

LANDMARK WEST!
THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

July 20, 2001

Dear Preservationist,

In January 2000, a group of preservation advocates met at the Municipal Art Society to discuss a Preservation Platform for the 2001 election year. Because of term limits, this year represents a watershed in city politics – we will be electing a new Mayor, Public Advocate, Comptroller, 4 Borough Presidents and 35 new City Council members. Inspired by this meeting and guided by the Historic Districts Council's detailed Preservation Platform, Landmark West!, in conjunction with a group of participants from the January 2000 meeting, developed a city-wide Preservation Platform.

We hope that your organization will support this platform by signing on as a co-sponsor. The platform and a list of those organizations supporting it will be distributed to candidates, demonstrating the strength and unity of the preservation community. By presenting a united coalition of community and citywide groups, we will demonstrate to the candidates that the preservation of our built environment cannot be ignored. Over 80 New York preservation organizations, including Landmark West!, Historic Districts Council, the Municipal Art Society, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy are putting their support behind this platform, and we would like to add your organization to this list. In addition to signing on, we encourage your organization to develop, if necessary, its own, more detailed political platform that addresses your specific issues and concerns.

Landmark West! is organizing a series of breakfast forums with the 2001 Mayoral candidates this June. Each candidate will be invited to speak at his own breakfast where they will answer questions from the preservation community. If you would like to lend your name as a co-host of the forums please let us know. As a co-host, you will be listed in materials for the breakfast, and we will also provide you with information about attending the forums.

Please contact Landmark West! or Historic Districts Council as soon as possible to let us know if you will sign on to this platform and participate in the June breakfasts forums, or if you have any other questions.

Sincerely,



Arlene Simon
President, Landmark West!

212-496-8110
landmarkwest@mindspring.com



Simeon Bankoff
Executive Director, Historic Districts Council

212-614-9107
sbankoff@hdc.org

Preservation Platform

Preservation and protection of our architectural, historical, and cultural assets is one of the most important factors in assuring that New York remains a livable city. Preserving the best of our city's past and adapting it for reuse in the 21st Century greatly enhances the quality of life for all citizens. Individual landmarks and historic districts continue to offer substantial opportunities for economic development, the revitalization of neighborhoods, the stabilization of property values, and the enhancement of the tourism industry.

New York's historic preservation community and other concerned community groups urge the candidates for elected office to commit to the following initiatives that aim to promote and protect our city's landmarks and historic neighborhoods. A preservation ethic must be reflected in the work of all city agencies whose work impacts the architectural, historical, and cultural resources of our great city.

1. Commitment to tax incentives to building owners for restoration work on historic properties.

New York City's elected officials should support the proposed State (Part E of A2001-A and Part E of S1149-A "Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Tax Credit") and Federal (H.R. 1172: "Historic Homeownership Assistance Act) tax incentive bills to encourage restoration and reinvestment in New York City's historic properties. Tax credits for historic rehabilitation generate localized economic activity and community reinvestment while enhancing the special character of our historic neighborhoods and contributing to the overall quality of life. We further ask elected officials to consider implementing a municipal tax incentive program to complement the programs at the State and Federal levels.

2. Preservation of public buildings, especially historic school buildings.

New York City must set an example for private building owners by preserving and restoring city-owned historic properties. We especially urge the preservation, restoration and maintenance of historic school buildings, which should preferably remain as schools. Historic school buildings anchor the city's neighborhoods and are often of a higher construction quality than newer school buildings. Moreover, it is commonly more economical to upgrade and rehabilitate historic school structures than to construct new school facilities. New York must follow the lead of cities such as Chicago and Baltimore in integrating the rehabilitation of historic schools into the city's education initiatives.

3. A well-funded and independent Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Increased funding and staffing is needed to enable the Landmarks Preservation Commission to perform its essential mission and to facilitate critical performance improvements by enabling:

- a. Timely consideration and designation of historic properties
- b. Better and more efficient enforcement of the Landmarks Law

The current Landmarks Preservation Commission budget is only \$3 million (0.008% of New York City's \$38 billion budget). For the city's 1,065 individual landmarks and 77 historic districts, there are only 45 Landmarks Preservation Commission employees.

4. Commitment to Zoning Reform that Reinforces & Complements Historic Neighborhoods.

Zoning reform should begin with the protection of urban fabric in livable neighborhoods throughout the city. Where appropriate, mapping of contextual zoning around historic districts will encourage sympathetically-scaled new buildings in the areas surrounding designated historic districts. Contextual zoning is especially important around designated brownstone neighborhoods throughout the boroughs where there are many blocks of outstanding, low-scale historic buildings outside of the historic districts' boundaries. Rezoning to match the existing built fabric within historic districts will reinforce the strength of the district and could prevent as-of-right "block-busters" from destroying the contextual integrity of these landmark protected neighborhoods.

April 10, 2001

(over, please)

Over 125 Organizations Supporting the Preservation Platform

State Wide and Regional Organizations:

Art Deco Society
Docomomo US/Tri-State
Friends of Croton-Harlem Aquaduct
Preservation League of New York State
Regional Plan Association

City Wide Organizations:

Aesthetic Districts Committee
AIA New York Chapter
Brownstone Revival Coalition
Friends of Cast-Iron Architecture
Friends of Terra Cotta
Gotham Center for New York City History
Historic Districts Council
Historic Landmark Preservation Center
Metropolitan Historic Structures Association
The Municipal Art Society
New York Built Environment
New York Landmarks Conservancy
North River Historic Ship Society
Place Matters, a project of City Lore
and the Municipal Art Society
Preserve & Protect
Salvadori Center
Save America's Clocks
Victorian Society in America, Metropolitan
Chapter
Women's City Club of New York City

Brooklyn Organizations:

Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association
Bay Improvement Group
Bay Ridge Conservancy
Boerum Hill Association
Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition
Brooklyn Heights Association
Brownsville Heritage House, Inc.
Citizens for the Preservation of Windsor
Terrace
Cobble Hill Association
Community Board 17
DUMBO Neighborhood Association
Fort Greene Association, Inc.
The Gravesend Historical Society
Park Slope Civic Council
Sheepshead Bay Historical Society
State Street Block Association
State Street Coalition
Vinegar Hill Neighborhood Association
Wyckoff House & Association, Inc.

Bronx Organizations:

Bronx Landmarks Task Force
Fort Independence Park Neighborhood
Association
Friends of Longwood
Friends of Van Cortlandt Park
Jerome Park Conservancy
Kingsbridge-Riverdale-Van Cortlandt
Development Corporation
The Riverdale Historic District

Staten Island Organizations:

Alice Austen House Museum
Mud Lane Society for the Renaissance
of Stapleton
Preservation League of Staten Island
St. George Civic Association

Serpentine Art & Nature Common

Manhattan Organizations:

10th & Stuyvesant Streets Block Association
22 Street East Block Association
89 West Block Association
Association of Neighbors on the Upper East
Side
Association of Village Homeowners
Beaux Arts Alliance
Carnegie Hill Neighbors, Inc.
Chelsea Historic District Council
Clinton Special District Coalition
Coalition to Save the Naumburg Bandshell
Community Board 1
Community Board 2
Community Board 4
Community Board 5
Community Board 6
Community Board 8
Community Board 9
Community Board 11
Coogan Coalition
The Drive to Protect the Ladies' Mile District
East 7th Street Block Association
East 12th Street Block Association
East 78th Street Block Association –
Park/Lex
East 79th Street Neighborhood Association
East 83rd/84th Streets Block Association
East Side Rezoning Alliance
The Eighteenth Street Neighborhood
Alliance
Friends of the High Line
Friends of the Upper East Side Historic
Districts
Gramercy Neighborhood Associates
Gramercy Park Block Association
Greenwich Village Society for Historic
Preservation
Hamilton Heights-West Harlem Community
Preservation Organization
Harlem Heights Historical Society at
Columbia University
Harlem Historical Society
Historic Neighborhood Enhancement
Alliance Inc.
LANDMARK WEST!
Lexington Neighbors
Lower East Side Conservancy
Lower Washington Heights Neighborhood
Association
Merchant's House Museum
Morningside Heights Historic District
Committee
Morris-Jumel Mansion, Inc.
Mt. Morris Park Community Improvement
Association
Murray Hill Neighborhood Association
Roosevelt Island Historical Society
Save Gansevoort Market
SoHo Alliance
Stuyvesant Park Neighborhood Association
Treadwell Farms Historic District/East 60's
Property Owners Association
Tribeca Community Association
Tudor City Association
Turtle Bay Association
Union Square Community Coalition

Queens Organizations:

Bayside Historical Society
Beachside Bungalow Preservation
Association
Bowne House Historical Society
Broad Channel Civic Association
Central Queens Historical Association
Colonial Farmhouse Restoration Society of
Bellerose, d/b/a Queens County Farm
Museum
Douglaston Little Neck Historical Society
Greater Astoria Historical Society
Hunters Point Community Coalition
Jackson Heights Beautification Group
Kew Gardens Hills Civic Association
King Manor Museum
Poppenhusen Institute
Queens Civic Congress
Queens Historical Society
Queensborough Preservation League
Remsen Park Coalition, Inc.
Richmond Hill Historical Society
Stockholm Street Historic District
Sunnyside Foundation for Community
Planning & Preservation
Woodhaven Historical & Cultural Society

List in Formation as of March 25, 2002