

The Rev. Dr. Thomas F. Pike  
26 Gramercy Park  
New York, NY 10003

July 9, 2009

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

Dear Chair Tierney,

I am writing to you as recently retired Rector of Calvary-St. George's Episcopal Church and as a former Landmarks Preservation Commissioner to support designation of West Park Presbyterian Church as an Individual Landmark.

St. George's Church, a landmark designated in 1975 as part of the Stuyvesant Square Historic District, was designed by Leopold Eidlitz, who was also the architect for West Park's original 1884 chapel. Architect Henry Kilburn expanded Eidlitz's chapel in 1890 to create a singular architectural example of the now rare "Richardsonian Romanesque" style. By consensus, West Park is one of the loveliest and most significant surviving 19<sup>th</sup>-century churches on the Upper West Side and deserves the protection that only the Landmarks Commission can provide.

From personal experience, I am conscious of the benefits and responsibilities that come with maintaining a landmarked church. In my role as a minister, commissioner, New York Landmarks Conservancy Board member, and a founder of Partners for Sacred Places, I have seen landmarked religious buildings survive and prosper with the help of the community. West Park Presbyterian Church has the strong support of its neighbors and the potential to become an anchor once more.

I believe that it is our responsibility to protect the beauty that we have and to preserve the works of history's great architects. Distinctive architecture, historical significance, and status as one of an endangered species of sacred sites on the Upper West Side make Eidlitz and Kilburn's West Park Presbyterian Church worthy of Individual Landmark designation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom" followed by a small circular mark.

Rev. Dr. Thomas F. Pike