West 74th Street, the Twentieth Police Precinct moved to a new building at West 82nd Street, the Walden School expanded with its Andrew Goodman Building, the Calhoun School moved to West 81st Street and then expanded to West 74th Street, the Joselow House occupied a rowhouse on West 74th Street, and a new high school building was constructed for the Columbia Grammar School. Thus, this period saw the continued growth of institutions and the welcoming of new organizations to the area.

This three-phase development pattern clearly summarizes the general history of the institutions in the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. A long period of establishment, an intense construction period, and a time of reorganization and expansion has brought to the district several strong institutions. Some of the organizations have national reputations and are monumental in design. Smaller institutions are nonetheless firmly established in the history of New York City and the Upper West Side, and continue to serve both city and neighborhood. The buildings which house the institutions of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District, through both their functions and their architectural

design, complement and enhance the residential character of the area. A more detailed account of the history and architecture of each institution is found below.

### Religious Complexes

#### **Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 51-53 Central Park West**

The Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, designed by Schickel & Ditmars -- William Schickel (1850-1907) and Isaac E. Ditmars (1850-1934) -- and built in 1902-03, stands on the northwest corner of Central Park West and West 65th Street. A neo-Gothic design based on late thirteenth-century northern European prototypes, the church is faced with rusticated limestone above a rusticated granite base. The stone of the clerestory walls is supported by a steel frame. The cornice is of limestone and copper and is surmounted by a peaked roof, covered with slate. A copper fleche rises above the roof.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity was organized in 1868 by a group seceding from St. James Lutheran Church on Mulberry Street. Holy Trinity first rented St. Paul's Dutch Reformed Church at 47 West 21st Street, then purchased it the following year. There the congregation remained until relocating to West 65th Street and Central Park West. St. James remained on Mulberry Street until 1891 when it moved to East 73rd Street, but in 1938 St. James merged with Holy Trinity.

#### **Second Church of Christ, Scientist, 77 Central Park West**

The Second Church of Christ, Scientist, designed by Frederick R. Comstock (1866-1942), was built in 1899-1901 on the southwest corner of Central Park West and West 68th Street. Comstock's design for a domed church is in the Academic Classical mode based on Beaux-Arts principles. The basement, as well as the other architectural elements at the building's base -- the twelve steps and cheek walls at the building's entrance and the Tuscan portico at 10 West 68th Street (entrance to the reading and reception rooms) -- are of smooth-faced New Hampshire granite ashlar. The torcheres on the cheek walls are of cast bronze. The walls of the church are of a high-grade New York limestone called South Dover marble. The roof is covered with dark slate; the dome and its cupola are sheathed with copper.

Christian Science was established by Mary Baker Eddy (d. 1910) in 1879. The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston (or Mother Church) was dedicated in 1895. (Frederick R. Comstock was an associate architect on this project.) Mrs. Eddy sent two disciples to New York, Mrs. Laura Lathrop in 1886 and Mrs. Augusta Stetson in 1888. Mrs. Lathrop and a group of her adherents, encouraged by Mrs. Eddy, seceded from the initial Christian Science congregation in New York and formed the Second Church of Christ, Scientist, in 1891. As Christian Science was a new sect, an impressive architectural presence was deemed an appropriate way to further its acceptance. Mrs. Stetson, who had enlarged the initial congregation, turned to Carerre & Hastings to design the First Church of Christ,

Scientist, 1898-1903, a designated a New York City Landmark on the northwest corner of Central Park West and West 96th Street. The Second Church of Christ, Scientist, undertook its building at Central Park West and West 68th Street simultaneously, choosing as its architect, Constock, who had worked on the Mother Church. The building activity of the two New York congregations inspired Mrs. Eddy to enlarge the Mother Church in Boston (1906).

**Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue (Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue),**  
99 Central Park West and 8 West 70th Street

The Congregation Shearith Israel synagogue is a striking example in New York City of the monumental Academic Classical style. Designed by Brunner & Tryon, it was built in 1896-97 of smooth-faced limestone ashlar. Though a singular stylistic departure from more conventional synagogue architecture in New York which had adhered, through 1895, to the mid-nineteenth century Byzantine-Moorish prototype, it was a choice defended by the architect. Brunner cited as a prototype the Greco-Roman synagogue ruins in Galilee then recently discovered by the Palestine Excavation Fund. The architecture of the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition (1893) was also an inspiration. The congregation, with its seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New York antecedents, had a preference for classical forms as well. The adjacent Beaux-Arts style rectory to the south of the synagogue is contemporary with the synagogue and designed by Brunner & Tryon.

Adjacent to the synagogue at 8 West 70th Street is the Polonies Talmud Torah School. Built in 1949 to the designs of Kahn & Jacobs, the school received a new facade designed by Cole & Liebman as part of alterations carried out in 1953-54.

Shearith Israel is the oldest Jewish congregation in the city, tracing its history back to the immigration of Spanish and Portuguese Jews to New York in 1654. In 1730 when the bans against public assembly were lifted they held their first public services on Mill Street, in a synagogue which was rebuilt to accommodate an enlarged congregation in 1816. With each move uptown, from Mill Street to Crosby Street in 1833 and from Crosby to West 19th Street off Fifth Avenue in 1860, Shearith Israel commissioned a classical style edifice. And with each move the congregation took with it classical interior architectural elements from the first synagogue on Mill Street. (Today they are contained today within the present building.) Shearith Israel is a designated New York City Landmark.

**The Scotch Presbyterian Church,** 360 Central Park West, 2-10 West 96th Street, and 3 West 95th Street

The Scotch Presbyterian Church, located at the southwest corner of Central Park West and West 96th Street, is encompassed within the first four stories of the sixteen-story apartment building designed by Rosario Candela and built in 1928-29. In 1928 the congregation, which has owned this block-through site since 1892, leased the site to Vinross Realities, Inc., developers, with the condition that the new edifice planned for the site contain a church. The presence of the church on the site is maintained by

the treatment of the entrance facade at 4 West 96th Street which is distinguished from and not subsumed within the apartment building's overall design. This entrance takes the form of a smooth-faced heavy neo-Gothic screen of ashlar limestone set along the building line in front of the apartment house's fourth-story setback. Four buttresses, offset by the truncated octagonal tower on the right, articulate the facade. The pointed arch containing the segmentally-topped portal and the four lancet windows above are flanked by the center buttresses. Attached to the base of the buttress to the right of the portal is a bronze plaque, a World War I memorial removed from the 1893-94 church previously on the site, which also had its entrance on West 96th Street. The Alexander Robertson School, affiliated with the church, is also located within the apartment building.

Founded in 1756 by a group of Covenanters who seceded from the old Wall Street Presbyterian Church, the congregation of the Scotch Presbyterian Church applied to the Associated Presbytery of Scotland and was sent its first pastor, the Rev. John Mitchell Mason, in 1761. Moving from its first home on Cedar Street to Grand Street in 1837, and from Grand to West 14th Street in 1853, the congregation built its fourth home, a stone-fronted lecture hall (which included the Alexander Robertson School) at 3 West 95th Street in 1893 and the stone-fronted church on the West 96th Street corner in 1893-94, both to the designs of William H. Hume (1834-1899).

Vinross -- among whose principals was Vincent J. Slattery, former partner in the architectural firm of Horgan & Slattery -- had the church and lecture hall demolished and commissioned Rosario Candela to design a building to house the church, a school, a gymnasium, laundry and apartments for 149 families, erected in 1928-29. This solution, while unusual, was employed by several other congregations in the 1920s. Other examples are the Calvary Baptist Church, 123 West 57th Street, located at the base of the Salisbury Hotel (1929-30, Jardine, Hill & Murdock) and the Manhattan Congregational Church, 2162 Broadway, once housed in the base of the former Towers Hotel (1928-1932, Tillion & Tillion).

**New York Society for Ethical Culture and School, 2 West 64th Street and 33 Central Park West**

The meeting house of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, at the southwest corner of Central Park West and West 64th Street, was designed in the Secession style by Robert D. Kohn (1870?-1953) and built in 1909-10, adjacent to the Society's Ethical Culture School immediately to the south at the corner of West 63rd Street. The two buildings are compatible in scale and detail. The Society's main meeting room is on the first story of Kohn's building; Sunday school rooms and offices are on the stories above. The building is a strong and unusual architectural statement. The base and steps are of granite; the walls are of smooth-faced Indiana limestone ashlar. The entrance facade, with its tall windows of leaded stained glass in wood frames, is on West 64th Street. Two of the lower panels of the blind Central Park West facade carry inscriptions. The light fixtures at the entrance are original. The entrance pediment sculpture is by the sculptor Estelle Rumbold Kohn, the wife of the architect. The New York



Society for Ethical Culture Meeting House is a designated New York City Landmark.

The Ethical Culture School, built in 1902-03, was designed by Carrere & Hastings with Kohn as associated architect. The juxtaposition of brick and limestone in this building, a variation of the neo-Renaissance style, makes a strong architectural statement. The rusticated brick base is punctuated by paired window openings and a pedimented entrance. The facades above are organized into three-story window bays flanked by stylized brick piers. A continuous wrought-iron balcony sets off the fifth story.

Kohn, like many American architects of his generation, had received his training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He was a friend and follower of the Society's founder, Dr. Felix Adler (1851-1933), and President of the Society from 1921 until 1944. Adler, a philosopher, religious teacher, educator, and reformer, believed in the concept of functional morality — the sense of duty social and national groups owe one to another. Young Adler was sent to Columbia University, and the universities in Berlin and Heidelberg in his training for the rabbinate (his father had come to New York from Germany to be rabbi of Temple Emanu-El). Upon his return in 1873 he taught at Cornell for three years. He founded the Society for Ethical Culture in 1876, and two years later the Workingman's School (named the Ethical Culture School in 1895) based upon the principles of Friedrich Froebel, the German educational theorist. In 1927 he founded the Fieldston School in the Riverdale section of the Bronx. The Society met at a succession of halls (including Carnegie Hall) until it moved up Central Park West to its present home. Adler was a professor of political and social ethics at Columbia from 1902 until his death.

**The Stephen Wise Free Synagogue and Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, 28-36 and 38-44 West 68th Street**

Bloch & Hesse's two-part four-story facade along the south side of West 68th Street for the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion was begun in 1939-41 and finished in 1948-49. Although building was interrupted by World War II, any disparity in appearance is minimized by the architects' consistent use of a neo-Medieval style with Gothic elements and identical materials. The buildings' base is granite, the walls of rough-cut, random, Fordham gneiss and the trim is smooth-faced limestone. Although the pointed entrance arch and projecting bay dominate the otherwise almost blind facade of the synagogue on the left, and the mullioned regularity of the casement windows expresses the seminary on the right, the broad facade is united by the common base, the continuous lower and upper stringcourses, the continuity of the fourth story fenestration, and the buildings' comparable height. To the lower right of the arched synagogue entrance is a single stone of different origin, a stone from the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem presented to the Free Synagogue in 1922 and consecrated as the new building's corner stone in 1948.

Stephen Wise, the founder of the Free Synagogue, acquired property on the south side of West 68th Street in 1910 in order to establish a place of

worship and a seminary, but it was not until 1922 that Wise could commission Eisendrath & Horowitz, with Bloch & Hesse as associate architects, to design the Free Synagogue House (at 26-36 West 68th Street) for his Jewish Institute of Religion (a training school for rabbis -- Reform, Conservative and Orthodox). Subsequently the Bloch & Hesse firm was called upon to renovate and convert the Institute for synagogue use and to extend the building to the west to house the merged Institute and Hebrew Union College (38-44 West 68th Street) giving the two buildings their present appearance. Additional alterations to the ground story of the seminary and its westernmost bay were carried out in 1960-61.

Stephen Samuel Wise (1874-1949), social liberal, ardent Zionist, and champion of the idea of a free synagogue (no mandatory membership, no fees) was a powerful speaker with a compelling presence. He was brought to this country from Germany at the age of fourteen months when his father was made rabbi of Congregation Rodeph Shalom. After studying at the City University, Columbia University, in Vienna, and at Oxford, he returned to New York in 1893 to become rabbi of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun. He went to Portland, Oregon, as rabbi at Temple Beth-El there; in 1906 he refused the rabbinate at Temple Emanu-El on Fifth Avenue, but returned to New York the following year to found the Free Synagogue. Its congregation met first at the Hudson Theater, then in 1908-09 rented the Third Universalist Church on West 81st Street, and then met at Carnegie Hall until 1940 when services were moved to the present site. He founded the Jewish Institute for Religion in 1922 and twenty-six years later realized its merger with the Hebrew Union College of Cincinnati. Bloch & Hesse's use of Gothic elements may have been at Wise's request; the pleasure he took in the character of Oxford University's medieval quadrangles has been recorded. Also, Wise would have been aware of the continuing archaeological research then centered upon the late medieval synagogues in Europe and their interior furnishings.

**Christ and St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Church (former) Chapel of the Transfiguration and Rectory, 124 and 124 West 69th Street**

The design of Christ and St. Stephen's Church as seen today reflects a series of changes over time. Initially it was a simple frame building designed by William H. Day and built in 1879; a porch, supporting a diminutive tower, was built against the north side of a western addition in 1887. (The church was widened to the south and a second story built across the rear to the designs of Sidney V. Stratton the following year.) In 1897, in conjunction with a change of congregational ownership, the architect John D. Fouquet changed the shape of the tower above the porch to its present appearance, inserted new dormers, and covered the roof with tiles; it may have been at this time that the exterior walls were rebuilt of red brick. Eleven years later the newer components of the little church's north facade were stylistically unified through Stratton's use of the Academic Gothic idiom. Subsequent additions have broadened the northern transept: in 1914 by Rogers & Zogbaum; in 1950 by Moore & Laudseidel; and in 1960 by Adams & Woodbridge. The four-story brick rectory at 120 West 69 Street, built in 1883-84, was designed by George Martin Huss (1853-1941) in an American Neo-Grec style with ornamental brick accents that also reflect the influence of the Romanesque Revival.

The site of Christ and Saint Stephen's Church was purchased in October 1879 by the Rev. George Houghton, founding Rector of the Church of the Transfiguration ("The Little Church Around the Corner") at 1 East 29th Street where he presided from 1848 until 1897. A nephew of George Houghton, the Rev. Edward Clark Houghton, D.D., had organized the uptown congregation in 1876. Day's frame church was consecrated as the Chapel of the Transfiguration in 1880. Like its parent on East 29th Street, the Chapel of the Transfiguration, now Christ and St. Stephen's, is a low building separated from the street by a small garden and greensward.

The history of the Christ and St. Stephen's congregation is one of relocation and consolidation, following the city's population northward. St. Stephen's was organized in 1805 by a group which seceded from the English Lutheran Church of Zion and joined the Episcopal Church. This congregation bought the Chapel of the Transfiguration in 1897 and changed its name to St. Stephen's Church. Christ Church, organized in 1793, moved from five homes until it built a buff brick and terra-cotta Romanesque Revival complex (1889-90) at 211 West 71st Street. Christ Church merged with its neighbor in 1975.

**Grace and St. Paul's Lutheran Church, (former) St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church, 123-125 West 71st Street**

The building that now houses Grace and St. Paul's Lutheran Church was erected in 1880-81 for St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church by the New York City Extension and Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the designs of architect Stephen D. Hatch (1839-94). Hatch's design employs rusticated brownstone ashlar with smooth-faced brownstone sills, trefoiled lintels, imbrication, copings, and horizontal bands binding the facade's vertical elements together. The pointed arches alternate roughcut and smooth voussoirs. Asymmetrical and compact, this High Victorian Gothic style facade contains all of the architectural components one would expect in a church front twice its size. The peaked church and tower roofs were originally covered with slate shingles.

St. Andrew's started in 1864 at Amsterdam Avenue and West 68th Street as a prayer meeting, becoming the Bloomingdale Mission one year later and the Broadway Mission in 1866, the year it was organized as a church by the Methodist Sunday School and Missionary Society. Its new church on West 71st Street, consecrated in 1882, was constructed using the proceeds of the sale of the Free Tabernacle Church at West 34th Street and Eighth Avenue.

Grace Lutheran was organized in 1886 and the congregation had two homes -- the first at West 50th Street and Ninth Avenue and the second at West 49th Street and Broadway -- before moving to this building which was sold to it by St. Andrew's in 1890. The congregation was incorporated as the Evangelische Lutherische Gnaden Kirche this same year. In 1933 Grace merged with St. Paul's Lutheran and the present name was adopted.

**Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Rectory, and School, 146-150 and 152 West 71st Street and 147-153 West 70th Street**

The Church of the Blessed Sacrament, rectory, and school, constructed in 1916-17, were designed by architect Gustave E. Steinback. The church facade is a thirteenth-century French Gothic tour de force in cast stone which is molded with a sharpness and intricacy as displayed in the pierced gables, the tracery, and the minute details of the niche canopies, the archivolt ornamentation, cusps, and finials. A full program of statuary — cast stone porch figures, tympanum, as well as figures higher up the facade — complements the architectural ornamentation. (Those saints who expounded the doctrine relative to the Sacrament are represented on the facade: St. John Baptist de la Salle; St. John Vianney; St. Francis de Sales; St. Philip Neri; St. Alphonsus Liguori; St. Francis of Assisi; St. Charles Borromeo; and St. Vincent de Paul. In the buttresses below the towers are representations of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure.) The church has a steel-frame structure, and the roof is supported by Guastavino domes and arches. Steinback's design for the four-story rectory, in a domestic Gothic style appropriate to the adjacent church, is also executed in cast stone. The six-story cast-stone school facade on West 70th Street employs the verticality characteristic of the Gothic style to articulate a modern pier and recessed spandrel system of three bays. It is flanked by two stair towers. The tracery of the spandrels and central gable of the school facade remains intact. Most of the terminal pinnacles and finials on the church, rectory, and school are of copper.

Organized in 1887 in the carriage room of the Havermeyer family's stable on the north side of 72nd Street, west of Broadway, by Father Matthew A. Taylor (1853-1914), the Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament dedicated its first home on the corner of Broadway and West 71st Street the same year and incorporated the following year. Father Taylor had been sent by Archbishop Corrigan to establish a new parish in this developing sector of the city; the nearest Catholic church was the Church of the Sacred Heart on West 51st Street. The congregation continued to assemble lots until 1916 when it had achieved a block-through site east of its corner location for the present-day church and rectory at 146-150 and 152 West 71st Street and the school at 147-153 West 70th Street. Father Taylor was succeeded by Father Thomas F. Myhan (1864-1916), a scholar, who initiated the present building. His successor, Father William J. Guinan, carried Myhan's plans to completion.

**Church of the Fourth Universalist Society (Church of the Divine Paternity),  
4 West 76th Street**

Designed by William Appleton Potter (1842-1909), the church and adjacent school were built in 1897-98 in an academic revival of the late English Gothic called the Perpendicular style. The design is executed in smooth-faced limestone ashlar. Located at the southwest corner of Central Park West and West 76th Street, the church is dominated by the four-stage pinnacled tower. A gabled nave, pointed-arch openings, and large stained-glass windows with ogival tracery are notable elements of the design. Prototypes for the design include Gloucester Cathedral and the Magdalen College tower, Oxford. A cornerstone on the West 76th Street side bears the dates "1838-1897." The three-story school building on West 76th

Street continues the design of the church with the stories marked by string courses and the window openings by drip moldings.

The Fourth Universalist Society was organized in 1838 and had four different church buildings prior to its move to Central Park West. By 1865, when it located to Fifth Avenue and West 45th Street, it was known as the Church of the Divine Paternity, which name it retained for many years on Central Park West. The Rev. E.H. Chapin, D.D., pastor in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, attracted several loyal members of great wealth, among whom was Andrew Carnegie. The three-story school building is currently occupied by the Winston Preparatory School. The Fourth Universalist Society's church and school is included within the boundaries of the Central Park West - West 76th Street Historic District.

**West Side Institutional Synagogue and Rectory, (former) St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church, 122-138 and 120 West 76th Street**

This church building, designed in the Romanesque Revival style by the architectural firm of J.C. Cady & Co., was constructed in 1889-90 for Saint Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church. As originally designed for this midblock site, the complex comprised (from east to west) the rectory, tower, chapel (behind the entrance doors), and church with a gabled front, all built of roughcut, rusticated limestone ashlar laid in alternating wide and narrow courses on a bluestone base. Major portions of the complex were irreparably destroyed in a fire in 1965, resulting in the loss of the limestone gable, peaked roof, dome, and tower roof. The consequent reconstruction was carried out by Emory S. Tabor, a general contractor, and the changes are reflected on the street facade: a flat roof; altered sanctuary windows partially filled with bronze-tinted aluminum grilles; and a new principal entrance marked by a bronze-tinted aluminum screen.

In 1957 the current owners, the West Side Institutional Synagogue, commissioned architect David Moed to reface the rectory and to introduce an entrance into the tower's base. The rectory facade is now a curtain wall of glass and aluminum trimmed with travertine marble but the original round corner buttresses of roughcut, rusticated limestone are retained. The added fifth story is of yellow brick, and iron basement window grilles incorporate the design of a menorah.

During the course of construction of St. Andrew's, J.C. Cady & Co., founded by Josiah Cleveland Cady (1837-1919), was renamed as Cady, Berg & See, with Louis de Coppett Berg (1856-1913) and Milton See (1854-1920) as the other partners. The firm is responsible for the impressive complex of Romanesque Revival buildings at the American Museum of Natural History along West 77th Street. St. Andrew's, previously established at 123-125 West 71st Street sold that building to the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1890, the same year this larger church building was dedicated. In 1937 St. Andrew's congregation moved up to West 86th Street and West End Avenue to merge with St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church and sold these buildings to the West Side Institutional Synagogue.

**Sisters of St. Ursula, (former Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul),**  
168-170 West 79th Street

In 1893 the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul purchased a fifty-foot wide lot on West 79th Street and commissioned a pair of four-story brownstone-fronted houses from the firm of Thom & Wilson. Built in 1894-95, these Renaissance Revival style houses appear to have been designed contemporary with the row of houses once to the east of them by the same firm for William Hall. Each house, a mirror image of the other, has a full height quarter bow. The principal entrances as well as their stoops are juxtaposed and share a porch with a screen of three Tuscan columns bearing a continuous frieze of classical motifs which runs the full width of both houses.

Rev. Matthew A. Taylor, the first rector of the Roman Catholic Church of the Blessed Sacrament on West 71st Street and Broadway, represented the Sisters of Charity in the purchase of the West 79th Street property. The Blessed Sacrament School was staffed by the Sisters of Charity. The Sisters occupied both houses as a single unit where they also ran a school for girls. The property was enlarged with the purchase in 1902 and 1907 of two houses on West 78th Street immediately behind the house. The Sisters of Charity sold the school and residence (containing a chapel) to the Sisters of Saint Ursula of the Blessed Virgin of New York in 1944, who ran the Notre Dame School in the buildings. The property has recently been sold to the Fleming School.

**Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, (former) Church of the Third Universalist Society (Church of Eternal Hope), 140-144 West 81st Street**

This Romanesque Revival church building, presently occupied by the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, was built for the Third Universalist Society in 1892-93 to the designs of the architect Jonathan Capen of Newark. Two square stair towers -- the taller on the left -- flank the gabled facade. A loggia of three arches, protecting the twin flights of entrance steps, links the towers with tile-covered pyramidal roofs. The basement, the window surrounds and sills, the loggia arch voussoirs and spandrels, and the lower stringcourse are of roughcut limestone ashlar; water table, step parapets, loggia columns, upper stringcourse and cornices are smooth-faced limestone. The church's upper walls are of rough-cast buff brick. Wrought-iron gates open at the base of the twin flights of entrance steps.

Of the six Universalist Societies founded in New York between 1794 and 1852, the Third was organized in 1834 and met at Bleecker and Downing Streets until its move to West 81st Street in 1893. Since then the building has changed owners and tenants several times. The Society leased this building to Stephen Wise's fledgling Free Synagogue in 1908-09, but sold it to the First Church of the Disciples of Christ in 1910. Thirty-five years later the Disciples moved to Park Avenue and sold the building to the Manhattan Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, its present owner. Mount Pleasant Baptist Church leases it, in turn, from the Latter Day Saints.

Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church of St. Volodymyr, (former) West End Synagogue (Congregation Shaaray Tefila) and Community House, 160 and 170 West 82nd Street

What is now the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church of St. Volodymyr was built as the West End Synagogue in 1893-94 by Congregation Shaaray Tefila to the designs of Brunner & Tryon. The buff Roman brick, limestone and terra-cotta facade rises above a basement and double staircase which spans the facade and is faced with horizontally-channeled smooth-faced limestone ashlar. The building, designed in a Moorish/Byzantine Revival style considered appropriate for synagogues in the second half of the nineteenth century, has a kinship in form and material with contemporary Romanesque Revival religious structures (see, for example, Mount Pleasant Baptist Church). The superimposed arcades of the facade's central bay are framed by two slightly projecting bays. The walls are laid up so that for every nine courses of brick there is a band of terra cotta bearing a continuous fret design. The columns and arch voussoirs of the lower arcade are of limestone; the upper arcade is constructed of terra cotta. The colonnettes, voussoirs, tracery, spandrels and arched frieze below the cornice are also of terra cotta.

In 1937 a fire damaged much of the synagogue's interior; S. Brian Baylinson was responsible for the renovation. The congregation was able to purchase the house just west of the synagogue the same year; the firm of Schwartz & Gross was commissioned to rehabilitate it as the congregation's Community House. When Congregation Shaaray Tefila moved to the Upper East Side in 1958, it sold the synagogue and community house to the Ukrainian Autocephalic Orthodox Church.

Congregation Shaaray Tefila was organized by a group of English-speaking Jews who seceded from the German-speaking Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in 1845. As this congregation moved uptown, it has consistently employed renowned architects to design its synagogues: Leopold Eidlitz and Otto Blesch designed the synagogue (1847) on Wooster Street; and Henry Fernbach was architect for the synagogue (1869) on West 44th Street, also a Moorish-inspired design. When Arnold Brunner (1857-1925) received the Shaaray Tefila commission, his work on Temple Beth-El (1891) at Fifth Avenue and East 76th Street had just been completed, and the commission for Congregation Shearith Israel's new home on Central Park West was still to come. Brunner was the grandson of a former president and a great-grandson of a founder and first president of Shaaray Tefila.

St. Volodymyr was organized in 1926, a parish in the Autocephalic Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the United States of America and Canada, with a sister church in Toronto. Its first home was a neo-Gothic church at 334 East 14th Street, which is now a synagogue.

Congregation Rodeph Sholom Synagogue, Community House, and School, 7-21 West 83rd Street and 10-16 West 84th Street

The five-story building of Congregation Rodeph Sholom, built in 1928-30, was designed by Charles B. Meyers to contain an auditorium, reception

and dining rooms, offices, classrooms, a board room, and a caretaker's apartment. The symmetry and mass of the smooth-faced limestone ashlar facade, emphasized by three monumental and deeply-cut arches, are expressive of the academic neo-Romanesque/Byzantine style, and may be inspired by contemporary synagogue excavations at Tiberias, known today in modern Israel as Natanya. The arches contain tall windows with limestone mullions and leaded glass; they are flanked by the arched entrances. The eastern entrance, leading to the synagogue and community rooms, is the more elaborate; the arch is supported by flat archivolts of polished pink and gray granite. The western entrance leads to the private quarters above. The polychromy of the main entrance is repeated higher on the facade in the polished granite colonnettes of the diminutive fifth-story arcades. Every colonnette in each series has a different capital. The Shield of David motifs in the rondels and the decorative lozenges are made up of pink, gray, and blue granite. Prior to the synagogue commission, Meyers had carried out buildings for Yeshiva University in Washington Heights.

The Rodeph Sholom Day School, located through the block on West 84th Street, was designed by the architect William Roper and built in 1973-77. The congregation purchased four rowhouses for renovation as a school. The houses, built in pairs, differed in the number of stories and ceiling heights. Roper kept the existing floor levels but attempted to downplay the disparity by employing the contemporary Brutalist aesthetic, superimposing an asymmetrical pattern of fenestration as well as a system of sympathetic angulation -- seen in the entrance stoop, window sills and parapet -- to the facade. A reddish-brown brick with joints tinted the same color gives homogeneity across the whole facade and a common parapet is suggested by the white sheet metal sheathing the upper portion of the school's facade.

Congregation Rodeph Sholom organized by seceding from Congregation Anshe Chesed -- which had seceded from B'nai Jeshurun -- in 1842. From 1853 until 1858 the congregation worshipped on Clinton Street. In 1891 it moved to the former Temple Beth-El at Lexington and East 63rd Street, and then to West 83rd Street in 1930.

#### St. Matthew and St. Timothy Church and Center, 26-32 West 84th Street

In 1967 Victor Christ-Janer and Associates was commissioned by the parish of St. Matthew and St. Timothy to design a new building to contain not only a church but also a fellowship hall, meeting and reading rooms, offices, residential units, and a gymnasium to replace the church building that had been severely damaged by fire. Christ-Janer, known for Brutalist designs inspired by the later work of the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier (1887-1966), erected a massive reinforced concrete screen along the building line of the site. Even the belfry is masked by a wide, upward extension of this screen wall. (The open-air roof was constructed to permit public assembly and recreation.) While horizontal channeling and vertical joints articulate this facade, it is the residual pattern of the wood forms in which the concrete was cast that give the facade its texture. In this broad, windowless and asymmetrical screen there is but one break (the fire doors at the extreme ends excepted). Within this rectangular brick-paved recess other wall planes become apparent: vertically-channeled limestone and



behind it pink brick, as well as the entrance to the church to the left in the eastern soffit, the raised entrance to the community house, and a horizontal range of second-story windows. Only the raised entrance's stoop parapet restates the original plane of the large screen. The rough planar surface not only unifies the several functions of this urban church complex but dramatizes a space arbitrarily defined by the building lines of the city's grid pattern. The resulting monolithic quality of St. Matthew and St. Timothy's places this building among the finest examples of the architecture of the late 1960s in New York City.

The history of this parish is one of many mergers. St. Matthew's Protestant Episcopal Church, organized in 1887, began as Bethlehem Chapel in 1870 at West 83rd Street and Columbus Avenue, a place of worship for German speaking people under the care of St. Michael's Protestant Episcopal Church. St. Matthew's purchased its site on West 84th Street in 1892 and 1893, and commissioned William Halsey Wood (1855-1897) to design a Romanesque Revival style church, executed in limestone. This building was demolished in 1966, after a severe fire. In 1897, the year of its incorporation, St. Matthew's absorbed St. Ann's Church for Deaf Mutes, a congregation founded by the Rev. Thomas Gallaudet in 1852. The parish of Zion and St. Timothy's, merged since 1890, joined St. Matthew's in 1922.

#### **The Society for the Advancement of Judaism, 13-15 West 86th Street**

The Society for the Advancement of Judaism purchased two houses at 13 and 15 West 86th Street in 1920 from the Alcuin School. Altered in 1925 by architects Deutsch & Schneider, the buildings were given a new facade designed by architect Albert Goldhammer in 1937. Although the arch Goldhammer inscribed at the building's entrance is an allusion to the earlier Moorish/Byzantine Revival style often used for synagogues, his facade derives its character from the warm tones of brick -- red, yellow and orange -- and cast stone, resting on a base of concrete-limestone aggregate, producing a statement in the Modern Semitic style.

The Society for the Advancement of Judaism was organized by Dr. Mordecai Kaplan (1883-1947), a religious teacher and philosopher concerned with religion and its application in modern life. He emerged from the ranks of Reformed Judaism to become a founding member of the Federation of American Zionists. Dr. Kaplan was on the faculties of the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Teachers' Institute and Seminary College for Jewish Studies, and the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

#### **The Jewish Center, 131-135 West 86th Street**

The ten-story building of the Jewish Center, built in 1917-20, was designed by Louis Allen Abramson to contain a variety of uses and spaces: synagogue, educational and recreational center, auditorium, meeting rooms, gymnasium, and pool. Occupying a midblock site, the neo-Renaissance style structure was designed to express this multiplicity of functions and to be compatible with its residential neighbors. The rusticated stone base supports a major Ionic order of two stories. The stories above are faced with brick. However the repetition of window shapes and the use of the

stone for the window surrounds and quoins unite the upper and lower portions of this facade. A large tablet bearing the name of this institution is flanked by escutcheons bearing the building's date in both the Gregorian and Jewish calendars.

#### **Romanian Orthodox Church of St. Dumitru, 50 West 89th Street**

Originally one of five rowhouses designed by Thom & Wilson and built for Patrick Farley in 1892, the Romanian Orthodox Church of St. Dumitru was altered for church use by architects John H. Knubel and John Solomon in 1940. A four-story brownstone-fronted rowhouse with a raised basement, the building largely retains its original domestic exterior appearance.

Incorporated in 1939, this was the third Romanian congregation to be organized in New York City but was the only one under the jurisdiction of the National Church of Romania. In a letter to the then Building Commissioner William Wilson, dated March 6, 1940, Andrei Popovici, Consul General at the Royal Consulate of Romania, described St. Dumitru's, "...a charitable organization to enable those no longer Romanians but not yet Americans to have spiritual and cultural development; to become good citizens of this country."

#### **Museums**

##### **The American Museum of Natural History, 175 Central Park West**

The American Museum of Natural History is one of the world's finest and largest institutions devoted to the study of the natural sciences and one of New York City's largest cultural structures. The Museum was founded in 1869 for the purpose of establishing in the city a museum and library of natural history and to encourage the study of natural science. Its founders include distinguished New Yorkers such as J.P. Morgan, Adrian Iselin, Henry Parish, Joseph A. Choate, Charles A. Dana, Morris Ketchum Jessup, and Theodore Roosevelt (father of the President). A gateway to the study of natural history, the museum exhibits more than 2,300 habitat groups, mounted specimens, showcases, dioramas, and scientific exhibits. Subjects covered in these exhibits include birds, reptiles, dinosaurs, fish, geology, meteorites, mammals, and man. The museum is also a research laboratory, a school for advanced study, a publishing house for scientific manuscripts, and a sponsoring agency for field exploration expeditions. The institution contains one of the world's finest natural history libraries consisting of 175,000 volumes. Over three million people from all parts of the world visit the museum annually.

The Museum first occupied two floors of the Arsenal in Central Park and remained there for eight years. However, within a year of its founding, it had outgrown this space. The Department of Public Parks offered Manhattan Square, an eighteen-acre plot of land bounded by 77th and 81st Streets, Eighth and Ninth Avenues (now Central Park West and Columbus Avenue), to the Museum Trustees for the site of a new, larger building to house their collections and exhibits. The cornerstone of the first building was laid on

this site on June 22, 1874. Designed by Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould in the Victorian Gothic style, the five-story red brick and stone structure is now barely visible among the later museum additions. As the museum's collections continued to grow, plans for expansion were prepared. The architectural firm of Cady, Berg & See presented a master plan in which the museum building was laid out to form a quadrangle with four peripheral structures joined to a central pavilion by four central wings. Initial construction followed this scheme, including the West 77th Street wing designed by the firm, however, the plan was later discarded. The West 77th Street wing, constructed between 1890 and 1899, is today one of the most impressive examples of the Richardsonian Romanesque style in the country.

The firm of Trowbridge & Livingston became involved in the Museum's expansion early in the twentieth century. Most of the remaining buildings were constructed according to their designs and include buildings in the interior courtyards, the Hayden Planetarium, and a Central Park West wing. (Other buildings were designed by architect Charles Volz.) The Trowbridge & Livingston design for the Central Park West wing called for a monumental entrance section facing the Park. Illustrating an Academic Classical style based on Beaux-Arts principles, the design of the entrance building, the central portion of the Central Park West wing, was the work of John Russell Pope, based on a winning competition entry in 1924. The building (containing a designated New York City Interior Landmark) memorializes Theodore Roosevelt. The 26th President of the United States, Roosevelt was a museum trustee, participated in museum expeditions, and donated his natural science collections to the museum.

Today, the American Museum of Natural History is not a single building but consists of seventeen interconnected units. Nearly a century of development and expansion is reflected in its growth and in the several architectural styles manifested in its facades. The original Vaux & Mould building, the West 77th Street wing, the Central Park West wing, the Columbus Avenue wing, and the Hayden Planetarium were designated New York City Landmarks in 1967. The museum complex was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 24, 1976.

#### **The New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West**

The New-York Historical Society (a designated New York City Landmark), the second oldest historical society in the United States, was organized in 1804 and incorporated in 1809. The Society's founders were prominent New Yorkers including: Egbert Benson, a judge and the Society's first president; DeWitt Clinton, then Mayor of New York; Samuel Miller, a clergyman and educator; David Hosack, a physician and later president of the society; Samuel Bayard, a lawyer and jurist; and John Pintard, a merchant and philanthropist and the Society's first secretary. Over the years, other prominent individuals have occupied seats in the Society's governing body. Among them were: the artist, John Trumbull; Daniel D. Tompkins, Governor of New York; Cadwallader D. Colden, Mayor of New York City; William Cullen Bryant, poet; J.P. Morgan, banker; and Cornelius Vanderbilt, steamship and railroad promoter and financier. Notable members of the Society have included individuals such as John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Noah Webster,

Washington Irving, and James Fenimore Cooper. The Society was organized to collect and preserve material pertaining to the history of the United States in general, and New York in particular, and today includes extensive collections of seventeenth- through nineteenth-century paintings, prints, furniture, silver, and folk art pertaining to New York. The Society's research library was created in 1807 with a gift from John Pintard. By 1813 the Society possessed over 4,000 books, documents, almanacs, newspapers, and maps.

The Society's present building at 170 Central Park West is its eighth home. Previous sites included Federal Hall (1804-09, Wall and Nassau Streets), the Customs House at Bowling Green (1809-16), the New York Institution (1816-32, formerly the city almshouse in City Hall Park), Rensselaer's Building at Broadway and Chambers Street (1832-37), the Stuyvesant Institute at 659 Broadway (1837-41), New York University at Washington Square (1841-57), and 170 Second Avenue, a building constructed specifically for the Society and occupied from 1857 to 1908. The Second Avenue building had grown inadequate by the late nineteenth century and the Society began to plan for a new home. They had been offered free land in Central Park, where the Metropolitan Museum of Art now stands, but that plan was abandoned. In 1891 the Society acquired the plot of land along Central Park West between 76th and 77th Streets. As the avenue closest to the park, Central Park West had long been considered a desirable location. With the construction of the American Museum of Natural History several years earlier, the early character of the avenue was established as an acceptable location for institutional structures. The museum's great rise in success since its opening further encouraged the society to build on Central Park West.

The central section of the society's present building was designed by the architectural firm of York & Sawyer and was constructed in 1903-1908. A rusticated granite basement supports a colonnade of three-quarter engaged Ionic columns which, together with the pedimented entrance portal, create a noble, formal composition for this distinguished society. Its monumental design illustrates an Academic Classical style based on Beaux-Arts principles. As the society's collections continued to expand, the north and south wings, viewed as austere end pavilions flanking the monumental colonnade, were added in 1937 by the architectural firm of Walker & Gillette. Their design was so skillfully integrated with the original building that the whole structure appears to have been erected in one campaign.

### Philanthropic Institutions

#### **The Jewish Guild For the Blind — The Joselow House, 46 West 74th Street**

The Jewish Guild for the Blind was organized in 1914 to provide care for blind and visually impaired persons, and has been a leader in this field since its inception. At its headquarters at 15 West 65th Street (outside the boundaries of the district), the Guild provides a variety of programs and services to meet the needs of persons of all ages with a variety of handicaps. The Joselow House, one of the Guild's services, was organized in

1977 as a hostel for mentally retarded, visually impaired, and blind adults. It provides care and services for fifteen residents. The hostel is located at 46 West 74th Street, a building originally constructed as a Georgian Revival style rowhouse in 1902-04 according to the design of architect Percy Griffin. The Joselow House first occupied this building in 1977.

#### **The Swiss Town House, 35-37 West 67th Street**

The Swiss Town House located at 35-37 West 67th Street is a division of, and serves as the headquarters for, the Swiss Benevolent Society of New York, a not-for-profit organization. Built in 1904-05 according to the design of John E. Scharsmith, the building was designed to resemble the town hall in Basle, Switzerland. Its steeply pitched roof, gabled dormers, brick facade, and stone trim are characteristics of its Northern Renaissance Revival style. The structure was built on a street which was not primarily residential in nature. Rather, its buildings were larger in scale than the Town House and included primarily studio buildings, but also a factory and warehouses (later replaced), and a riding academy. The Swiss Home, as it was originally called, is somewhat smaller than its immediate neighbors, and its design and detail reflect its distinct function.

The initial purpose of the Swiss Home was to house the elderly. A newspaper article written at the time of its construction indicated that the new structure was equipped "with the latest improvements for the treatment and convenience of the inmates." The building could house eighty individuals. In 1923 the home was rededicated as a residence for girls and women who had recently immigrated from Switzerland and remained in that capacity for approximately fifty years. The 1970s saw a sharp decrease in Swiss immigration, and a new use was found for the building. At that time the society began to offer room and board to local female students, most of whom attended the Julliard School of Music or the Tobe Coburn School of Fashion. The Swiss Benevolent Society operates a social service office on the building's ground floor, and offers these services to its residents. Various Swiss organizations also use the building for their regular meetings. A gallery on the main floor is maintained by the Swiss Institute, a not-for-profit organization separate from the Society, and is used for art exhibits and other social events.

#### **The Pythian Temple, 135-145 West 70th Street**

The Knights of Pythias is a fraternal and charitable organization which was organized in Washington, D.C. in 1864 with Justus Henry Rathbone as its head and is the only fraternal organization chartered by the U.S. Congress. Believing that friendship is the strongest bond of union among men, Knights hold it along with charity and benevolence as their cardinal principles. The organization takes its name from Pythias, a mythological character whose story represents true friendship. The order first came to New York shortly after the Civil War.

At the head of the organization is the Supreme Lodge which has jurisdiction over the entire order in the United States and Canada. Each state or district has a Grand Lodge, under which are established Subordinate

Lodges in cities or towns. The building at 135-145 West 70th Street, once known as the Pythian Temple, was one of 120 Subordinate Lodges in New York City at the time of its construction. (Total membership in the organization was nearly one million at that time.) The Temple included thirteen lodge rooms, an auditorium, a gymnasium, bowling alleys and billiard rooms. The building's cornerstone was laid on November 20, 1926, and was dedicated "on behalf of the greatest and oldest patriotic order in the United States." Today, the cornerstone is still inscribed with the phrase, "Dedicated to Pythianism." (An inscription above the doorway reads "If fraternal love held all men bound how beautiful this world would be.") The structure was completed in 1926-27 according to the design of Thomas White Lamb, best known for his theater designs, and displays an exotic neo-Babylonian style that incorporates imaginative, polychromatic ornamental details inspired by ancient sources. This site no longer functioned as a Subordinate Lodge of the Knights of Pythias by the 1950s. The building was converted to a residential condominium in 1979 at which time a substantial amount of glass was inserted into the masonry facade as part of the alteration.

#### **The YMCA and the McBurney School, 3-11 West 63rd Street and 13-15 West 63rd Street**

The Young Men's Christian Association was first organized in London in 1844 for the purposes of improving the spiritual condition of young men through religion. American visitors to London were impressed by the group and returned to the United States urging the creation of a similar organization. The first American association was created in Boston in 1851. The first New York Association was organized one year later but, by 1862, it was on the verge of dissolution. At that time Robert McBurney (1837-1898), a young man with an interest in Christian service and religious work, joined the organization and with his efforts the New York YMCA prospered. McBurney worked with the "Y" for forty years and concentrated on developing the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical character of young men.

McBurney realized that in order to offer a substantial "counter-attraction to the vices of the industrial city" the Association required "large, attractive, and specially designed buildings." The first building constructed under McBurney's aegis appeared at 23rd Street and Fourth Avenue in 1869. For many years McBurney had emphasized the need for a branch to benefit young men on the West Side. His final building effort was the West Side branch located on West 57th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues which opened in 1896.

A new West Side branch of the YMCA began construction in 1928 and was completed in 1930. Located at 3-11 West 63rd Street, the building was designed to house various social and recreational facilities and provide room and board for young men. Designed by architect Dwight James Baum, it extends through the block to 64th Street and rises fourteen stories in height. Its brick and stone facade, an abundance of towers and corbel tables, and window and door openings in rounded arches combine to form a bold neo-Romanesque design. In 1931 a high school was built adjacent to the main building, designed by Baum to complement the existing structure. Named the McBurney School, it honored the man whose efforts helped the New York

YMCA flourish in its early years. While the scale of the combined structures corresponds with that of the religious structures located to the east and apartment buildings to the south, the YMCA dominates the short block between Central Park West and Broadway.

When the West 63rd Street buildings were constructed, the West 57th Street branch ceased to function for the organization. The McBurney School (for a time joined with the Baldwin School) vacated its structure around 1985, at which time the YMCA expanded its facilities to the former school building. The West 63rd Street building is currently the only branch of the YMCA on the Upper West Side.

### Public Buildings

#### Engine Company No. 74, 120 West 83rd Street

New York City's paid, professional Fire Department was established in 1865 as the Metropolitan Fire District, serving Manhattan and Brooklyn. At this time, volunteer companies, which were first organized into a department by the colonial legislature in 1783 and to which the responsibility for fire fighting previously fell, were replaced by paid, professional companies below 86th Street. This came about as a result of the rapid urban expansion of the city and the increasing frequency of fires.

In 1853, Marriott Field published City Architecture, a book which advocated a heroic architecture and appropriate symbolic ornament for fire stations so as to architecturally differentiate the firehouse from other building types, particularly the conventional urban stable. The city's Fire Department contracted with the noted architectural firm of Napoleon LeBrun & Son(s) to design firehouses from 1880 to 1895. The firm's typical straightforward use of materials -- brick, stone, iron, and terra cotta-- and sparsely integrated ornament did elevate the basic stable facade and make it more consistent with the purposes of the professional fire company within. The firm's consistent designs also helped to produce a recognizable idiom for this building type. Engine Company No. 74 was one of the firm's many New York City firehouses and was built at 120 West 83rd Street in 1888-89. While some fire stations were designed with more exuberant detail, this building exhibits a simple LeBrun design based on Renaissance and Romanesque Revival detailing. The recognizable design elements of a fire station are all visible: symmetrical organization, materials of two colors and textures, a large ground-story vehicular doorway topped by a simple molding, intermediate floors exhibiting tripartite double-hung window arrangement, and a roofline with greater detail, here a round-headed window topped by a decorative molding and a gable dormer in a pitched roof. All these elements clearly characterized the structure as a fire station, an important institution in the district. One of the earliest institutions in the area, Engine Company No. 74 (previously known as Engine Company No. 56) symbolizes the increased construction and rapid urban growth of the Upper West Side in the late nineteenth century.

### St. Agnes Branch, New York Public Library, 444-446 Amsterdam Avenue

The New York Public Library, today one of the leading research institutions in the world, was formed in 1895 by the consolidation of three corporations: The Astor Library, the private library of James Lenox, and the Tilden Trust. In order to benefit from a \$5,200,000 gift to the city made by Andrew Carnegie for library buildings, the New York Free Circulating Library (organized in 1887 with eleven branches) joined the Astor-Lenox-Tilden consolidation in 1901. It formed the Circulation Department of the New York Public Library — now the Branch Library System. The Carnegie Grant, a philanthropic effort on behalf of popular education in New York City, resulted in the large-scale construction of neighborhood branch libraries during the early twentieth century and is largely responsible for the New York Public Library System as it exists today.

The St. Agnes Free Library was formed in 1893. Trinity Church allowed the library to be located in the parish house of its St. Agnes Chapel at 121 West 91st Street (a designated New York City Landmark). At that time the nearest public libraries were found on West 42nd Street and East 125th Street. (Today, the nearest branches are on West 69th and West 100th Streets, both outside the district boundaries.) In 1897, Trinity dissolved its ties with the library. The collections were moved to other locations on the Upper West Side, generally around Amsterdam Avenue, settling temporarily at West 82nd Street and Broadway.

The building at 444 Amsterdam Avenue was conceived as one of the branch libraries made possible with Carnegie Grant funds. Opened on March 26, 1906, the Renaissance Revival style building began construction in 1905. Built according to the design of Babb, Cook & Willard, its three-story granite and limestone facade displays symmetrical ordering of members and restrained classically-inspired ornament. The use of neo-Classicism in library design was encouraged by McKim, Mead & White's designs for Low Library at Columbia University (1893), Gould Memorial Library at the Bronx campus of New York University (1893-94), and the Boston Public Library (1888-92). The grand style of these monumental buildings was interpreted on a smaller scale for midblock city sites, such as those occupied by the St. Agnes Branch and the earlier Yorkville Branch Library (222 East 79th Street, 1902, a designated New York City Landmark). The Yorkville Branch, designed by James Brown Lord, may have been used as a prototype for the urban branch library and, therefore, influenced the St. Agnes design of Babb, Cook & Willard. This architectural firm was also active in other branch library designs under the Carnegie expansion.

### The Twentieth Precinct Station House of the New York City Police Department, 110-124 West 82nd Street

The first police office in New York City was established in 1798 at Federal Hall at Wall and Nassau Streets. In 1844 the State Legislature passed an act which established the Police Department of the City of New York. This law called for the division of the city into precincts. The seventeen wards of Manhattan and portions of the present-day Bronx were thus divided and each patrol district -- or precinct -- was equipped with a



station house, captain, and sergeant. Before 1970, the Twentieth Precinct served the Upper West Side from 66th to 86th Street and had its station house at 150-152 West 68th Street (outside the boundaries of the district). In the late 1960s the Police Department began closing its older stations and moving to newly-built structures. The Twentieth Precinct was one of fourteen precincts that received new station houses. The precinct currently serves the area from 59th to 86th Streets, from the Hudson River to the western edge of Central Park, and occupies a station house at 120 West 82nd Street. (The northern section of the district is served by the Twenty-fourth Precinct Station House at West 100th Street, outside the district boundaries.) The building was constructed in 1970-72 according to the designs of architects Ifill & Johnson. The severe, unornamented concrete facade illustrates the building's modern style. The station house was officially opened at 12:10 p.m. on March 29, 1972, is currently assigned 140 officers, and is one of seventy-three station houses in the five boroughs.

### Schools

**The Anglo-American International School (Formerly the Franklin School), 18-20 West 89th Street**

In 1872, the Sachs Collegiate Academy for Boys was founded by Dr. Julius Sachs (1849-1934), a prominent educator who held positions in the Schoolmasters' Association of New York and the American Philological Association, and a professor of secondary education at Teachers College, Columbia University. The Academy prepared its students for attendance at Ivy League colleges by following a classic European curriculum. The school changed its name to the Franklin School in 1912, the year in which its current home at 18-20 West 89th Street was constructed. The school was designed by the architectural firm of Dennison, Hiron & Darbyshire. The functional style of the building is reflected in its sparse ornament and large expanses of glass.

The Franklin School became co-educational in 1958. In 1977, it became associated with the International School of London and a curriculum to meet both American and International requirements was developed. Two years later, the school's Board of Trustees was reorganized, a non-profit corporation was begun, and a new name was taken. Today, the Anglo-American International School continues as a college preparatory school with classes from kindergarten through twelfth grade. There are approximately 5,000 living graduates of the Franklin School and approximately 300 currently in attendance. The school sponsors "The Red and Blue," a literary magazine founded in 1872 which is one of the oldest of its kind in the United States.

**The Calhoun School (Formerly the Baldwin School, Formerly the Veltin School), 160-162 West 74th Street**

In 1896, the Jacobi School for Girls was founded. Mary Edward Calhoun became the headmistress of the School in 1916, and retained that position for twenty-six years. One year later, the school honored its headmistress by formally changing its name to The Calhoun School. In 1957 a co-

educational lower school was added to the institution, and the middle and upper schools turned co-educational in 1971.

In 1989, the Calhoun School increased its facilities to include the building at 160-162 West 74th Street. (Previous locations were also on the Upper West Side.) This building was previously occupied by the Baldwin School (which later joined with the McBurney School) and was originally built as the Veltin School, designed by the firm of Lamb & Rich in the Georgian Revival style. While the building is larger than the neighboring rowhouses, its detail is restrained and the design corresponds to the residential context of 74th Street.

The Veltin School, originally established in 1886, formally opened in its West 74th Street home on February 10, 1893. Its purpose was to "establish a permanent West Side private day school affording girls every opportunity for a thorough education from Kindergarten to college preparatories." The New York Times reported that the school building was the "largest and most thoroughly-equipped private educational institution for young ladies" in New York City.

The Calhoun School currently accepts children from pre-kindergarten through high school and enrolls approximately 400 students. Its curriculum is based on progressive educational principles. Its main building, located at 433 West End Avenue (outside the district boundaries), will by 1992 house grades two through twelve. The West 74th Street building will by that time house the pre-school children and the first grade.

#### **The Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School, 4-8 West 93rd Street**

The Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School was founded in 1764 as The Columbia Grammar School, a boys' preparatory school for Kings College (later Columbia University). Early instructors at the College complained that its entering students were poorly prepared for their college courses. In 1763 they called for a grammar school annex to the College to remedy this problem. The success of the school was almost immediate; it soon supplied the College with half of its entering freshman class. The Grammar School remained under the College's care for 100 years until, in 1864, Columbia College (as it was then known) terminated the relationship. The school continued to prosper under private care and has been located on the Upper West Side since 1907. In 1909-10 a new building for the school was constructed at 5 West 93rd Street (outside the district boundaries).

In 1941, Columbia Grammar School became a non-profit institution. In 1956, the school merged with the Leonard School, a girls' school founded in 1937 by Florence Leonard and housed in several interconnected rowhouses on West 94th Street which back onto the existing Columbia Grammar School building. With this merger, the institution turned co-educational for the first time. Today, the Columbia Grammar and Preparatory School is a co-educational college preparatory school with an emphasis on art, music, and drama.

The converted rowhouse at 20 West 94th Street, constructed in 1889-90 as a single-family dwelling according to the design of Edward Wenz in the Renaissance Revival style, and those at 22 through 28 West 94th Street, also designed as single family dwellings and constructed in 1888 according to the design of Increase M. Grenell in the Queen Anne style, now serve the lower grades from kindergarten through fourth grade. The building at 5 West 93rd Street is now occupied by the middle school. The high school is located in a recent building at 4 West 93rd Street, constructed in 1987-88 according to the design of Pasanella & Klein.

**Junior High School No. 44 -- William J. O'Shea Junior High School, 131-149 West 76th Street**

Junior High School No. 44 occupies the eastern half of the city block bounded by 76th and 77th Streets, and Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues. The school is named for William J. O'Shea, a lawyer who was sworn in as a member of the New York City Board of Education on January 6, 1955. His father (of the same name) was previously the Superintendent of Schools in New York City. In the late 1940s and '50s the New York City School Board found itself short of classroom space. The forces behind this shortage were: a growing birth rate, a large influx of immigrants and refugees, and a shifting of the city's population. Acknowledging that monumental school designs were a thing of the past, the school board boldly confronted these complex social, financial, and educational problems. Forced to devise a new means of economic building and design without compromising structural safety, aesthetic qualities, or educational adequacy, the board set upon a new design strategy: the introduction of sparse, functional designs with simple lines and straightforward planning, assisted by modern building materials including steel, concrete, aluminum, and glass. Additionally, ceiling heights were lowered, stairways reduced, and elevators installed. A focus on functional design was found to be the answer. Constructed in 1955, the modern design of Junior High School No. 44 created by the architectural firm of Gehron & Seltzer, reflects this period of reform in American school design.

**The New Walden Lincoln School (Formerly the Walden School), 11-15 West 88th Street**

The Walden School was founded in 1914 by Margaret Naumberg. Naumberg was considered an innovator in the field of education and utilized progressive educational principles. By 1933 the school was located at 1 West 88th Street, in a Beaux-Arts building originally constructed for the Progress Club in 1904 according to the design of Nathan Korn. (The Progress Club was a prominent German-Jewish club organized in 1864. Its Central Park home was the third club built in the area. While the trustees thought that a move to the West Side would increase membership, this eventually proved ineffective and the club dissolved in 1932.) The Walden School expanded in 1958 by adding a floor to this structure.

The Andrew Goodman Building at 11-15 West 88th Street was constructed adjacent to the main school building in 1967. The design was by architect Edgar Tafel, a former Walden student. The modern style of the building is

reflected in its unornamented concrete, brick, and glass facade. The structure honors Andrew Goodman, a civil rights activist who attended the Walden School and was murdered in 1964 while seeking to further the cause of voting rights in Mississippi.

The school made plans in 1984 to renovate the former club building and erect a seventeen-story apartment house above it. When this proved unsuccessful, the school trustees decided to demolish the club building and replace it with an apartment tower which would also contain space for the school. The Walden School vacated the club building by the fall of 1987 and a new 23-story apartment building is now nearing completion.

The Lincoln School of Teachers College was founded in 1917 by Abraham Flexner. Like Walden, it was progressive in its curriculum. It was located at West 100th Street and later at 210 East 77th Street, a former YMCA building. Lincoln became independent from Teachers College in 1948 and in 1949 adopted the name New Lincoln. The Walden and New Lincoln Schools merged in 1989 to combat rising costs and shrinking enrollment, forming the New Walden Lincoln School, a co-educational school accepting students from pre-kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

#### The Robert Louis Stevenson School, 22 West 74th Street

The Robert Louis Stevenson School was established in 1908 by Dr. William Whitney as a school for girls from the elementary grades through high school. The name, that of a famous author of children's stories, was chosen for the popular association of his works with children. The school turned co-educational in the 1940s. When the current director, Lucille Rhodes, arrived at the school in 1960, the aim of the school then became the education of "promising adolescents with unrealized potential." Previously located elsewhere on the Upper West Side, the Stevenson School moved into its current home at 22 West 74th Street in the early 1960s. The building was originally constructed in 1902-04 in the Georgian Revival style according to the design of Percy Griffin as one of a row of eighteen houses. Currently, the Stevenson School is a co-educational high school chartered as a not-for-profit institution and enrolls approximately 100 students.

#### The Stephen Gaynor School, 22 West 74th Street

The Stephen Gaynor School was organized in 1962. It is a non-profit, co-educational school for children of pre-school age through thirteen years. At the school, children with learning disabilities receive an education based on multi-sensory teaching. In the mid-1960s, the school moved from its home on the Upper East Side to the Georgian Revival style rowhouse at 22 West 74th Street. Designed by Percy Griffin, the building is one of a row of eighteen houses constructed in 1902-04.

Margaret M. Pickart  
Charles Savage



## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 67th Street and West 68th Street [West Side]

71-75 Central Park West

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1120/29

See: 75 Central Park West

75 Central Park West

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1120/29

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1928-29 [NB 531-1928]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Rosario Candela

OWNER/DEVELOPER: 75 Central Park West Corp.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance

Facade(s): Brick, limestone, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 15

Window Type/Material: Three-over-three double-hung/Metal

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: One seven-story brick structure

## ALTERATION(s)

Masonry removed from window bays to enlarge openings in some locations.

Aluminum replacement windows installed.

CENTRAL PARK WEST  
Between West 67th Street and West 68th Street [West Side]  
77 Central Park West [a/k/a 2-10 West 68th Street]  
Tax Map Block/Lot: 1120/33

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): The Second Church of Christ, Scientist  
DATE: 1899-1901 [NB 958-1898]  
TYPE: Church  
ARCHITECT: Frederick R. Constock  
OWNER/DEVELOPER: Second Church of Christ, Scientist  
STYLE/ORNAMENT: Academic Classical  
Facade(s): Marble and granite  
Number of Stories: 4  
Window Type/Material: Multipane arched windows/Metal  
Roof Type/Material: Peaked and domed/Slate and copper  
Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

CENTRAL PARK WEST  
Between West 68th Street and West 69th Street [West Side]  
80 Central Park West [a/k/a 1-13 West 68th Street]  
Tax Map Block/Lot: 1121/29

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): Central Park West Apartments  
DATE: 1965-67 [NB 103-1965]  
TYPE: Apartment Building  
ARCHITECTS: Paul Resnick and Harry F. Green  
OWNER/DEVELOPER: London 68 Co.  
STYLE/ORNAMENT: Modern

## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 68th Street and West 69th Street [West Side]

80 Central Park West [a/k/a 1-13 West 68th Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1121/29

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Brick and concrete

Number of Stories: 24

Window Type/Material: Tripartite single-pane/Aluminum  
(with one-over-one sidelights)Method of Construction: Steel frame construction  
FireproofSite formerly occupied by: Four brick-faced buildings of five, six, and  
seven stories and a vacant lot

80-81 Central Park West

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1121/29

See: 80 Central Park West

88 Central Park West [a/k/a 2-10 West 69th Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1121/36 in part

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): Brentmore

DATE: 1909-10 [NB 446-1909]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Schwartz &amp; Gross

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Akron Building Co.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Beaux-Arts/Neo-Renaissance

Facade(s): Brick, stone, terra cotta, and ironwork

Number of Stories: 12

Window Type/Material: Tripartite one-over-one double-hung/Wood

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction  
Fireproof



## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 69th Street and West 70th Street [West Side]

91 Central Park West [a/k/a 1-7 West 69th Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/29

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1928-29 [NB 590-1928]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Schwartz &amp; Gross

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Caul Realty Corp.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance with Beaux-Arts elements

Facade(s): Brick, stone, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 15

Method of Construction: Steel frame construction

Fireproof

Site formerly occupied by: Two seven-story buildings including "The Catherine" and three rowhouses

99 Central Park West [a/k/a 2-4 West 70th Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/36

Individual Landmark (Synagogue only)

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): Congregation Shearith Israel Synagogue &amp; Rectory

DATE: 1896-97 [NB 104-1896]

TYPE: Synagogue and Rectory

ARCHITECT: Brunner &amp; Tryon

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Congregation Shearith Israel

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Academic Classical and Beaux-Arts

## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 69th Street and West 70th Street [West Side]

99 Central Park West [a/k/a 2-4 West 70th Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1122/36

Individual Landmark (Synagogue only)

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Limestone

Number of Stories: 1 and 3 with basement

Window Type/Material: Multipane stained glass/Wood

One-over-one double-hung/Wood

Basement Type: Raised (rectory)

Stoop Type: Straight (rectory)

Roof Type/Material: Peaked &amp; mansard/Tin &amp; copper

Method of Construction: Masonry bearing walls

## ALTERATION(S)

Rectory raised from two to three stories and mansard roof added.

1902: Alt 1140-1902 [Source: Alteration Application]

Architect -- William H. Hume &amp; Son Owner -- Congregation Shearith Israel

## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 70th Street and West 71st Street [West Side]

101 Central Park West [a/k/a 1-7 West 70th Street

2-4 West 71st Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1123/29

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

DATE: 1929-30 [NB 574-1929]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Schwartz &amp; Gross

OWNER/DEVELOPER: 1081 Park Avenue, Inc.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Neo-Renaissance

## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 70th Street and West 71st Street [West Side]

101 Central Park West [a/k/a 1-7 West 70th Street  
2-4 West 71st Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1123/29

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA (continued)

Facade(s): Brick, stone, and terra cotta

Number of Stories: 17

Window Type/Material: Six-over-one double-hung/Wood  
Paired six-over-one double-hung/WoodMethod of Construction: Steel frame construction  
FireproofSite formerly occupied by: Two brick-fronted buildings of ten and twelve  
stories with basements

101-105 Central Park West

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1123/29

See: 101 Central Park West

## CENTRAL PARK WEST

Between West 71st Street and West 72nd Street [West Side]

115 Central Park West [a/k/a 1-15 West 71st Street  
2-10 West 72nd Street]

Tax Map Block/Lot: 1124/27

Individual Landmark

## ORIGINAL BUILDING DATA

BUILDING NAME(s): The Majestic

DATE: 1930-31 [NB 215-1930]

TYPE: Apartment Building

ARCHITECT: Irwin S. Chanin

OWNER/DEVELOPER: Majestic Hotel Corp.

STYLE/ORNAMENT: Art Deco



## NEW YORK CHAPTER

## THE SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

ROOM 303, MAIN BLDG. NEW YORK UNIVERSITY • WASHINGTON ST. NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

September 7, 1982

The Honorable Gene A. Norman, Chairman  
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
20 Vesey Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chairman Norman:

I write to urge the Commission to reject the proposed design for a 425-foot-tall tower cantilevered over the landmark Shearith Israel Synagogue. The Commission should reject any design that would overhang the synagogue (even by a few feet) and any design that pretends to be a column or an obelisk or any sort of vertical "addition" to the old building.

As a historian of New York architecture with longstanding professional and personal ties to the West Side, I would much prefer that no tower be built anywhere near that highly visible, park-side, corner site. (At best, a tower will unpleasantly disrupt the rather low skyline of that area.) But if one must be built there, then it should at least be as inconspicuous as possible and in no way intrude on the space of the landmark building. It should neither compete with nor "complete" the Beaux-Arts synagogue. The proposed design is particularly offensive in both respects. It gives the impression that Shearith Israel is both the base of a gigantic pagan grave monument and an ugly sliver-skyscraper. No wonder the designers did not want us to see the head-on view!

It is a great pity that the adjoining parsonage, a good example of its kind and a harmonious adjunct to the synagogue, has not been designated a landmark. Is it too late to propose it for designation? That site is surely being considered for the entrance-way to the tower from the avenue. How sad to lose one of the few Beaux-Arts residences ever built on Central Park West.

In the absence of legal restrictions on the height of the proposed tower, the Commission must use all its resources to control the design. Dark stone or brick, or even brown glass for the walls would act as a veil for the light limestone walls of the synagogue. The tower should appear to recede behind Shearith Israel, not hover over it. Better an inconspicuous, even a dull building than one that stands out. The Commission's action on this issue is extremely important; the wrong decision will not only diminish a very important landmark building but also blight yet another corner of the city as well as a neighborhood that is prized for its historic architectural integrity.

Sincerely,

*Sarah Bradford Landau*  
Sarah Bradford Landau, Vice-President  
(and Assistant Professor of Fine Arts, New York University)

① cc: C. HASBROUCK }  
F. SANETTIS } FYI  
D. MINOR }  
L. NORMAN }  
M. FRANKSON }  
② Hold for Response  
- THEN FILE JM 7/10/83

GEORGE LITTON  
91 CENTRAL PARK WEST  
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10023

March 31, 1982

The Board of Trustees  
Congregation Shearith Israel  
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue  
8 West 70th Street  
New York City, NY 10023

APR 2 1982  
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION

Gentlemen:

On March 9, 1982, Mr. Jules Mayer, President of 91 Central Park West Corporation wrote Mr. Edgar J. Nathan, 3rd, President of the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue expressing concern on behalf of our tenant-shareholders respecting the impact on our adjoining building and community of your high-rise development plans as reported in the press. Mr. Mayer requested confirmation of our understanding that you will consult with us and with other community groups prior to any implementation of such plans. Mr. Mayer reports receiving informal assurances in this regard, but to date we have received no official communication or information from the Synagogue.

For the sake of good order, I confirm the readiness of the 91 Central Park West Advisory Committee upon reasonable advance notice to meet with representatives of the Synagogue and with all other interested community groups, officials, and governmental agencies having jurisdiction in order to begin discussion of your development plans. We are increasingly concerned by continuing press reports of very specific development plans of which we have no knowledge.

We should appreciate your advice regarding a proposed date and place for our first meeting at which we could anticipate receiving needed information. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

91 CENTRAL PARK WEST  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

per: *George Litton*  
Chairman

cc:  
Office of the Mayor  
New York City Council  
City Planning Commission  
Community Board 7 / Manhattan Borough President  
U.S. Congressmen  
New York State Senators & Representatives  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Members, 91 Central Park West Advisory Committee

# Synagogue Looks Up, but Not as High

By DAVID W. DUNLAP

Congregation Shearith Israel has the richest history of any synagogue in New York and one of the most glorious sanctuaries. But it has another extraordinary asset: unused development rights overlooking Central Park West.

This month, almost two decades after it outraged neighbors by unsuccessfully proposing a 42-story, 488-foot apartment tower over its landmark synagogue, the congregation will return to the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Now it seeks to develop a 14-story, 157-foot building that would include the synagogue's community house at its base and 10 residential floors above.

The new building, designed by Platt Byard Dovell White, would rise next to the synagogue on 70th Street, taking the place of a vacant lot and the current four-story community house, which was built in 1954 and is not a landmark.

There would probably be no more than two apartments on each floor, perhaps only one. Even in a weakening economy, there will presumably always be a strong market for newly built apartments with broad windows facing Central Park, in part because so few become available.

Under the most likely plan, a developer would control the apartment floors as a condominium unit separate from the synagogue's space. The congregation would share in the proceeds from the apartments.

It is not possible now to estimate how much the sales would yield. But the congregation can use the money. It has just completed an \$8 million restoration of the sanctuary designed by Stephen Tilly and sees much more work ahead.

"There is no limit to what we have to do, which is why the building project is so important," said Peter Neustadter, the parnas (or president) of the 348-year-old congregation, also known as the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue.

Besides the 19th-century neo-Classical sanctuary and adjoining parsonage, which is currently empty, the congregation must care for three small historic cemeteries in Manhattan, a chapel designed by Calvert Vaux in its cemetery on Cypress Hills Street in Queens and its own considerable archives.

Income from the development might be used to restore the Vaux chapel or the old cemeteries on Chatham Square, West 11th Street and West 21st Street, said Shelly S. Friedman of Friedman & Gotbaum, a lawyer for the synagogue.

But the most significant preservation benefit, he said, was that the proposal would pull the development away from the synagogue. In contrast to the tower proposed in 1983, which would have cantilevered over the landmark.

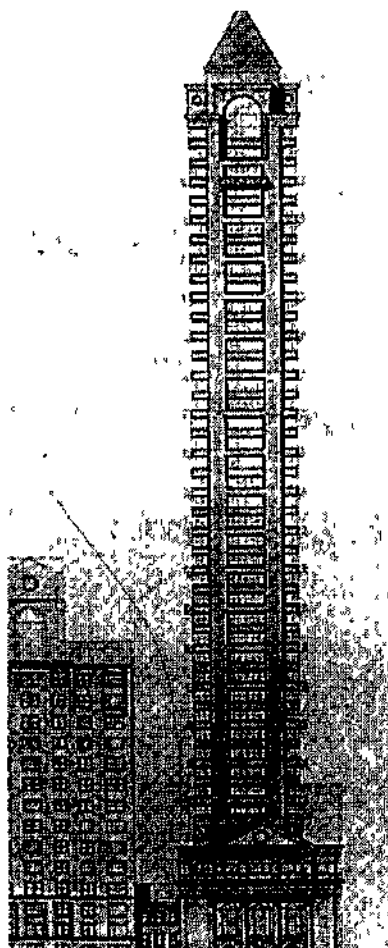
At a hearing on Nov. 26, the congregation will argue that the preservation benefits warrant support from the landmarks commission for the variance it needs to construct a 157-foot tower in a zoning district with a row house-scaled 75-foot height limit.

Because the site is in the Upper West Side-Central Park Historic Dis-



Platt Byard Dovell White Architects LLP

Above, a Central Park West view of Congregation Shearith Israel's proposed 157-foot building on West 70th Street next to the synagogue. Left, the 1983 proposal for a 488-foot building.



trict, the scale of the proposed building is already being criticized by preservationists as a destructive precedent citywide.

"The entire application is a way to create spot zoning that would compromise the contextual zoning district for midblocks," said Simeon Bankoff, executive director of the

Historic Districts Council. "They're breaking the zone by proposing a new design that has twice the height of allowable buildings."

Landmark West, a local preservation group, is worried about the relation of the new building to the landmark and the possibility that the terms of the project will change once a developer is designated. It is also not persuaded that the project has a preservation purpose, as it must for the landmarks commission to endorse and join the application for a zoning change.

Norman Marcus, a former counsel to the City Planning Department, who lives next door to the synagogue, allowed that the new proposal was modest in comparison with the 1983 version. "On the other hand," he said, "it's still a very long stretch from a brownstone scale."

But it happens that Mr. Marcus's 16-story building at 91 Central Park West — along with several other nearby structures of 9, 14 and 18 stories — are cited by the congregation as the real context for its proposal, which Mr. Friedman described as "well suited to its neighbors."

In determining how large a building to propose, Mr. Friedman said, the congregation decided to forgo the use of about 50,000 square feet of development rights. "A building height of about 160 to 170 feet," he said, "seemed to be the most that was practical to ask for."

## Metro Briefing

### NEW YORK

**THE BRONX: CAR KILLS TODDLER** A car driven by a livery driver struck and killed a 15-month-old boy yesterday as

smallest businesses. The study found that about 75 percent of the businesses that received funds had fewer than 10 employees. But as critics have argued, the study by the General Accounting Office also found that the

"The Best of the Web" Forbes Magazine

"Bravo to Elegance"

Pierre Rovani of Georges Dubouche the fact that he remained true to goal of delivering quality at consumer friendly prices

All of the delicacy of Beaujolais and delightful Macon. Chardonnays here feature the has won first prize Macon wine for prize winning

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"BEAUJOLAIS"



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# CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

PROPOSED MIXED-USE BUILDING

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

Platt Byard Dovell White Architects LLP

Stephen Tilly, Architect

Higgins & Quasebarth



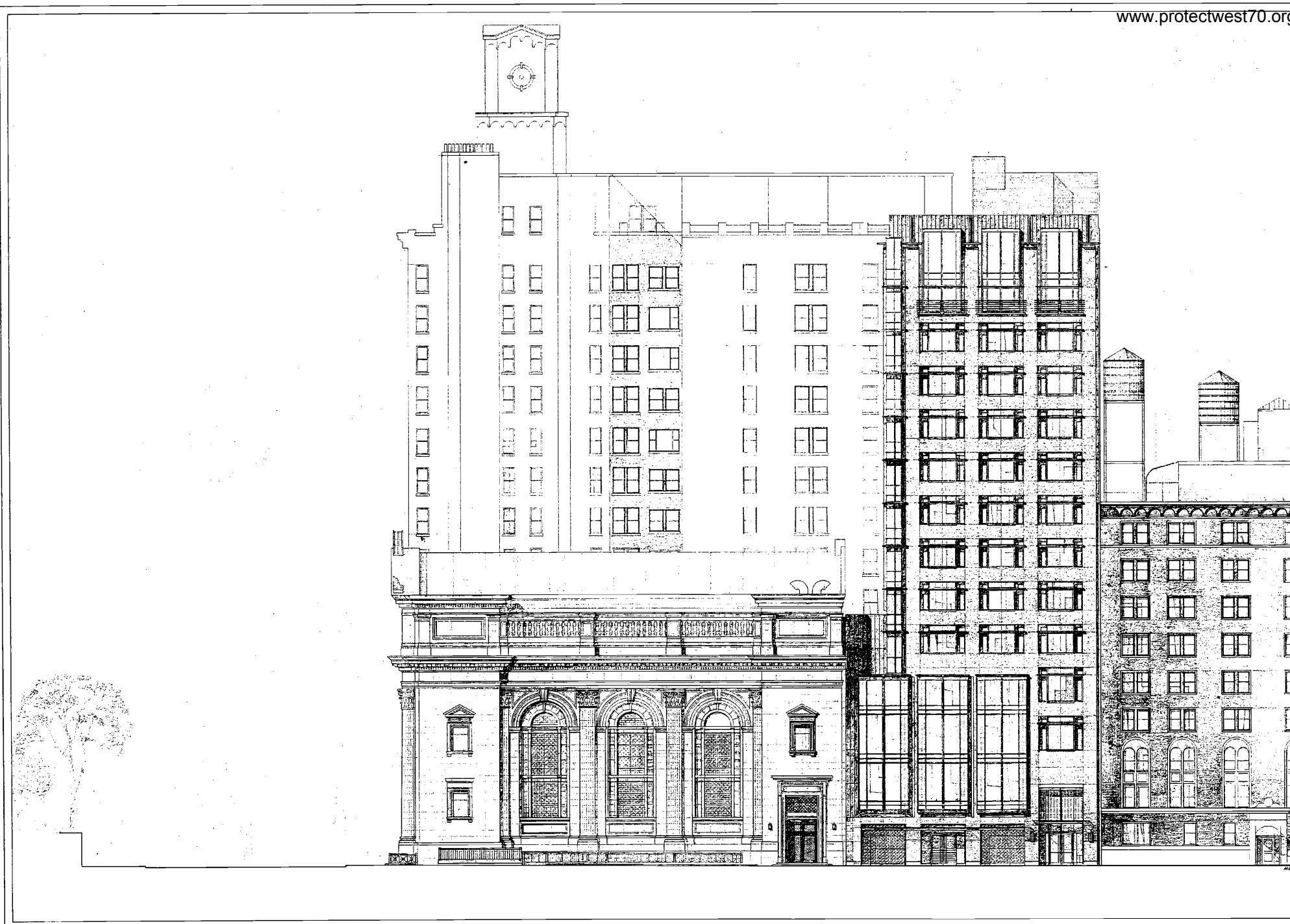
10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

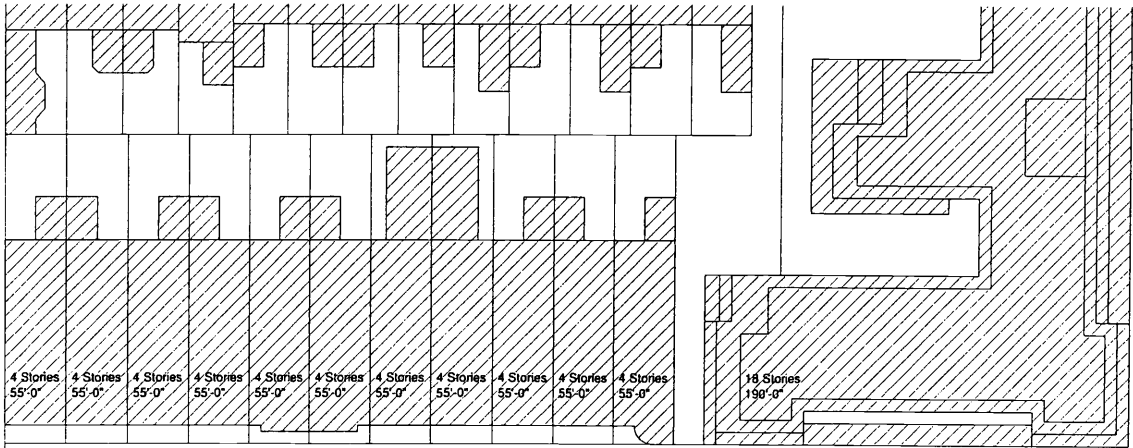
PERSPECTIVE FROM CENTRAL PARK WEST

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



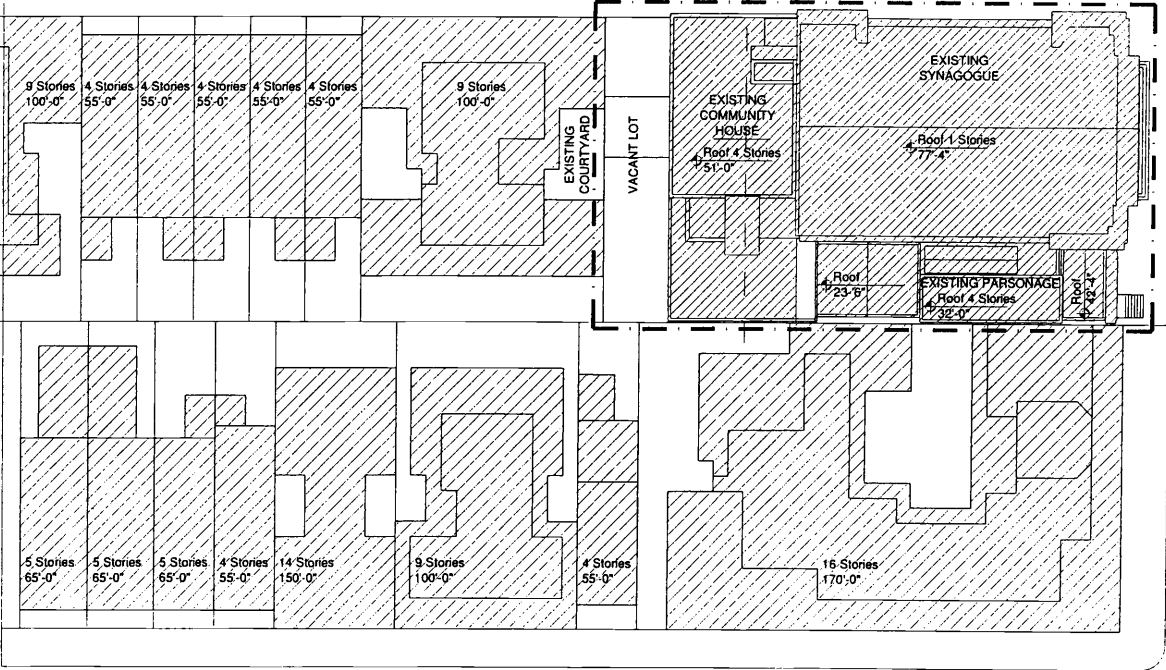






70th STREET

R8B R10A



CENTRAL PARK WEST

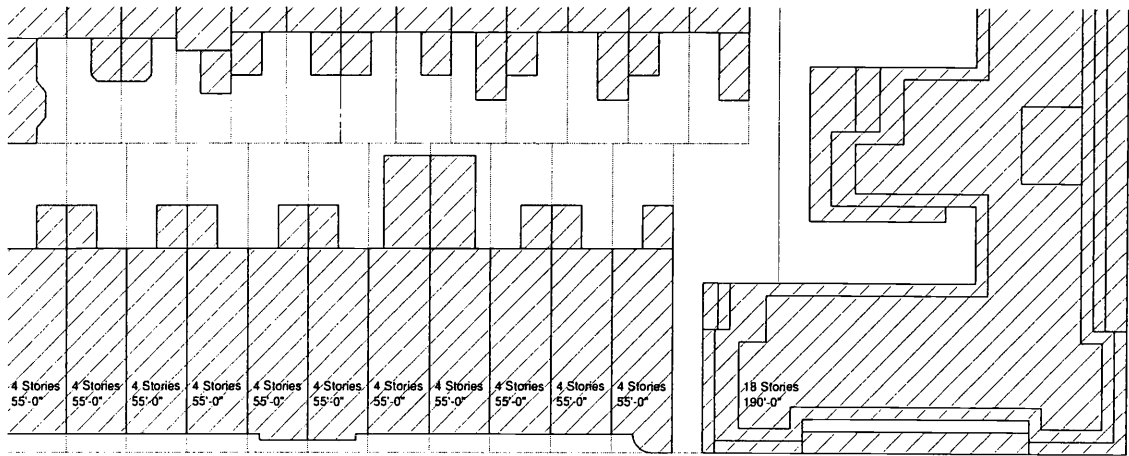
CENTRAL PARK

NOTE: EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS  
IN NUMBER OF STORIES  
FURNISHED FROM  
SANBORN MAPS

10 WEST 70th ST.

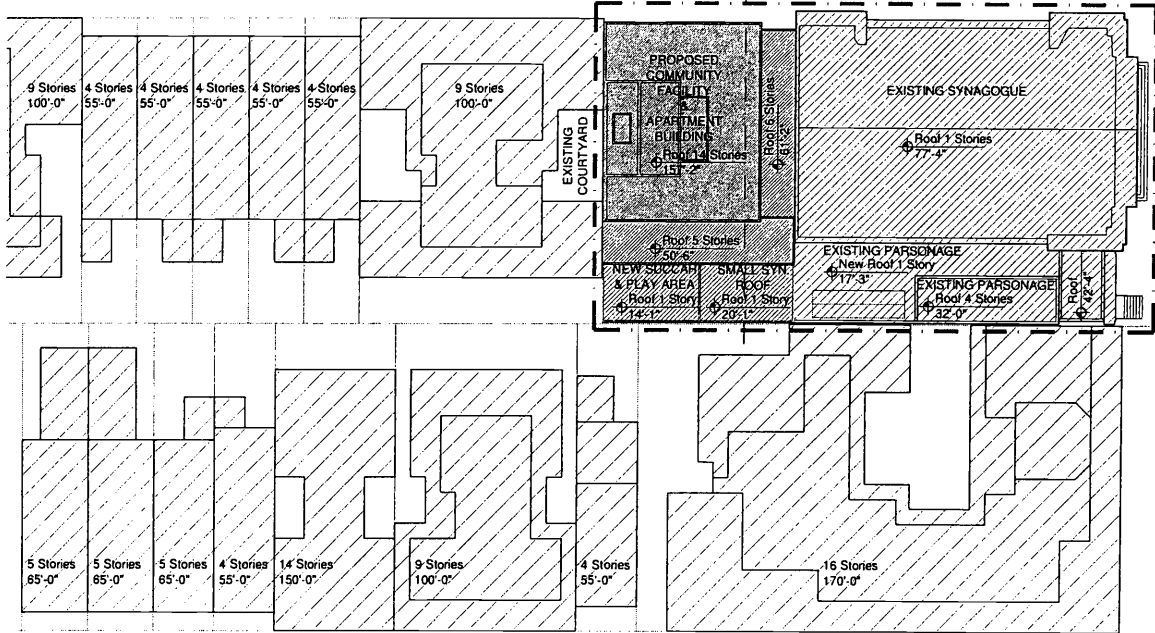
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

EXISTING SITE PLAN  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



70th STREET

R88 R10A



CENTRAL PARK WEST

CENTRAL PARK

NOTE: EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS  
IN NUMBER OF STORIES  
FURNISHED FROM  
SANBORN MAPS

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



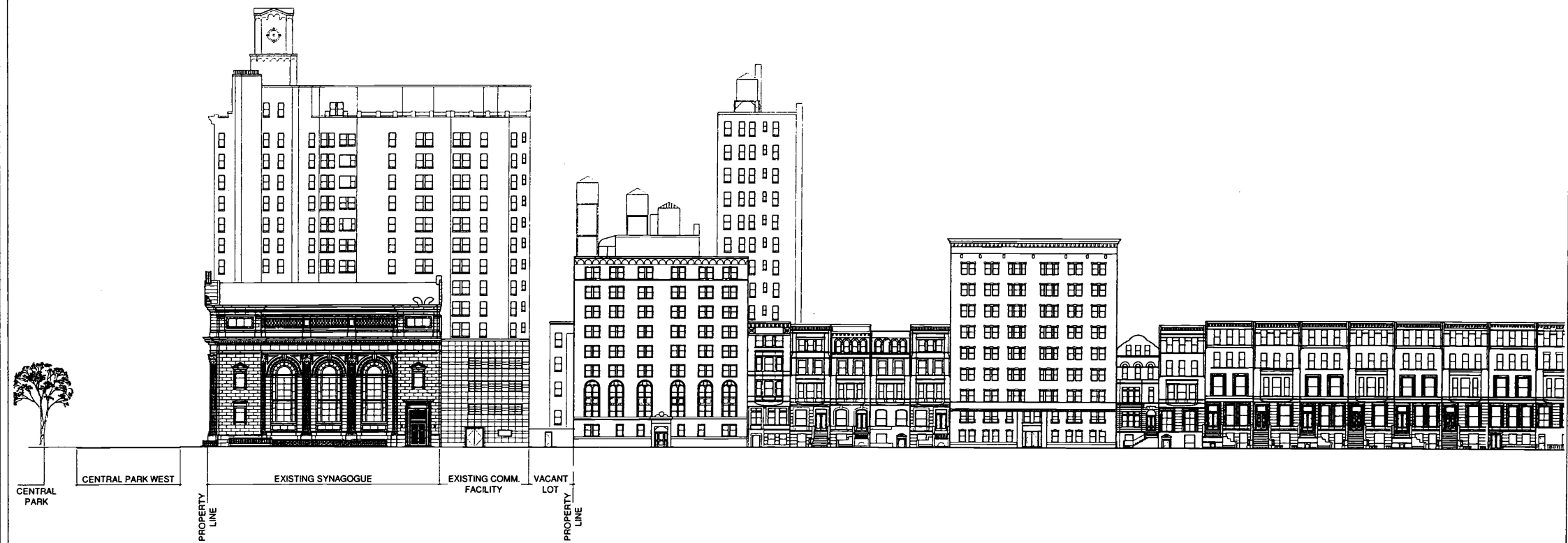


10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

EXISTING EAST CONTEXT ELEVATION  
CENTRAL PARK WEST

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



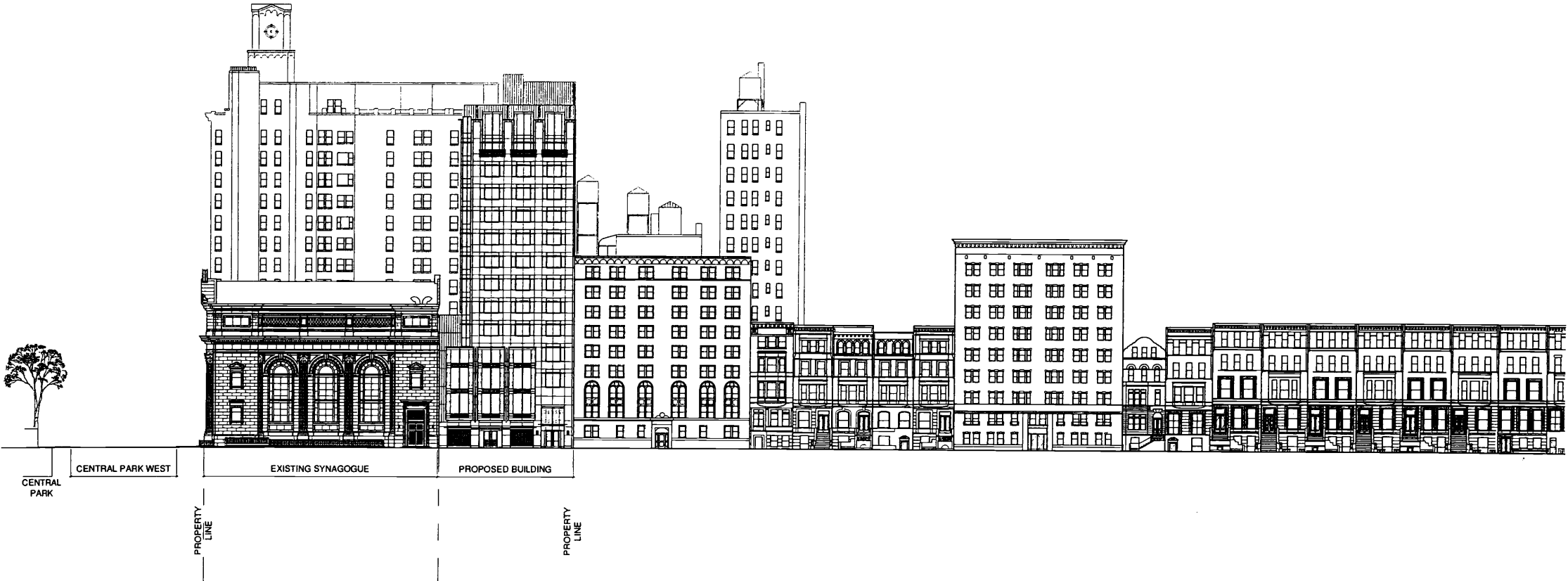
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PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE   STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

EXISTING NORTH CONTEXT ELEVATION

WEST 70th STREET

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

PROPOSED NORTH CONTEXT ELEVATION  
WEST 70TH STREET

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



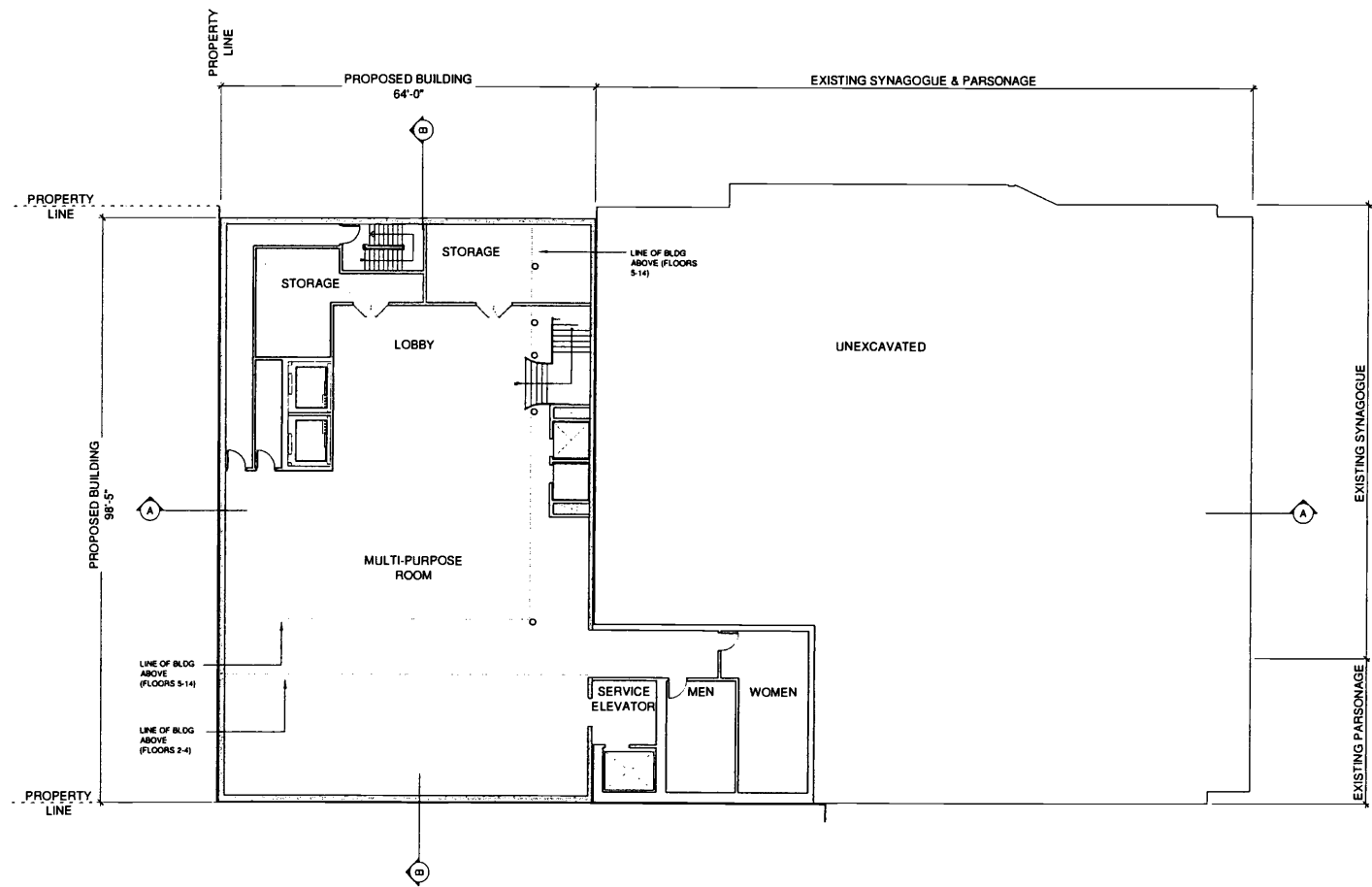
10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

PROPOSED EAST CONTEXT ELEVATION  
CENTRAL PARK WEST.

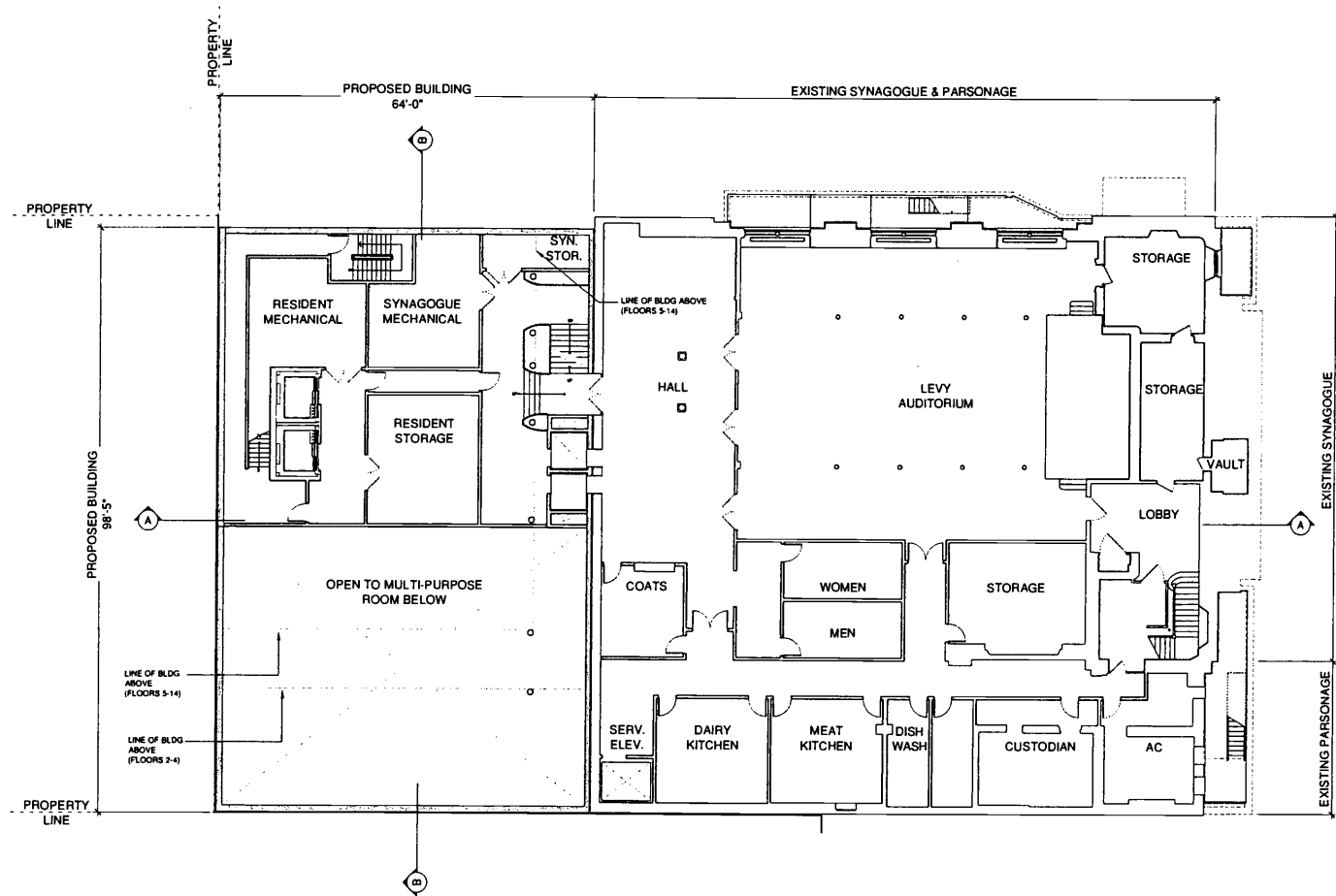
NOVEMBER 26, 2002





10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

SUB-BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



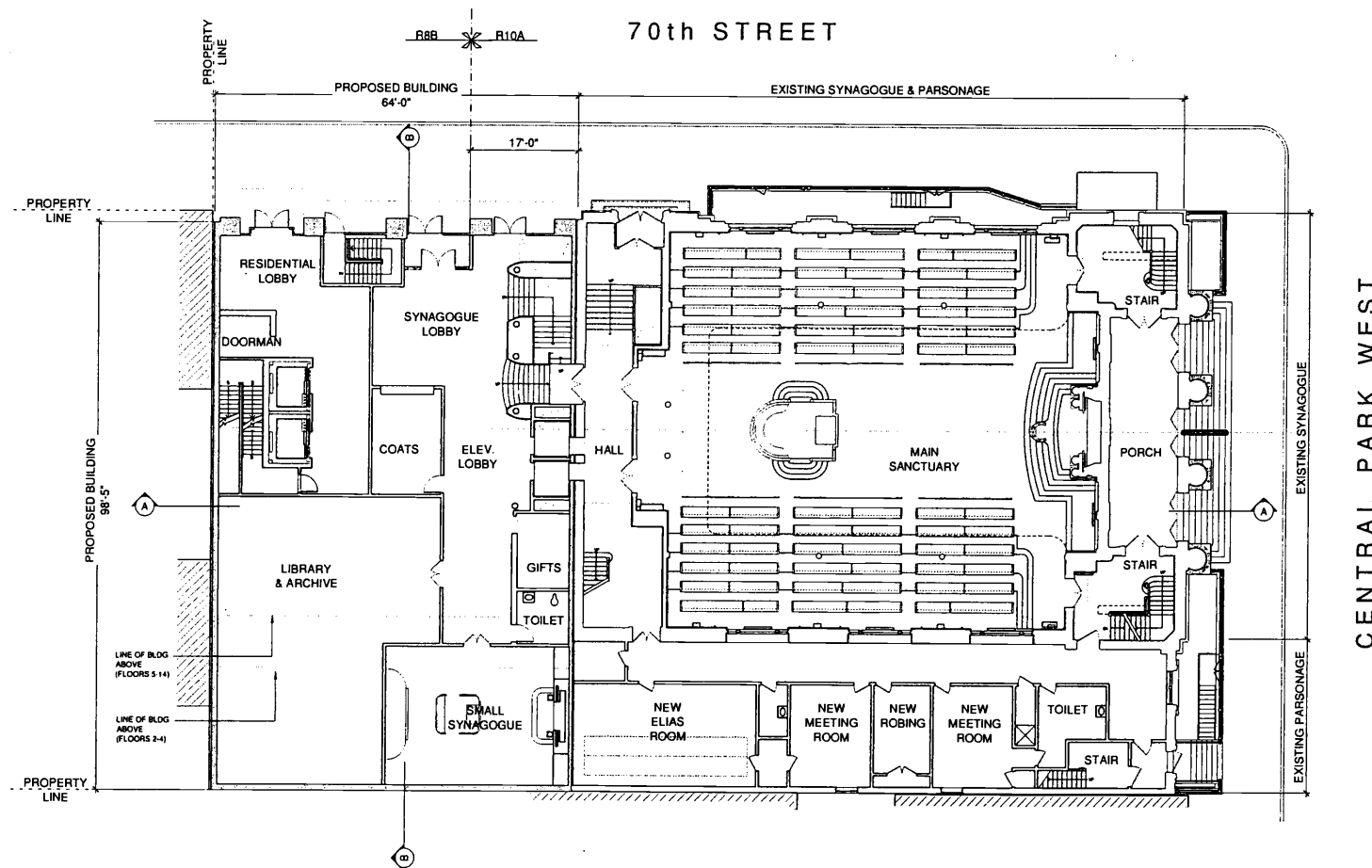
NOTE: INTERIOR PARTITIONS  
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE  
PURPOSES ONLY

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



NOTE: INTERIOR PARTITIONS  
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE  
PURPOSES ONLY

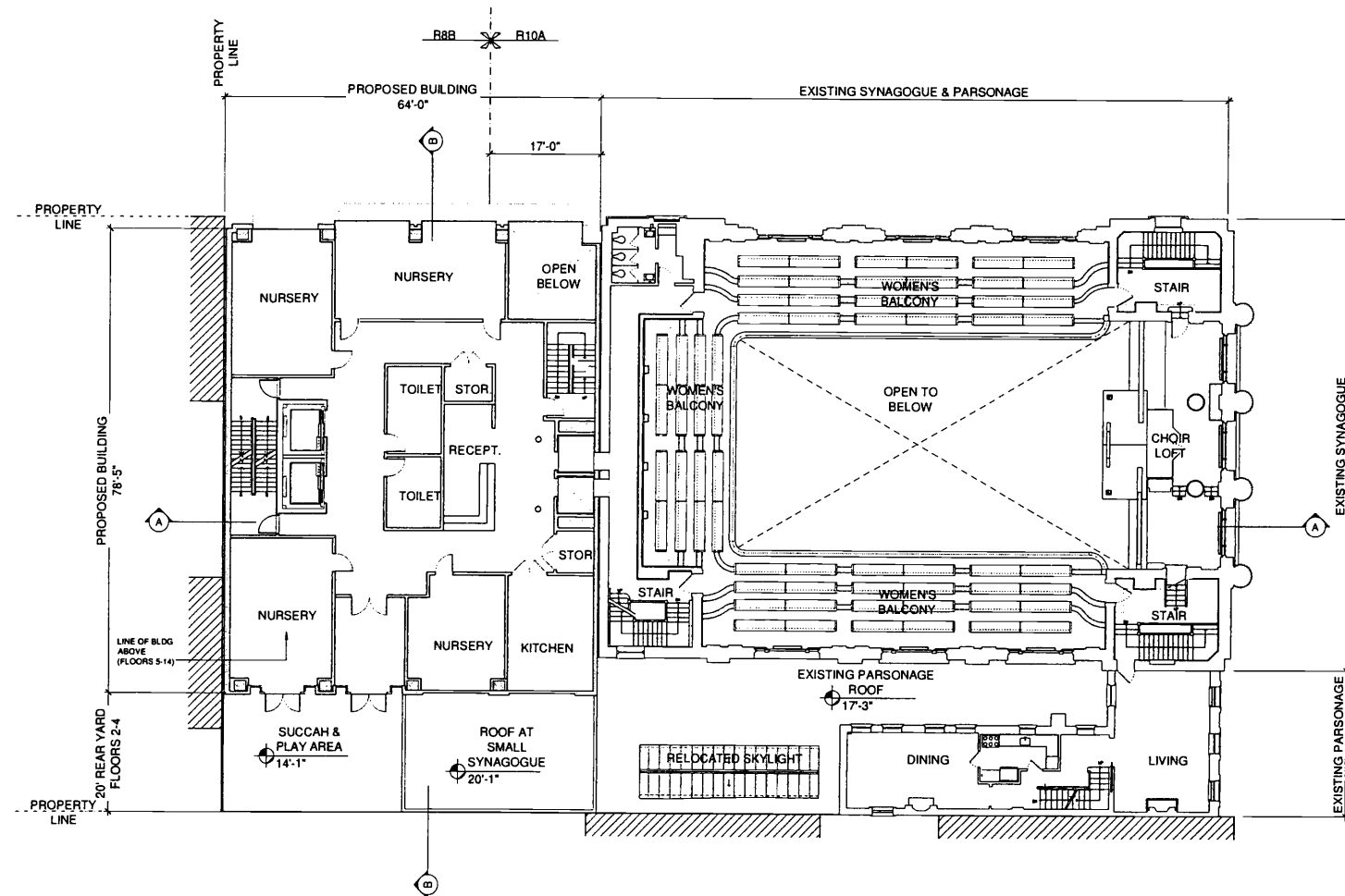
10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE      STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

### FIRST FLOOR PLAN

NOVEMBER 26, 2002





NOTE: INTERIOR PARTITIONS  
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PURPOSES ONLY

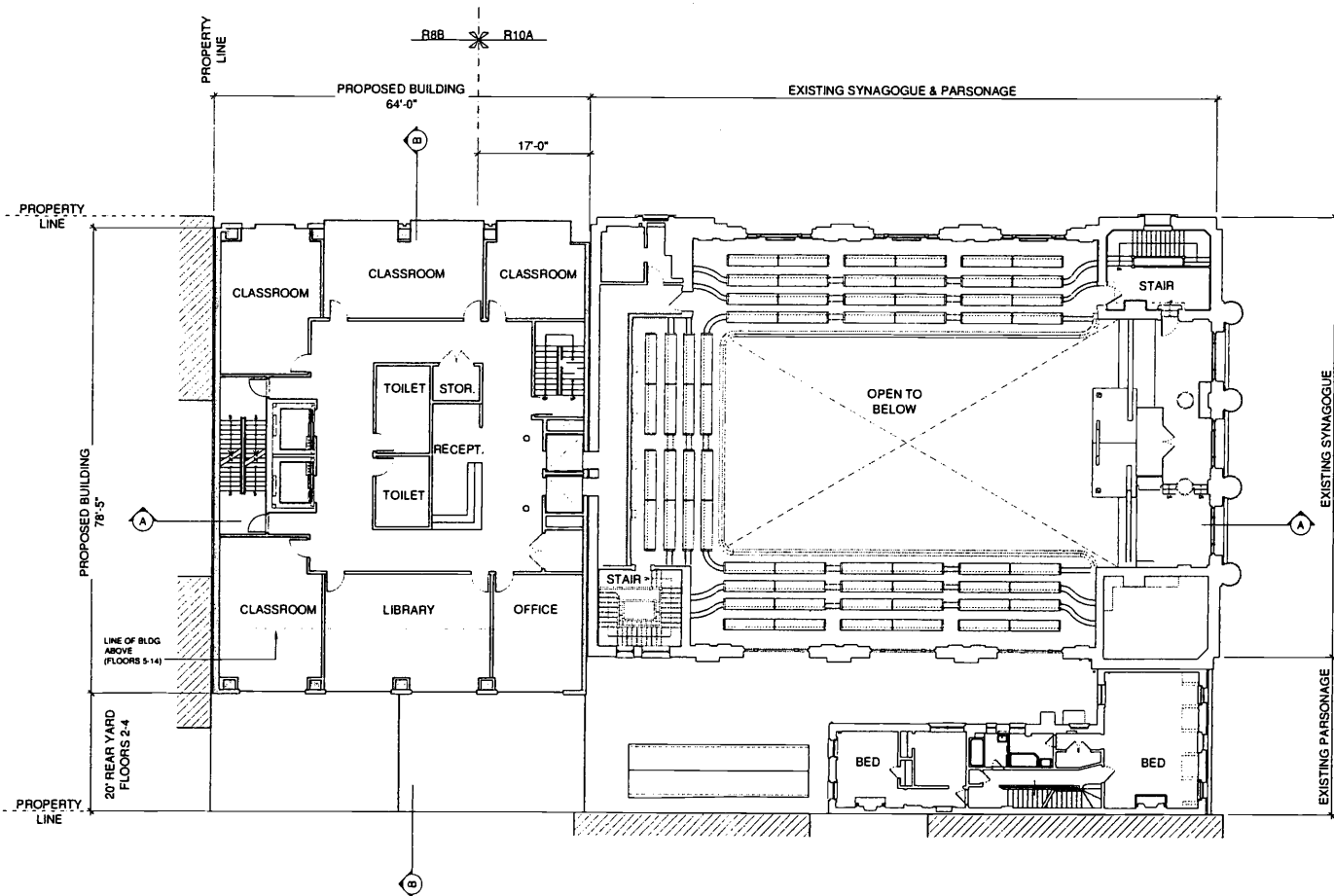
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PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE      STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

SECOND FLOOR PLAN.

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

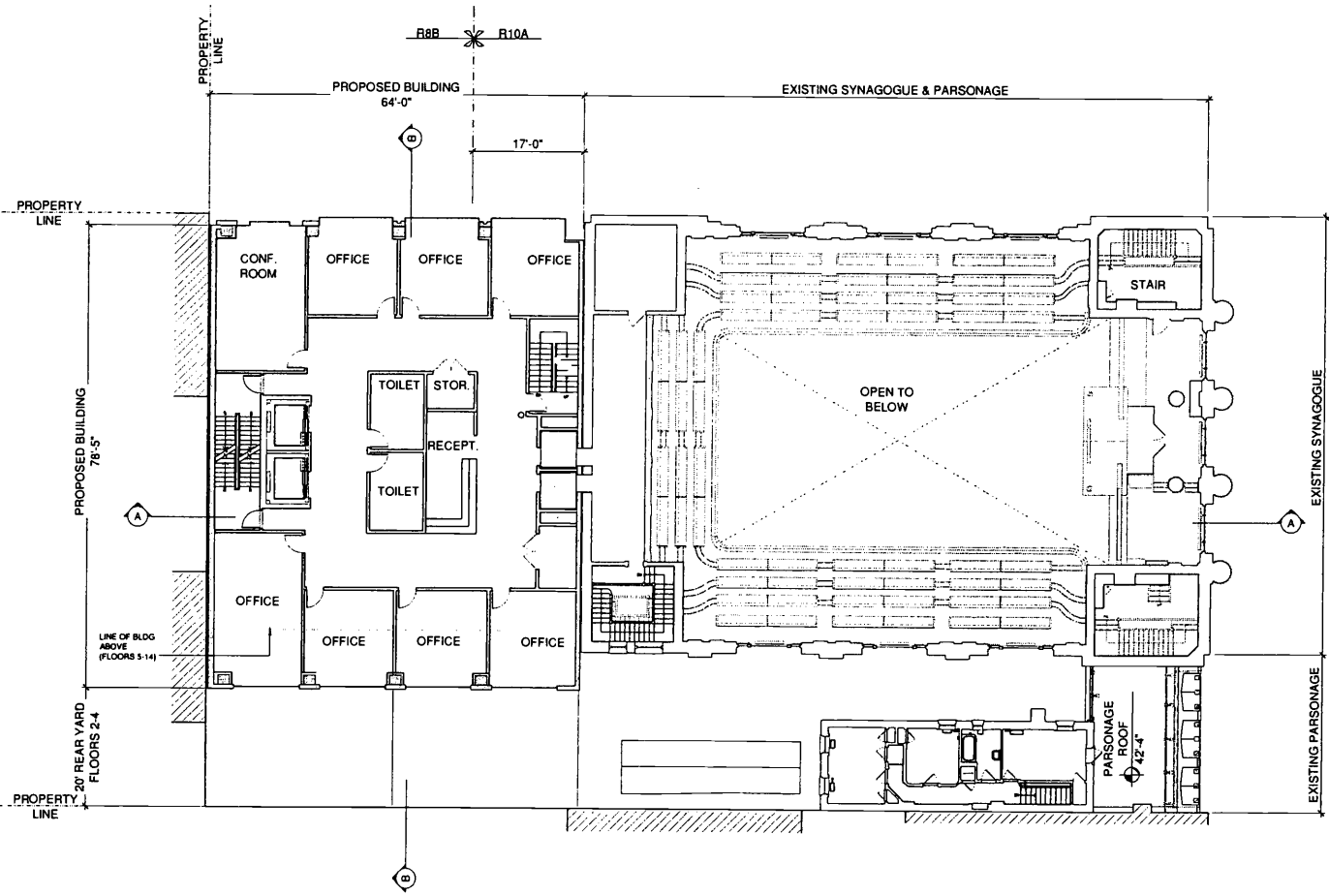




NOTE: INTERIOR PARTITIONS  
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE  
PURPOSES ONLY

10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

THIRD FLOOR PLAN  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



NOTE: INTERIOR PARTITIONS  
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE  
PURPOSES ONLY

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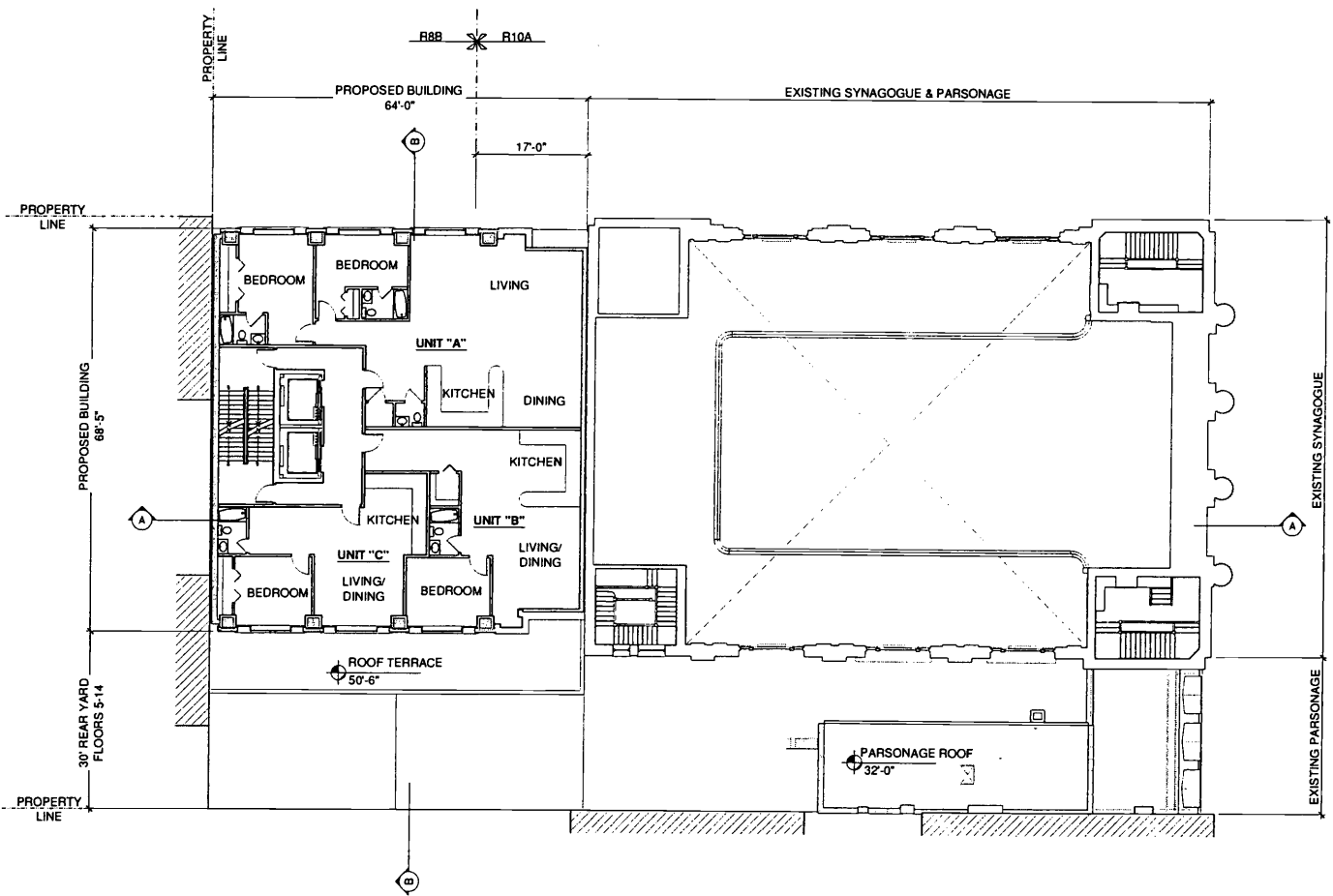
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP

STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

FOURTH FLOOR PLAN

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

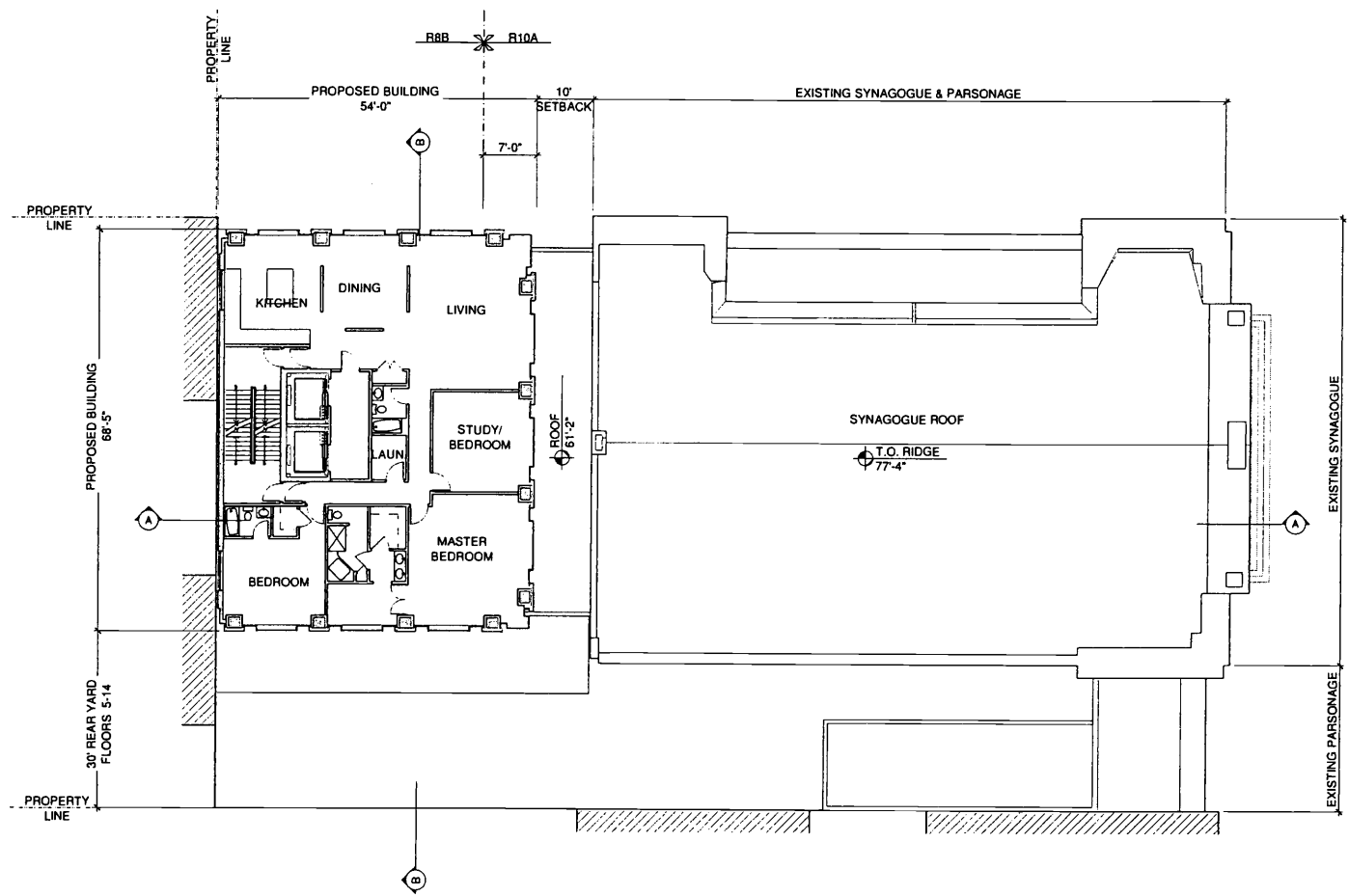




NOTE: INTERIOR PARTITIONS  
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE  
PURPOSES ONLY

10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

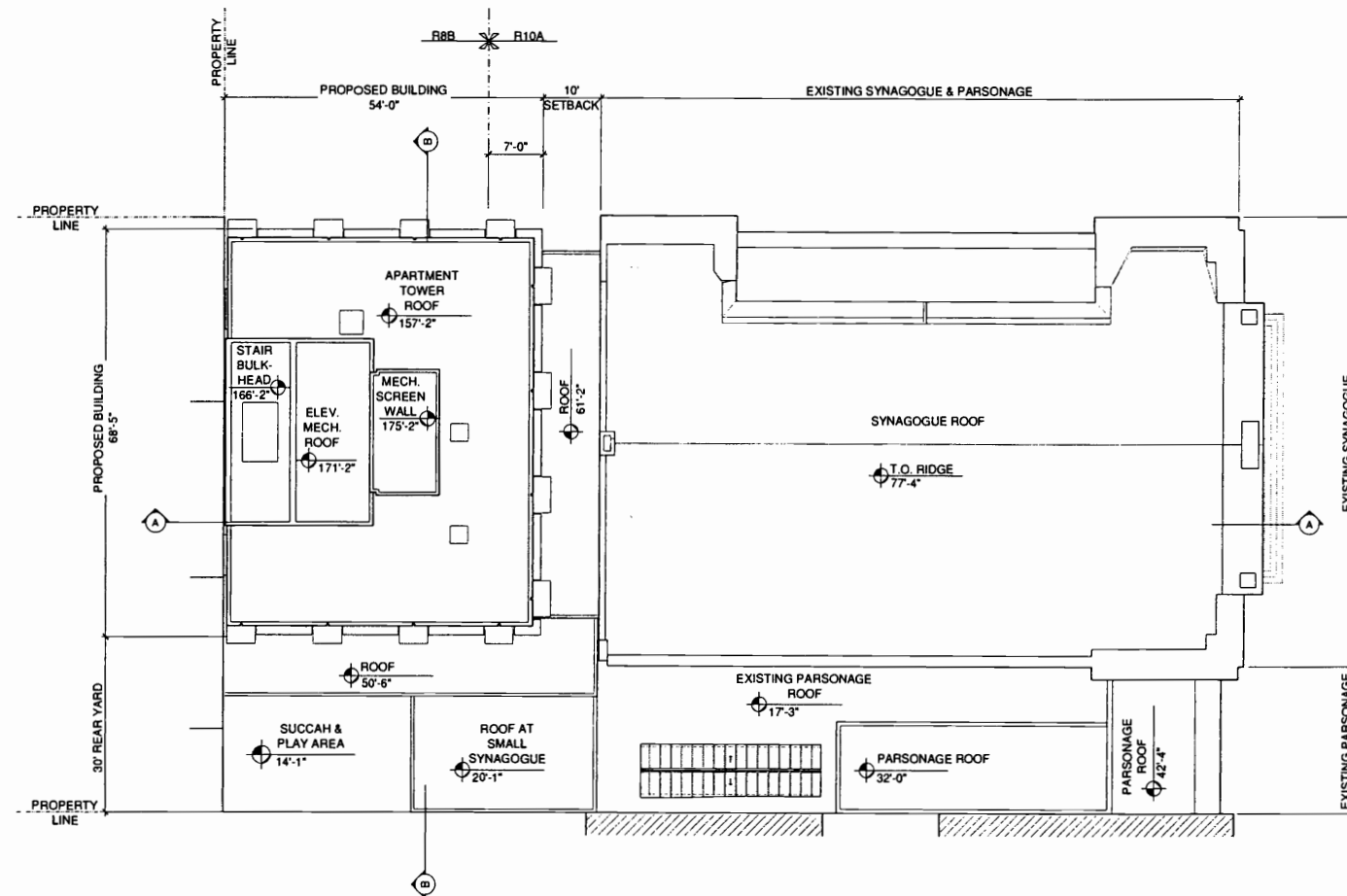
FIFTH FLOOR PLAN  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

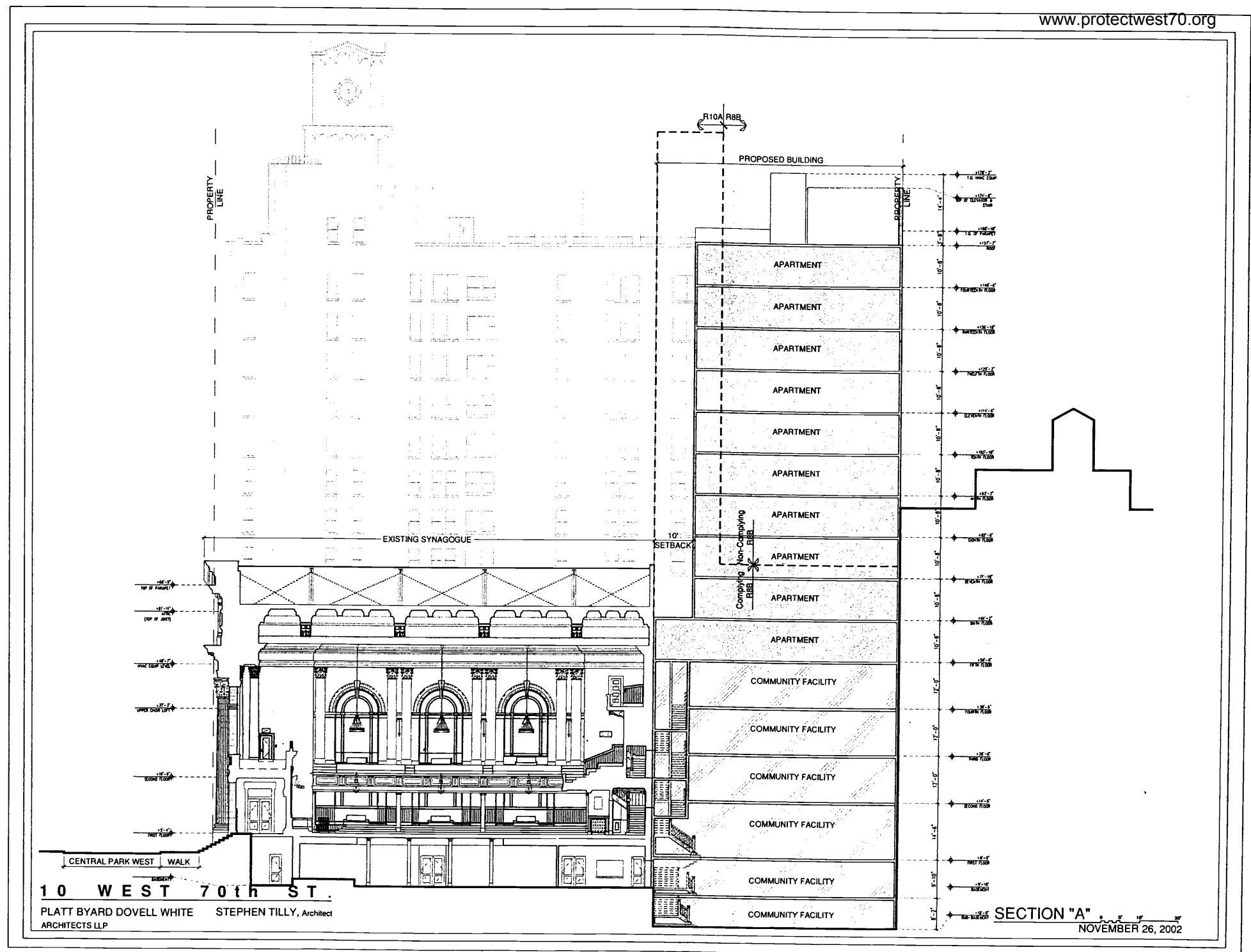
TYPICAL APARTMENT  
FLOOR PLAN (FLOORS 6 - 14)  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002

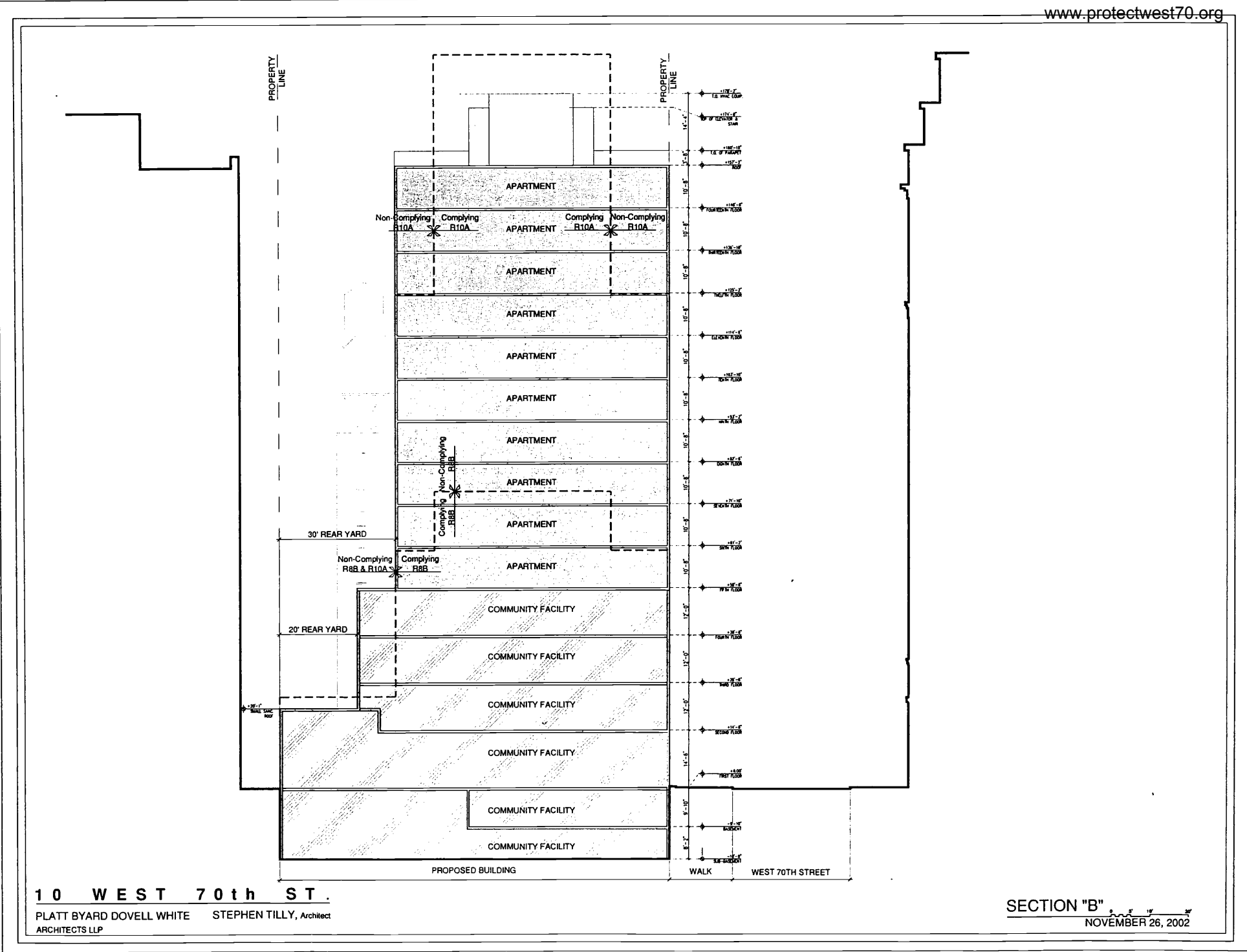


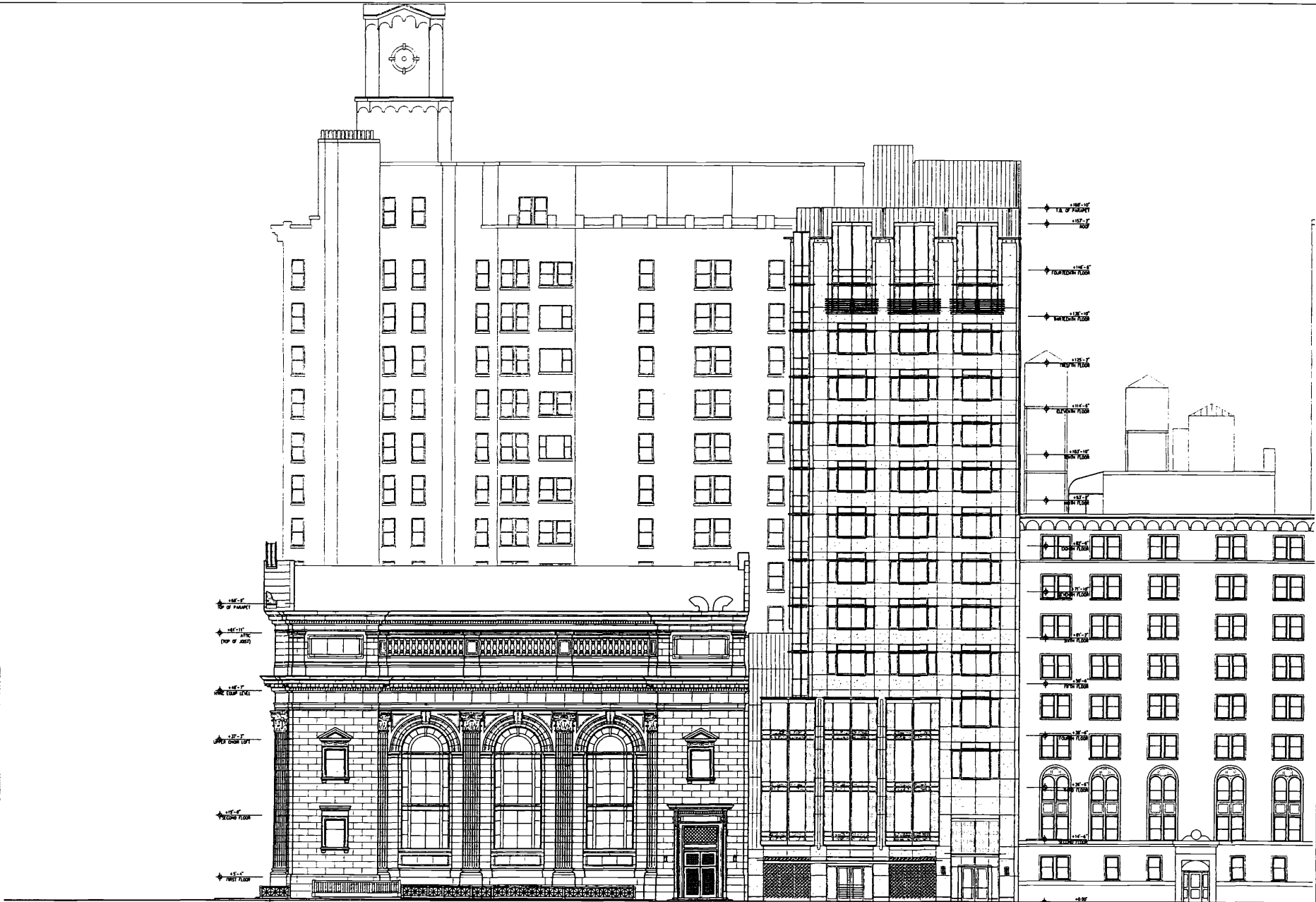


10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, ArchitectROOF PLAN  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002





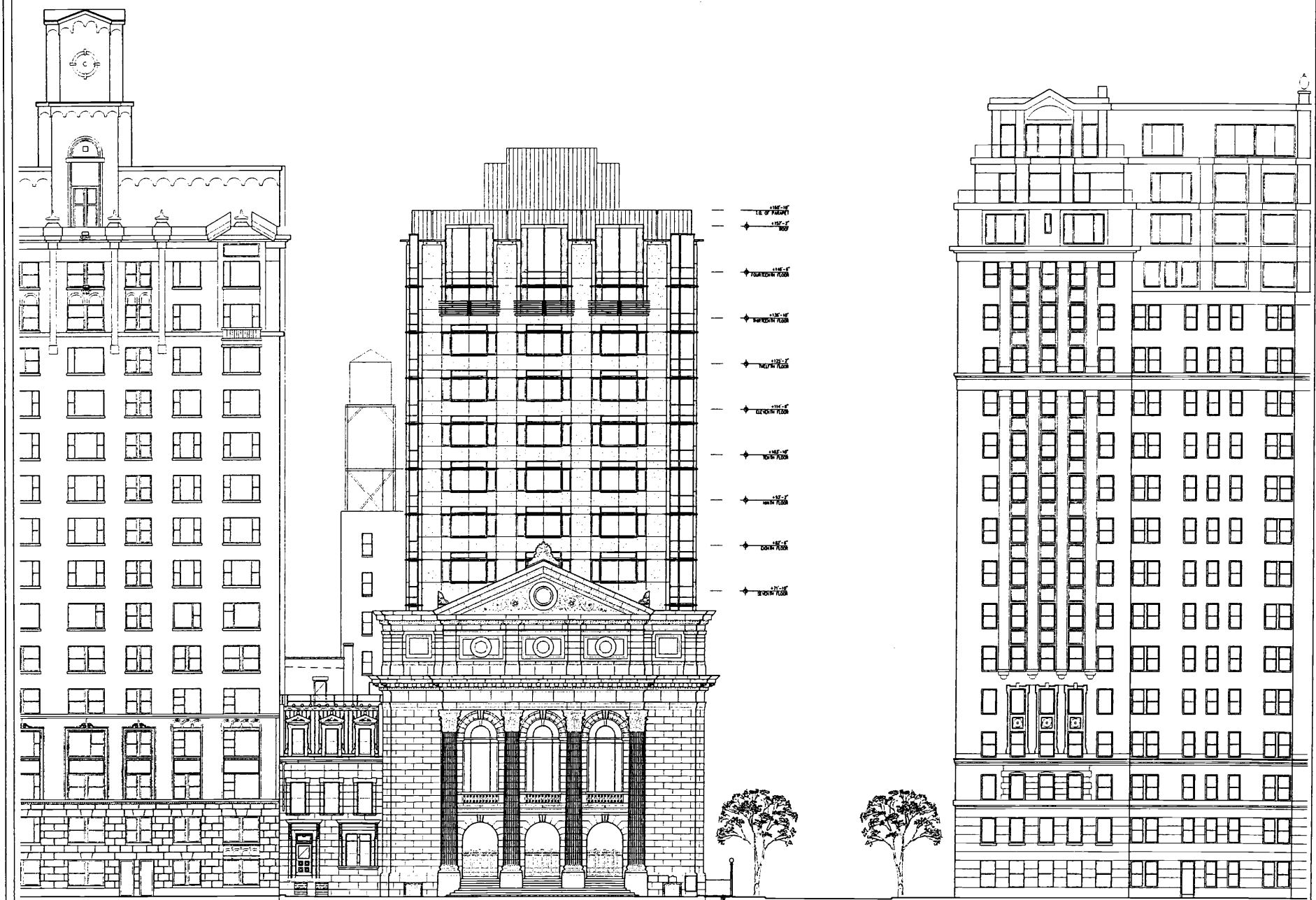


CENTRAL PARK WEST  
10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

EXISTING SYNAGOGUE

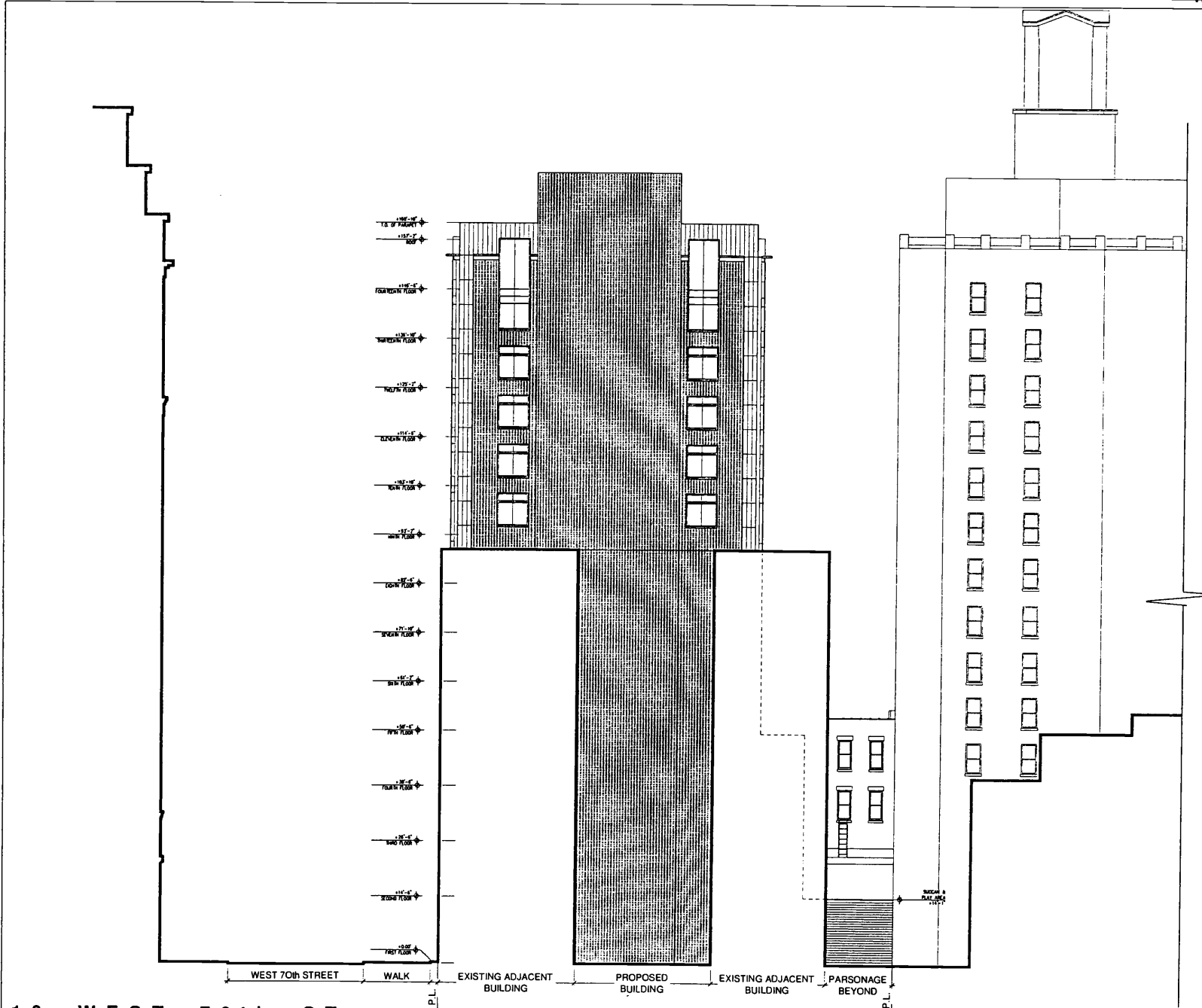
PROPOSED BUILDING

PROPOSED NORTH ELEVATION  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th STREET  
EXISTING PARSONAGE NO CHANGE  
EXISTING SYNAGOGUE NO CHANGE  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002

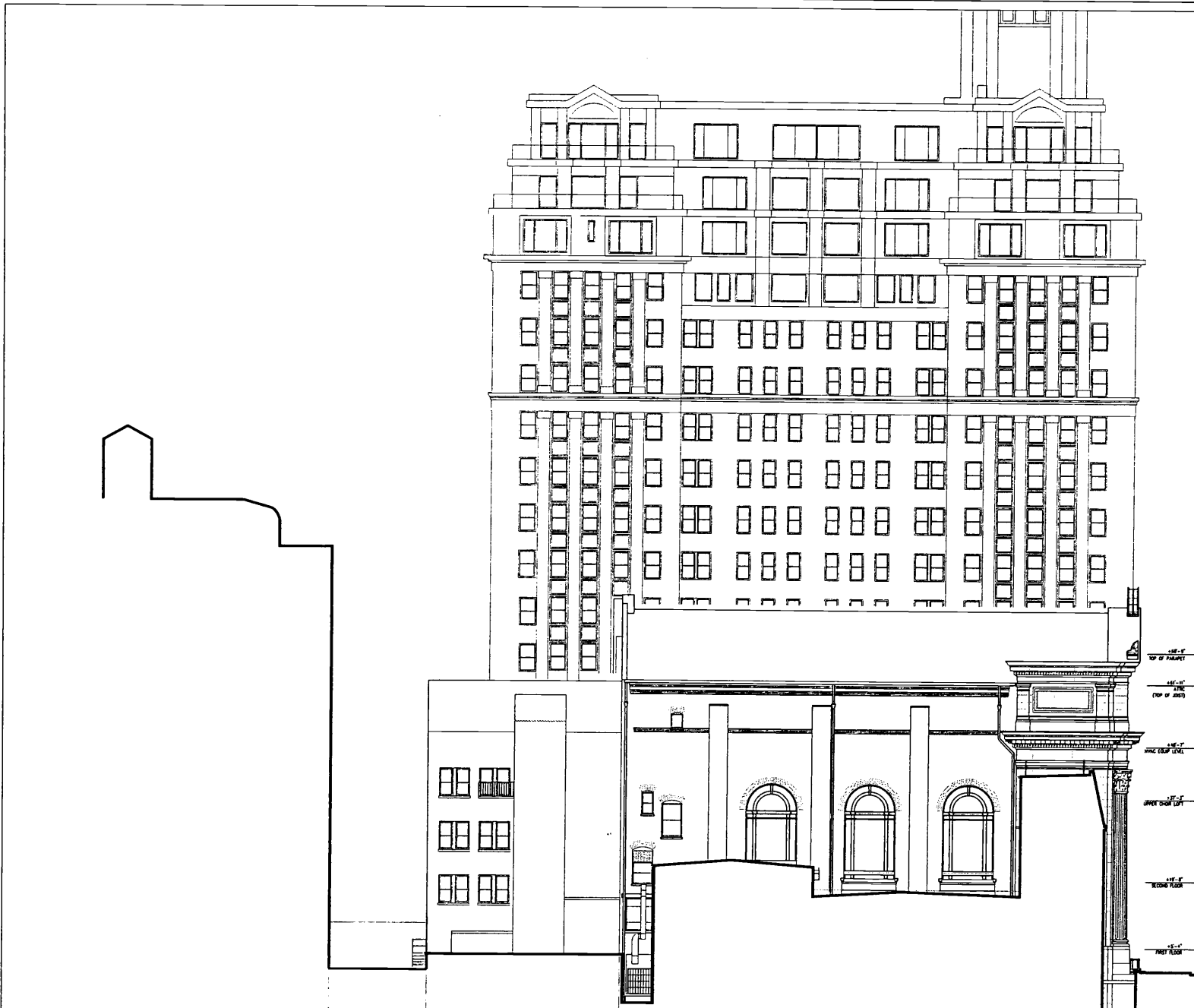


10 WEST 70th ST.

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ARCHITECTS LLP

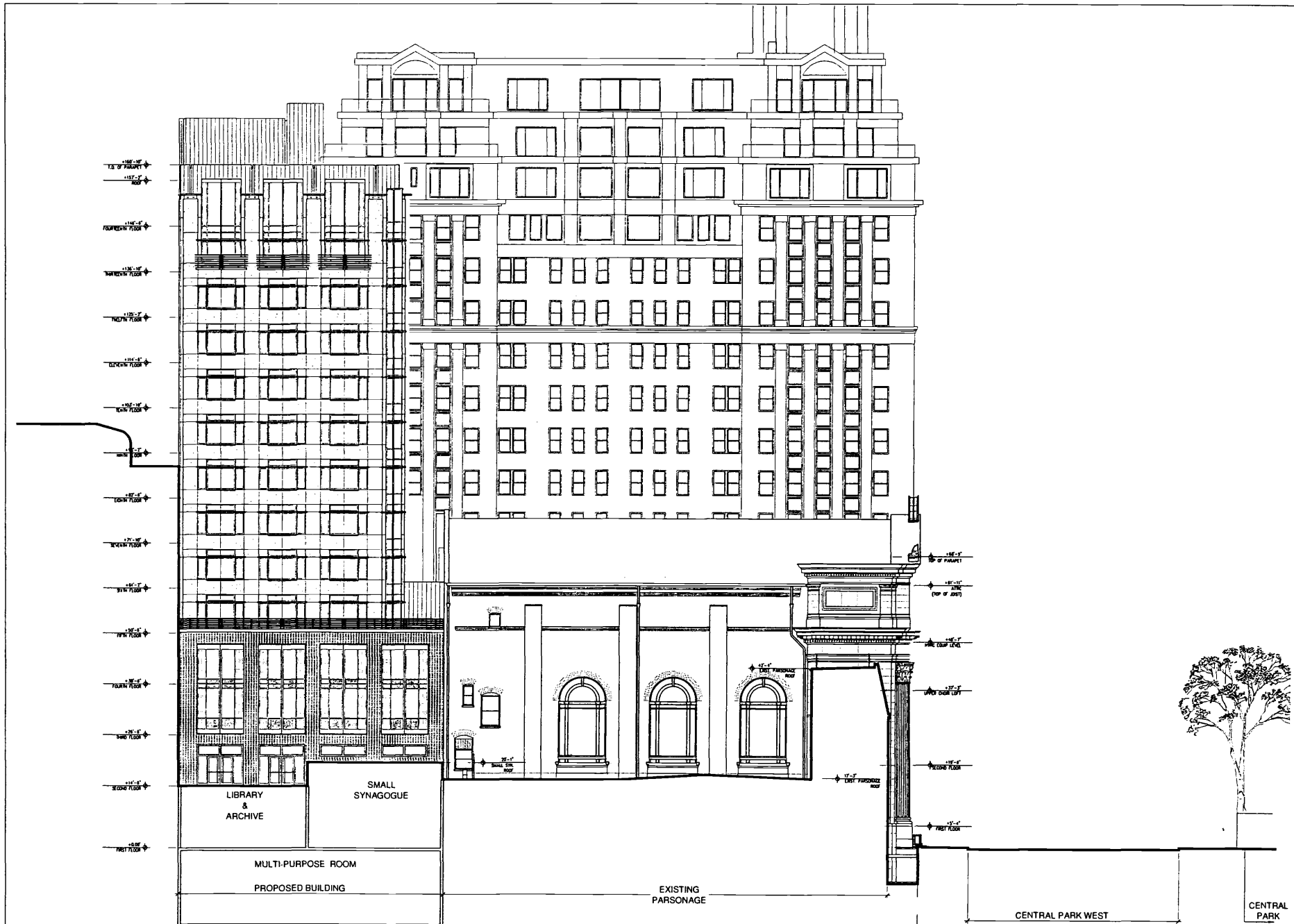
PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION.

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP  
STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002

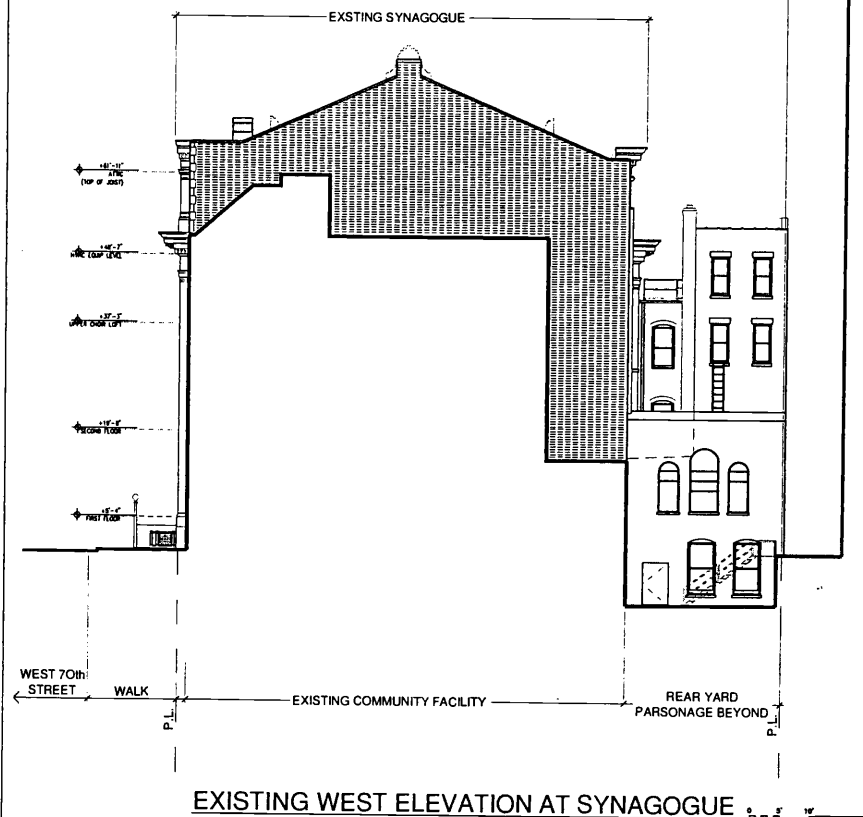


10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

PROPOSED SOUTH ELEVATION  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002

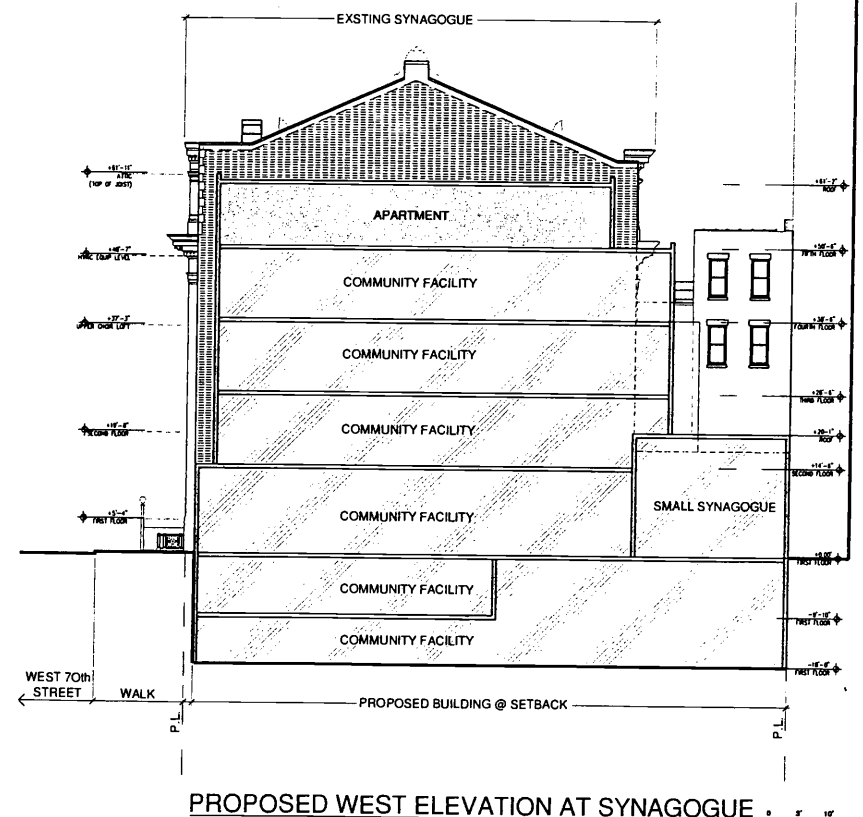




EXISTING WEST ELEVATION AT SYNAGOGUE

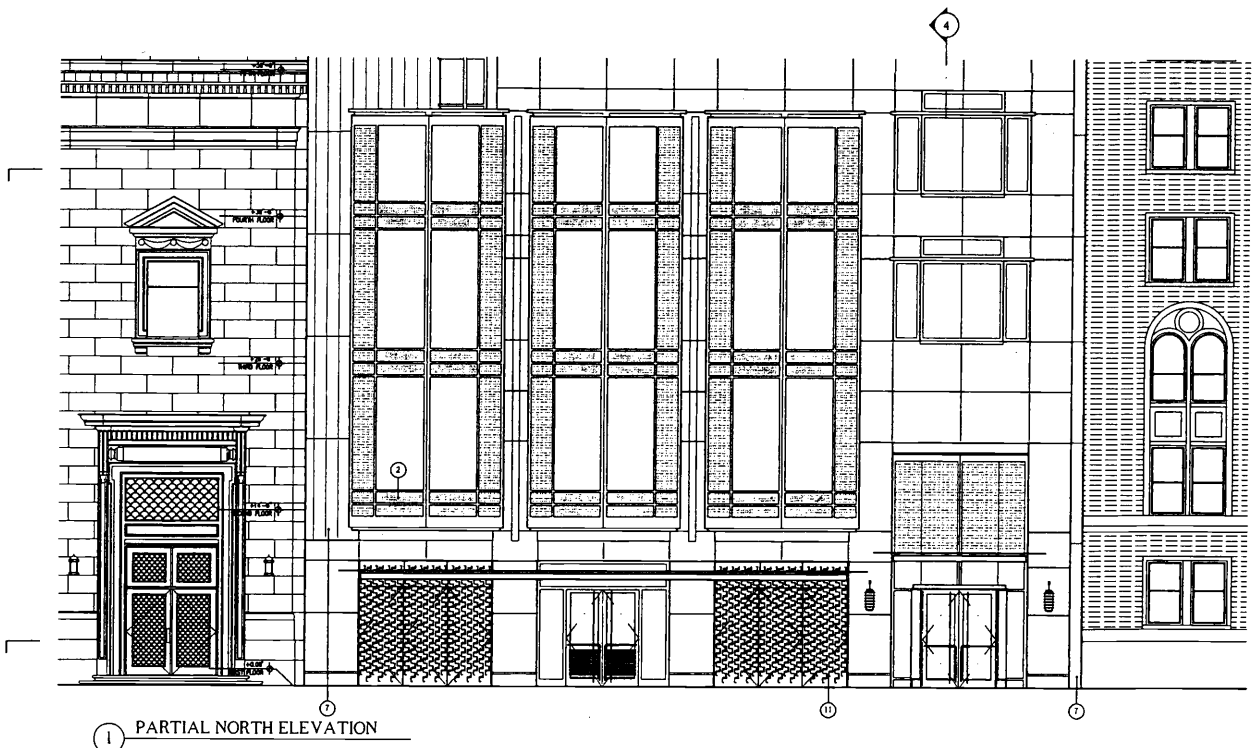
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ARCHITECTS LLP

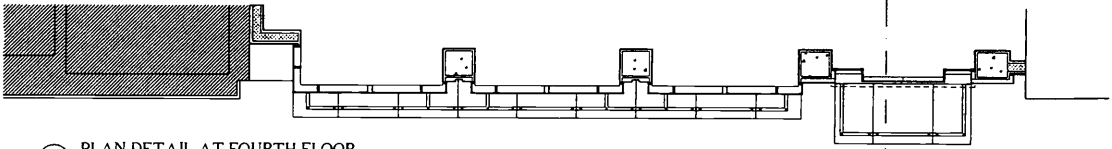


PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION AT SYNAGOGUE

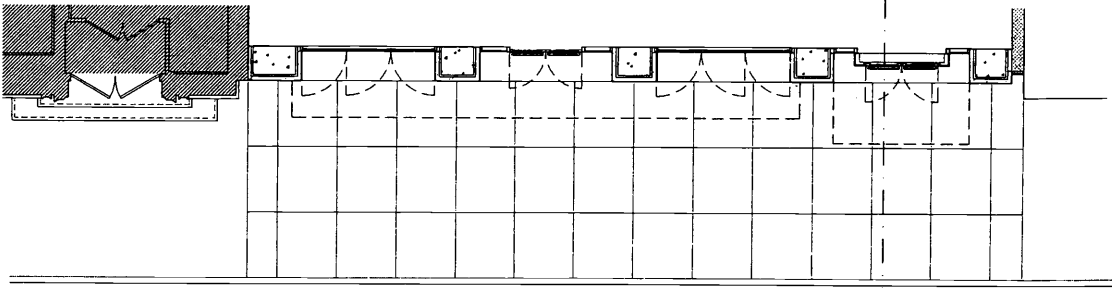
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



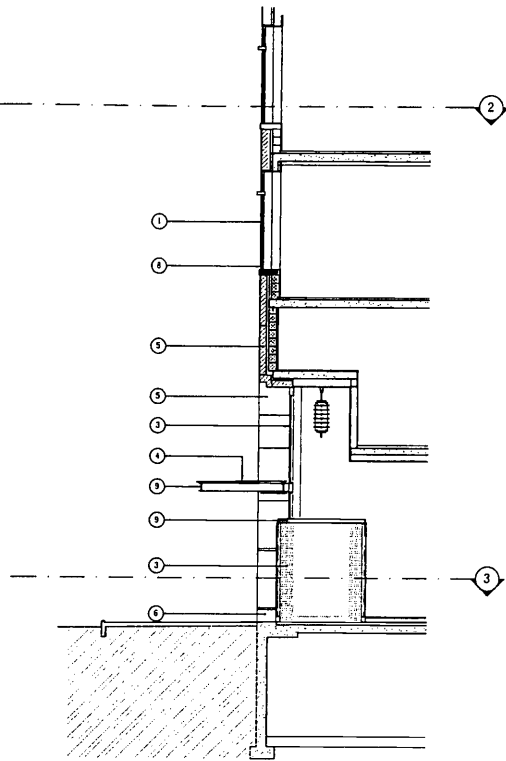
1 PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION



2 PLAN DETAIL AT FOURTH FLOOR



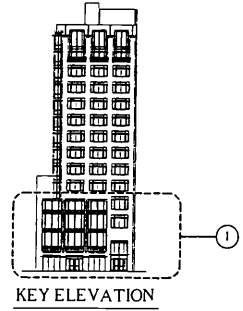
3 PLAN DETAIL AT STREET LEVEL



4 DETAIL SECTION AT RESIDENTIAL ENTRY

KEY

- 1. CLEAR GLASS
- 2. SPANDREL GLASS
- 3. PATTERN GLASS
- 4. GLASS CANOPY
- 5. STONE
- 6. GRANITE BASE
- 7. ZINC CLADDING
- 8. PAINTED METAL WINDOW FRAME
- 9. BRONZE
- 10. BRONZE FRAME
- 11. PERFORATED BRONZE PANELS

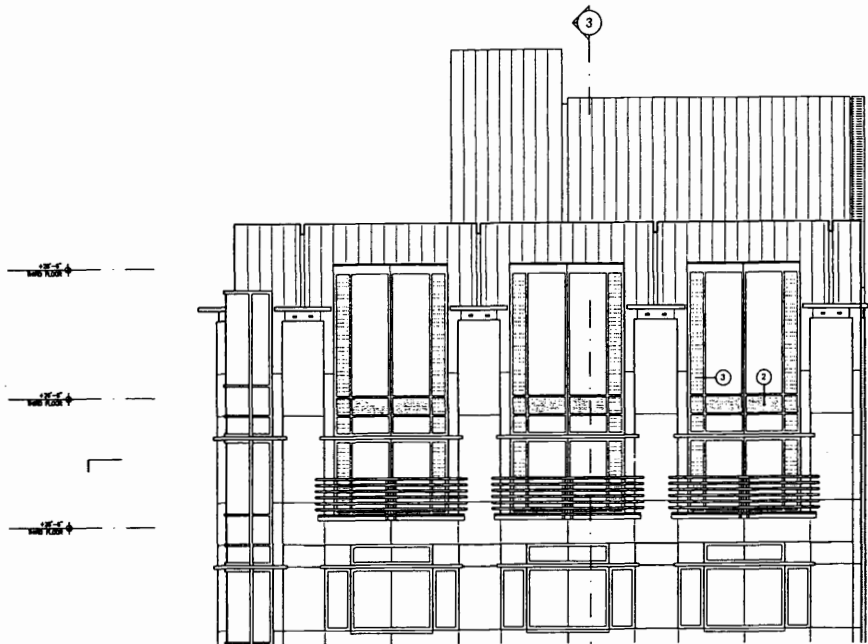


KEY ELEVATION

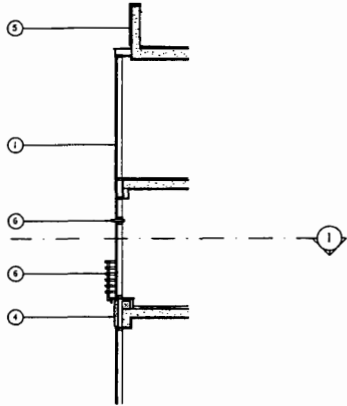
10 WEST 70th ST.  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE    STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

DETAIL PLANS/ SECTION/ ELEVATION @ BASE

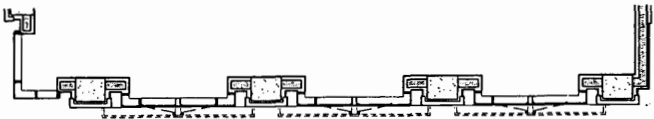
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



1 PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION



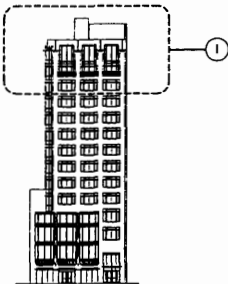
3 DETAIL SECTION AT TOP TWO FLOORS



2 PLAN DETAIL AT 13th FLOOR

KEY

- 1. CLEAR GLASS
- 2. SPANDREL GLASS
- 3. PATTERN GLASS
- 4. STONE
- 5. ZINC CLADDING
- 6. PAINTED METAL



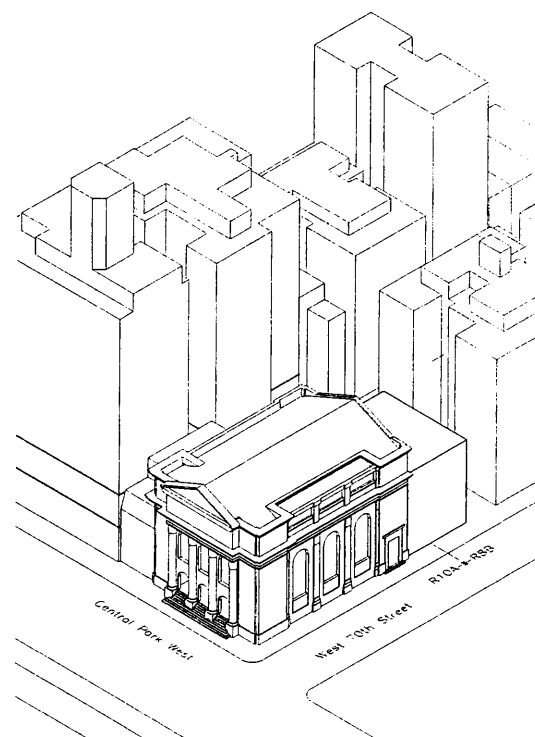
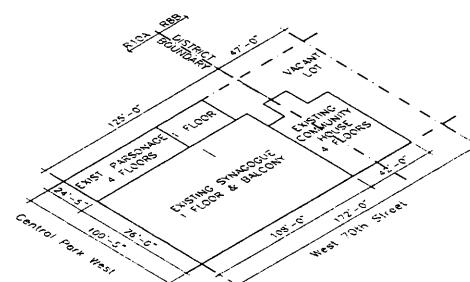
KEY ELEVATION

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

DETAIL PLAN / SECTION/ ELEVATION @ TOP

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

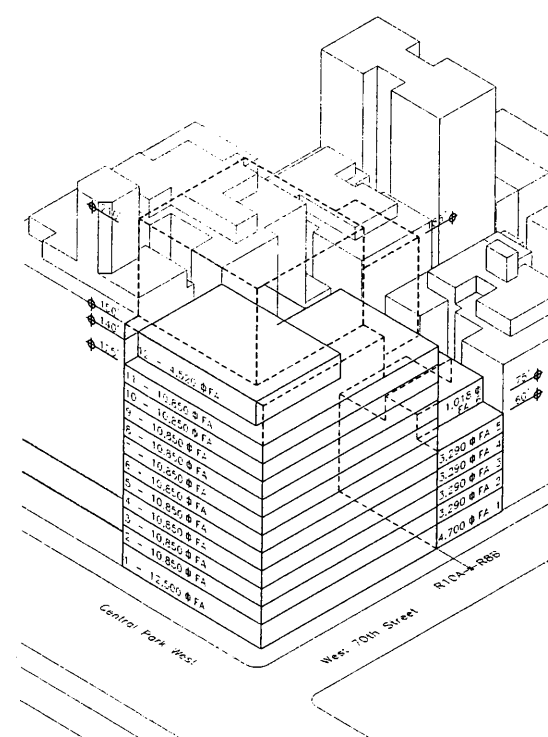
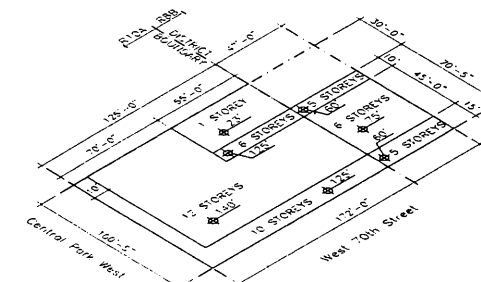


## EXISTING BUILDINGS

LOT AREA: 17,272 SF  
EXISTING FLOOR AREA:  
R10A- 41,368 SF  
R8B- 6,044 SF  
COMBINED - 47,412 SF

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE      STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP



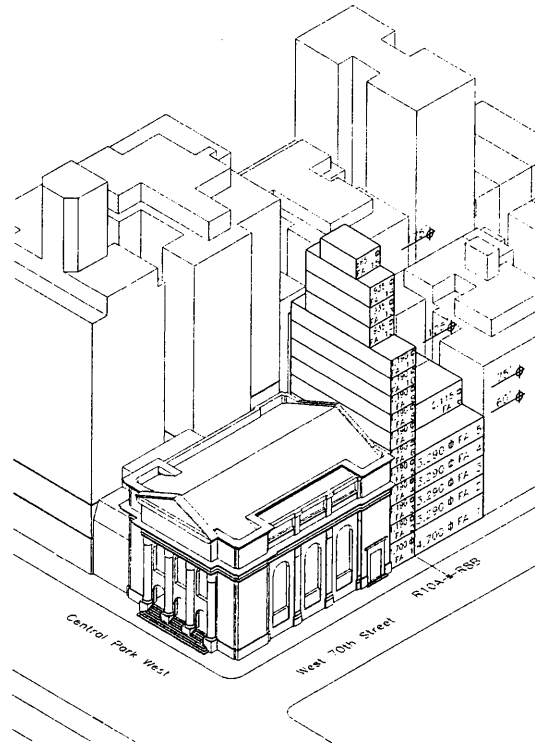
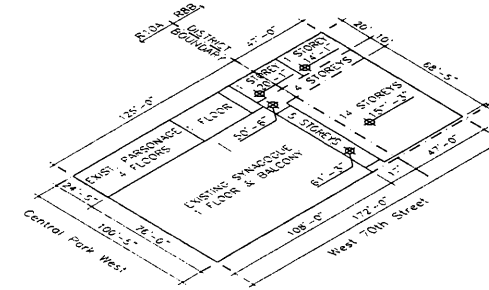
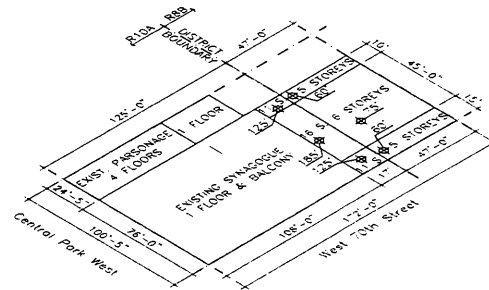
MAXIMUM PERMITTED ZONING ENVELOPE

WITHOUT F.A.R. AVERAGING PERMITTED A.O.R. BY ZR77-22

LOT AREA: 17,272 SF  
MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA:  
R10A- 125,520 SF  
R8B- 18,800 SF  
COMBINED - 144,400 SF

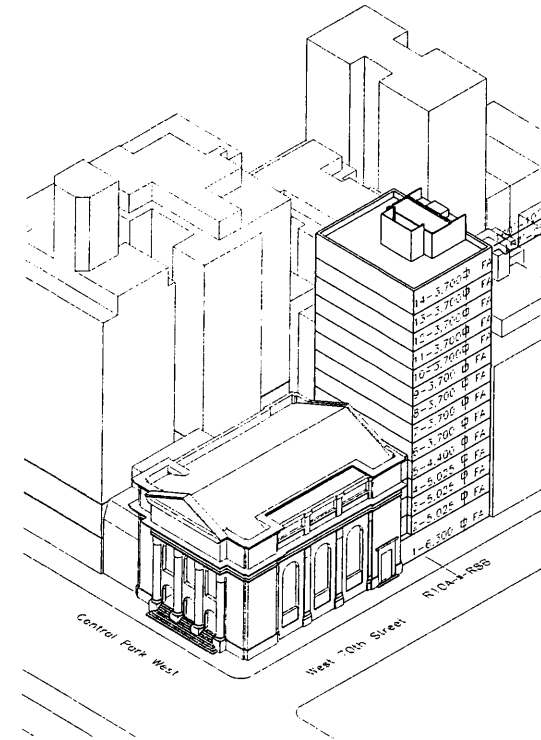
## ZONING ENVELOPE

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



EXISTING AS OF RIGHT ZONING ENVELOPE @  
DEVELOPMENT SITE

LOT AREA AT DEVELOPMENT SITE: 6,427 SF  
PERMITTED FLOOR AREA:  
R10A- 17,070 SF  
R8B- 18,878 SF  
COMBINED - 35,948 SF



### PROPOSED ZONING ENVELOPE AT DEVELOPMENT SITE

LOT AREA AT DEVELOPMENT SITE: 6,427  
PERMITTED FLOOR AREA:  
R10A- 13,332 SF  
R8B- 49,155 SF  
COMBINED - 62,487 SF

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE      STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

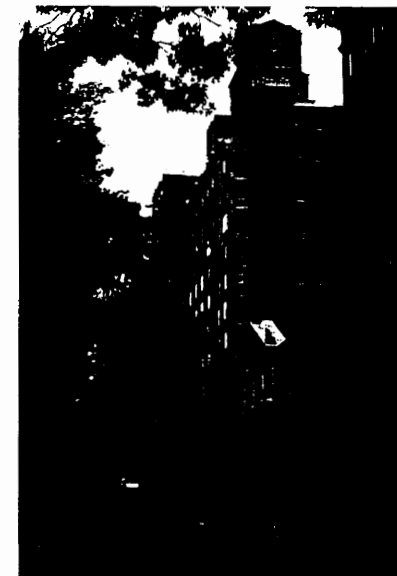
## ZONING ENVELOPE

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

REQUIREMENT	R10A PORTION OF DEVELOPMENT SITE	R8A PORTION AT DEVELOPMENT SITE
FLOOR AREA <i>Note (1)</i>	a.o.r	<b>Special Permit</b> Additional 9,601 sf required per ZR 77-22
BUILDING HEIGHT <i>Note (2)</i>	a.o.r	<b>Special Permit</b> Permitted height 75'; Proposed height 157'-2"
STREET WALL HEIGHT (MAX) <i>Note (2)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 125'; proposed at 157'-2"	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 60'; proposed at 157'-2"
REAR WALL HEIGHT (MAX) <i>Note (2)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 125'; proposed at 157'-2"	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 60'; proposed at 157'-2"
REAR YARD <i>Note (3)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> 30' required; 20' proposed at floors 2, 3, & 4	<b>Special Permit</b> 30' required; 20' proposed at floors 2, 3, & 4
LOT COVERAGE OVER 23' <i>Note (4)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> 70% required; 78% proposed	<b>Special Permit</b> 70% required; 80% proposed

*Notes*

- (1) Floor area ratio on divided site permitted by ZR 77-22 : 8.38
- (2) Building heights and setbacks measured to main roof. Add 3'-8" to top of parapet.
- (3) No rear yard required within 100' of corner
- (3) All calculations are approximate pending verification by survey and final plans



10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

CONTEXT PHOTOS - CENTRAL PARK WEST

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

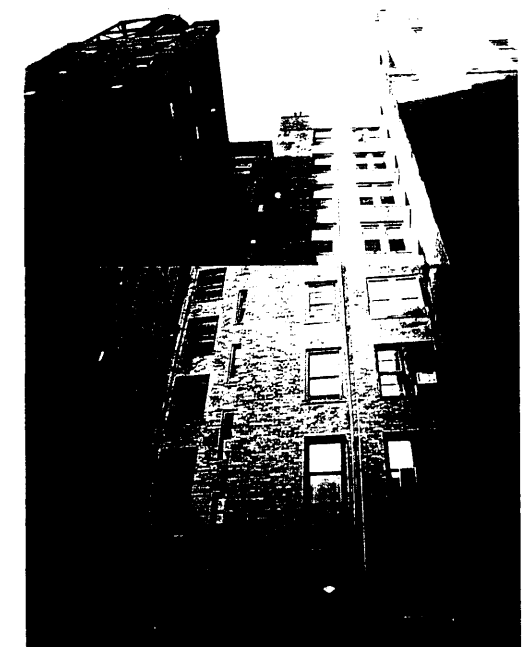
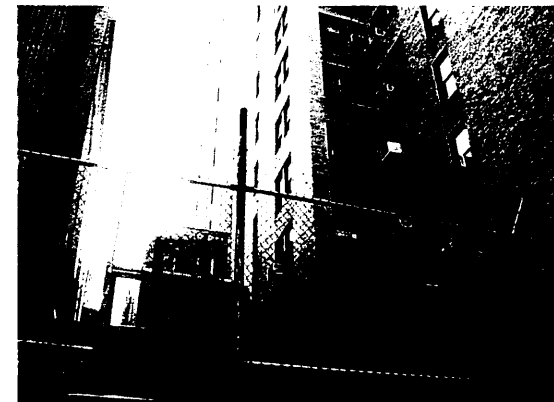
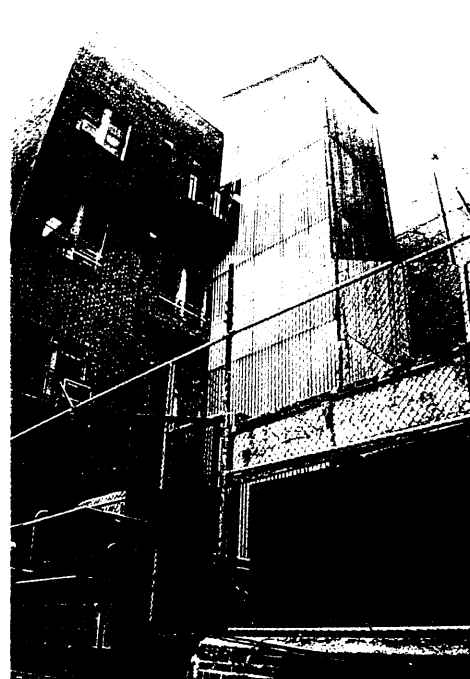


10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

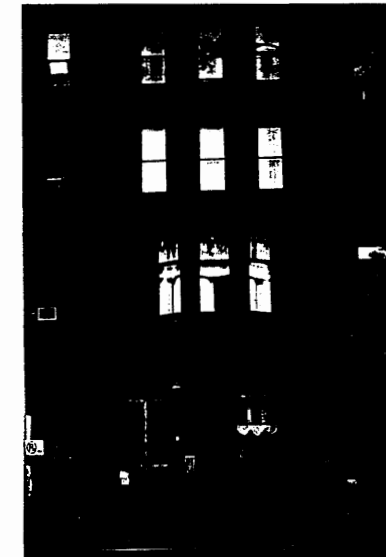
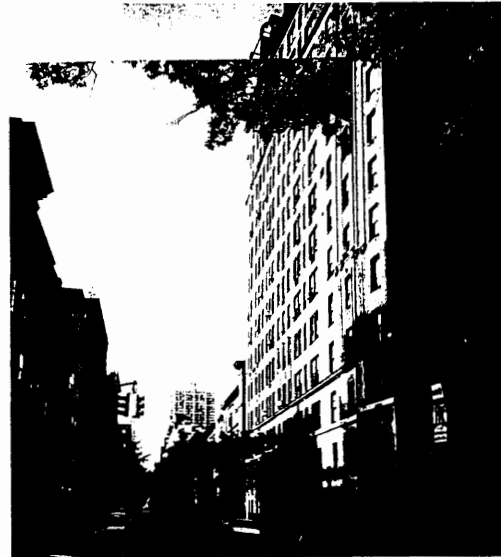
DESIGN PRECEDENTS  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002





**1 0 W E S T 7 0 t h S T .**  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

**CONTEXT PHOTOS - REAR YARD**  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE    STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

CONTEXT PHOTOS - WEST 70TH STREET

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

# CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

PROPOSED MIXED USE BUILDING

JULY 1, 2003

Platt Byard Dovell White Architects LLP

Stephen Tilly, Architect

Higgins & Quasebarth

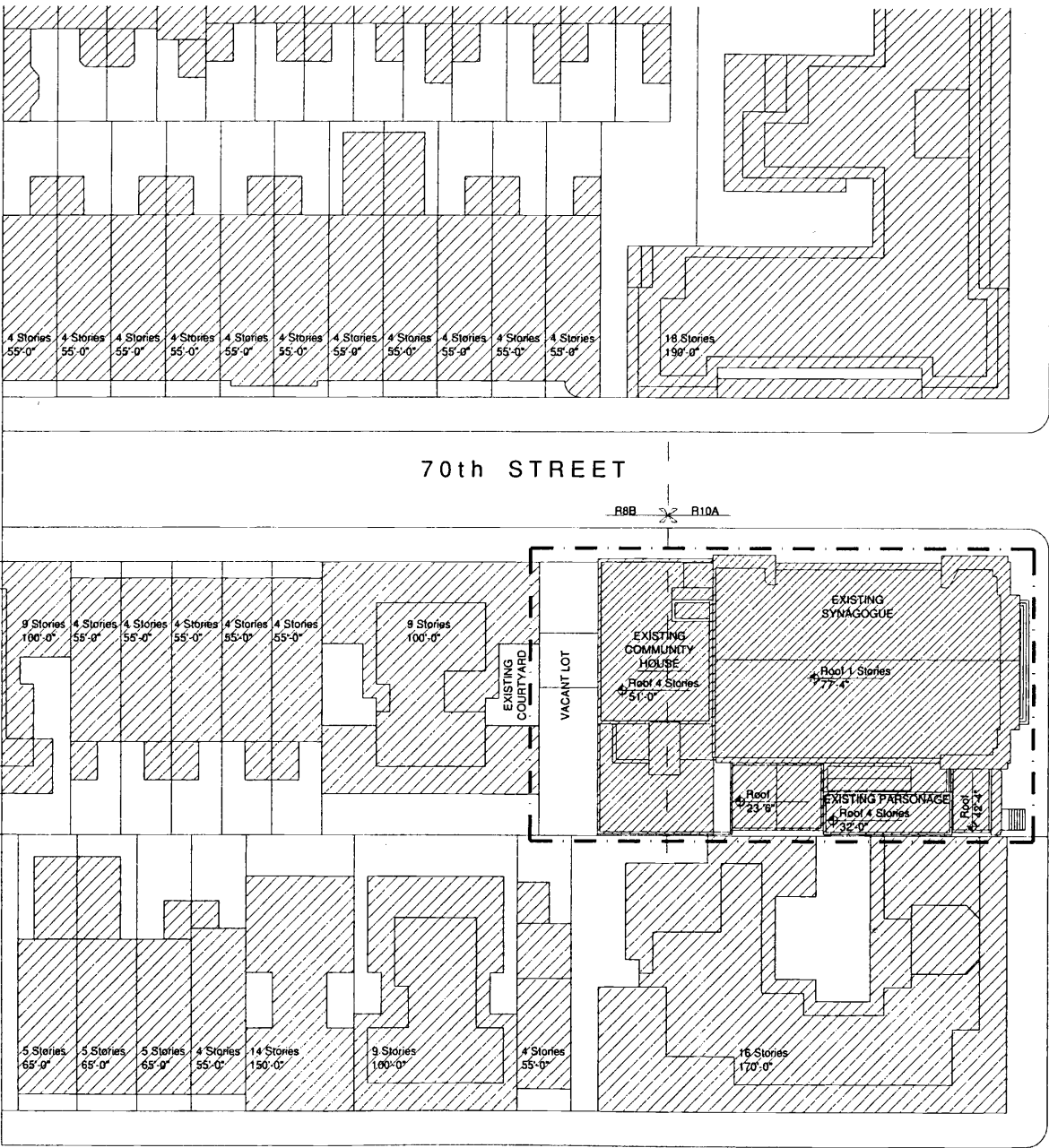


**10 WEST 70th ST.**  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE    STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

**PERSPECTIVE FROM CENTRAL PARK WEST**

JULY 1, 2003

www.protectwest70.org



CENTRAL PARK WEST

CENTRAL PARK

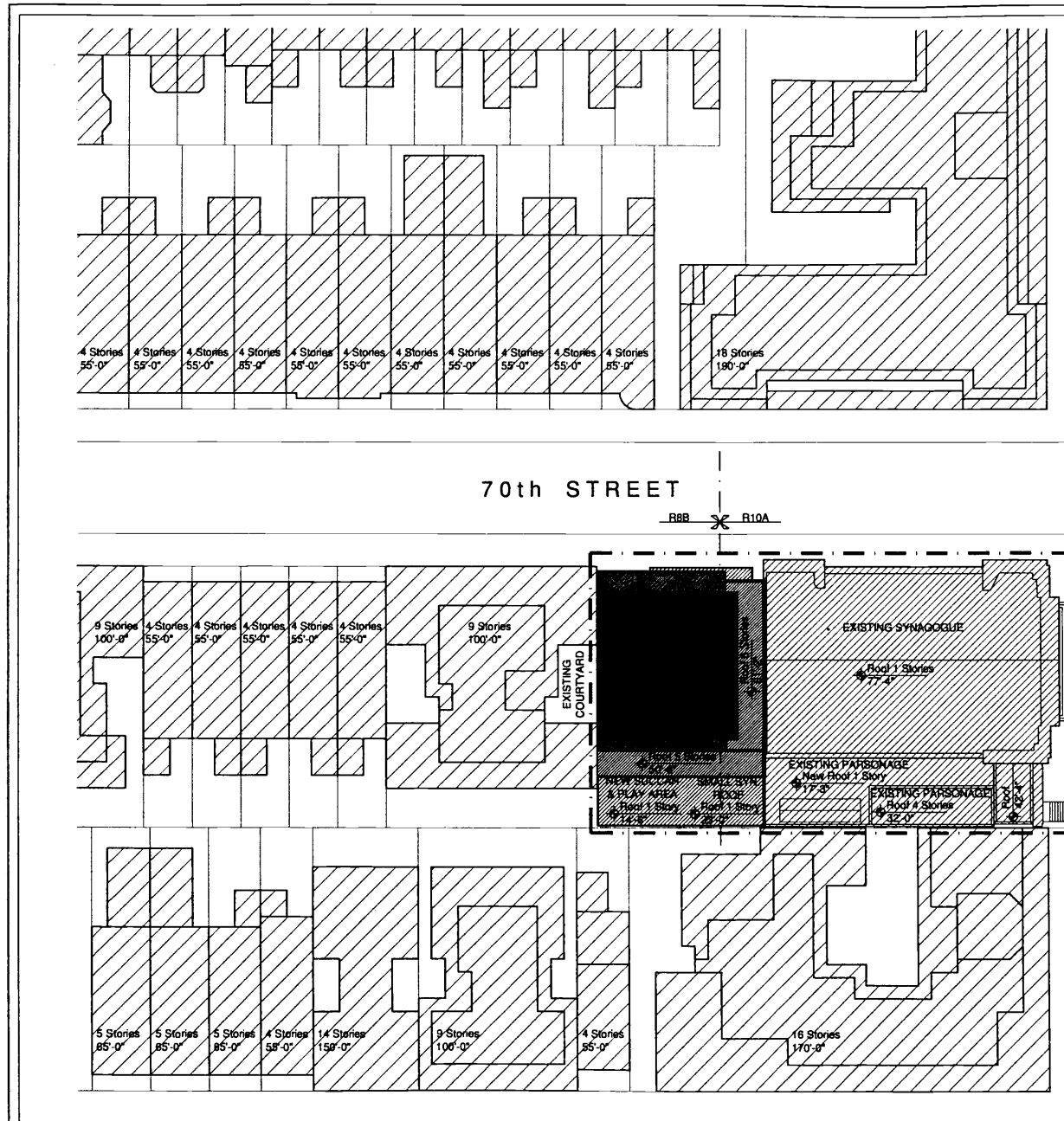
NOTE: EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS  
IN NUMBER OF STORIES  
FURNISHED FROM  
SANBORN MAPS

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

EXISTING SITE PLAN  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002

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CENTRAL PARK WEST

CENTRAL PARK

NOTE: EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHTS  
IN NUMBER OF STORIES  
FURNISHED FROM  
SANBORN MAPS

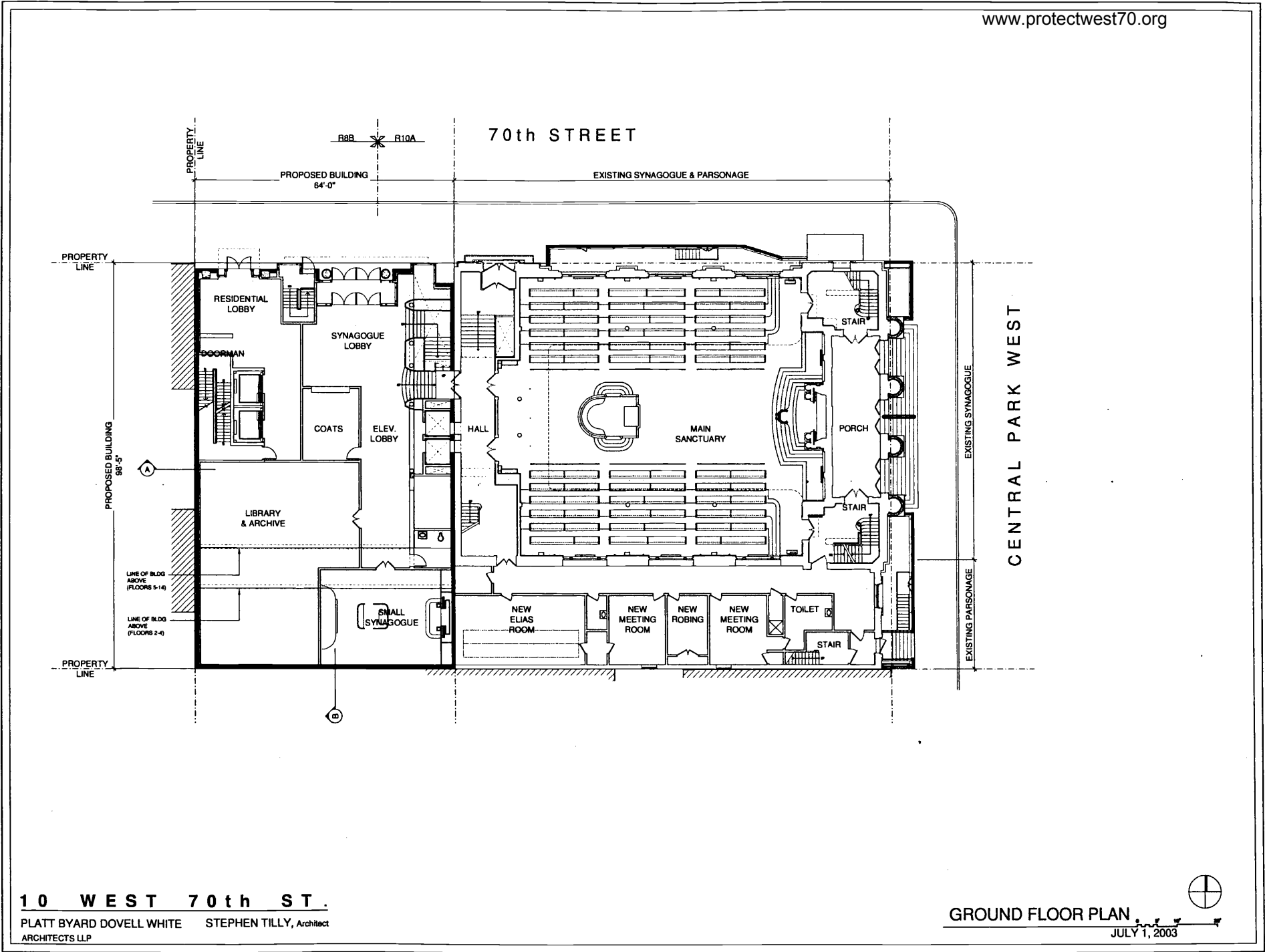
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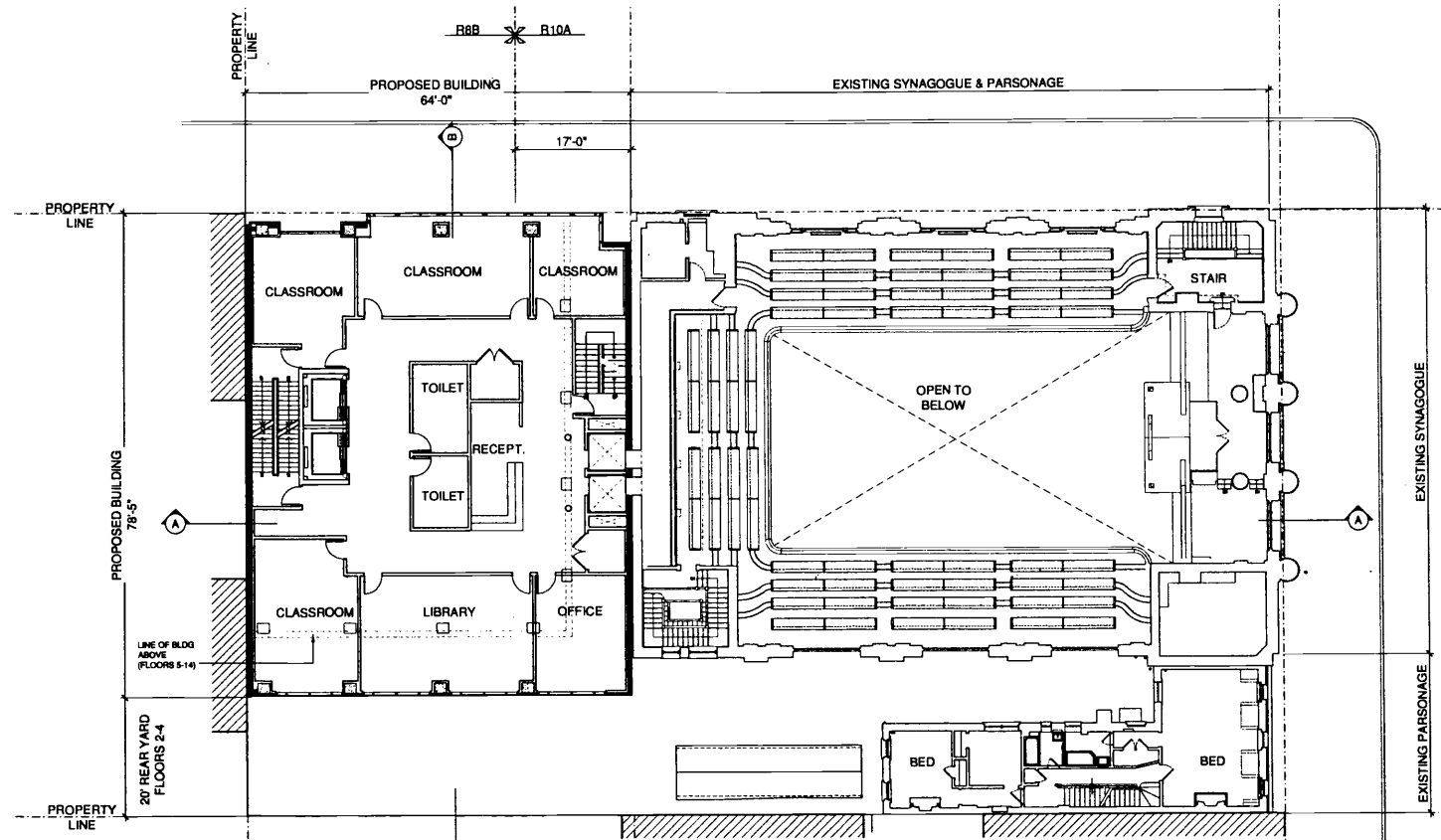
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE      STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

## PROPOSED SITE PLAN

JULY 1, 2003







10 WEST 70th ST.

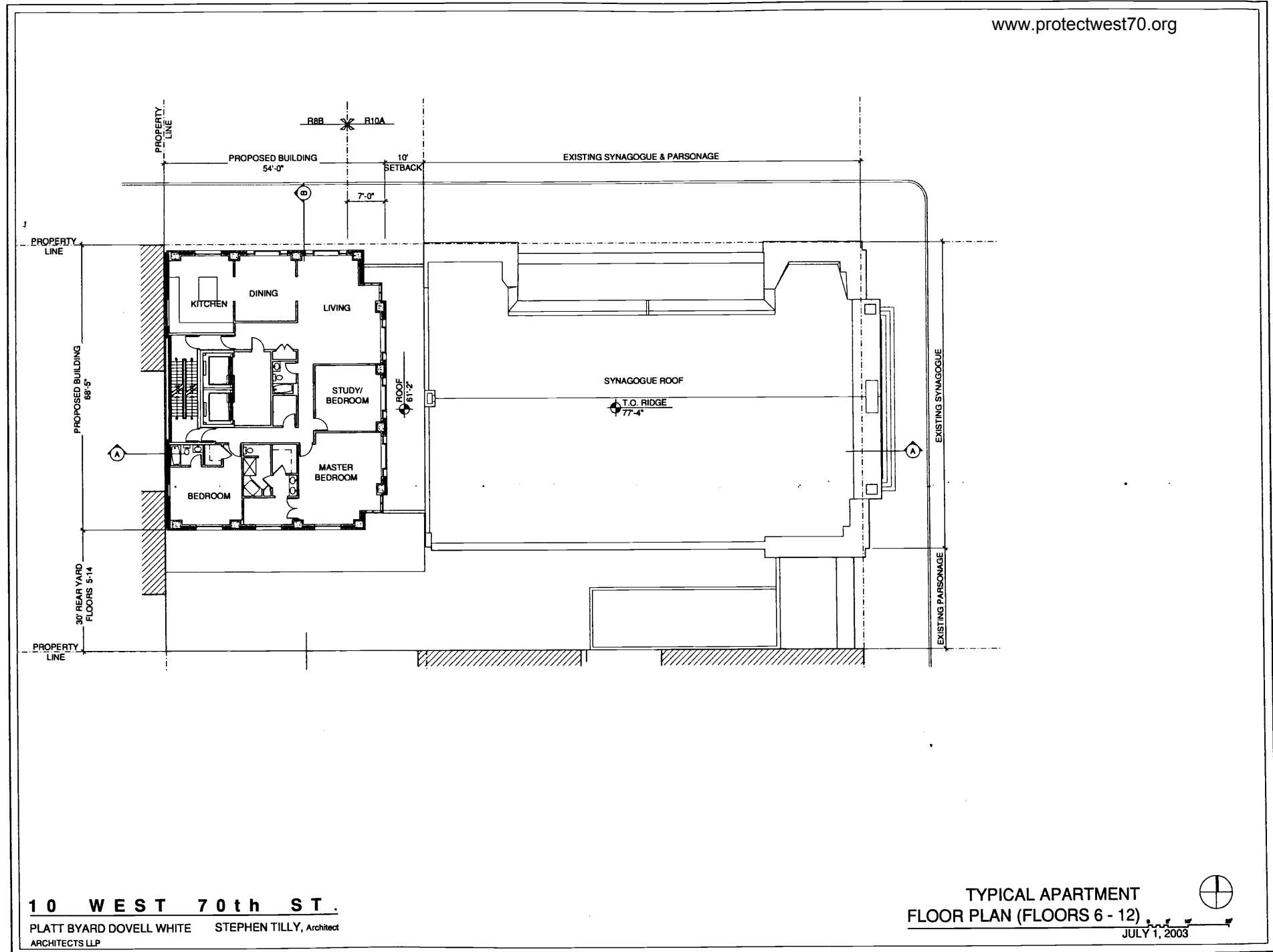
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ARCHITECTS LLP

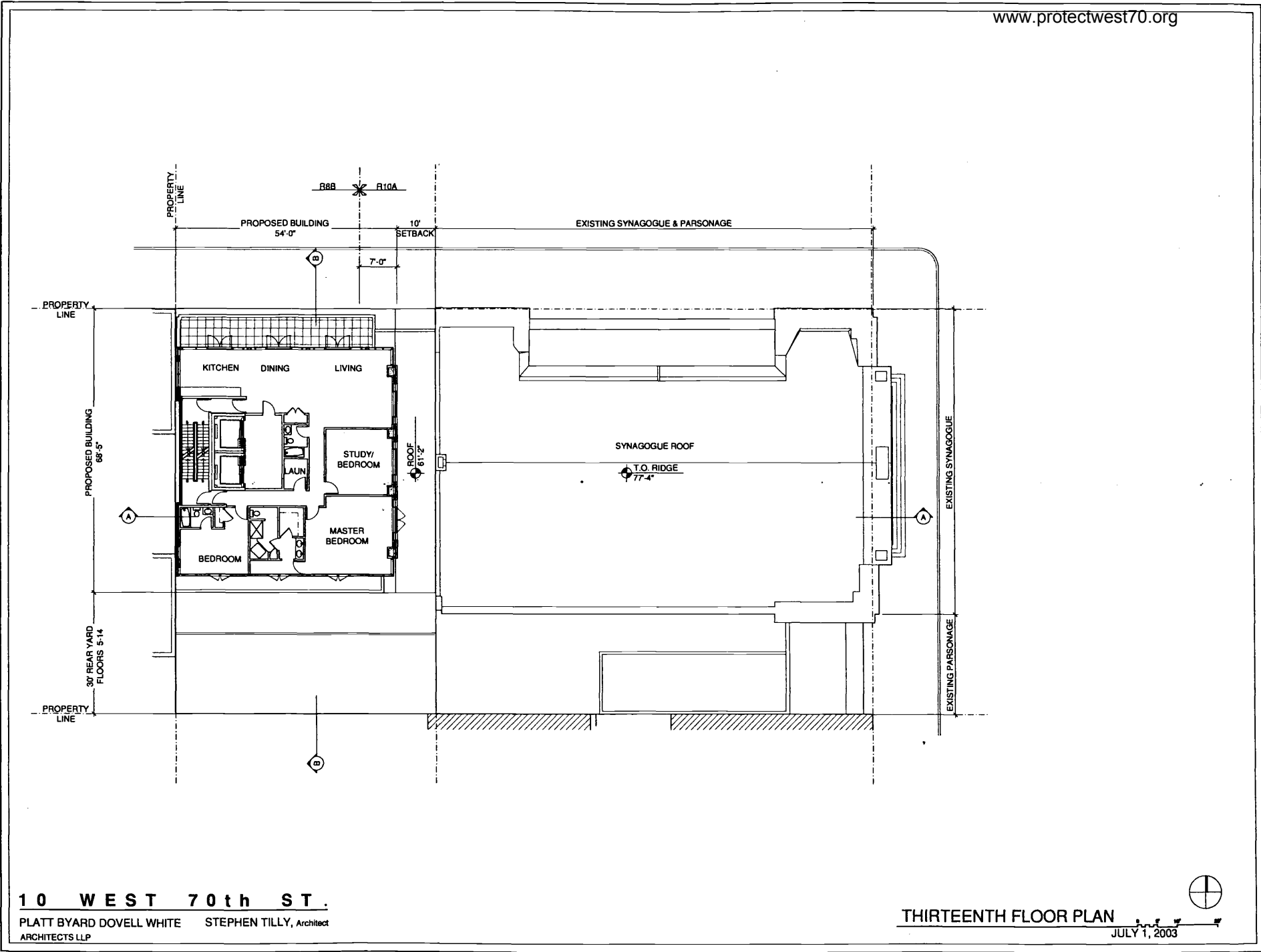
THIRD FLOOR PLAN

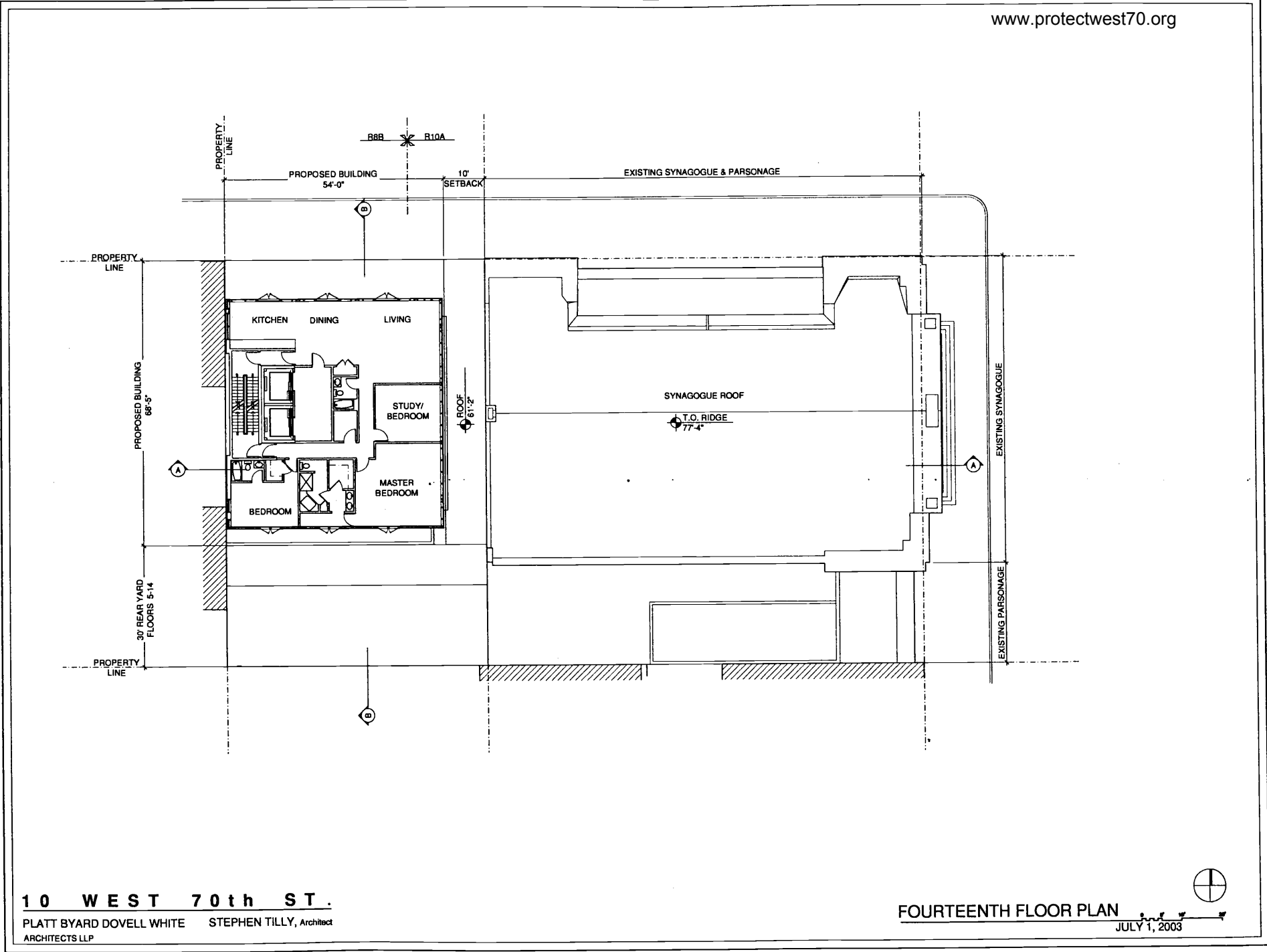
JULY 1, 2003

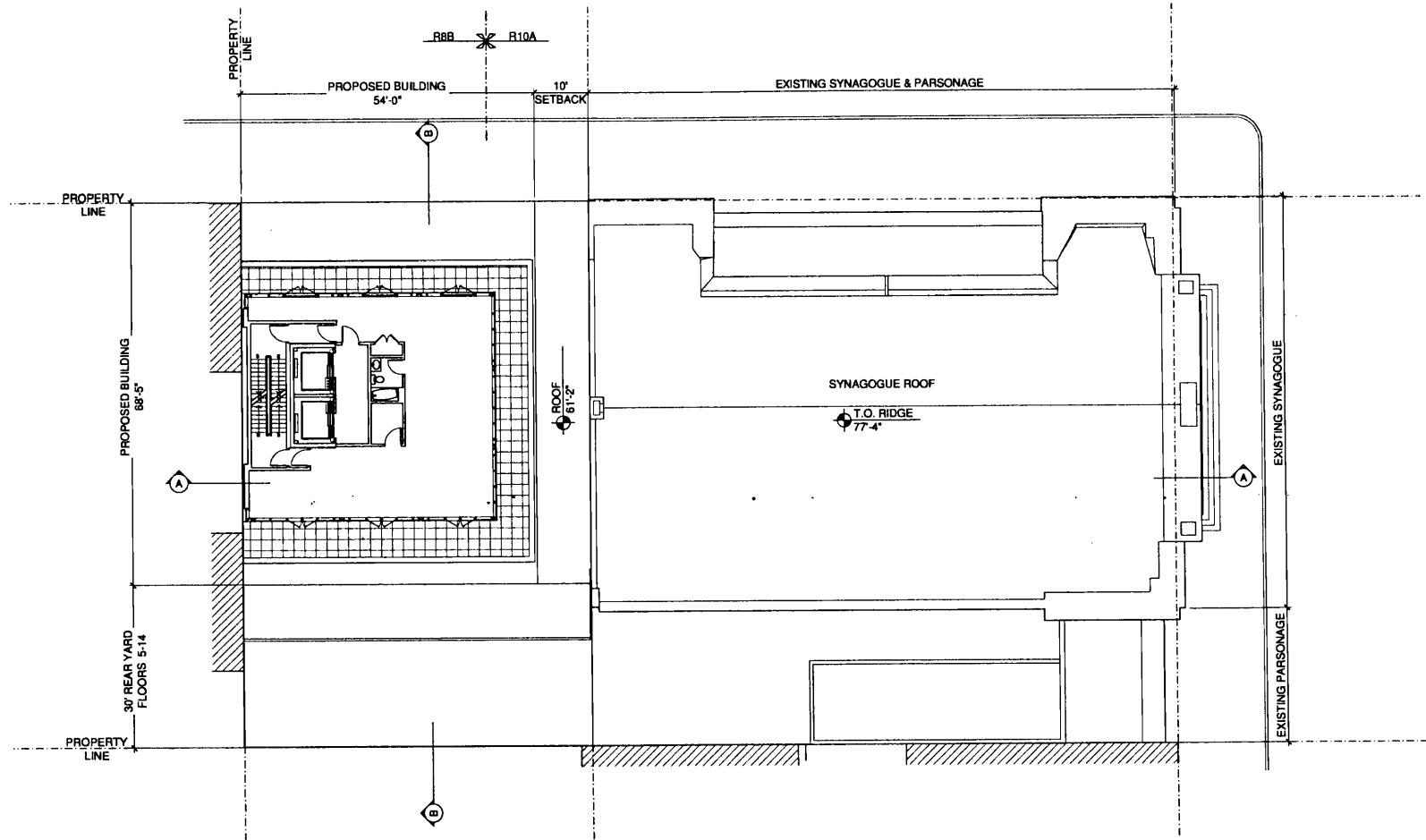












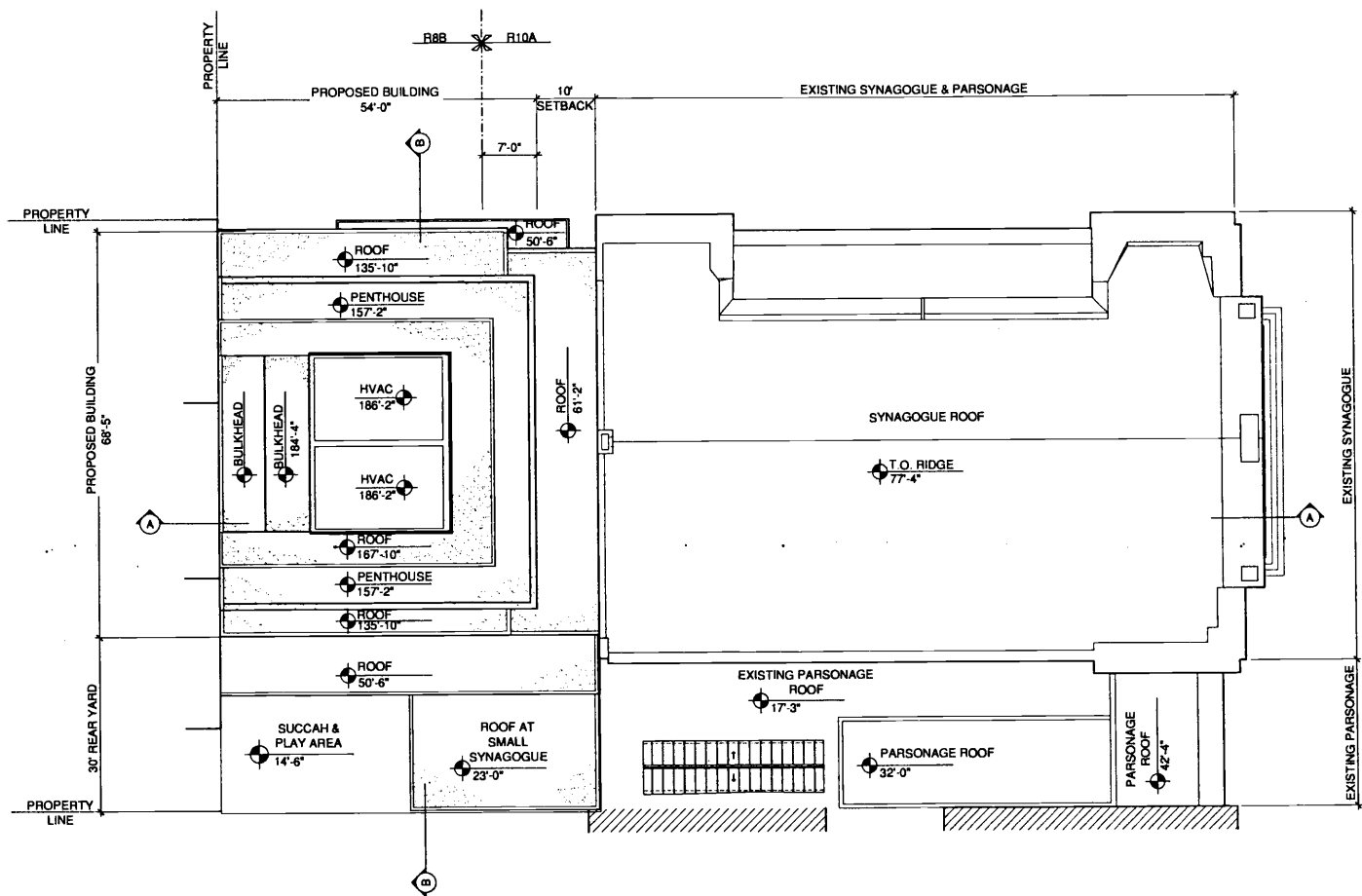
10 WEST 70th ST.

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ARCHITECTS LLP

FIFTEENTH FLOOR PLAN

JULY 1, 2003

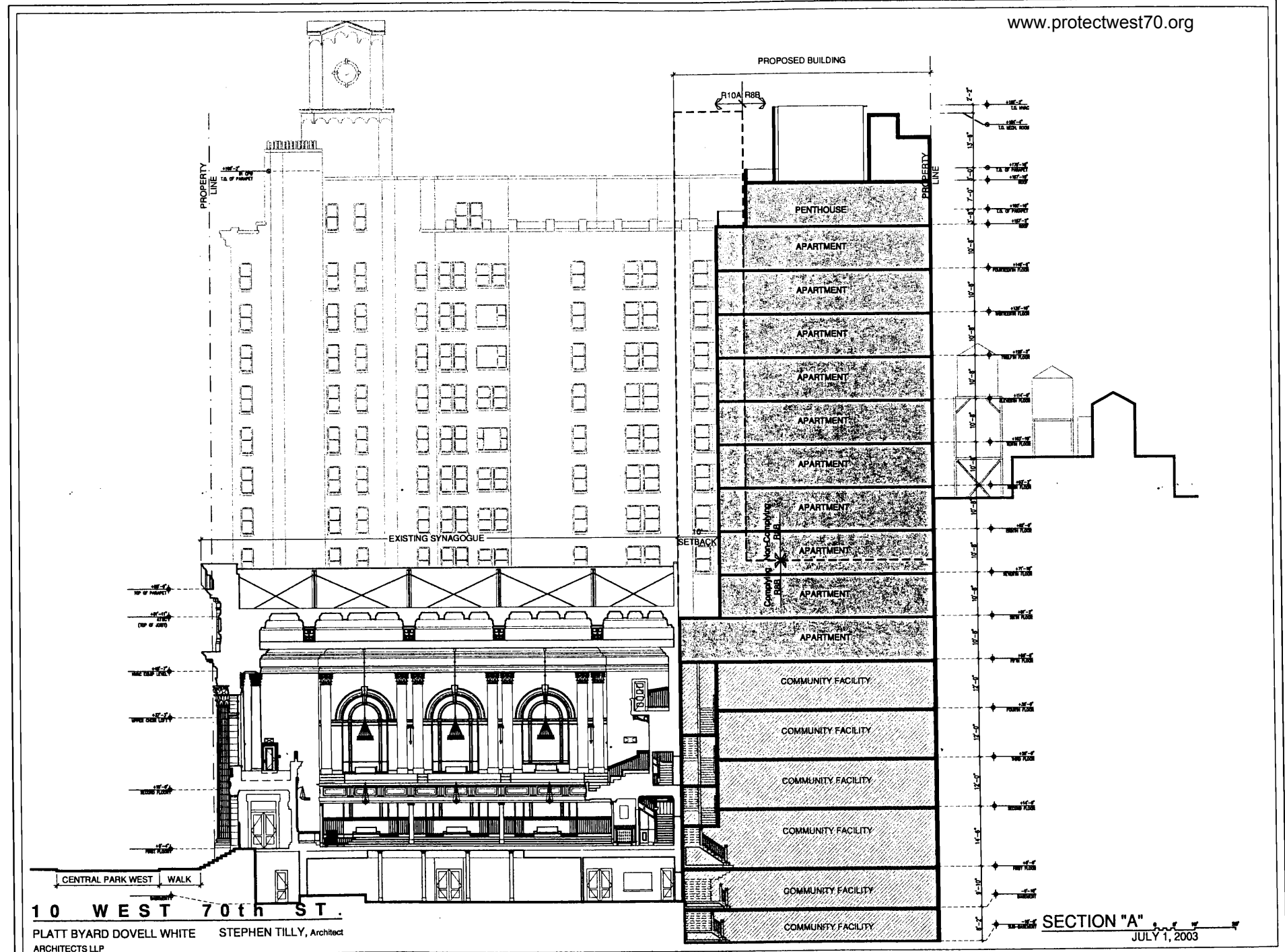


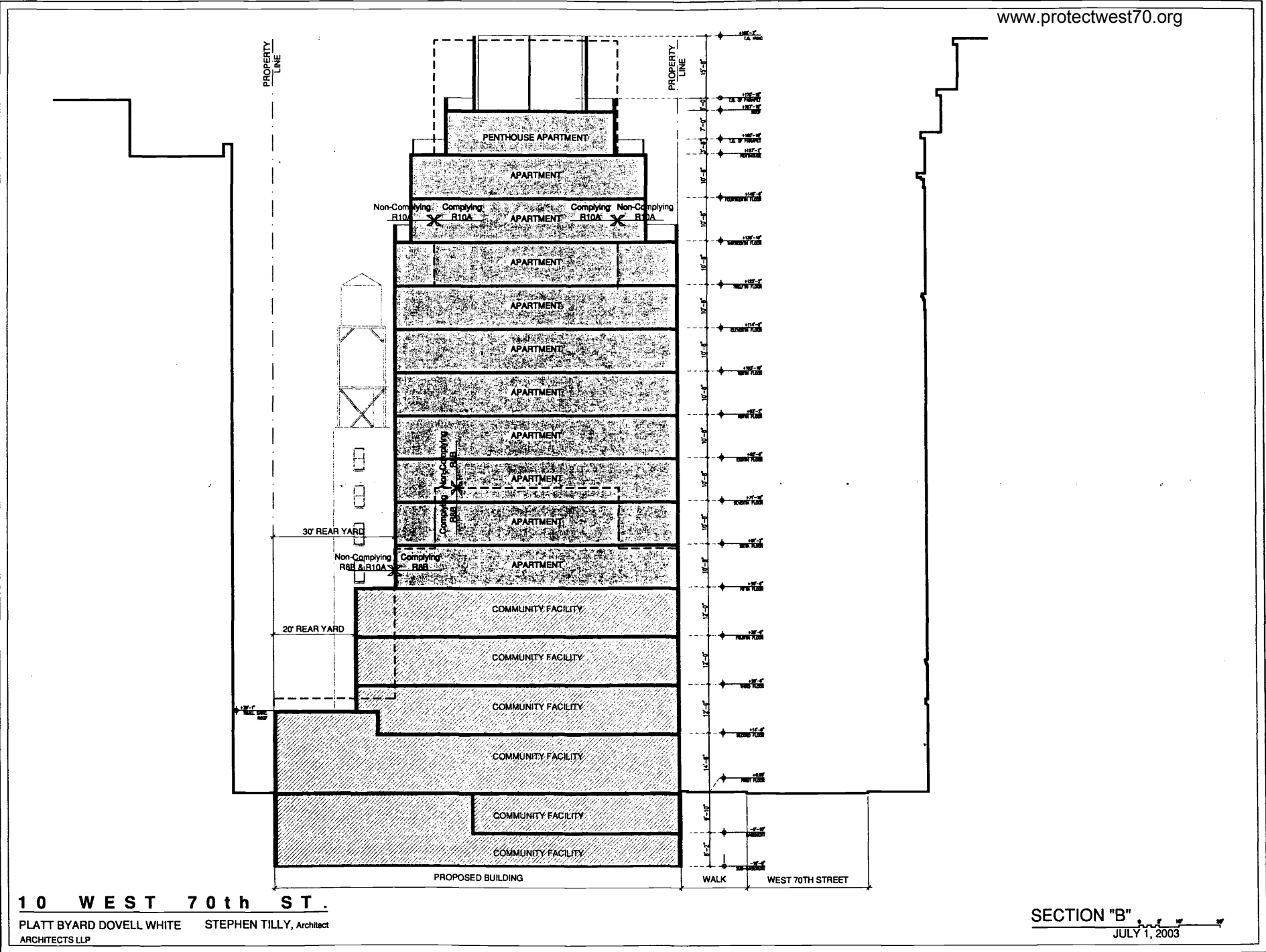


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ARCHITECTS LLP

ROOF PLAN  
JULY 1, 2003

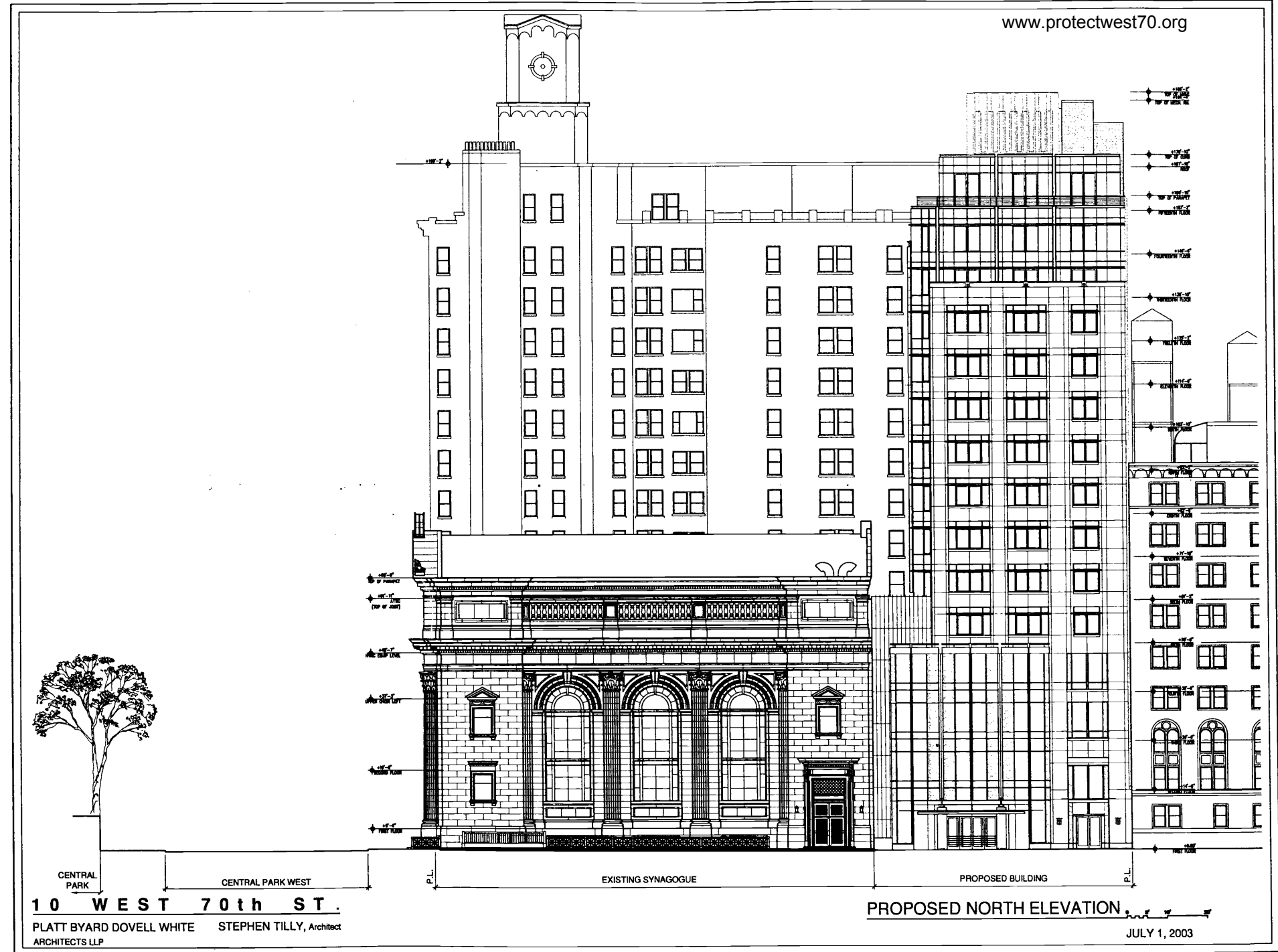




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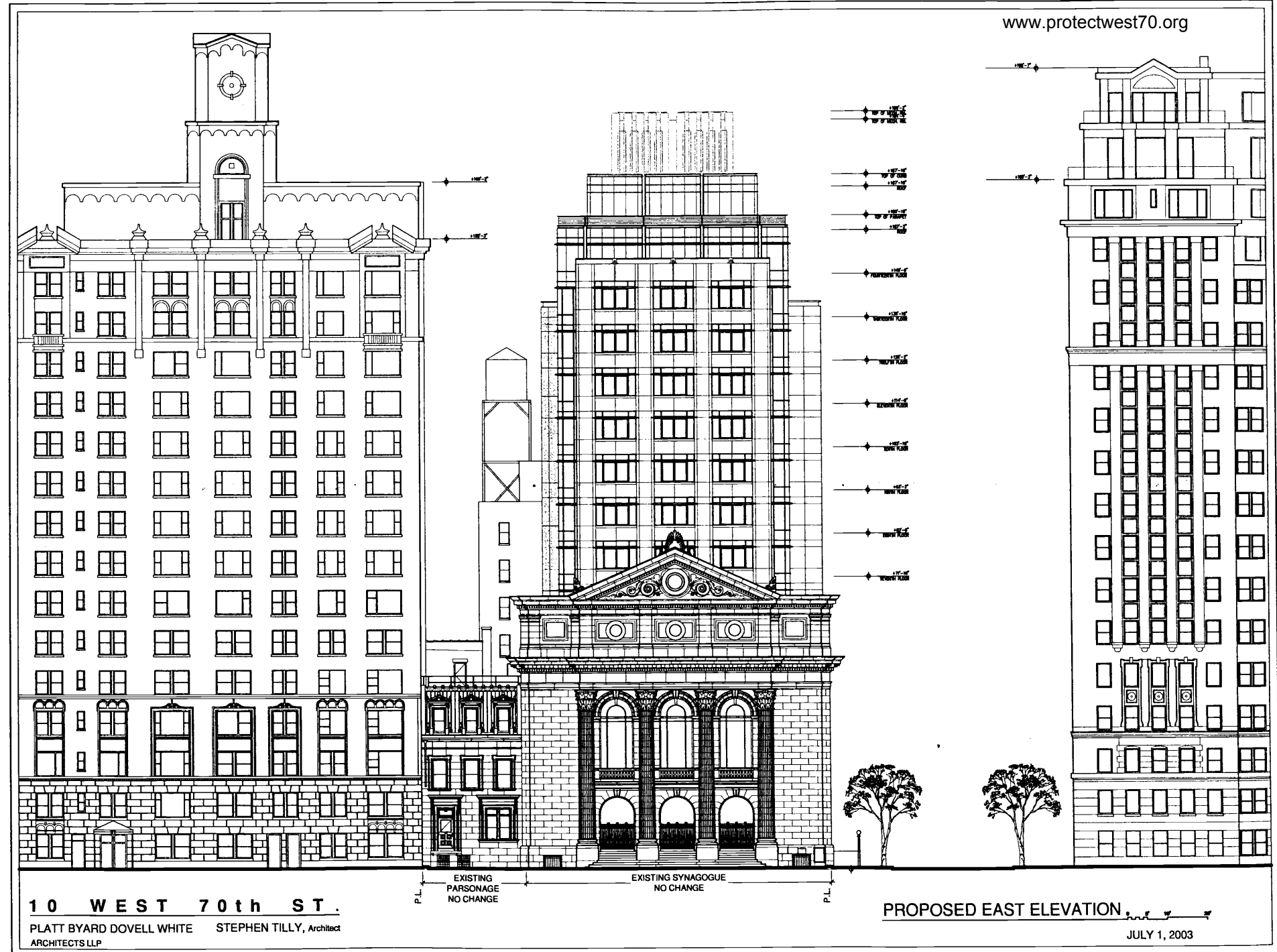
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

SECTION "B" JULY 1, 2003

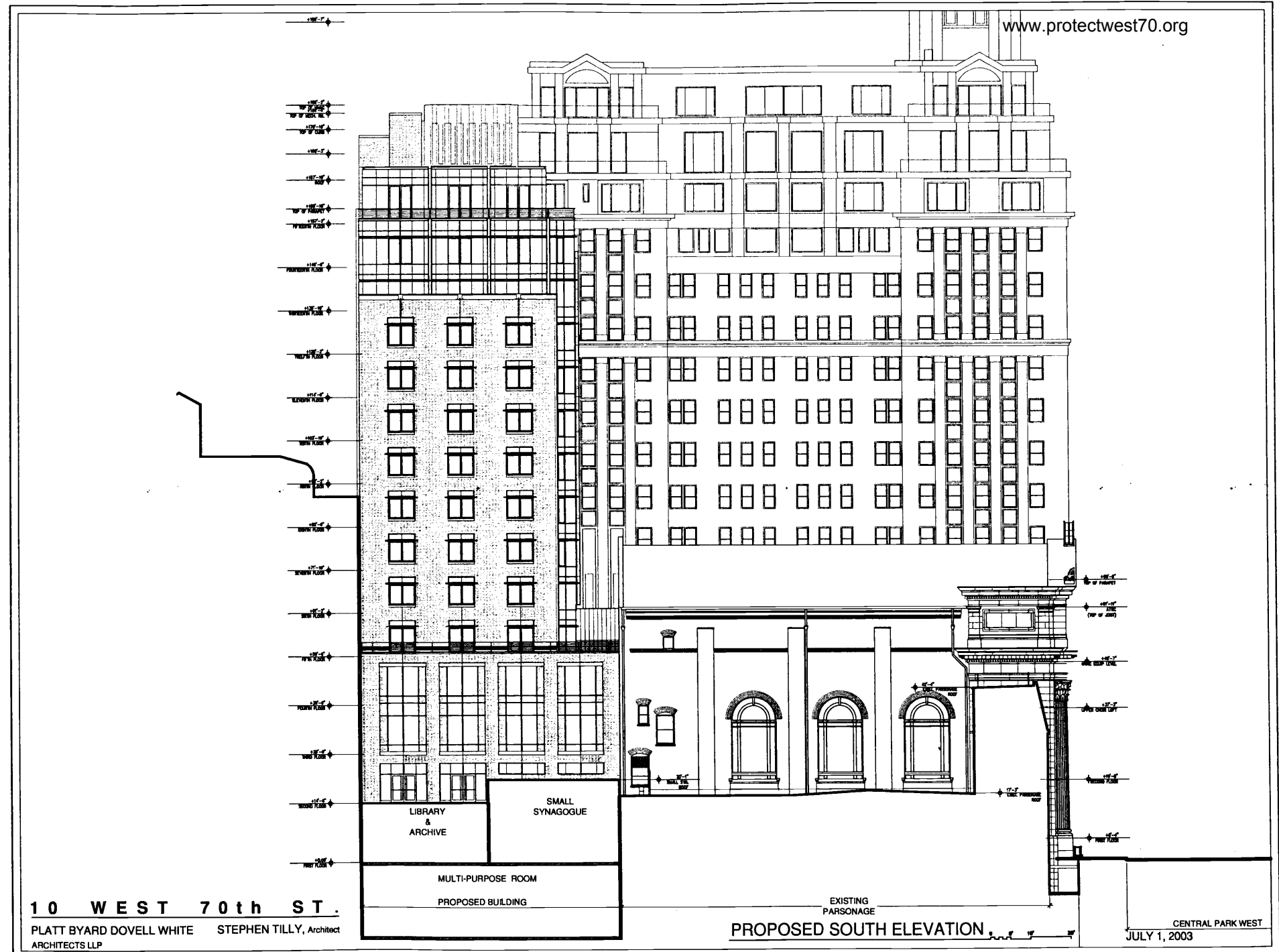


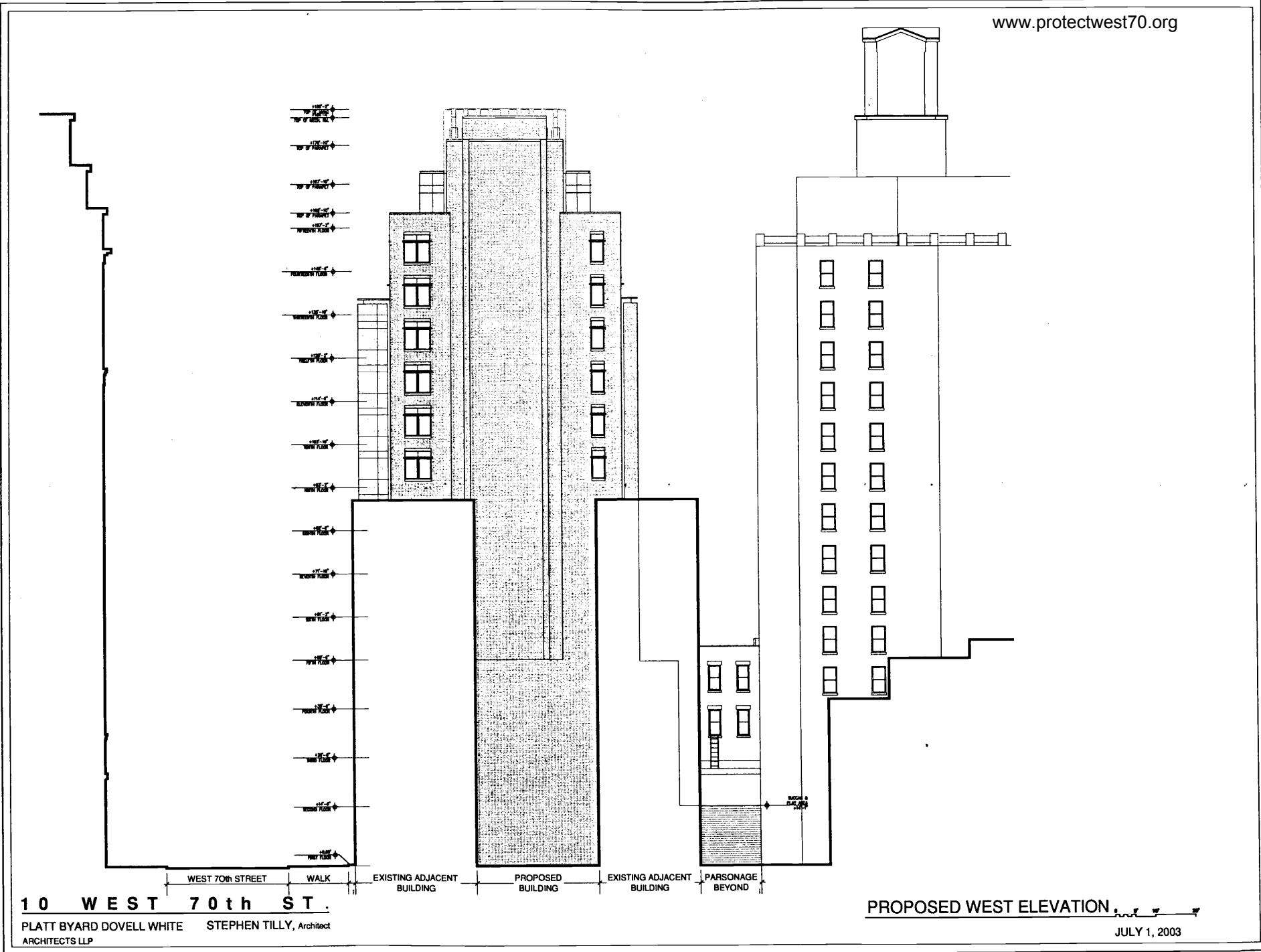


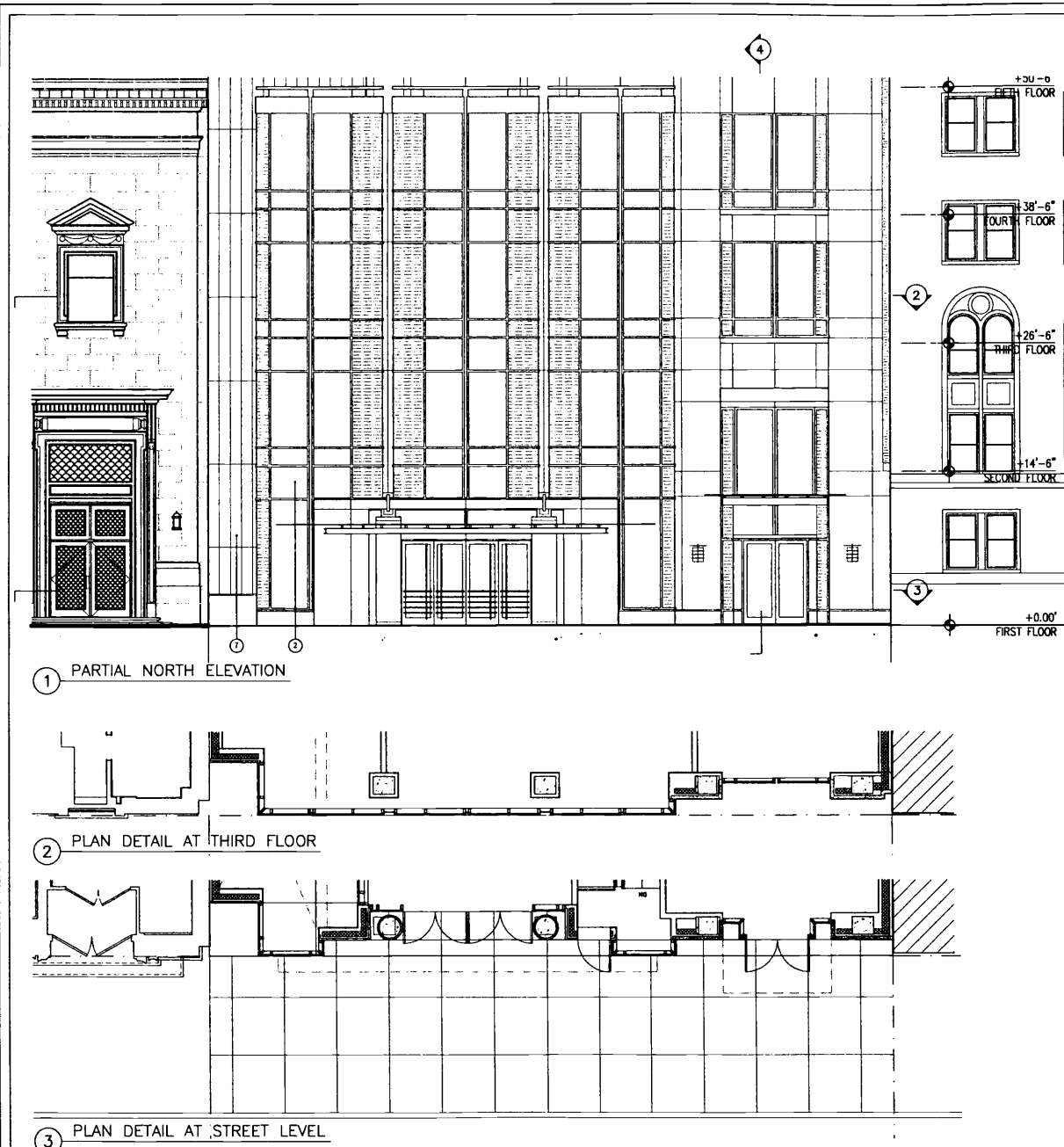
www.protectwest70.org



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4 DETAIL SECTION AT RESIDENTIAL ENTRY

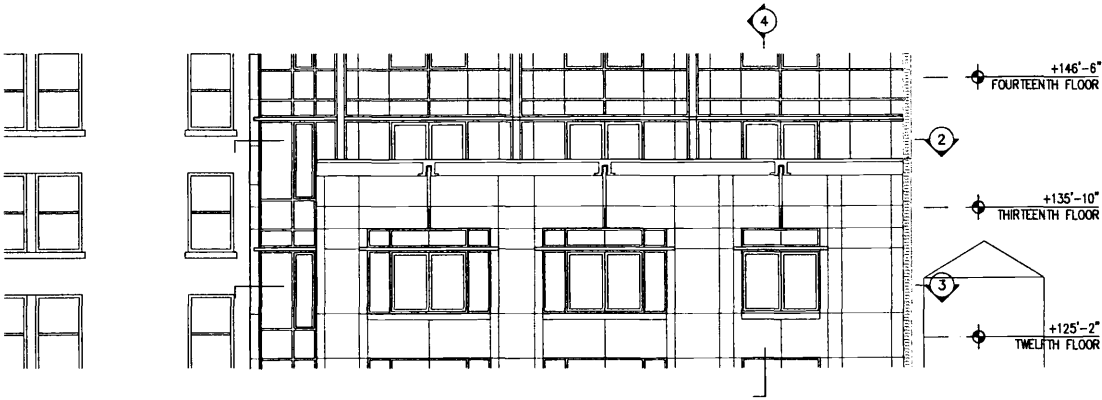
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  - 2. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 3. PATTERN GLASS
  - 4. GLASS CANOPY
  - 5. STONE
  - 6. GRANITE BASE
  - 7. ZINC PANELS
  - 8. PAINTED METAL WINDOW FRAME
  - 9. BRICKS
  - 10. PERFORATED BRICKS PANELS

10 WEST 70th ST.

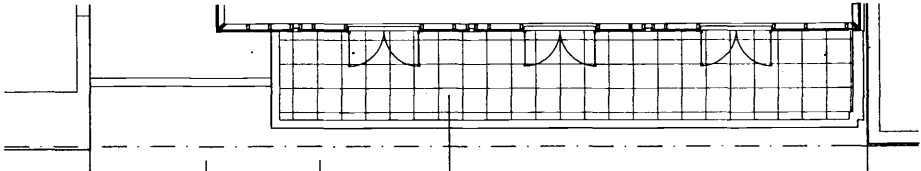
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

DETAIL PLANS/SECTION/ELEVATION AT BASE

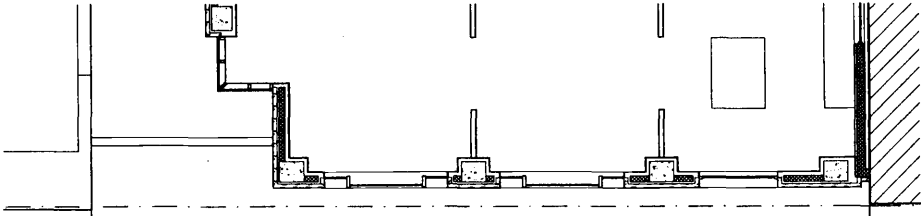
JULY 1, 2003



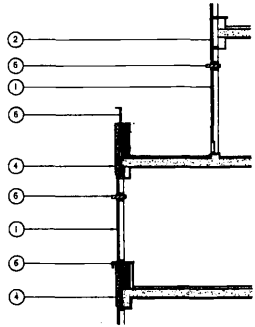
① PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION



② PLAN DETAIL AT THIRTEENTH FLOOR



③ PLAN DETAIL AT TYPICAL FLOOR



④ DETAIL SECTION

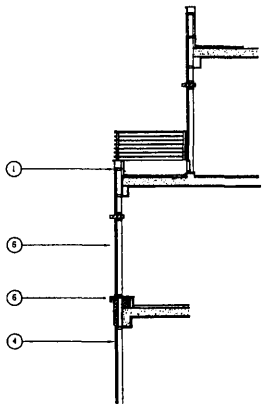
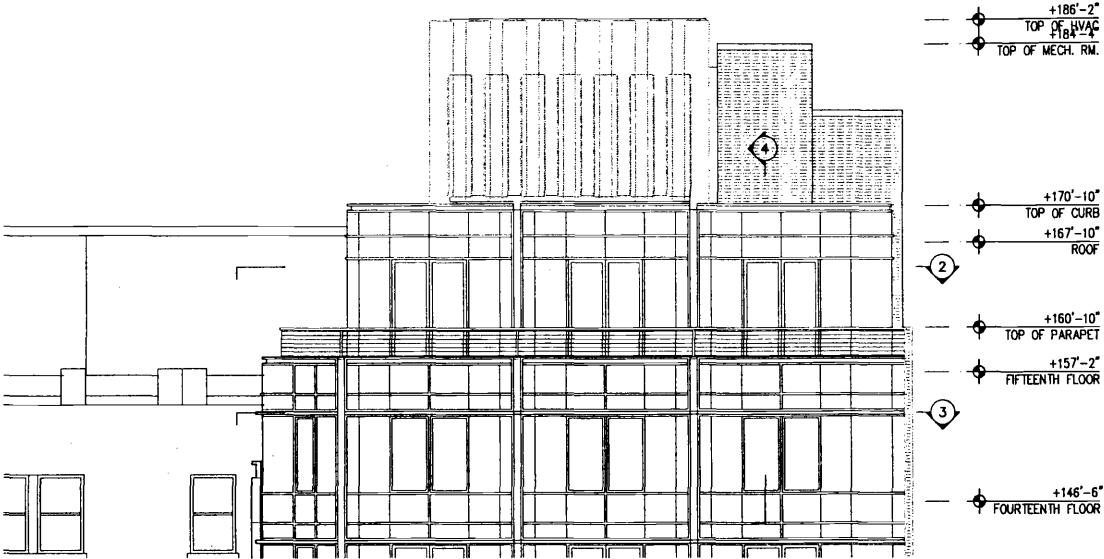
KEY  
1. CLEAR GLASS  
2. SPANGLER GLASS  
3. PATTERNS GLASS  
4. STONE  
5. ZINC PANELS  
6. PAINTED METAL

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

DETAIL PLANS/SECTION/ELEVATION AT MID

JULY 1, 2003



4 DETAIL SECTION

- KEY
- 1. CLEAR GLASS
  - 2. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 3. PATTERNS GLASS
  - 4. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 5. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 6. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 7. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 8. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 9. SPANDREL GLASS
  - 10. SPANDREL GLASS

1 PARTIAL NORTH ELEVATION

2 PLAN DETAIL AT FIFTEENTH FLOOR

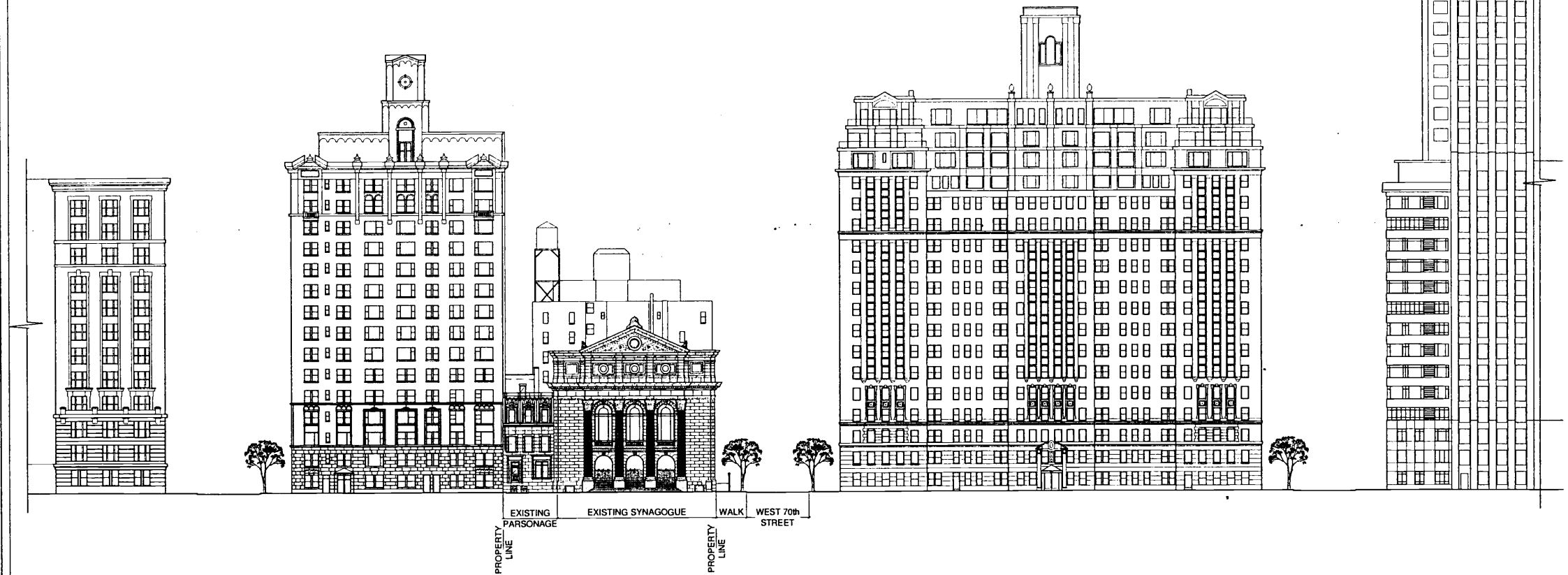
3 PLAN DETAIL AT FOURTEENTH FLOOR

10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE ARCHITECTS LLP STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

DETAIL PLANS/SECTION/ELEVATION AT TOP

JULY 1, 2003

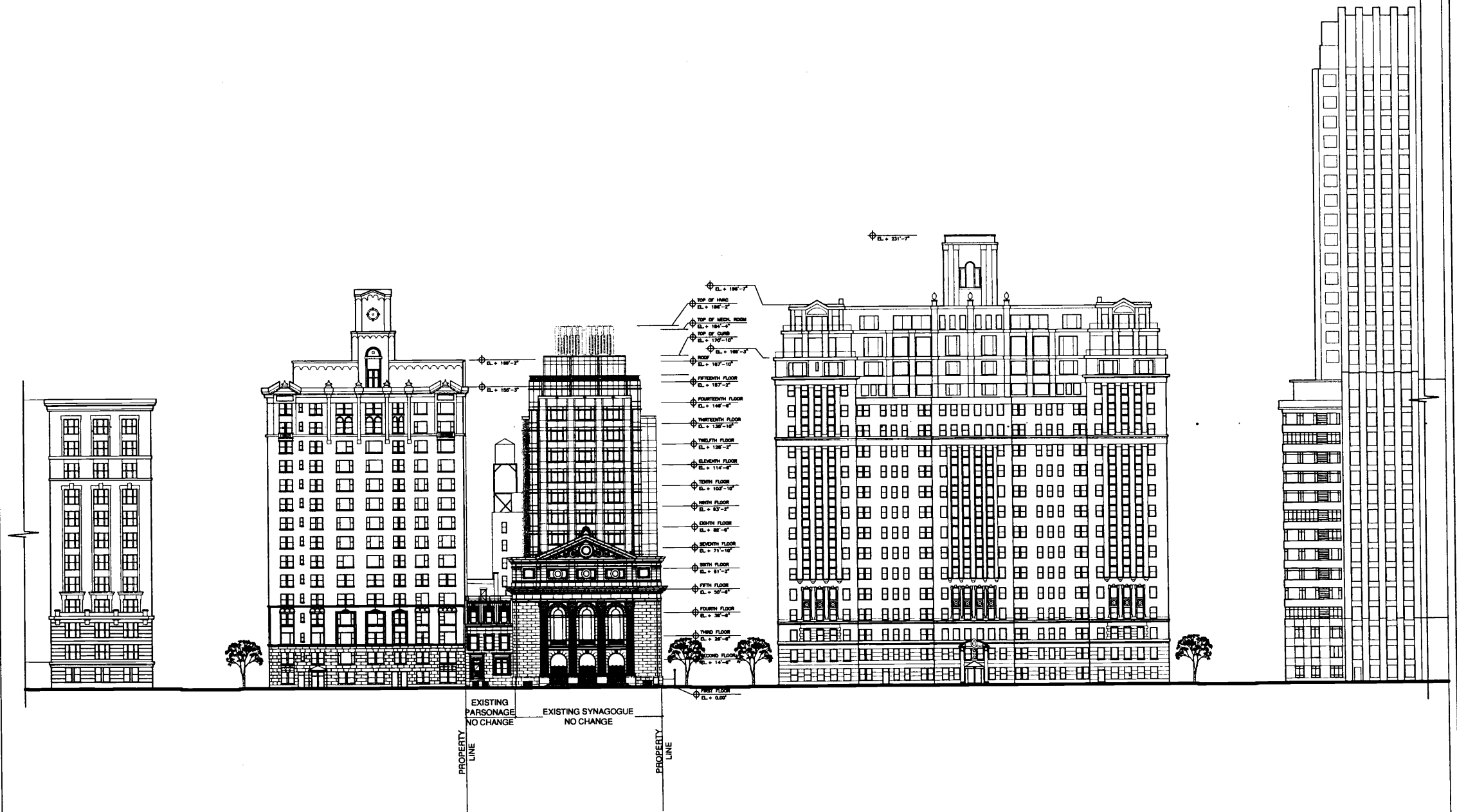


10 WEST 70th ST.

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ARCHITECTS LLP

EXISTING EAST CONTEXT ELEVATION  
CENTRAL PARK WEST

NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

PROPOSED EAST CONTEXT ELEVATION  
CENTRAL PARK WEST  
JULY 1, 2003





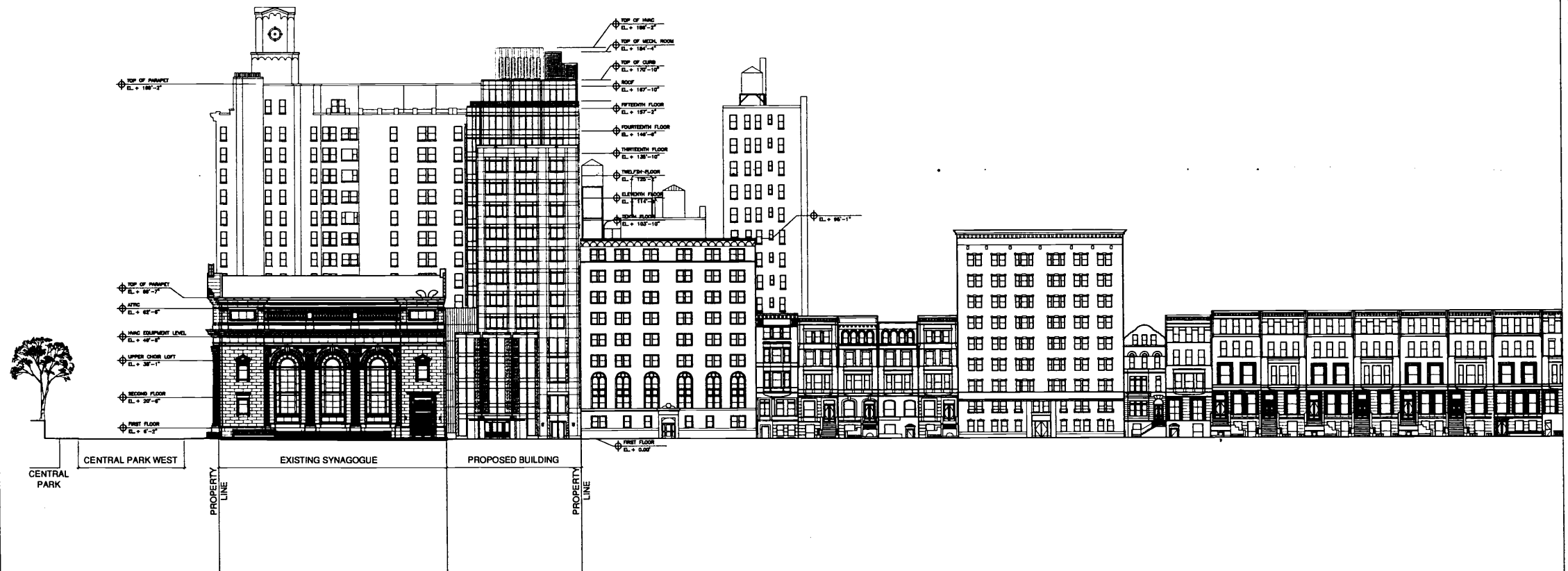
10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

EXISTING NORTH CONTEXT ELEVATION

WEST 70th STREET

NOVEMBER 26, 2002

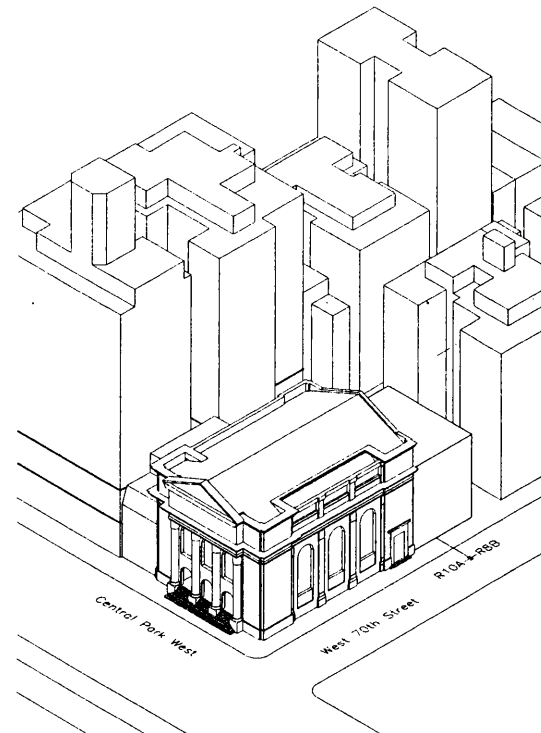
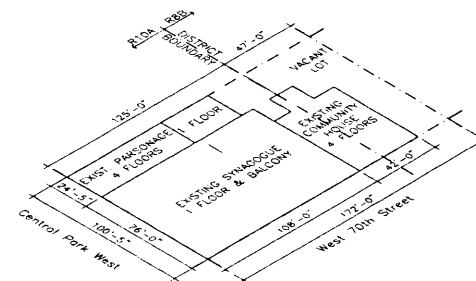


10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE  
ARCHITECTS LLP

STEPHEN TILLY, Architect

PROPOSED NORTH CONTEXT ELEVATION  
WEST 70TH STREET JULY 1, 2003

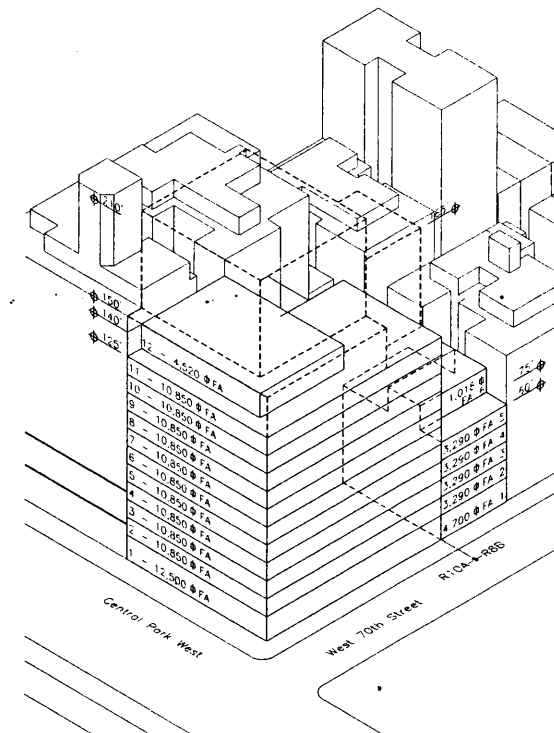
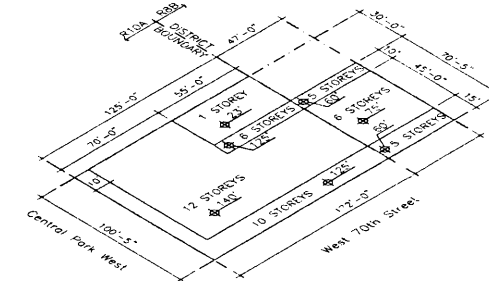


EXISTING BUILDINGS

LOT AREA: 17,272 SF  
EXISTING FLOOR AREA:  
R10A- 41,368 SF  
R8B- 6,044 SF  
COMBINED - 47,412 SF

10 WEST 70th ST.

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ARCHITECTS LLP

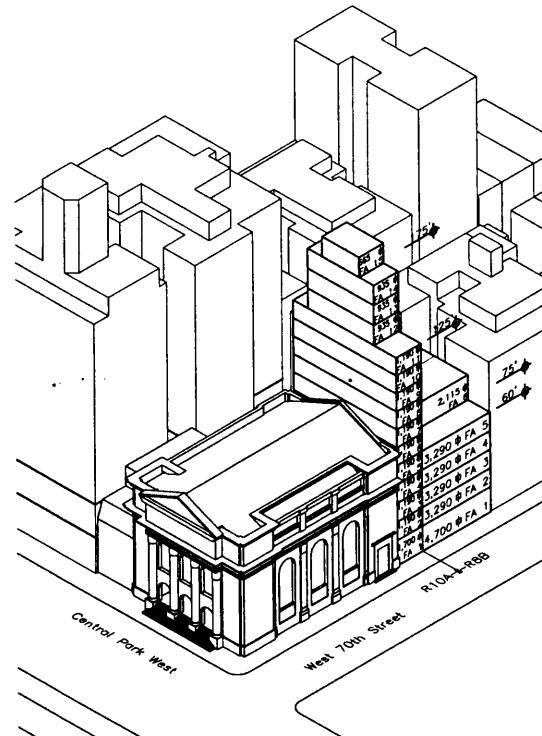
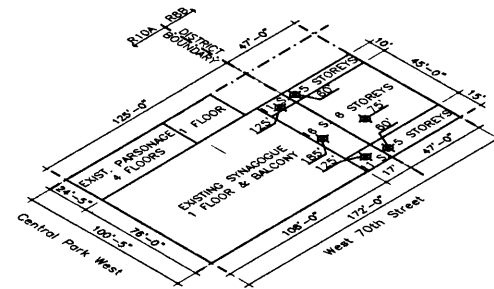


MAXIMUM PERMITTED ZONING ENVELOPE  
WITHOUT F.A.R. AVERAGING PERMITTED A.O.R. BY ZR77-22

LOT AREA: 17,272 SF  
MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA:  
R10A- 125,520 SF  
R8B- 18,800 SF  
COMBINED - 144,400 SF

ZONING ENVELOPE

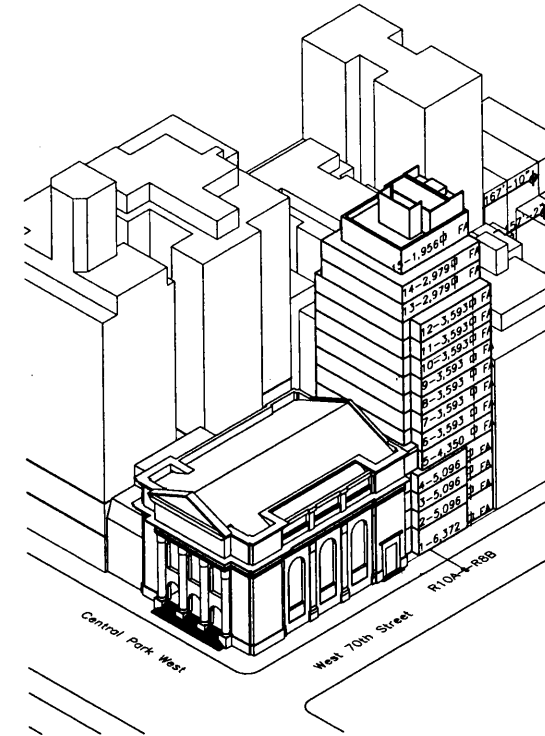
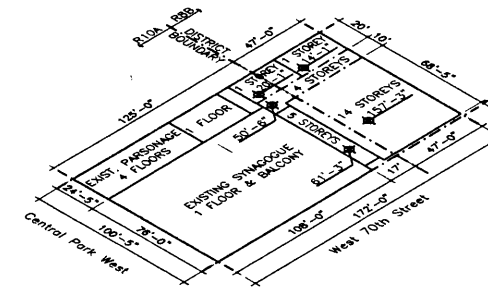
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



EXISTING AS OF RIGHT ZONING ENVELOPE @  
DEVELOPMENT SITE

LOT AREA AT DEVELOPMENT SITE: 6,427 SF  
PERMITTED FLOOR AREA:

R10A- 17,070 SF  
R8B- 18,878 SF  
COMBINED - 35,948 SF



PROPOSED ZONING ENVELOPE AT DEVELOPMENT  
SITE

LOT AREA AT DEVELOPMENT SITE: 6,427  
PROPOSED FLOOR AREA:

R10A- 9,969 SF  
R8B- 49,106 SF  
COMBINED - 59,075 SF

**10 WEST 70th ST.**

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

**ZONING ENVELOPE**

JULY 1, 2003

REQUIREMENT	R10A PORTION OF DEVELOPMENT SITE	R8B PORTION AT DEVELOPMENT SITE
FLOOR AREA <i>Note (1)</i>	a.o.r	<b>Special Permit</b> Additional 9,523 sf required per ZR 77-22
BUILDING HEIGHT <i>Note (2)</i>	a.o.r	<b>Special Permit</b> Permitted height 75'; Proposed height 135'-10"
STREET WALL HEIGHT (MAX) <i>Note (2)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 125'; proposed at 135'-10"	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 60'; proposed at 135'10"
REAR WALL HEIGHT (MAX) <i>Note (2)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 125'; proposed at 157'-2"	<b>Special Permit</b> Setback required at 60'; proposed at 135'-10"
REAR YARD <i>Note (3)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> 30' required; 20' proposed at floors 2, 3, & 4	<b>Special Permit</b> 30' required; 20' proposed at floors 2, 3, & 4
LOT COVERAGE OVER 23' <i>Note (4)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> 70% required; 78% proposed	<b>Special Permit</b> 70% required; 80% proposed
LOCATION OF STREET WALL <i>Note (5)</i>	<b>Special Permit</b> Required at lot line; proposed 5' off lot line	<b>Special Permit</b> Required at lot line; proposed 1'-6" off lot line

- Notes*
- (1) Floor area ratio on divided site permitted by ZR 77-22 : 8.38
  - (2) Building heights and setbacks measured to main roof. Add 3'-8" to top of parapet.
  - (3) No rear yard required within 100' of corner
  - (3) All calculations are approximate pending verification by survey and final plans

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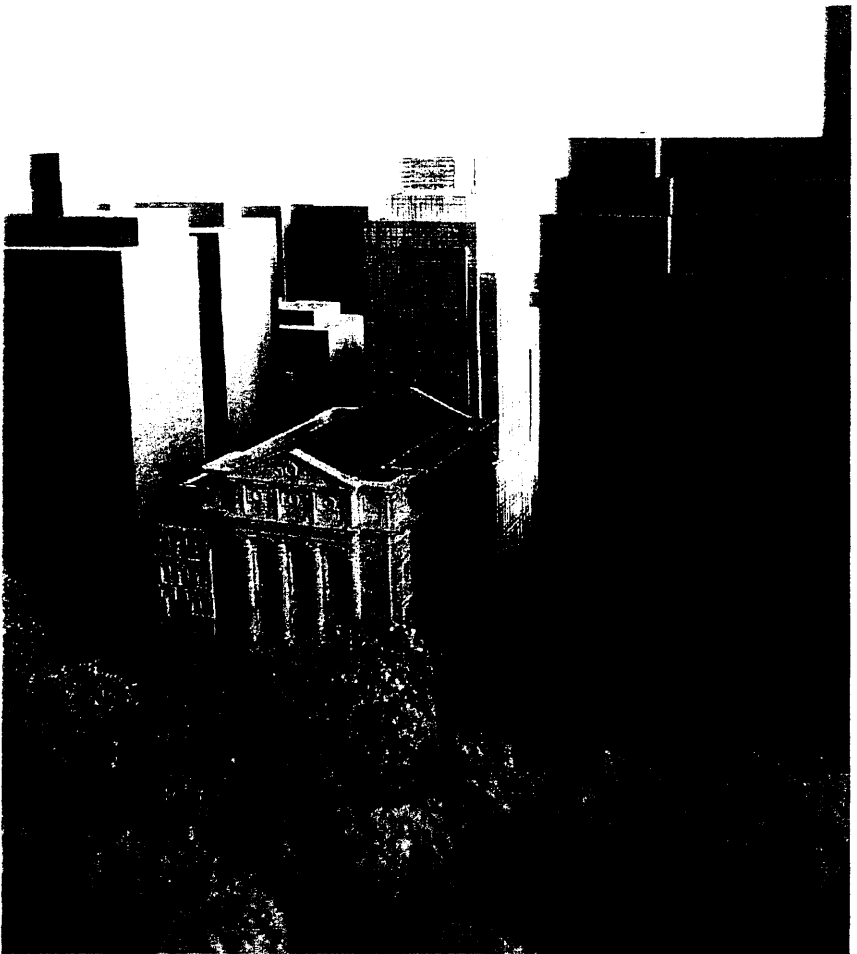
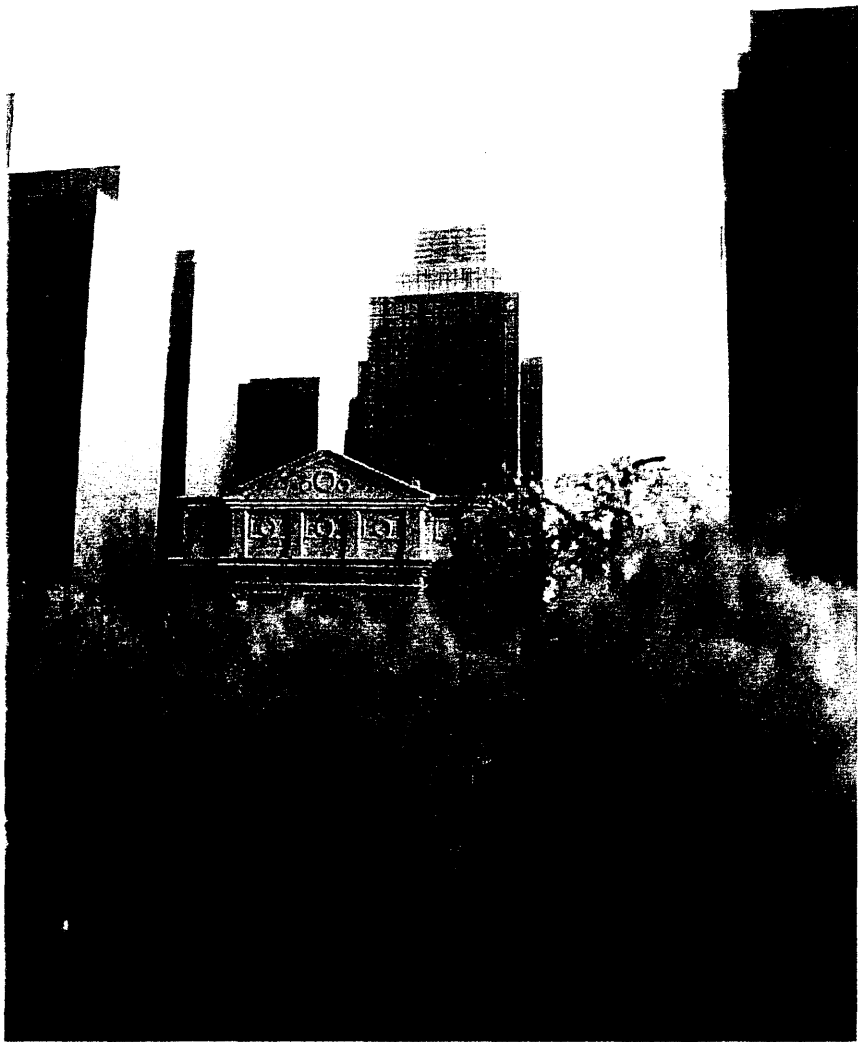
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PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE   STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

MODEL PHOTOS 1

JULY 1, 2003

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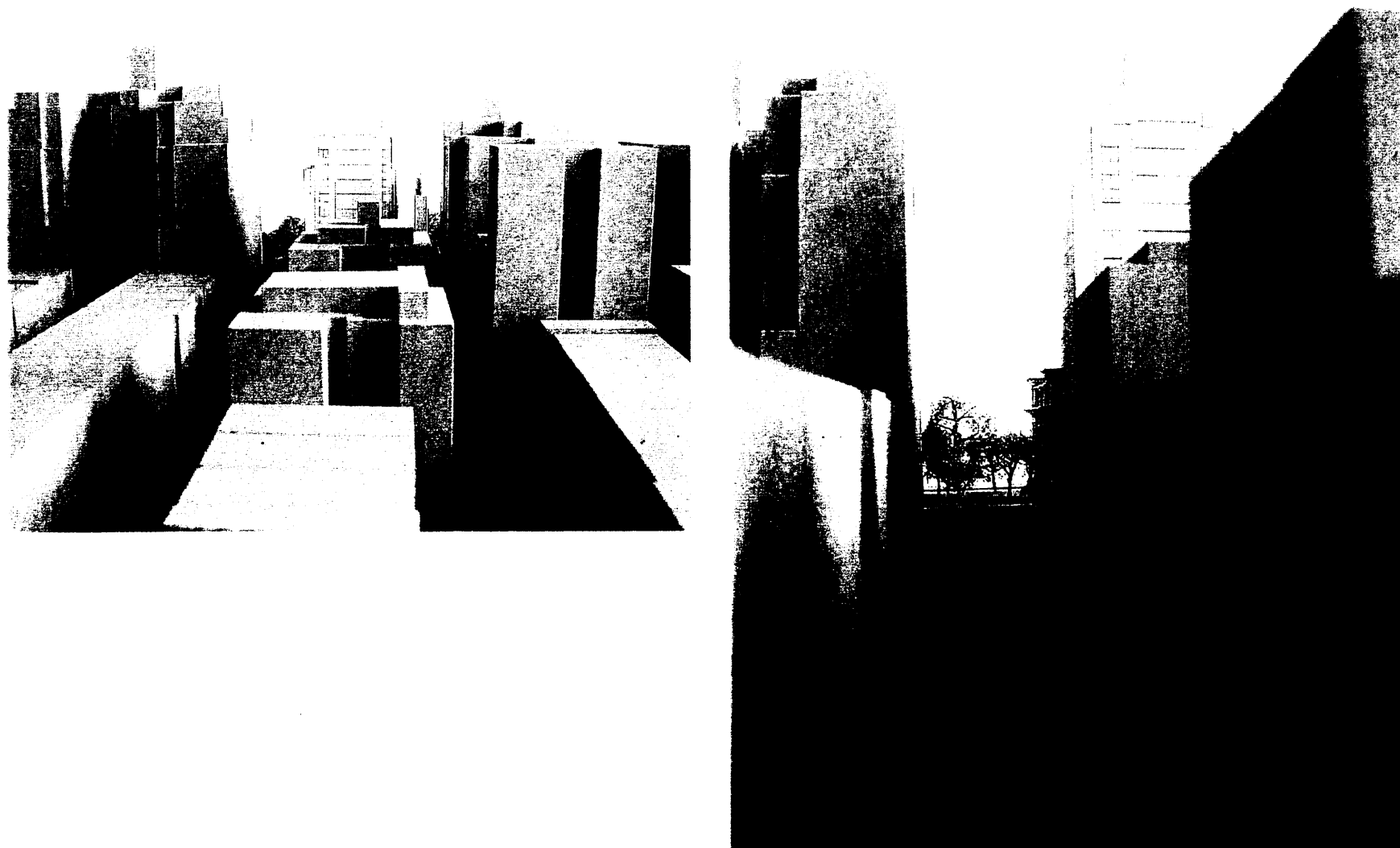
10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

MODEL PHOTOS 2

JULY 1, 2003

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**10 WEST 70th ST.**

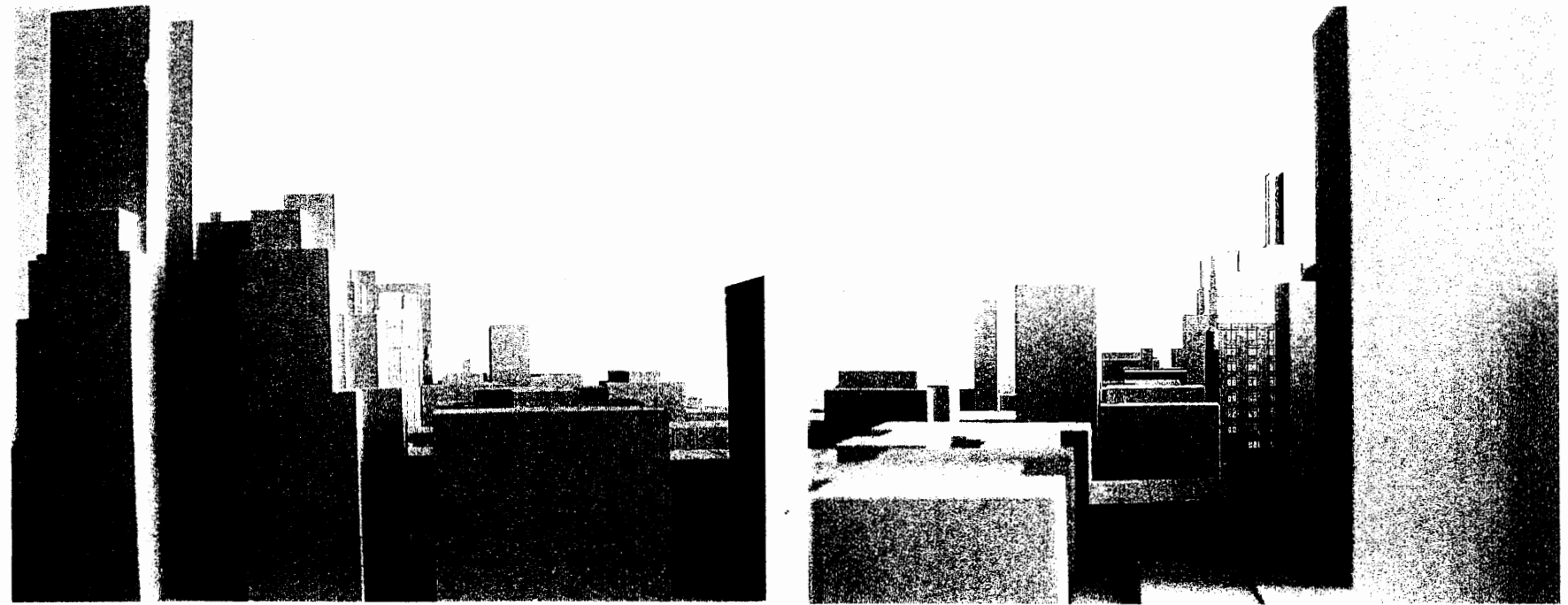
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE    STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

MODEL PHOTOS 3

JULY 1, 2003



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**10 WEST 70th ST.**

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ARCHITECTS LLP

**MODEL PHOTOS 4**

JULY 1, 2003



1 0 W E S T 7 0 t h S T .

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE    STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

CONTEXT PHOTOS - CENTRAL PARK WEST

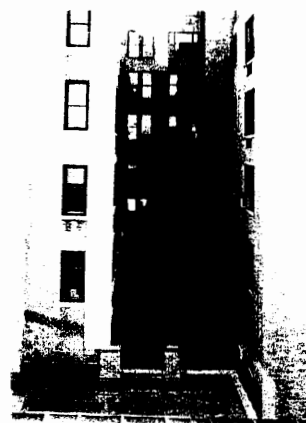
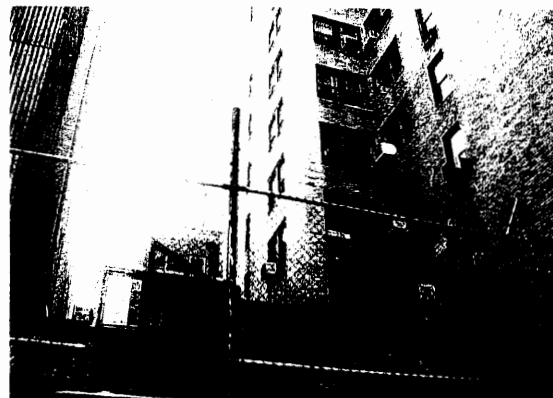
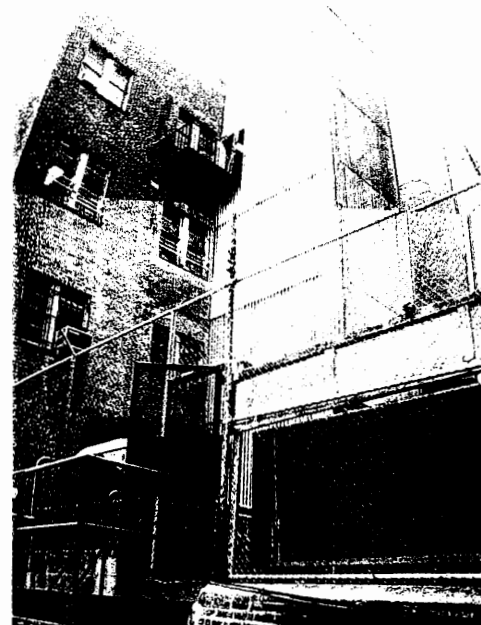
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



1 0 W E S T 7 0 t h S T .

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE      STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

CONTEXT PHOTOS - WEST 70TH STREET  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



**10 WEST 70th ST.**  
PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

**CONTEXT PHOTOS - REAR YARD**  
NOVEMBER 26, 2002



10 WEST 70th ST.

PLATT BYARD DOVELL WHITE STEPHEN TILLY, Architect  
ARCHITECTS LLP

DESIGN PRECEDENTS

NOVEMBER 26, 2002