



THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

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Statement of the Historic Districts Council
Certificate of Appropriateness Hearing

5/3/2011

Item 31
CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
118018- Block 1111, lot 1-

Central Park, Cherry Hill Concourse - Scenic Landmark

A former carriage concourse and surrounding landscape and pathways, within an English Romantic style public park designed by Olmsted and Vaux in 1856. Application is to replace paving, furnishing and landscaping.

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.

While we wish to preserve Central Park, each generation has left its mark there over the past century and a half. Some of these alterations have proven to be incompatible, wear out, or are quickly dated. Others like the adventure playgrounds, the Alice in Wonderland statue, and the boathouse to name a just few have added to the richness of the park and should be preserved. The Cherry Hill Concourse happily falls into this latter category.

The space is in good condition with only the asphalt needing an overhaul. A nicer material such as belgian block or that perennial park favorite, hex pavers, could be put in its place. HDC questions the use of resin aggregate. The material has not been approved for use elsewhere in the park, and it is not known how well it will really hold up here. This important, busy piece of the park should not be the test case. This 1980 design, old enough now to be considered historic, by noted preservation landscape architect Philip Winslow is not only a handsome design, but also reflects an important piece of Central Park's history – its rebirth – and it is worth preserving.