

Duke Ellington Boulevard Neighborhood Association

Cathedral Station, P.O. Box 207 New York, N.Y. 10025

January 27, 2003

Robert Tierney, Chairman

Landmarks Preservation Commission

City of New York

(Via email)

Dear Mr. Tierney:

I am writing on behalf of the Duke Ellington Boulevard Neighborhood Association, a group of nearly 200 members who are committed to improving Manhattan Valley as well as the Upper West Side. We are also committed to preserving its architectural heritage.

We are aware that there is proposal to build a 14 story tower midblock on West 70th Street between Columbus Avenue and Central Park West. Having gone through numerous rounds of public meetings regarding the construction of a 27 story tower at 106th Street and Central Park West (currently under construction), our membership is unenthusiastic at the prospect of still more outsized buildings on the Upper West Side. Situated midblock on West 70th Street, this project would be a disaster.

Though the proposal for West 70th Street is below Manhattan Valley, both that neighborhood and ours are fortunate to have many human-scaled blocks, with many buildings rising not more than five stories. We are concerned first for our neighbors to the south, who would suffer the effects of a project that would effectively destroy the low-rise character of their neighborhood, and secondly for ourselves, because the waivers and variances sought for the construction of this project, if granted, will foreshadow more out-of-character high rise development for our neighborhood as well, which we strenuously oppose.

We urge that you work to ensure that the special requests being made by the developers of this project are turned down. Granting these requests would set a very bad precedent for adherence to reasonable zoning for an area--the Upper West Side--that not only offers human scaled city living for its residents but also is of great historical and architectural significance, a legacy that must be guarded and preserved. We are hopeful that you will not support the proposed project and thereby perform the valuable function of architectural preservation of our community.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ben Jannarone

President, DEBNA