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# BROOKLYN PRESERVATION COUNCIL FOUNDATION, INC.

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## STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF DESIGNATION OF THE PROPOSED BROOKLYN BOROUGH HALL HISTORIC DISTRICT

My name is Robert Furman and I am the President of the Brooklyn Preservation Council, an organization that assists communities in obtaining landmark protection and promotes historical commemoration. I am also completing a comprehensive history of Brooklyn Heights entitled "Brooklyn Heights: The Rise, Fall and Rise of America's First Suburb." Most of the buildings included in the historic district are in the Heights but are not within the existing Brooklyn Heights Historic District.

I am here in support of the Brooklyn Heights Association, which has tirelessly promoted preservation in the Heights, and Otis Pratt Pearsall, without whom there might not be a NYC Landmarks Commission.

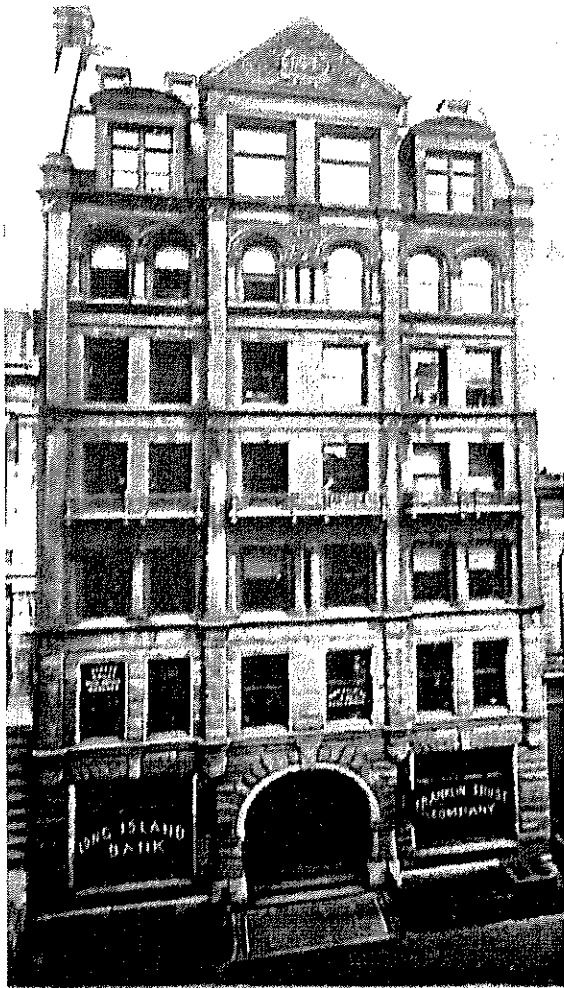
Designation of buildings in the downtown section of the Heights has become crucial with the demolition of the original 1857 Greek Revival headquarters of the Brooklyn Union Gas Company by St. Francis College.

Some of the greatest buildings in the Brooklyn Heights/Borough Hall area are proposed for designation as part of this historic district. My personal favorite is the 1920s *Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce Building*, which formerly carried the address of 66 Court Street, but was re-designated as 75 Livingston Street when it was converted for residential use in the early 1980s.

This is an Art Deco building with an unusual Gothic-influenced design, which has more in common with the Woolworth Building in Manhattan than with other 1920s office buildings.

This façade alone justifies the historic district's designation, and we urge the cooperators of the building to appreciate the importance of preserving its unique skin. All property owners are justifiably concerned with maintaining their freedom of action, especially when future modernizations may mitigate against preservation, but this unique structure is unquestionably worthy of saving.

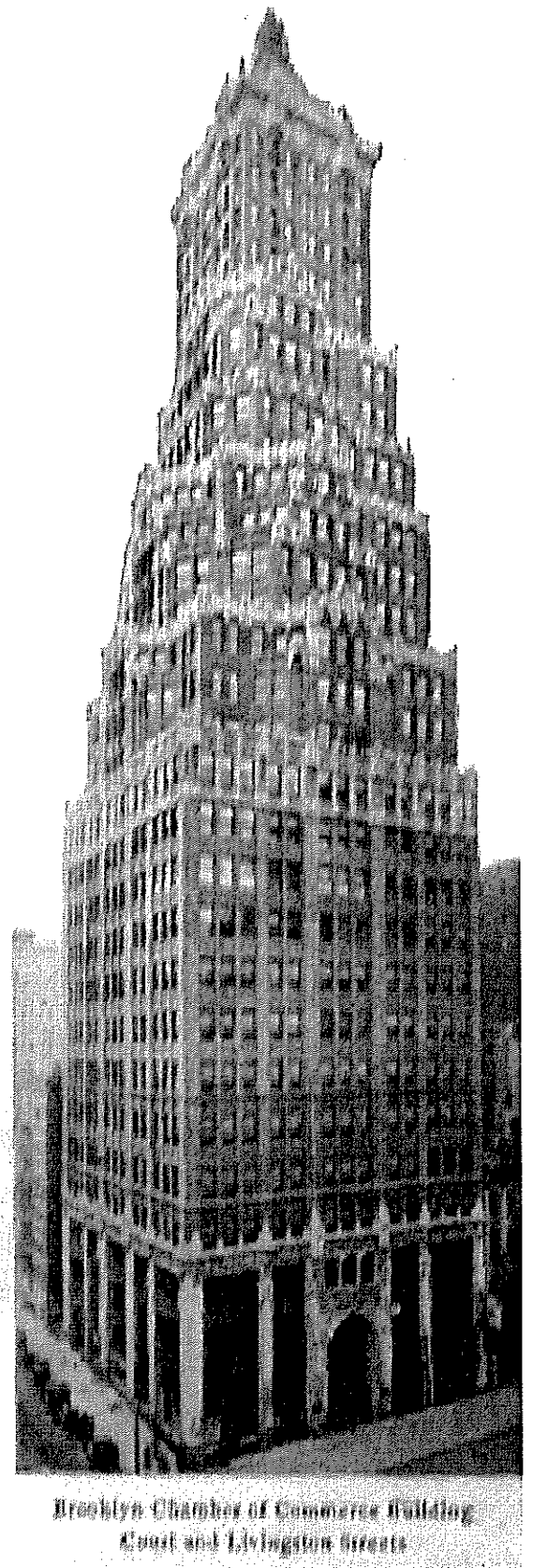
Figure 1 (Right) The *Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce Building* in 1929, shortly after its completion. While unmistakably Art Deco, Gothic elements perhaps derived from the Woolworth Building, are unmistakably also present. See especially the arched entryway and filials.



THE LONG ISLAND BANK

Figure 2 (Left) In 1897-1898 Remsen Street was known as the Long Island Bank Building but also housed the Franklin Trust

Company (Note the bank names on the ground floor windows.). Built for A.A. Low & Company, later tenants included other banks, the N.A.A.C.P. and Little Flower Children's Services. The now removed top floor is shown.



Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce Building  
Corner of Livingston Streets

Another building that should be mentioned is 186 Remsen Street, the Low Building, which Brooklyn and NYC mayor and Columbia University President Seth Low commissioned with some of the funds from the liquidation of his father's shipping firm, the *A.A. Low and Brother Company*. These funds enabled him to personally endow the *Low Memorial Library* at Columbia, named for his father, Abiel Abbot. We all know the A.A. Low mansion at 3 Pierrepoint Place in the Heights, perhaps its greatest surviving mansion.

The *Lawyer's Title Insurance Company Building* at 188 Montague Street is a Beaux Arts masterpiece eminently worthy of inclusion although little appreciated.

As I mentioned, these structures were not included in the original Brooklyn Heights Historic District which, understandably, while including almost the entire neighborhood, omitted these commercial buildings, perhaps because the concern at the time was townhouse preservation. This may also be an example of time altering perspectives, i.e., what appeared pedestrian in 1965 in 2011 seems worthy today.

We regret the omission from the district of the "bank row" on the north side of Montague Street near Clinton Street between Cadman Plaza West and Clinton, including the *Brooklyn Trust Company* (Chase) building, the *People's Trust Company* (Citibank), the *National Guaranty Trust Building* at 185 Montague, and of the *Franklin Trust Company Building*, on the southwest corner of Montague and Clinton Streets. In spite of this we believe that this designation is eminently worthy of approval.

Figure 3 A stately parade of 1920s high-rise office towers marches down Court Street from Montague Street, many of which are among the finest specimens of their type. From the right, they are 16, 26, and 32 Court Street. Also shown are 184, 188 and 200 Montague Street, which are included in the district. No. 188 Montague is the tall building to the right of 16 Court on the corner of Montague Street.





## Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums

INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

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250 West 57 Street • Suite 730 • New York, NY 10107-0700

Comments on the proposed Brooklyn Skyscraper Landmark District  
Presented by Mary Ann Rothman, Executive Director  
December 14, 2011

The Council of New York Cooperatives & Condominiums (CNYC Inc) is a membership organization for housing cooperatives and condominiums. More than 500,000 families live in coops and condos in New York City, in buildings that span the full economic spectrum from very modest housing to some very upscale dwellings. What we have in common is a commitment to our homes, our communities, and to this City where we have put down roots. I am here today to express my concerns about the impact that the proposed historic district designation would have on 75 Livingston Street, one of CNYC's member buildings.

It goes without saying that the past few years have been lean and uncertain for many New Yorkers. With high unemployment and stagnant wages in many industries, the cooling of the residential real estate market has posed a challenge for thousands of homeowners in multiple dwellings. This situation has been exacerbated by painful increases in the operating costs of residential buildings, most of which can be attributed to increased property taxes and new City regulations.

Including 75 Livingston Street in the historic district will create one more burden for these homeowners. Ordinary maintenance and repair, even projects like cleaning and painting that do not require a permit from the Department of Buildings, will require a discretionary permit from the Landmarks Commission. Critical façade, roof and sidewalk work are likely to be made much more expensive by the designation. Even for interior work within their apartments, residents will be required to seek the Commission's approval, again incurring substantial costs and delays.

The most recent Mayor's Management Report shows that LPC's regulatory performance has been trending downward in recent years as the number of designated

Please turn the page

buildings has increased. The published statistics show that the percentage of "Certificates of No Effect" issued within 10 days has declined from a high of 92% in FY09 to just 85% in FY11, and the percentage of Permits for Minor Work issued within 10 days has declined from a high of 90% in FY09 to 81% in FY11. Budget cuts announced by the Mayor suggest that this trend is likely to continue, inconveniencing homeowners in the process.

In the last five years, the City has imposed many new requirements on large residential buildings, seemingly without regard to the costs imposed on the homeowners. For example, new elevator inspection rules requiring an independent third party inspector have virtually doubled the cost of that necessary service. Local Law 11 work on large buildings has become dramatically more expensive as a result of the City's requirement that on-site safety inspectors be present to oversee significant portions of the work. The Green Buildings laws, passed in 2009, required the first annual benchmarking reports this year. These cost between \$250 and \$1000 per building, with an additional \$105 to Con Ed for the raw data. In the next couple of years, we will also be required to conduct extensive energy audits and retro-commissioning activities. New DEP rules requiring the elimination of #6 oil between now and 2015 will require some buildings to replace or upgrade their heating plants on short notice and often at substantial expense.

Additionally, water charges and property taxes have increased at a rate that far exceeds the rate of inflation. And the one program that has provided some limited financial incentive for capital improvements, the J-51 program, is expiring this year and may not even be renewed.

Of course we support public safety, environmental conservation, and historic preservation, but we feel the pinch of their costs. Continually driving up the cost of home ownership actually destroys the diversity and vibrancy of our neighborhoods by driving away seniors and the middle class. As homeowners and staunch supporters of our communities, we urge you to omit 75 Livingston Street from the proposed historic district.

**TESTIMONY OF THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION BEFORE  
THE CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING  
AND MARITIME USES ON THE DESIGNATION OF THE BOROUGH HALL  
SKYSCRAPER HISTORIC DISTRICT.**

**December 14, 2011**

Good morning Council Members. My name is Jenny Fernández, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Relations for the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District in Brooklyn.

The urbanization of Brooklyn began in earnest in the first decades of the 19th century. The Village of Brooklyn was chartered in 1816, and the City of Brooklyn was created less than 20 years later in 1836. The newly-formed municipal government quickly set out to build a proper city hall, which was located on the outer edge of the existing settlement at the intersection of Court, Joralemon, and Fulton Streets. While construction on Brooklyn City Hall (now Brooklyn Borough Hall) was delayed by the Panic of 1837 and was not completed until 1848, the finished structure was an imposing monument to the growth of the new city and a masterpiece of the Greek Revival style of architecture.

The neighborhood surrounding Brooklyn City Hall (now Brooklyn Borough Hall) developed rapidly during the mid-19th century. A number of grand civic structures went up on Joralemon Street, while many cultural institutions established themselves on the nearby stretch of Montague Street. Stores and other commercial buildings began to rise on Court Street around the time a horsecar route opened on the road in the 1850s. The area became Brooklyn's true downtown office district in the post-Civil War period as a series of taller commercial buildings were erected on Court Street and in the immediate vicinity. While most were later replaced by even taller skyscrapers, the Franklin Building remains a significant survivor of this period of development.

The growth of Downtown Brooklyn was greatly aided by the planning and construction of the Brooklyn Bridge, which opened in 1883, as well as by the erection of a network of elevated railroads during the late 1880s. Building heights continued to increase throughout the 1890s. Particularly notable was the Temple Bar Building, the last and tallest of a series of early skyscrapers designed by George L. Morse. When it was completed in 1901 the Temple Bar Building was lauded as the largest office building ever constructed in Brooklyn.

The City of Brooklyn was consolidated into Greater New York as the Borough of Brooklyn in 1898, a move that was widely supported by the downtown real estate developers. Commercial structures continued to rise in the area during the early 20th century, although none would best the height of the Temple Bar Building for more than a decade and a half.

New transportation improvements, including the opening of several important subway lines through Downtown Brooklyn, as well as the early planning efforts for a new Municipal Building, led many to speculate that the area was ready for a period of even greater commercial development. These predictions came to fruition in 1918 when the 22-story building at 32 Court Street was completed. Widely regarded as Brooklyn's first true skyscraper, the structure easily surpassed the height of the Temple Bar Building and helped initiate a local building boom that turned Court Street into Brooklyn's definitive skyscraper row. The 1920s saw the completion of the Municipal Building, followed soon after by the erection of the Remsen and Court Building, the Montague-Court Building, and the Court-Livingston Building (later renamed the Brooklyn 4 Chamber of Commerce Building) and 75 Livingston. These structures show the clear influence of the 1916 zoning resolution, particularly in their use of setbacks and slender towers, and feature architectural detailing in the neo-Romanesque and neo-Gothic styles that rivals that of any skyscraper erected in Greater New York. Other notable, if shorter, commercial buildings were erected on the adjacent blocks, including a number designed in the neo-Gothic style such as 186 Joralemon Street, 191 Joralemon Street, and 56 Court Street.

The Great Depression brought a halt to skyscraper construction in Downtown Brooklyn and throughout the city. By the mid 20th century development in the area had shifted to government-sponsored urban renewal projects, which eventually led to the demolition of many of the borough's historic commercial buildings. The skyscrapers on Court Street and the business structures on the adjacent blocks were amongst the few survivors of this period.

On December 14, 2010, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District in Brooklyn. Seven people spoke in support of designation, including representatives of the Brooklyn Heights Association, the Historic Districts Council, the New York City Landmarks Conservancy, and the Municipal Arts Society, and two owners of 75 Livingston Street; a representative of City Council Member Stephen Levin spoke in support of designation and asked the Commission to work with owners of 75 Livingston Street to address their concerns; Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz spoke in support of designation but expressed

concerns about the inclusion of 75 Livingston Street and the Brooklyn Municipal Building; a representative of State Assembly Member Joan L. Millman spoke in support of designation but noted that she believed 75 Livingston Street should be excluded from the district. Five people spoke in opposition to designation including representatives of the Brooklyn Law School, the Court-Livingston-Schermerhorn Business Improvement District, the Real Estate Board of New York, a representative of the owner of 26 Court Street, and a representative of the property manager for 188 Montague Street and 175 Remsen Street; six owners of 75 Livingston Street, including the president of the Board of Directors, spoke in opposition to including their building in the district. A letter in support of designation from State Senator Daniel Squadron, and a resolution in support of designation from Brooklyn Community Board 2, were also entered into the record at the public hearing. The Commission held numerous meetings and phone calls with the representatives of 75 Livingston and the Chair met personally with representatives several times to consider their issues and concerns with the designation. The Commission carefully evaluated their submission and fully understood their concerns. However, the Commission found that their arguments were not sufficient to exclude this building from the historic district based on merit. This building is one of the most important buildings in this historic district and is a strong contributor to the sense of place of the district. On September 13, 2011, the Commission voted unanimously to designate the Borough Hall Skyscraper historic district.

The ensemble of 21 buildings in the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District remain significant for their historic importance as the heart of Brooklyn's downtown office district and as notable examples of the skyscraper and tall office building typologies that reflect an important era of development for the borough of Brooklyn.

The Commission urges you to affirm this designation.





OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT  
**TESTIMONY BY BOROUGH PRESIDENT MARTY MARKOWITZ**  
**TO THE CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON**  
**LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USE**  
**REGARDING THE PROPOSED BOROUGH HALL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

**December 14, 2011**

I WANT TO THANK SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR BRAD LANDER AND FELLOW SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS, FOR ALLOWING ME TO TESTIFY ABOUT ESTABLISHING BROOKLYN'S FIRST COMMERCIAL SKYSCRAPER CENTER AS A HISTORIC DISTRICT.

AND I WANT TO SEND A SPECIAL SHOUT-OUT TO THE BROOKLYN HEIGHTS ASSOCIATION — ESPECIALLY JUDY STANTON AND OTIS PEARSALL — FOR ADVOCATING ON BEHALF OF THESE SKYSCRAPERS AND BOROUGH HALL.

IT WAS LARGELY THANKS TO OTIS, OF COURSE, THAT BROOKLYN HEIGHTS WAS DESIGNATED NEW YORK CITY'S FIRST HISTORIC DISTRICT.

THE AREA IN DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN UNDER CONSIDERATION IS A MONUMENT TO THE BOROUGH'S HISTORY, SHOWCASING MANY ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGIES.

AS THE <sup>COUNCIL</sup> ~~COMMISSION~~ CONSIDERS THE BOUNDARIES OF THIS DISTRICT, IT MUST DO SO IN A WAY THAT PRESERVES THE BUILDINGS WHILE RESPECTING THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE WHOSE LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS MAY BE AFFECTED BY THE CHANGES.

IN THAT REGARD, I HAVE CONCERNS REGARDING THE LANDMARKING OF 75 LIVINGSTON STREET.

WHEN I TESTIFIED BEFORE THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION (LPC) LAST DECEMBER, I EXPRESSED CONCERN AS TO WHETHER 75 LIVINGSTON STREET SHOULD REMAIN IN THE PROPOSED DISTRICT.

MY CONCERN STEMMED FROM WHETHER ITS RESIDENTS WOULD BE REASSURED THAT THE BUILDING COULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE GOVERNED BY A MASTER PLAN, APPROVED BY LPC AND THAT IS NOT FINANCIALLY ONEROUS.

THIS APPROVAL WOULD HAVE HAD TO COME WITH SOME UNDERSTANDING REGARDING THE POSSIBLE USE OF SYNTHETIC MATERIALS TO REPLACE ANY FAILING TERRA COTTA, WHILE BEING RESPONSIVE TO CHANGES ALREADY MADE TO WINDOWS AND WOULD NOT ADD ADDITIONAL MAINTENANCE AND ASSESSMENT FEES.

I APPLAUD THE DEMONSTRATED COMMITMENT OF HEIGHTS 75 OWNERS CORP. TO TACKLE FACADE UPGRADES WITH UTMOST RESPECT TO THIS BUILDING, THAT HAS OF ARCHITECTURAL MERIT AND IS A SYMBOL OF BROOKLYN'S 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY COMMERCE.

THE ANTICIPATED FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING THE FACADE WITH ITS DECORATIVE TERRA COTTA ORNAMENTATION AND DEALING WITH WINDOW REPLACEMENTS ARE VALID CONCERNS WHEN CONSIDERING WHETHER THIS BUILDING SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT.

WITH ALL THE TIME THAT HAS ELAPSED SINCE THE LPC HEARING AND FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING PART OF A HISTORIC DISTRICT, THE POSITION OF THE LEADERSHIP HAS NOT CHANGED.

ITS POSITION REMAINS THAT FUTURE REPAIR COSTS SUBJECT TO LPC REGULATIONS WOULD BE A FINANCIAL BURDEN.

THEREFORE, I AM URGING THE CITY COUNCIL TO EXCLUDE 75 LIVINGSTON STREET FROM THE DESIGNATED HISTORIC DISTRICT.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS — AND A HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

HEIGHTS

75

OWNERS CORP. 75 LIVINGSTON STREET BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201

**Statement before Land Use Subcommittee on Landmarks regarding the Brooklyn  
Skyscraper Historic District  
December 14, 2011**

My name is Ellen Murphy and I am President of the Board of Directors of the Heights 75 Owners Corporation. I am grateful for this chance to speak to you about why we feel that our building at 75 Livingston Street should not be included in the Brooklyn Skyscraper Historic District. First I would like to tell you about our building and our residents.

75 Livingston Street was built in 1927, designed by Abraham Simberg. The original address was 66 Court Street but when the building was converted to a co-op in the 1980s the entrance was moved to the current space which was the original service entrance. 66 Court Street is now occupied by a bank and the entrance no longer exists. By the early 1930's the building's owners were bankrupt and title changed hands many times. By the late 1970's the building had been vacant for almost a decade. In 1982, it was converted to a co-op. Today we have 96 apartments and a community of middle class people with a mixture of families, working couples and retirees. 15% of the apartments are occupied by original owners who have lived there since the early 1980's. More than half of our residents have been here for more than 10 years.

We are opposed to the landmark designation not because we don't value our building but because the designation represents an unneeded regulation from the LPC and also because of the unintended consequences for our shareholders. Here are our specific concerns:

**1. We have already invested a lot of money to restore our building.** Over the past 22 years we invested \$6 million in restoration projects, primarily as a result of Local Law 10/11. For more than 50 years there had been virtually no maintenance of the building so the cost of façade repairs almost crushed the co-op. The façade work was so expensive because we hired top flight architects to help us with restoration to the high standards of a landmark building even though we were not one. As an example, we restored the terra cotta features of the building with modern materials rather than just strip it off as we could have done. The firm we used for all this work confirmed that we paid three times what it would have cost just to remove the terra cotta so we could preserve it as it was in 1927. Because it's an old building, not all that well constructed in 1927 and poorly maintained, we have to spend money on the roof and façade every year, not just for LL 10/11 work. And it is expensive. To pay for it our shareholders have had six special assessments since 2000 -- an average of \$65,000 per apartment -- as well as annual maintenance increases which have averaged 4% per year to pay for smaller façade projects. Just last week we had to tell our families that we will have yet another special assessment in 2012 along with a maintenance increase. The reason? We have to do work on the exterior of the building because the August hurricane caused leaks in 17 of our 96 apartments.

2. Landmark designation adds to our costs and nothing else. Many people seem to believe that having a landmark designation automatically increases property values but there is no evidence to support that position. In fact, our survey of area real estate brokers shows that landmark designation has nothing to do with property values. What does impact value is proximity to transportation, schools and the building's finances. What has also been confirmed by our engineers is that the required filings and interactions with LPC as well as higher contractor and material costs will add at least 5% to the cost of any project that we have to do. We have been advised by LPC to develop a master plan of façade, windows, and lighting for the building and our engineers estimate the cost for such a plan is a minimum of \$20,000. For shareholders doing apartment renovations requiring building permits, LPC sign off is required and the shareholders will have additional costs and time in getting these approvals. LPC Chairman Tierney has even said that the designation might cost more at the beginning but he seems not to understand that owners have ongoing costs to pay architects, engineers and consultants to file with LPC and respond to questions as well as contractor and material costs.

Another cost factor is the impact of the designation on the residents of the apartments at the top of the building who have single pane windows to take advantage of the spectacular views from the top of our building. We have been advised by LPC that these unobstructed views will not be allowed when the windows need to be replaced because the LPC approved window will have to look like the original windows which had at least 6 panes of glass. Those views add value and we have consulted with real estate professionals who estimate the loss of the view at 5% of the asking price at a minimum. Most people don't think about replacing windows very often but they don't last forever, particularly when we have the energy-retrofitting codes of New York City to consider.

3. Taken alone, the landmark designation might be manageable for us. However in the past two years, the City Council has passed six new local laws that will cost us money to comply. All these apply to us because our building exceeds 50,000 sq. ft. Each of these requires us to incur engineering and consulting fees to get City approval before we do the work. Our total costs are not yet known. These requirements are:

1. Determining how to reduce energy used to light hallways and lobbies
2. Installing back flow preventers on the water main to prevent water from re-entering City water supply
3. Performing energy audits to cover all building systems, including the façade
4. Requiring all renovations requiring a permit to meet energy conservation standards as if it was new construction.
5. Benchmarking energy and water use and upload to a public EPA database
6. Upgrading lighting systems to meet codes in effect in July 2010

These new codes all have worthy objectives but the costs to comply within mandated timeframes can't be ignored particularly if you have a residential building like ours. These costs are all coming at a time when the real estate tax abatement program is due to be phased out in 2012 which will take nearly \$150,000 away from us.

4. We are concerned about pressure that the landmark designation and all the other costs will have on our property values. Our shareholders have invested a lot of money in our building because we had to and chose the most costly methods to preserve our building's architectural integrity. But it's meant that we have not been able to accumulate money for reserves with funds that were not needed almost immediately for building work. In the 1980's a

settlement with the sponsor resulted in the transfer of a number of apartments which had to be sold to pay for the first façade project rather than going to build reserve funds.

Recent developments in the real estate and mortgage markets mean that we must build reserve funds just at the time when it's most difficult. New mortgage underwriting standards for condos (increasingly applied to co-ops as well) mandate that we reserve 10% of our annual operating expenses or at least \$200,000 each year. This will add to monthly maintenance but if we fail to reserve at this level potential buyers may have trouble getting a mortgage to buy apartments in our building. We know that at least one major bank has lowered the loan to value ratio of our building at 65% which means buyers have to come in with more cash than even the building requires. With our record of special assessments, buyers may think twice about our building when so many new buildings in the area are options for them.

We must replace our underlying mortgage and line of credit in 2012 and we are concerned about our ability to get a mortgage on the favorable terms we have now. Like other buildings, our resales are slow and prices are flat. With the uncertainty of the general economy, we know that apartment values matter. Those values are impacted much more quickly by financial issues than a landmark designation.

According to the LPC website, the Landmark Law was passed amid growing concern that important buildings were being lost despite the fact that they could be reused. We believe that we have more than lived up to the goals of that legislation, not because we were required to do so but because our building is important to us. There is no possibility that this building will be lost or changed in any significant way from its 1927 appearance. But there is a real chance that the families who live here will be paying a surcharge for their voluntary compliance and good citizenship. And that's just not fair. I have attached to my testimony some statements from residents who could not be here today about that personal impact on them. No one has yet been able to explain either the tangible benefit to our building if it stays in the district or the damage to the district if our building is excluded.

We have appreciated the support of our local Brooklyn elected officials – Borough President Marty Markowitz, Assembly member Joan Millman and Senator Daniel Squadron. They don't have a say in this matter but you do. We hope that you and the City Council will give serious consideration to our concerns and exclude our building from this historic district.

## Ellen Murphy

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 11, 2011 9:17 PM  
**To:** Ellen Murphy  
**Subject:** [REDACTED]

I am vehemently opposed to Landmark status for 75 Livingston street. I moved to 75 Livingston st. In summer of 1999. It was more affordable back then. Now I am retired and a senior citizen of 77 years. I have had to pay six assessments since 1999 totaling over \$25,000 and counting. My maintenance has increased 30% plus. My former next store neighbors moved out last year because they could no longer afford their apartment when he retired. I am not the only senior feeling the financial pinch in this building. Also, the majority of the tenant shareholders have growing families. We are middle class and not a wealthy group.

I have heard the report from our major building repair firm. Landmark status will result in higher costs and costly delays. This is the only residential building to be considered in this plan. Why? Our building has diligently spent millions in facade and interior renovations. We did it on our own and will continue to do so.

Previously, I lived in Clinton Hill under Landmark designation. I was President and on their Board for 20 years. I remember very well the difficulties we had with Landmarks in trying to replace 100 year old windows. We couldn't afford it. To this day that building continues to patch those windows ; paint is holding them together. I paid over \$4000 in 1999 to put in new double hung windows in my apartment here facing the court street side. What happens to the high floors at 75 Livingston where those tenant shareholders put in Tilt and Turn windows to take advantage of the breathtaking views? If they are forced to return to the old style double hung window it will be a severe financial blow.

Please reconsider. Landmark status for 75 Livingston will be an added financial burden we cannot afford and it is not necessary. Already the city is removing its tax abatement program. Seniors, retirees, disabled and middle class families are being shoved out of downtown Brooklyn.

Resident at 75 Livingston Street

In spite of a serious law-suit and the fact that no one could sell an apartment or get a mortgage, 19 years ago, my wife and I purchased our co-op in 75 Livingston St. We loved our space and the strong community we were joining.

Little did we know that our wonderful building was near to becoming a proverbial "money-pit." Not long after we moved in, Local Law 10 was passed and we learned that, since its construction in the mid 1920s, no work had ever been done to maintain the facade. Suddenly, 100 shareholders were faced with an assessment of almost \$2 million. This was just the beginning.

Over the years shareholders have continued to pay several very costly assessments. Why? Because we love and respect our building, our homes, and the single most important economic investment of each and every shareholder. While we know we're not architecturally significant, we also know we're one of the few lovely sights in our immediate area.

Hence, no shortcuts have been taken and, throughout all the mandated structural improvements, we have maintained the integrity of our facade: it has been restored exactly as it was built. We did this with respect for our building and absolutely no help from any city agency.

Over the years my wife and I have spent well over \$150,000 to keep both the exterior and interior of 75 Livingston in pristine condition. As our maintenance is already very high these assessments are a significant additional burden.

The shareholders of 75 Livingston Street have proven, over nearly 20 years, that we go above and beyond the call of duty to maintain our home. So, I fail to see how adding a layer of bureaucracy between us and our building will result in anything other than delays and additional costs. And at a time of great economic uncertainty, when people are losing their jobs and the cost of living continually increases, it makes no sense to saddle a group of responsible middle class home-owners with additional financial strain.

As I was finishing this letter, I received a call from a friend in France. When I told her that the landmarks commission wanted to designate our building she couldn't initially understand why we were so adamantly against this. Everyone in France wants their building to be declared historical. Why? Because in France, when a building is landmarked, the state pays for all repairs. I think this is an excellent idea. If the Landmarks Commission so strongly feels our building should be landmarked, we should let them preserve its and their integrity by paying for it.

We purchased in 75 Livingston Street in 2010 because we wanted to stay in Brooklyn Heights, within proximity of good public schools but without taking on high costs of other Brooklyn Heights coops. This is our first apartment and we are a young working family with a small child so it is important for us to keep our expenses low, considering the cost of education.

Before we moved in last year, we needed to renovate to maximize the space we have. Since I am a licensed architect, I was able to avoid the costs of filing with LPC. But I still had delays which seemed unwarranted to me and caused us to have to pay rent and mortgage for an additional period of time.

We are also mindful of the fact that when it is time to sell our apartment, we do not want prospective buyers to be turned off by an overly expensive maintenance fee ratio to the price of our apartment. Extensive additional landmarking related costs will surely increase the maintenance fee that may become more difficult to accept and even more difficult to a buyer.



## 75 Livingston Shareholder

I am retired from the federal government and my pension is my income. I have lived at 75 Livingston since 1998 and during that time I have paid my mortgage, maintenance and more than \$25,000 in special assessments for my small one bedroom apartment. I had to get a home equity loan to pay the largest assessment. Recently I applied to Chase to refinance my mortgage to take advantage of the low rates and try to pay off the home equity loan. Chase has told me that they will only finance 65% of the value of my apartment which is even more strict than the building's rule that only 75% of the value can be borrowed. Chase says this is a result of not only the current economic conditions but because mortgages are sold to the federal government these days so they must be very conservative. I am worried that I will not be able to refinance. Without this refinance, I am reaching the limit of what I can pay in assessments and increased maintenance. There has been no increase in my pension for two years and although there will be a small increase in January it is taken up by the increased costs at my building and rate hikes for health insurance. I want to stay in my apartment but I can see the day coming when I will have to leave. When I do, it will be to leave New York.

Our apartment is on the 29th floor of 75 Livingston Street. When we recently renovated our apartment, we replaced the bulky, double hung windows with single pane flat-paneled tilt and turn windows. The changes cost \$87,000. We kept with the design many other units of the building had already adopted. The windows are uniform, and in no way detract from the building. The subsequent views of Brooklyn and the harbor I now have were a serious consideration when I renovated the apartment. It is designed around the magnificent views. The resale value would be decremented by several hundred thousand dollars if I were forced to re-adopt the tiny, inefficient, double-hung windows of yore. This was a factor in calculating the expense and effort I put into the renovation.

Most of the units in our building have changed their windows (to a uniform design) that avails them of the wonderful views of Brooklyn. Our building has over 100 units. The aggregate value that would be destroyed if they were all compelled to go back to less inviting windows, for authenticity, would be extreme and unnecessary. The new design in no way detracts from the glamor of our building. Banning them for the sake of keeping a building original is unnecessary. We have been caring for this building since before anyone external cared.

For at least the last 7 years, tenants have absorbed a tremendous number of special assessments to keep our building in its glorious state. We have been excellent stewards of the building, even during the 1980's and 1990's when the rest of the neighborhood was neglected. For at least the last 3 years, my special assessments alone (as one of the higher shareholders of the building) have been averaging \$400 a month. ***This is on top of a considerable monthly maintenance charge of \$3000 which is on top of my mortgage.*** In addition, during the last 5 years, I have been assessed in lump sum special assessments over \$25,000 for additional facade work. This is for a 1700 sf unit. We already comply with Local Law 11 and a myriad of other ordinances.

Our wonderful stewardship has kept the building in beautiful shape even though we have not been able to renovate our lobby because we don't have the money. Even in leaner the times of the past decades, we cared for it. As owners have refined the units, we have become even more obsessive about keeping the building in its original beauty. The only result of imposing landmark upon us would be higher costs and for some of us, the loss of stunning views of Brooklyn. If landmarking were not such a rigid process, there would probably be less opposition, but if a building is landmarked, it must comply with all rules. In our building's case, this would wind up becoming an economic burden and drastically reducing the aesthetics of the units.

Please afford us the respect of continuing to maintaining the building as we have for 30 years.

**Ellen Murphy**

**From:**

Monday, December 12, 2011 1:13 AM

**Sent:**

Murphy, Ellen

**To:**

**Subject:**

To be anonymous:

During 26 years of residence as owner/occupants of Heights 75, we have owned two apartments and raised two children -- both educated strictly through New York public schools. We sold the first apartment in 1996 after 12 years of being steeply "under water" due to market conditions and excessive building assessments. Due to capital assessments totaling at least \$28,000 during our ten years there, we suffered a loss in those apartment shares of \$35,000.

In January 1996, we purchased our second apartment, in which we currently reside, at a foreclosure price of \$35,000. Since then, our capital assessments (including scheduled assessments for 2012 and required window replacements), have totaled \$62,000.

These sums do not include an average of over \$20,100 annual in regular maintenance charges (including underlying mortgage interest and real estate taxes) paid to rent our apartment from the cooperative corporation for the last 16 years.

We are both freelance subcontractors (writer & theater artist). Available work in our fields has substantially declined for the last decade. Our combined earned income for a family of four has not exceeded \$59,000 since 2006 and most likely never again will. Our self-paid "sole proprietor" health insurance premiums for the last two years totaled \$32,400, an average \$1,350 per month, not including uncovered prescription drug co-pays for a special needs child totaling nearly \$10,000, BEFORE medical co-pays for regular health care and Rx's for the other three family members. We also shoulder college tuition for our older child at a university offering no scholarship or grants of any kind.

We have eliminated every extra in our budget but, must constantly dip into retirement savings to cover ongoing living expenses. In 2011, we were forced to withdraw \$45,000 from retirement savings for expenses including maintenance fees and capital assessments, apartment insurance, food, health insurance, college tuition and uncovered medical bills.

This family is not starving. For now, we have a roof over our heads. But to add additional costs to living expenses by rendering Heights 75 Owners Corp. a "landmark" building will definitely be the straw that breaks our backs. If and when York City adds that unnecessary burden upon our costs, this family must sell our space in a building that we helped to save, which has been our home for nearly 3 decades -- and leave entirely. Regretfully, other cities and states may prove far more appreciative of hard working middle class families than New York City and state currently seem to be. For a city supposedly caring for its middle class, the stupidity of proposing to "preserve" a well preserved building at the expense of the residents who saved it defies belief.

## **A PLEA TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL TO PROTECT THE RESIDENTS OF 75 LIVINGSTON STREET**

December 2011

Dear City Council Members:

We are proud residents of 75 Livingston and I hope you will take our request to heart. The City Council is our last chance to have our concerns heard and I feel it is the responsibility of the New York City Council to carefully weigh all of the numerous issues involved in the land marking process. If you do, I am confident that you will understand our request to be carved out of this new Downtown Brooklyn district.

We have met with Borough President Marty Markowitz, State Senator Daniel Squadron and State Assemblymember Joan Millman and were happy to learn that they oppose land marking 75 Livingston Street as the only residential building in the proposed Skyscraper District. They understood that the economics of a commercial building or large office tower are totally different than the economics of a cooperative apartment building where individual shareholders and families are struggling in this economy.

It is simply not fair to only focus solely on "architectural merit" as part of this discussion and not take into account these personal family stories and issues, because this ultimately isn't just about architecture...it's about peoples' homes. We urge you, as our elected representatives, to take into consideration how your public policy decisions on this proposal will impact families and lives, not just building facades.

While this issue of "architectural merit" is questionable in its own right, based on some of the incredibly non-descript Court Street buildings that are included in this district, we again hope that you will look beyond the narrow focus of single-focus advocacy groups like the Brooklyn Heights Association (who should be ashamed of themselves for their indifference to the very real concerns of their neighbors here at 75 Livingston) and do the right thing for families looking to the City Council for leadership and assistance.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

**Ellen Murphy**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 12, 2011 8:55 AM  
**To:** 'ellenmurphy2@verizon.net'  
**Subject:** LANDMARK PROPOSAL

I am writing this to address the proposal to designate 75 Livingston St. as a landmark building I have lived in this building for almost 30 years. I am one of the few "original" tenants still in the building.

For the past 9 years, I have worked as an attorney for The Children's Law Center in the Bronx. Because it is a not for profit, my income is extremely modest. Due to recent budget cuts, all salaries have been frozen for the foreseeable future.

I am a single woman and, therefore, the sole source of income. The resulting increased costs from designating 75 Livingston a landmark would make my continued presence at my home of 30 plus years cost prohibitive and untenable. Thank you for all the efforts you have made to address this

Deborah Gould

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Dear Council Members:

We are writing to oppose the inclusion of our cooperative building - 75 Livingston Street - in the downtown Brooklyn skyscraper landmark district.

The primary reason that we bought our apartment (actually two apartments that we combined) which constitutes the 23<sup>rd</sup> floor of our building, was because of the incredible views of Brooklyn and Manhattan. We did a complete and extremely costly renovation, of which we spent close to \$40,000 (15 years ago!) just to replace the old multi-paned windows - which obstructed the view - with tilt-turn single pane windows. We also spent considerable additional money to install sprinklers to enable us to replace the lot-line wired windows.

The most outstanding feature of our apartment is the 30 single pane windows with their incredible views. Under the proposed landmarking proposal, we would not be able to retain single pane windows when they need to be replaced, which would be a huge detriment to the future value of our apartment and render useless the considerable funds we have expended to increase the value of this apartment. In addition, it so happens that, over the past 15 years, we have had several times to replace the glass in many of these windows, due to damage caused by work on the exterior of the building or by wind. We shudder to think that, under the new law, we would have to install multi-paned windows in a scattershot fashion when replacing existing windows!

It would be an extreme hardship to us were the value of our apartment to fall dramatically because of the inability to keep single pane windows, and also because of the demonstrated fact that landmarking will not increase the overall value of the building's apartments.

Our building sits on the far edge of the proposed district. As it is a residential cooperative, the possibility that it would be torn down is totally remote. Rather, the coop, through its shareholders, has spent many, many millions of dollars repairing the facade and bringing a poorly-designed and shoddily built building into much better shape. The many assessments have been paid by the individuals living in the building. We are not a faceless organization! The coop has taken extreme care, WITHOUT ANY REQUIREMENTS, to retain the correct architectural appearance and validity of the exterior of our building.

It does not seem fair to punish our building and individual shareholders with additional costs and hoops to jump through in order to meet landmarking requirements, when we are already maintaining the building voluntarily in a most appropriate fashion.

Sincerely,

Pamela and Arnold Lehman, #23A

We have lived at 75 Livingston Street for close to thirty years. Throughout that time, the residents of the building have sacrificed, repeatedly, in order to expend hundreds of thousands of dollars for façade work to maintain the architectural integrity of the building and ensure that it is safe and in compliance with local laws. Soon after the building became a co-op, in 1982, a number of other residents on the block commented to us about the significant improvement there was to the block, and the area in general, due to 75 Livingston Street being properly taken care of. The building has strived, all this time (and we think, successfully), to maintain these high standards.

We have proven our commitment to the upkeep and well-being of this building; and, we have fought for its architectural integrity when we tried to change the zoning law to prevent the construction of the intrusive sliver building and its sister extension. It was the residents of the building who worked to try to preserve the character of the building, no civic organization came to our assistance.

Today, the majority of the building's residents oppose the inclusion of our building in the proposed Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District. We still want to preserve the building that we have cared for, for 30 years, without unnecessary additional expense or unnecessary oversight. We ask the Council to accord deference to the position of the residents and exclude us from the District. Thank you.

Barbara Zahler-Gringer and Martin Gringer

Resident at 75 Livingston Street

We bought in this building 5 years ago a few weeks before the birth of our son. The largest reason was because the building is zoned for an up-and-coming public school (P.S. 261) where my son now attends kindergarten.

75 Livingston is a great, old building. But, like many older structures, it needs a great deal of care to ensure its upkeep. As someone who does care (deeply) about my family, my neighbors and my neighborhood - I joined the board a few years after we moved in and served in that capacity for two years. I did so because I wanted to remain close to our family's single largest financial investment. Our biggest problem as a building community is our inability, due to the original agreement put in place by the co-op sponsor, to generate income from our street level tenants. This point severely impacts all of the families in our building and likely makes us unique in the footprint of the proposed landmark area. From the lack of retail income comes a very bleak financial picture. Every dollar required for a boiler fix, facade improvements or an upgrade in healthcare for our superintendent, comes directly from the families in the building.

Since the time we moved into the building in 2006, my family has been subject to assessments totalling just over \$45,000. I cannot overstate the impact that these funds leaving our bank account has had on the college savings for our son. We have also seen our maintenance increase in the high single digits almost every year. Worst is the impact that I am certain ongoing assessments will have on our ability to sell in the future. Our apartment is worth less than it was when we bought, we have put in more money still and the assessments (along with the promise of more should landmark status be approved) is essentially acting as a second mortgage.

In a year when we debate Presidential politics and the affect various tax plans will have on middle class families across the country, please don't require hard working, dual-income families like ours to be subject to a landmark tax that will further injure our financial picture. On behalf of myself, my wife and our son, I make this heartfelt plea.



December 11, 2011

Dear Councilman Levin,

I am a seven-year resident of 75 Livingston Street in Brooklyn. I write to register my strong opposition to our building's inclusion in the landmark district and request that we be excluded from this new designation.

As shareholders, we are already burdened with enormous and continuing costs to maintain and upgrade our building. In fact, since I purchased apartment 24B in 2004, I have been saddled with assessments totaling nearly 10 percent of the purchase price and a monthly maintenance that has increased by nearly 20 percent during the same period. I might add that these increases have taken place during a challenging time economically.

We are a middle-class, residential building whose shareholders cannot afford the additional expenses that will result from a landmark designation. The truth is excluding 75 Livingston from the designation will have no negative impact on the building or the neighborhood. As a cooperative, we have a strong record of making sustained and large investments in the maintenance and improvement of our building. However, including us in the landmark designation will create an enormous additional burden for individual shareholders who, as I outline above, already pay a steep price.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Brown

Resident at 75 Livingston Street

We bought in this building 15 years ago. The largest reason because it was a truly amazing, affordable building in a great area.

75 Livingston is a great, old building and we have been continually impressed about how the board has worked to keep it that way. But, like many older structures, it needs a great deal of care to ensure its upkeep. As a couple who cares deeply about our home, our neighbor's and our neighborhood – we have loved living at 75 Livingston. After living in the building for 15 years we have found that our biggest problem as a building community is our inability, due to the original agreement put in place by the co-op sponsor, to generate income from our street level tenants. This point severely impacts all of the families in our building and likely makes us unique in the footprint of the proposed landmark area. From the lack of retail income comes a very bleak financial picture. Every dollar required for a boiler fix, facade improvements or an upgrade in healthcare for our superintendent, comes directly from the families in the building.

Since the time we moved into the building in 1997, we have been subject to assessments totaling over \$100,000. We have also seen our maintenance increase numerous times. We have a very unique apartment that has been a truly wonderful home for us, but due to the high maintenance and history of assessments, we are very concerned about the impact that these will have on our ability to sell in the future.

People leave NYC everyday because of the high costs of living here; we make it work because we can't think of leaving 75 Livingston and the home we have created in Brooklyn Heights. So we ask you as our elected official to do your part in ensuring that our neighbors and we can stay by voting against this landmark tax that will further injure our financial picture. On behalf of myself and my partner, I make this heartfelt plea.

**CASE STUDY IN IMPACT PROPOSED LANDMARKING IS ALREADY  
HAVING ON SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE PROPOSED  
DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN DISTRICT  
December 8, 2011**

A small retail food operator is attempting to open a storefront within the district.

After signing his lease in August, his project has languished for close to five months.

He is attempting modest improvement to his storefront and to widen his door to make egress into this shop easier.

After spending six-weeks in the City's 10-day "fast track" program, he was told he would have to make a formal application to LPC. He has spent the last three months going back and forth with LPC on his proposed changes without resolution. His free rent period has ended, and his store is not open.

Instead of renovating the storefront, he has chosen to not improve it. He can no longer afford the cost of the renovation or not being open. His employees are also not getting paid.

He has asked that his name not be used until he opens his store because he is worried that if he complains about LPC he will receive more scrutiny from the City.

December 11, 2011

Dear Council Members:

I have lived and worked as a residential and commercial real estate broker in the Downtown Brooklyn area for over 35 years. I owned several properties in Landmark areas. In addition to my long term involvement with Landmark properties and non Landmark properties, I have a commercial brokerage that services the Downtown Brooklyn area. It is most shocking to me that in this poor economy there are those, both in government and advocates of landmarking, who want to raise the cost of our living and working in Downtown Brooklyn.

I am an Executive Board member of the Court Livingston Schermerhorn Business Improvement District (CLSBID). As a commercial broker, the small businesses we are servicing, who are struggling to stay alive, know that the additional costs will be passed along to them. They are terrified of the prospect of the costs, time and frustrations of dealing with Landmarks. Small businesses consider Landmarks an adversary. How can we in Downtown Brooklyn compete with lower Manhattan when tenants have to deal with the cumbersome and costly landmarking process? Downtown Brooklyn perennially lags Manhattan, lower and middle, on all economic indicators -- adding landmark regulations just adds insult to injury.

I have been called as an expert witness in real estate matters in the involved area many times. I have just conducted a survey of six large residential brokerages. It is my opinion and the opinion of all of the senior brokers surveyed that no incremental value can be attributed to the landmarking of a building in this area. In fact, the exact opposite is true. People would prefer buying in a non Landmark area as the buyers would very much prefer not to incur all the extra costs and delays involved in going through the landmarking process for an alteration and or renovation.

I live at 75 Livingston Street and over the past ten years we have had six (6) material assessments. We do not need the burden of additional costs, time and effort of going through Landmarks to move a wall in our units or repair a lintel.

Sincerely,

Paula Ingram

From: [REDACTED]  
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 11:03:28 -0500  
To: Ellen Murphy<ellenmurphy2@verizon.net>  
Cc: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Landmark opposition

Ellen-- As you know, I am opposed to the inclusion of our building, 75 Livingston Street, in the proposed landmarked district. Besides the fact that I do not see any logic whatsoever in including many of the buildings on Court Street south of Joralemon, I am troubled by the undue burden landmarking will have on our building, and on me, personally. Given our building's remarkable efforts to voluntarily maintain and preserve our building, and the obvious pride we all share in the building, the proposed additional requirements are especially troublesome.

On a personal level, my wife and I are expecting our third child in three weeks, and so we expect the coming additional personal expenses that accompany such a life-changing event. Moving to 75 Livingston Street represented a logical step in our family's progression from a smaller apartment to one with more space. We expect that there will be another step for us, whereby we will one day sell our apartment, likely within the next few years. With that slightly longer term outlook, I am troubled by the additional costs landmarking will have on our building that will, as a result, affect our resale value and the ease with which we will be able to sell. We are a young family building our lives, and are especially sensitive to changes in financial obligations.

We were just levied an additional assessment, in large part due to the continuing work on our building initiated a few years ago, and all in the name of maintaining the beauty and excellence of the building. There will certainly be more, and additional regulations imposed by the proposed landmarking will increase all of them.

I, and my family, love living at 75 Livingston Street. It is where our second child was born and will be where our third child comes home. We have created such fond memories here and would be so incredibly upset if we were forced to leave due to additional financial constraints involuntarily placed upon us.

Please let me know what I can do to help shed light on the fact that landmarking, in addition to being functionally unnecessary for our residents, will add another layer of financial burdens on me, my family and fellow residents.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

To Whom it May Concern:

We bought our apartment at 75 Livingston in 1997, back when Brooklyn real estate was affordable for your average couple. When we moved in, the Brooklyn Heights Neighborhood Association had yet to approve building the movie theatre on Court Street, an eyesore of a building that blocked much of our light and brought late-night street noise and crowding. As long-term residents of Brooklyn, we're well aware that not every change to our neighborhood is for the better.

Over these years we also saw the city change codes for facades, and we contributed to assessments that paid to upgrade our exterior, remake our historic terra cotta ornamentation and shore up our building. We paid thousands of dollars to overhaul our basement and sub-basements against flooding, we paid thousands to upgrade our elevators and hallways, we paid maintenance increases to cover the cost of damage and construction delays from historic weather patterns.

We've been fortunate to live in our building and in the neighborhood.

We send our daughter to the public school in our zone, love the community our building has provided, and like many New Yorkers, we make do as a family with the space we bought as a young couple. Our budgets are not limitless however. Our maintenance was high when we moved in and much much higher 15 years later. We have lived for years now with back-to-back special assessments. The prospect of yet another series of payments amidst an economy that has not been kind to our bank accounts, in a city that is firing teachers and cutting back on garbage services is daunting and disappointing.

Sarah Slobin  
Eric Palma  
Apartment 9B

Statement of Jane McGroarty, President of the Brooklyn Heights Association, to the City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses  
RE: BOROUGH HALL SKYSCRAPER HISTORIC DISTRICT, LU No.536.

Good morning Chairman Lander and Members of the Committee: My name is Jane McGroarty. I am President of the Brooklyn Heights Association, speaking on behalf of the Association, in strong support of the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District. I am an architect, with experience working in landmarked buildings throughout the city, and I would welcome any questions from members of this Committee.

The proposed district is located on the eastern periphery of the Brooklyn Heights Historic District, which was the first to be designated in New York City. As proposed, the Borough Hall Skyscraper District accords preservation status to a collection of 21 architecturally distinctive large scale early 20<sup>th</sup> century office buildings, the most decorative of which being 75 Livingston Street.

This cluster of tall buildings that form this district had a central role in Brooklyn's development and illustrates an important chapter of New York City's history. As Commission Chair Tierney has said, "These were the skyscrapers of their day which gave Brooklyn its commercial heart and its skyline."

I hope that you all will read the Landmarks Commission's Designation Report that outlines the historic and architectural significance of the proposed district and why it is worthy of protection and preservation.

The BHA supports the district's designation, especially because it includes 75 Livingston Street (the former Chamber of Commerce Building which is now residential above the first story). Its current shareholders have been responsible stewards and it is emblematic of the richly varied architecture of the other buildings forming this historic civic center of downtown Brooklyn.

Chairman Lander, our members hope that you will lead your subcommittee on landmarks to respect and abide by the judgment of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. We ask that you 'keep your eyes on the prize' by approving the Borough Hall Skyscraper District with its proposed boundaries intact.

As a longtime resident of Brooklyn Heights and as an architect, I know that this landmarking initiative will not prevent development because the heights and bulk are determined by zoning. The zoning which covers the area under consideration is very generous, permitting an FAR of 10 and building heights of 210 feet for new

development, and it should be said that new development is permitted in historic districts. Indeed, within the Brooklyn Heights Historic District there are currently two new buildings soon to be in the pipeline to replace two non-contributing buildings located at 30 and 70 Henry Street. You might be surprised to hear that our group is urging their owners to take a contemporary design approach to both of them.

In conclusion, I and others who have performed work on landmarked buildings have offered advice and assurance to those residents of 75 Livingston Street who are fighting to take their building out of the proposed district (and here it should be mentioned that not all the residents of that building are in agreement with those who are opposed). We have met with shareholders of 75 Livingston Street in the offices of our Councilmember, Steve Levin, (who is fortunate to be already representing seven historic districts), and we have tried to familiarize them with the steps involved in making exterior alterations so as to demonstrate that the process is frequently far more expeditious for buildings of their type, which are subject to Local Law 11, than the typical brownstone. The Councilman has found this to be supportive and informative, and I and my colleagues at the Brooklyn Heights Association would be pleased to meet with any members of your committee who have interest. Thank you for your consideration.



# THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY

December 14, 2011

## **STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITINGS AND MARITIME USES OF THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF THE BOROUGH HALL SKYSCRAPER HISTORIC DISTRICT, BROOKLYN**

Good day Chair Lander and members of the Subcommittee. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of The New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy supports designation of the entire Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District and urges the Council to affirm that designation.

Almost six years ago, the Conservancy, the Brooklyn Heights Association and the Municipal Art Society joined forces to investigate whether landmark protection could be extended to the significant group of buildings along the Court Street corridor, which had been left out of the Brooklyn Heights Historic District in 1965. We were galvanized by the demolition of the 1857 Brooklyn Gas Light Company headquarters on Remsen Street. The demolition with little fanfare of the oldest and finest commercial building in the area made it clear that something needed to be done. The report we produced recommended a new Historic District running from Montague Street to Livingston Street.

In many ways this is not only a great collection of buildings, it is also the symbolic center of Brooklyn. Spanning a century of high-quality commercial and municipal architecture, these structures survive as a testament to the development and distinct identity of the borough's first business district. Collectively they tell the story of the growth and development of Brooklyn's core. They are aesthetically, historically and culturally significant structures and therefore they are all worthy of inclusion in a historic district.

Nonetheless, some would try to cloud that fact with rumors of purported costs and with scare tactics.

We have heard unsubstantiated arguments that designation will increase owners' costs. Conservancy staff has spoken to professionals at eight architecture and engineering firms with experience working on older buildings within and outside historic districts, and they have indicated that this is simply not the case. (A summary of those discussions is attached to the testimony.) The practitioners have told us that the costs of materials, labor, filings, and professional fees for designated buildings are not significantly higher than for unprotected properties.

We have heard arguments that designation will impede commercial activity. Instead, we suggest looking at the examples of SoHo, TriBeCa, or Ladies Mile where landmark designation has led to busy commercial thoroughfares.

Property owners in New York City face a myriad of rising expenses every year, from fuel costs to DOB requirements, to ever-higher property taxes. Landmark designation does not automatically require any actions or impose any costs, and when work is performed the additional costs are minimal.

In fact landmark designation has been shown to have positive benefits, such as stabilizing and increasing property values as stated by the City's Independent Budget Office in its 2003 report. This is one of the reasons that so many neighborhoods have requested landmark designation. Owners of over 29,000 designated buildings, in over 100 historic districts across the city are maintaining those properties in communities that are thriving. The evidence that designation works is everywhere.

The facts are clear. The fears are unfounded. We see no evidence in our work or from the professionals in the field that there is any significant expense associated with landmarking. Carving up this District would be a real blow to the City's efforts to protect the superb architecture that gives New York its special character.

Misinformation should not trump merit.

We ask that you affirm designation of this District in its entirety and give it the recognition it richly deserves. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK  
LANDMARKS  
CONSERVANCY**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Peg Breen  
From: Andrea Goldwyn  
Date: December 12, 2011  
Re: Costs for Repair Work on Multi-family Buildings within Historic Districts

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In December 2011 staff of The New York Landmarks Conservancy surveyed several architecture and engineering firms on the subject of costs for façade repairs on buildings within the boundaries of historic districts designated by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission compared to those that are not in historic districts. Below is a summary of those discussions.

*Firm A. 12/7/2011*

We try and do a good job on all buildings. Naturally we will want to match the mortar and match the color of the brick and match the pieces we replace whether a building is a landmark or not. I want to make the repairs look as good as possible to make the client happy, not just the Landmarks Commission. I don't see a cost difference there.

Now more elaborate buildings, which tend to be the ones that are landmarked, have more ornament and more features, sometimes a wide variety of materials. Those buildings cost more because they are more complicated and more elaborate.

*Firm B. 12/7/2011*

Sometimes the landmark buildings cost more when you get assigned a staffer who perhaps is new and unsure and they keep asking you for more and more support material.

It is also true that it is annoying to wait for weeks and weeks and then get a list of fifty things you need to supply. If I had received the list more expeditiously I would have had the extra submission ready sooner. This adds costs in terms of my time, small buildings are often more problematic than large buildings. In terms of the cost of the actual repairs, I would say there is no difference. The Commission is pretty flexible in terms of substitute materials so if I have to replace one terra cotta piece with cast stone, they are OK with that.

*Firm C. 12/7/2011*

There is no real cost difference. There are the costs of preparing the application that is probably a couple of thousand dollars but no more. We would prepare material and color samples anyway for our own use and to show the client. The real cost is in the labor and materials. Brick is brick and the costs for cast stone and terra cotta are what they are in or out of a historic district. I do think there is a difference between large buildings and small buildings. The Landmarks surcharge, if we can call it that, is minimal for large buildings. No one is going to question me if I say that the top twenty floors of a residential tower needs to have all its bricks replaced. But if I'm working on a brownstone's stoop, the review can be very picky. This could add a significant amount to the overall cost of a small project.

*Firm D. 12/8/2011*

We would never tell a client that the work will cost more because they are in a historic district. That is not the driving force. The real issue is how much work does the building need, what condition is the building in and how do we phase it. We are at the site often for inspection visits so I do not visit a site more often because it is landmarked. In terms of delays, the real delays are in trying to pull all the DOB approvals and permits.

*Firm E. 12/8/2011*

There is no way of quantifying any increased costs just because a building is in a historic district. It has more to do with how the owners want to deal with the issues. To tell the truth, you can get away with not doing a very good job in a landmark building. On the other hand, the owners of a non-landmarked building may want a top-notch job done. The era of stripping buildings is over. People want their building to look good, the additional cost to a landmark building comes from perhaps a little more paperwork. In terms of delays, they are modest compared to the ones created at the DOB.

*Firm F. 12/8/2011*

The costs for mobilization, access, and scaffolding are the same in or out of a historic district. Costs for brick repair, for flat roofs are the same. The LPC will sometimes allow substitute materials, so the costs would be the same. Work required under Local Law 11 is restorative and at the LPC is handled at a staff level. I've never had a project that started as Local Law 11 and ended at a public hearing. As long as you're prepared and ready to respond to LPC staff requests, there shouldn't be time delays. If there are some, they aren't onerous.

*Firm G. 12/9/2011*

We approach our projects on older buildings like restoration projects whether or not it is an official landmark. We have added cornices to buildings that are not in historic districts and have explained to the owners how the removal of the original cornice caused damage to the façade. I usually add an administrative fee of \$500 for the paperwork at Landmarks. I could see if one is not familiar with the requirements of the Commission how it could become a complicated thing but I apply there all the time and know what sorts of things are required. Sometimes for a designated building one has to get a paint color analysis for instance, but I like getting that anyway just to give us a better understanding of the building. Those costs are not big. Bottom line I would say that the construction costs are the same. The administrative costs could be higher say \$500 to 1500 depending on how familiar your architect or engineer is with the requirements at the Commission.

*Firm H. 12/12/11*

Landmarking has been going on in the City for over 30 years. The LPC has done a lot to streamline the process. There should be no adverse effect for owners. Cost increases would be small; the amount of regulation and filings might add a small amount; the timing might be a few weeks, but there is no big impact. It increases property values because of the consistency in the fabric of the building remaining preserved. It's a synergistic effect. On co-ops done in accordance with the LPC, once the contracts got samples up, LPC staff came to the site, helped with the approvals and got the job moving. The results are phenomenal.

December 13, 2011

Honorable Brad Lander  
New York City Council Member  
39<sup>th</sup> District, Brooklyn

City Hall Office  
250 Broadway  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District

Dear Councilman Lander:

I am writing to restate my support of the Borough Hall District, recently approved unanimously by the Landmarks Commission, with the inclusion of 75 Livingston Street.

On December 7, 2010, I prepared the following text to the Landmarks Commission and wish to now submit it to you and your Committee for your consideration.

"Though not originally from Brooklyn, I have lived in the Borough for 31 years. I received my Architectural Degree from Pratt Institute in 1982 and have practiced architecture in New York since that time. I moved to 75 Livingston Street in 1983, have been a shareholder for 23 years, and served several terms as a Board and Building Committee member. During the course of these years, I have had the pleasure of participating in the Building's improvement and restoration as a notable, handsome structure. I have also been gratified to witness the changes in this, my neighborhood; the coming to life of vacant commercial properties, revitalization of storefronts along Court and neighboring streets, the replacement of an X-rated theater with a thriving multiplex, and the construction of several, major mixed-use buildings in place of empty lots and a derelict municipal parking structure.

The proposed Borough Hall Skyscraper District with the splendid Greek Revival Borough Hall and north plaza at its focus are, both figuratively and literally, the urban center of the Borough. It is the primary civic, business and transportation focus of the Borough. The Federal and County Courts, the Borough President and the Borough civic agencies all reside here. At the more immediate level, it is the focus around which the surrounding, newly and not so newly vibrant neighborhoods of Metro Tech, Fulton/Downtown, Court Street South and Brooklyn Heights revolve. Although each of these neighborhoods maintains its particular identity, they all share Borough Hall and the surrounding streets as a common commercial district, green market, transit hub and town square.

Since suffering the decline of early mid-century, the ravages of urban renewal and the doldrums of the 1970s, the area is now well on its way to a successful return to cohesion and vitality. Like so many urban areas, it has enjoyed and benefitted from the expansive economies of the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Also, like so many inner city districts now returning to robustness, it is rich with a varied, significant and potentially endangered architectural context. The assemblage of important, large scale, early 20<sup>th</sup> Century skyscrapers, 75 Livingston being the most remarkable, along Court Street, each with their own exuberant historical styles, coupled with the solid classical backdrop of the Municipal Building, frame and embrace Borough Hall, its northern plaza and the Court and Montague Street corridors with

richness and scale befitting the official and commercial heart of Brooklyn. The skyscrapers' substantial presence and individual architectural characters embody a brick-and-mortar celebration of the historic vitality of Brooklyn, and, when taken as a whole, play a significant role in defining the singular quality of the area.

Recognition of the Court Street Skyscrapers and the numerous smaller scale buildings for these qualities coupled with their contribution to the integrity of the greater Borough Hall District will be a timely step in recollecting and preserving Brooklyn's urban richness and will be an important step towards further supporting the present and future renaissance of this unique place at the heart of the Borough.

I thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration and support of the Skyscraper District."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Magnuson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Philip Magnuson, AIA LEED AP  
Governor, Brooklyn Heights Association  
Chair, BHA Landmarks Preservation Committee

Testimony Before the Subcommittee on Landmarks, NYC Council, 12/14/11

Maxine L. Rockoff

Good morning. My name is Maxine Rockoff and my husband and I have lived at 75 Livingston Street since 1995. Once we learned about the proposed landmarking designation, we have earnestly tried to find out how this will serve the public interest and what the processes are for getting a building landmarked. Some of what I have learned is very disturbing.

Arguments for landmarking that I have heard essentially negate our concerns rather than specify positive things that will happen with landmarking that wouldn't happen without landmarking. For example, we are concerned that landmarking will impose delays and costs on every project we undertake because each will have to be approved by the LPC – even if the project has *no exterior effect*. We are told that the LPC has developed streamlined procedures so that getting their approval will not significantly increase project costs. But why should any increase in project costs be incurred when we have already demonstrated that we are responsible stewards of our wonderful building?

I have also learned that both professionals and citizens are so fearful of being on the wrong side of the LPC that they won't say here in public today what they have said to me in private. Two architects have told me privately that any apartment that has unobstructed views now will lose value if their windows have to look like they did in 1927. Yet neither is willing to testify because both of them need to work with the LPC and they fear reprisals if they speak out, as is an acquaintance of mine who lives in a carriage house in a landmarked district in Brooklyn.

I attended the LPC session at which our building was designated a landmark. Although several of us opposing the designation were present in the room, we were not permitted to speak. The dissenting opinions were given no voice whatsoever!

Furthermore, I have observed that many of the people who most strongly advocate for landmarked buildings have a personal financial interest in having buildings landmarked. These include architects, structural engineers, artisans who restore old buildings, and people who are employed in the landmarking business.

Finally, I have gradually come to realize that the people who support landmarking our building – even though we have amply demonstrated the harm that landmarking will do – have a belief in landmarking that approaches a religious conviction. They believe they are right and that their beliefs are not subject to discussion or argument. Therefore I call upon you, members of our City Council, to recognize that the opinions and actions of such “preservationists” should be balanced by the negative impacts that landmarking will have on those of us who live at 75 Livingston Street. You are our only protection against increasingly burdensome – and menacing! – government intervention.

Contact: Maxine L. Rockoff, 75 Livingston Street, Apt. 27A, Brooklyn, NY, [MLR@ClarkRockoff.com](mailto:MLR@ClarkRockoff.com); cell (917) 667-4926

**Statement of Otis Pratt Pearsall Before the City Council's  
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses In  
Support of the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District,  
December 14, 2011**

Good morning Chairman Lander and members of the Committee. My name is Otis Pratt Pearsall and, as leader of the Brooklyn Heights community's seven year campaign starting in the Fall of 1958 to achieve in 1965 both the Landmarks Law and designation of the Heights as the City's first Historic District, I am now here to support completion of this preservation work through your approval of the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District.

To help fill in the entire picture I would like to I explain just how the segmentation of the Brooklyn Heights preservation story between its residential area encompassed by the 1965 Historic District and its commercial edge encompassed by the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District came about.

To begin with, one must remember that when we were getting started in 1958 not only was there no landmarks law but there was nothing that might be characterized as a preservation community. So when we approached James Felt and his City Planning Commission, intent as they were on redoing the Zoning Resolution, it was very much a matter of real life "David and Goliath." No one, of course, in this City had attempted an historic district and while we fully recognized it would be a heavy lift, we had no way of anticipating just how heavy it might actually prove. And so, as we sought to delineate a possible district, we were at pains to narrow our profile as much as possible against the opposition we knew enough to expect.

So, at the top of the list, we deleted Robert Moses' proposed Cadman Plaza Title One Redevelopment Project. While we were prepared to contest elements of the Moses scheme, we felt that, realistically, preservation of the many fine buildings on his target site was an issue that



had long since left the station. And we felt the same way about the Brooklyn Savings Bank block on which Borough President Cashmore had set his redevelopment sights.

But while we believed that the grand historic skyscrapers of Brooklyn's commercial heart along our Eastern edge should and could be preserved, we concluded rightly or wrongly that in prudence this must be deferred. Ignorant of any actual facts, we imagined that in control of these major buildings would be powerfully connected interests perhaps in a position to sink our entire fledgling enterprise. Later, when we detailed our eastern boundary rationale to the Landmarks Preservation Commission's First Executive Director, Jim Van Derpool, and its first Chairman, Geoffrey Platt, they agreed that our strategy appeared to make sense. But that agreement was by no means universal. At the November 17th, 1965 designation hearing, our Brooklyn Heights neighbor, Norval White, later to become Editor of the AIA Guide, harshly criticized omission of the commercial edge now encompassed by the new District, and he was not alone.

Our designation came just days later, on November 23rd, 1965 and we were very much of the view that when the dust settled we should circle back and seek the designation of what essentially is before you today, including of course the very important buildings in the block north of Montague Street. But the time-consuming efforts working with City Planning and the Board of Estimate to achieve our 50 foot Limited Height District and, thereafter, to defeat Mayor Lindsey's ill-considered initiative to relocate the Fort Greene Wholesale Meat Market to the East River in place of the Empire Stores and Tobacco Warehouse absorbed all available pro bono energies in the late '60's, and the priority intended for our commercial edge unfortunately slipped away.

Sadly, it was not until the sudden loss of St. Francis College's McGarry Library, originally the 1857 Brooklyn Gas Light Company, brought the preservation community up short

that the New York Landmarks Conservancy, Municipal Art Society and Brooklyn Heights Association combined forces to accomplish the substantial research supporting their January 2006 joint proposal to the Landmarks Commission for the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District.

The LPC's painstakingly researched and documented Designation Report impressively and, in my opinion, more than amply supports the new District, inclusive of its signature Chamber of Commerce Building at 75 Livingston Street. Very simply, we are dealing here with no less than the centerpiece of Brooklyn's architectural and commercial heritage. I urge you to vindicate the public interest in preserving this legacy.



## **Testimony of the Municipal Art Society**

Before the New York City Council Subcommittee On Landmarks, Public Siting And Maritime Uses

By Lisa Kersavage, Senior Director of Preservation and Sustainability

Regarding Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District

December 14, 2011

The Municipal Art Society of New York is a private, non-profit membership organization that fights for a more livable New York through advocating for intelligent urban planning, design and preservation.

I am Lisa Kersavage, Senior Director of Preservation and Sustainability, speaking on behalf of the Municipal Art Society. I am pleased to be here today to convey MAS' strong support for the designation of the proposed Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District, which, along with the Brooklyn Heights Association and the New York Landmarks Conservancy, we proposed in 2006. Designation of the district will ensure the protection of this exceptional concentration of commercial architecture and help guide its revitalization as a dynamic mix of residential and commercial uses.

Brooklyn's financial sector experienced unprecedented growth after the five boroughs were consolidated into Greater New York in 1898. Spanning nearly a century of rich, high-style commercial architecture, the proposed historic district forms a cohesive group of late nineteenth and twentieth century commercial structures from Romanesque and Gothic Revivals – as seen at the Montague Court Building and the Central Building – to International Modern – as seen at the Lafayette National Bank. Each building included in the proposed district survives as an intact reminder of the important development and distinct identity of Downtown Brooklyn's central business district.

The proposed district will recognize the importance of Brooklyn's contribution to New York City's commercial development and history. While arguments are commonly made that historic district designation will impede a neighborhood's economic development, over 45 years of historic district designation and LPC oversight has proven otherwise. Not only does historic designation not stymie economic development, but it often is the lynchpin for a neighborhood's revitalization. For instance, when the Ladies' Mile Historic District was designated in 1989, the area was practically a no man's land of forgotten former department stores and commercial buildings. Today, it is one of the city's most vibrant shopping and commercial districts in the city. The creation of the historic district helped to make Ladies' Mile what it is today.

We understand that there are concerns about the effect the designation will have on residents within the proposed district. Many New York City historic districts, including the Upper West and Upper East Side historic districts and even part of the Park Slope Historic District, contain large residential condo, co-op and rental buildings. These have remained financially stable and desirable after designation. In these districts and the many others, the LPC's regulations have proven to be flexible and reasonable, ensuring the preservation of a building's defining features while allowing it to be adapted to modern needs.

The City has made serious investments into the revitalization and rejuvenation of this part of Brooklyn, from the Downtown Brooklyn rezoning to the creation of Brooklyn Bridge Park. Preservation of the buildings in the Borough Hall Skyscraper District is an important part of those planning efforts and will help foster Brooklyn's continued renaissance. MAS strongly believes that the buildings in the historic district merit protection under the Landmarks Law and that the LPC has correctly drawn the district boundaries, which has been borne out in the rigorous review of this district. We urge the City Council to uphold that agency's designation and approve this district with the boundaries put forward by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Thank you for your attention.



45 Washington Street | Box 123 | Brooklyn, NY 11201 | [www.dumbo-dna.org](http://www.dumbo-dna.org)

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting & Maritime Uses  
250 Broadway, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY

December 14, 2011

L.C. No. 536  
Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District  
Brooklyn, CB-2  
20125120HKK (N 120069 HKK)

Honorable Lander and Subcommittee Councilmembers,

On behalf of the DUMBO Neighborhood Alliance (DNA), I urge the Council to support the designation of the Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District with no exception. The collection of buildings in the Borough 's 26<sup>th</sup> historic district is architecturally significant and represents a unique clutch of important skyscrapers in Brooklyn.

These buildings interplay with the adjacent Brooklyn Heights Historic District, NYC's first historic district, and known throughout the United States as America's first suburb in terms of height and scale. Hence, downtown Brooklyn became the first local business district of great importance outside of Manhattan.

The owners of 75 Livingston Street, a building worthy of individual landmark status, have been such great stewards of their building. They have been doing landmark quality restoration of the exterior that the buildings inclusion in the district is a non- issue. Because of their stewardship, they know what the costs involved with preservation maintenance are. The historic district will protect their investment and ensure that in the future their building will be preserved. The Landmarks Preservation Commission confirmed the inclusion of 75 Livingston ST, one of the most significant buildings in the district. Please believe me when I tell you that every building should want to be in the district. The residents in 75 Livingston should be urging LPC to extend your historic district boundaries. I would be happy to take you on a walking tour of DUMBO, Fulton Ferry and Vinegar Hill and show you blatant examples of what can happen to your neighborhood without landmark protection through zoning and a public authority.

As a neighboring historic district, the DUMBO Neighborhood Alliance welcomes the addition of another protected neighborhood in close proximity to DUMBO.



Meredith Hamilton  
128 State Street Brooklyn NY 11201  
[meredith@meredithhamilton.com](mailto:meredith@meredithhamilton.com)

December 14, 2011

Re: Proposed Borough Hall Skyscraper District: Public Hearing of the NYC Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses

Ladies and Gentlemen: I am a resident of State Street in Brooklyn Heights. I strongly support the proposed Borough Hall Skyscraper Historic District. I am aware of efforts by those who oppose it and are seeking to exclude 75 Livingston Street from the district and possibly other buildings as well. I urge you not to change the boundaries which have been approved by the Landmarks Commission and the City Planning Commission.

With its external architectural details 75 Livingston is clearly an integral member of this group of designated buildings. To carve it out because of a coop board's worry that complying with the designation might be onerous would undercut our city's landmarks laws, and the judgement of the Landmarks Preservation Committee, who voted unanimously to create a contiguous district.

Having been deeply involved in the effort to have buildings in downtown Brooklyn landmarked, I have closely followed the LPC's effort to reach out to landlords along Fulton mall, as well as their support in guiding landlords through the additional layer of requirements that designations entail. The LPC is flexible, judicious and supportive.

Occupants of 75 Livingston have argued that they are good stewards of the architecture of their building, and do not need to have preservation standards inflicted upon them because good maintenance has been carried out. That is why they have nothing to fear. However, times could change, and in the future the stewardship may not be as successful as it is currently.

Anecdotally, I looked at purchasing an apartment in this building years ago when I first moved to Brooklyn. On successive visits the broker never walked me down Court Street, choosing instead to guide me via the landmarked streets of Brooklyn Heights. This building, then, benefitted from its proximity to the Brooklyn Heights Historic District. Whether all of its residents can understand or appreciate this now, they WILL most certainly benefit from being part of the Skyscraper District if the City Council upholds the decision by the Landmarks Commission.

Sincerely,

Meredith Hamilton

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. ~~536~~ <sup>536</sup> Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jenny Fernandez

Address: 1 Centre Street

I represent: VPC

Address: 57th St

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert Oliver

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Joseph P DOT

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Arthur Goldstein

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: owners of 186 Remsen St, 44, 50 Court

Address: + 186 Jerusalem St.

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 5 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: Dec 14, 2011

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RICHARD BEZAK

Address: 209 JERALMON STREET

I represent: BROOKLYN BRUGH PRESIDENT

Address: MARTY MARKOWITZ

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. LU536

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Edward Piccinich

Address: 16 COURT STREET

I represent: SL Green

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. LU 536 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JORDAN BAROWITZ

Address: 75 LIVINGSTON ST

I represent: MYSELF

Address: Ø

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 536 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: BARBARA ZAHLER - GRINGER

Address: 75 LIVINGSTON ST.

I represent: SELF BRKLYN NY 11201

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 536

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12.14.11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andrea Goldwyn

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NY Landmarks Conservancy

Address: 1 Wintchale St, NYC 10007

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 536

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jean Goldberg

Address: 42 Jerusalem Street

I represent: myself

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 536

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jane McGroarty

Address: 142 Jerusalem Street

I represent: Brooklyn Heights Association

Address: 55 Piermont Street

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

LU 536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12.14.11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Arnold Reisman

Address: 75 Livingston

I represent: self

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Carol A. Nuzzo 1829 E. 34 St

Address: ~~16 Court Street~~, Brooklyn, NY 11234

I represent: SL Green Realty Corp.

Address: 16 Court Street, Brooklyn, NY 11241

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

LU 536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 12.14.11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Paula Ingram

Address: 75 Livingston

I represent: Myself as Broker & Court-Hiv-Sch

Address: 15 MetroTech

BUS. IMPROVEMENT DIST.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

LU 536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Maxine L. Rockoff

Address: 75 Livingston St Brooklyn

I represent: self

Address:

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 536  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 12-14-11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mary Ann Rothman

Address: 110 Riverside Dr. NYC

I represent: Council of NY Cooperatives & Condominiums

Address: 250 W. 57 St, #730 NYC 10107

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 536

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Phil Magnuson

Address: 75 Livingston Street

I represent: myself

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 536

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Katie Robinson

Address: 15 Eleventh Ave. Brooklyn

I represent: Courts Livingston-Schermerhorn BID

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 536 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Slattery

Address: 570 Livingston Ave

I represent: Real Estate Board of New York

Address: SA

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 536 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chris Pearsall

Address: 157 Willow St.

I represent: Myself.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12-14-11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mona Gort

Address: 32 Cedar St

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card 536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Bolo Hill Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: STEVEN BRONOFF

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Historic District Council

Address: 232 E 11 St NY 10002

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card L4 536

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 12/14/11

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EILEEN MURPHY

Address: 75 LIVINGSTON ST.

I represent: 75 LIVINGSTON ST

Address: SAME

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆