



March 19, 2007

Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chair  
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10007

**Re: New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West**

**Officers**

Christopher Holbrook  
*Chair*

Caroline B. Mason  
*Vice Chair*  
Thomas J. Schwarz  
*Vice Chair*

Wendy E. Feuer  
*Secretary*

Robert J. Kafin  
*Treasurer*

Anne G. Older  
*Chair Emeritus*

**Board of Trustees**

Pamela S. Banker  
George H. Beane  
Barry Bergdoll  
William L. Bernhard  
Constance L. Clapp  
Henry S.F. Cooper  
Joan K. Davidson  
William E. Davis, Jr.  
Stephen A. Facey  
Arthur N. Field  
Lionel Goldfrank III  
Mark Goldman  
Tony Goldman  
Huyler C. Held  
George L. Howell  
Marilynn G. Karp  
Robert J. Kresse  
Judith M. LaBelle  
Richard J. Lippes  
Gregory R. Long  
Jean M. McCarroll  
F. Eugene Romano  
Daniel Romualdez  
David R. Sloan  
Elizabeth (Zibby) F. Tozer  
Samuel G. White, FAIA  
Caroline Rob Zaleski

Jay DiLorenzo  
*President*

Dear Chairman Tierney and Members of the Landmarks Preservation Commission:

The Preservation League is New York State's not-for-profit, statewide advocacy organization, dedicated to the protection of the state's diverse and rich heritage of historic buildings, districts, and landscapes. Through our programs and statewide advocacy we actively encourage historic preservation by public and private organizations, agencies, municipalities, and individuals throughout New York State.

Today the Landmarks Preservation Commission has an opportunity to protect one of New York's most notable historic landmarks – the home of the New York Historical Society located at 170 Central Park West. We urge the Commission to reject the changes proposed to the building's façade which we feel would seriously and permanently alter this landmark building.

170 Central Park West is notable for its recognition as a local historic landmark and as a contributing element in two of Central Park West's local historic districts. As such, the Historical Society's home is recognized by our organization as an important landmark of statewide significance. This makes the proposal to alter the façade of this building very troubling.

Although we recognize that alterations to historic buildings are sometimes necessary to accommodate their continued use, we are not convinced that this is the situation facing the Historical Society. We would be hard-pressed to envision a set of circumstances that would warrant such drastic façade alterations, including the removal and replacement of doors and windows, in a building of this significance. Furthermore, it has been made clear that plans are underway to add a mixed-use, museum/residential building on the site. It seems to us that the current façade alteration proposal before the Commission should not be viewed as a stand-alone project but rather as part of the larger alteration plan the Historical Society has for the landmark building.

For these reasons we hope you will echo the decision of Community Board 7 to oppose the proposal before you. Thank you for your consideration and please call on us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Jay A. DiLorenzo  
President