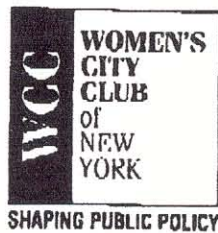


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Testimony to the Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Re: Congregation Shearith Israel's Proposal

July 1, 2003

The Women's City Club of New York is an 88 year old non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization which works to shape policy in New York City on a broad range of issues.

Despite alterations to the original design, the Women's City Club continues to oppose the building which Congregation Shearith Israel seeks permission to construct on West 70<sup>th</sup> Street.

We do so because we take seriously, and urge the Landmarks Commission to take equally seriously, our shared responsibility to uphold the landmark laws and the principle of contextual zoning throughout the City.

Careful consideration went into the crafting of the historic district regulations which were designed specifically to achieve a harmonious relationship between the low-rise buildings of the mid-block and the taller buildings on the avenues, while allowing for appropriately scaled development. These same zoning regulations were recently successfully applied in the creation of the Park Slope Historic District in Brooklyn.

Providing Congregation Shearith Israel with a special permit to allow construction of this inappropriate building will do more than damage the Upper West Side Historic District and the special character of West 70<sup>th</sup> Street in particular, It will set a dangerous precedent, the ultimate effect of which will be to compromise contextual zoning and Historic Districts throughout the City.

We respectfully request the Commission to deny this application.