



HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL



THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

232 East 11th Street New York NY 10003
tel (212) 614-9107 fax (212) 614-9127 email hdc@hdc.org

October 17, 2007

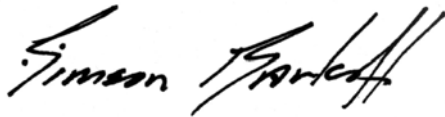
Hon. Sheldon Fine, Chair
Community Board 7
250 West 87th Street
New York, NY 10024

Dear Chair Fine,

The Historic Districts Council is concerned about Congregation Shearith Israel's proposed new building on West 70th Street. As you are aware, despite the Landmarks Preservation Commission's approval of the design of the new building, the applicant still require a multitude of variances from the Board of Standards and Appeals, variances that agency has thus far refused. We agree with BSA's objections to the application and hope that the agency continues to deny permission for an unnecessarily large building which violates the protective mid-block zoning which is so integral to maintaining the character of the Upper West Side. Zoning is the underlying script of development – it directs what should be built where. The instructions of the carefully-crafted contextual zone of Central Park West are clear in their intent and direction. This application seeks to summarily rewrite the script. To allow this would undermine the intent of the city planners who wrote the zone and the intent of the public who approved it.

This is Central Park West, not the Wild West. Please “stick to your guns” and defend your neighborhood from this unwelcome proposal.

Sincerely,



Simeon Bankoff
Executive Director