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June 5, 2006

Robert B. Tierney
Chairman
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

RE: 348-354 Amsterdam Avenue (former Dakota Stable)
318-324 Amsterdam Avenue (former New York Cab Company)

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I write to urge the Commission to calendar public hearings for two architecturally and historically significant stable buildings: the former Dakota Stable at 348-354 Amsterdam Avenue and the former New York Cab Company at 318-324 Amsterdam Avenue. I understand that the Dakota Stable is immediately threatened with demolition. Both buildings, which were converted to parking garages in the early 20th century, are important visual and historic anchors serving the Upper West Side community and warrant the Commission's careful attention.

You have by now received letters from architectural historians, including Andrew Scott Dolkart (James Marston Fitch Associate Professor of Historic Preservation at Columbia University) and Mosette Broderick (Director of Urban Design and Architecture Studies program at New York University), describing the significance of the large, commercial stable type exemplified by these two buildings. Only one example of this increasingly rare building type (on East 73rd Street) has been designated as a New York City Landmark. Here on the Upper West Side, we have two distinguished examples, part of what Christopher Gray refers to as "'stable row,' a collection of a dozen public and private garages, most of them former stables, on Amsterdam Avenue from 75th to 77th Streets" (*New York Times*, "Streetscapes," 5/24/87).

Not only are both buildings architecturally distinguished; they also help tell the story of the West Side's development; from a thinly populated area to a major urban neighborhood. The Dakota Stable, designed by Bradford Gilbert and built from 1891 to 1894, is a "stylistic gem" according to Gray. He writes, "The warm orange walls are set off by rich, salmon-colored trim at the windows and the cornice....[Its] simplicity gives it a fresh, even modern, character despite its age." The former New York Cab Company stable, a truly unique building designed by C. Abbott French and built in 1889, is called out in the *AIA Guide to New York City Architecture* for its large Romanesque Revival arches.

Please act swiftly to protect these two treasures of the Upper West Side. If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact Peter Mellman of my staff or me at (212) 873-0282. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale A. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "G".

Gale A. Brewer

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