

Architecture Plus!

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Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chairman
N.Y.C. Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I write to express strong support for the proposed designation of the West Park Presbyterian Church, located on the northeast corner of Amsterdam Avenue and W. 86th Street, in the Borough of Manhattan. I commend the Commission, the Research staff and your leadership for selecting this outstanding Romanesque Revival church complex for consideration as an individual landmark.

More than twenty years ago, during my tenure as Chair of the LPC, the West Park Presbyterian Church was included in the public hearing called to consider the creation of an Upper-Westside Historic District, since it was a complex of outstanding merit that included a chapel designed by Leopold Eidlitz in 1884 and a sanctuary and tower by Henry F. Kilburn in 1889. Since its completion this church has stood as a highly visible and meaningful anchor in the rapidly developing upper Westside community. It became a local "landmark" in short order and I was sure it would be included and protected when the Historic District was designated.

I left the Commission prior to the official designation of the Upper Westside/Central Park West Historic District and was very much surprised to learn that the West Park Presbyterian Church had been excluded, along with two other Westside religious buildings, from the newly formed District. The current Commission now has an opportunity to protect this significant Westside structure and I urge you to do so without delay. I further urge the Commission to designate The First Baptist Church and Holy Trinity Catholic Church. These two Westside institutions deserve to be protected and should have been included in the District.

Swift action is presently needed to complete the unfinished protection of valuable historic fabric that was started over two decades ago. I wish you continued progress with this important task.

Sincerely,



Gene A. Norman