

Hearing Date: 1/24/2006
LPC Docket Number: 062273
Manhattan, Block: 1111, Lot: 1
Scenic Landmark Historic District

A stable, shed and keeper's building designed by Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould and built in 1869-71. Application is to enclose the central courtyard.

HDC Testimony

The Historic Districts Council does not support this application to enclose the central courtyard of this complex, as we believe this plan will do irreparable damage to this group of landmarked buildings. HDC's Review Committee found this enclosure to be much too visible and intrusive to be appropriate. While we recognize that the applicants have made an attempt to reveal the buildings while connecting them by using this glass construction, we did not feel that it succeeded in minimizing the effect on this landmark. The Committee found the design to be over scaled and overpowering, and felt that it would ruin the small scale of this complex of buildings. It calls too much attention to itself and away from the landmarked buildings, and its overbearing presence would be further emphasized by the proposed lighting plan.

This site is not only a significant part of Central Park's history, but also of the history of the Croton Aqueduct as the south wall of this complex abuts the retaining wall of the old reservoir. This unique site has two overarching historic themes present and this proposal does not relate to either, and in fact detracts from both.

HDC believes that it may not be possible to enclose this courtyard without damaging this landmark, and therefore recommends that consideration be given to moving the police department into a new building that would better meet their needs, perhaps constructed on the site of the temporary building or somewhere else in the park. Forcing a program into this building that simply does not work may result in the destruction of these landmarks, in addition to creating an unfortunate condition for the police department.

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