



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRPERSON
Committee on Cities

COMMITTEES
Education
Higher Education
Housing
Judiciary
Health

MEMBER
Assembly Task Force
on Women's Issues

SCOTT STRINGER
Assemblymember 67th District

230 West 72nd Street
New York, New York 10023
(212) 873-6368
Fax (212) 873-6520

Room 842
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248
(518) 455-5802
Fax (518) 455-5015

Honorable Amanda Burden
City Panning Commission, Chair
22 Reade Street
New York, NY 10007-1216

November 25, 2002

Dear Ms. Burden:

I am writing this letter to state my opposition to the development plan of Congregation Shearith Israel, located at 8 West 70th street.

The proposal to construct at 14-story building on the site of 8 West 70th street and the adjacent lot is well intended for the synagogue but it would violate the true spirit and quiescence of the Central Park West Historic District.

I have several concerns about the proposed development. If such a project was approved, it would set a bad zoning as well as landmarks precedent. In order for such a proposal to go forth, a score of variances, waivers and special permits, would need to be granted. Special permission would be needed to allow a transfer of 'air rights' and to shift the air rights across a zoning boundary. Rear yard and setback requirements, designed to protect neighboring buildings would need to be waved.

Given the special nature of the Central Park West Historic District, I feel this proposal should not go forward. If the developer were allowed to clear all the hurdles in place to protect such Historic Districts, it would become easier for other developers to destroy true treasures of unique communities.

I hope you will reject this proposal and allow the Central Park West neighborhood to retain its luster and spirit. If you have any questions about this matter please do not hesitate to contact me at 212-873-6368.