

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

SUB-COMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND
MARITIME USES

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May 4, 2010
Start: 11:25am
Recess: 12:50pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:
BRAD S. LANDER
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Maria Del Carmen Arroyo
Daniel J. Halloran, III
Rose Mendez
Annabel Palma

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Jennifer Fernandez
Dir. Of Intergovernmental & Community Relations
Landmarks Preservation Commission

2 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Good morning,
3 I'm Council Member Brad Lander, I'm pleased to
4 call this meeting of the subcommittee on
5 Landmarks, Public Siting, and Maritime Uses to
6 order. With us today we have Council Member
7 Annabel Palma from the Bronx, Council Member Del
8 Carmen Arroyo from the Bronx, Council Member Rosie
9 Mendez from Manhattan and Council Member Dan
10 Halloran from Queens. We have four items on our ...
11 three items on our calendar today. West Park
12 Presbyterian Church, we closed the public hearing
13 at the last meeting, and we will be voting on, at
14 a new meeting that's been put on the calendar for
15 Wednesday, May 12th, at 10:15 a.m., likely to be in
16 chambers ... well, we don't know the location yet,
17 we'll get you the location, it will be put on the
18 Council calendar. So if you're here for West Park
19 ... hmm? It's off the calendar for today, so if
20 you're here for West Park, I apologize. We had
21 anticipated voting on it this morning, but there's
22 still some conversations taking place, it will be
23 on the calendar for 10:15 a.m. on the 12th of May.

24 We will proceed with the other
25 three items on the calendar. The first one is

2 Land Use #58-2010-5348, Dollar Savings Bank in the
3 Bronx, in Council Member Arroyo's district, and I
4 invite Jennie Fernandez from the Landmarks
5 Preservation Commission to present her testimony.

6 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair
7 Lander, members of the Committee. My name is
8 Jennie Fernandez, director of intergovernmental
9 and community relations for the Landmarks
10 Preservation Commission, and I'm here today to
11 testify on the Commission's designation of the
12 Dollar Savings Bank in the Bronx. On December
13 15th, 2009 the Landmarks Preservation Commission
14 held a public hearing on the proposed designation
15 of the Dollar Savings Bank. Three witnesses spoke
16 in favor of designation, including representatives
17 of the Historic Districts Council, the New York
18 Landmarks Conservancy. On January 12th, 2010, the
19 Commission voted to designate the building a New
20 York City Individual Landmark. The Dollar Savings
21 Bank was founded in 1887 by John Haffen of the
22 prominent Haffen family, which controlled much of
23 the Bronx in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
24 It was the first thrift institution to be
25 organized in the Bronx, preceding its competitors

by sixteen years. Structured as a mutual savings bank, it was managed for the benefit of the depositors, which assured them most savings would not leave the Bronx. Designed by the renowned firm of Renwick, Aspinwall & Tucker in 1919, the classical revival style bank building illustrates the style adopted by savings institutions during the last decades of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century. The impressive building is clad entirely in limestone and sits on a trapezoidal corner lot, with facades facing three streets. The window fenestration is distinct on each façade. The canted main entrance with central bracketed pediments, round-arched window, flanking paired Ionic pilasters with laurel leaves all evoke the traditional classical design. The distinctive bank building is a significant reminder of classical revival style banks built in New York City during this time. By the late 1940's, Dollar had become the sixth largest savings bank in the country. This building served as the bank's headquarters from the time it was constructed until 1950, when its offices were moved to the Fordham branch, at 2516 to 2530 Grand

2 Concourse, designated New York City landmark. It
3 is now the Bronx Temple of Seventh Day Adventists
4 Church. The Commission urges you to affirm this
5 designation.

6 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you very
7 much. Council Member Arroyo, do you have any
8 comments or questions?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Very
10 briefly, thank you. I just want to thank the Arts
11 Commission for the discussion about this
12 particular property. I raised a couple of
13 concerns, and the Chair assured me that working
14 with the property owner of the church, they would
15 be able to get them motivated to upgrade the
16 property, because it's a little bit old and I
17 think they're having some financial challenges.
18 But it can use a facelift. And that's something
19 that I'm looking forward to. I'm happy to support
20 this.

21 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Wonderful, and
22 I'm guessing that you put them in touch with the
23 Landmarks Conservancy and their church ... their
24 funding program for churches seeking to do work on
25 their landmark designation?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Yes,
3 through conversations we'll continue to steer them
4 in the direction of either getting additional
5 funding, or even through resources available
6 within the Commission how to help them upgrade
7 their building in an appropriate manner.

8 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thank you.
9 Any other questions from the Committee members?
10 No? Seeing none, we'll close the hearing on this
11 item. Ms. Fernandez, thank you. And we will move
12 on to Land Use #88-2010-5413HKM, the former Yale
13 Club in Speaker Quinn's district. Ms. Fernandez,
14 whenever you're ready.

15 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair
16 Lander. For the record, my name is Jennie
17 Fernandez, director of intergovernmental and
18 community relations for the Landmarks Preservation
19 Commission. I'm here today to testify on the
20 Commission's designation of the former Yale Club
21 of New York City building, now Penn Club of New
22 York and Manhattan. On November 17th, 2009, the
23 Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public
24 hearing on the proposed designation as a landmark
25 of the former Yale Club of New York City building,

2 now Penn Club of New York. The hearing had been
3 duly advertised in accordance with the provisions
4 of law. Four people spoke in favor of
5 designation, including representatives of the Penn
6 Club, the University of Pennsylvania, New York
7 Assemblyman Richard Gottfried and Historic
8 Districts Council. On February 9th, 2010, the
9 Commission voted to designate the building a New
10 York City individual landmark. The former Yale
11 Club of New York City building is located along
12 Clubhouse Row, at West 44th Street, between 5th and
13 6th Avenues. Its neighbors include the Harvard
14 Club, the New York Yacht Club, Association of the
15 Bar of the City of New York, and former City Club.
16 This beaux arts style building, constructed in
17 1900 to 1901 by builder Marc Eidlitz & Son, was
18 designed by Tracy & Swartwout, both Yale
19 University graduates, Yale Club members and former
20 employees of McKim Mead & White. It was one of
21 the first high rise clubhouse buildings in the
22 city, with over half the floors devoted to
23 bachelor apartments during the era when bachelor
24 apartment houses were a necessity in the vicinity.
25 The original 11-story, 50 foot wide front façade

2 features a double story rusticated limestone base,
3 and red brick cladding laid in Flemish bond with
4 glazed headers above and balconies, a profusion of
5 terra cotta ornament manufactured by the New York
6 Architectural Terra Cotta Company, and an
7 oversized arch surmounted by a cartouche above the
8 widely projecting bracketed coffered cornice. Its
9 tripartite composition reflected the original
10 internal organization, club rooms on the lower
11 stories, bachelor apartments in the middle section
12 and upper club dining rooms and service area.
13 Organized in 1897, the Yale Club of New York City
14 remained here until 1915, when it moved to a
15 larger facility two blocks east. Acquired by the
16 trustees of the University of Pennsylvania in
17 1989, this has been the home of the Penn Club of
18 New York since 1994. The Commission urges you to
19 affirm this designation.

20 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Okay. I'm
21 interested to learn that bachelor flats is
22 something we're now attempting to preserve. I've
23 been informed that Speaker Quinn is in favor of
24 this designation as it's been presented. Are
25 there any questions or comments from the members

2 of the Committee? Or anyone wishing to testify on
3 this matter? If not, I'll close the public
4 hearing. Thank you very much, and we'll move to
5 our third and final item, which is LU #89-2010-
6 5414HKM, 143 Allen Street, in Council Member
7 Chin's district.

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Chair
9 Lander. Again, my name is Jennie Fernandez,
10 director of intergovernmental and community
11 relations for the Landmarks Preservation
12 Commission. I'm here today to testify on the
13 Commission's designation of the 143 Allen Street
14 house in Manhattan. On June 23rd, 2009, the
15 Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public
16 hearing on the proposed designation of the 143
17 Allen Street house. Four people spoke in favor of
18 the designation, including a shareholder in the
19 property and representatives of the Historic
20 District's council and the Society for the
21 Architecture of the City. On February 9th, 2010,
22 the Commission voted to designate the building a
23 New York City individual landmark. The Federal
24 style rowhouse at 143 Allen Street was constructed
25 circa 1830 to 1831 as a speculative investment by

George Sutton, a ship captain and counting house merchant. Originally part of a group of six similar residences, it is located in the heart of what is now known as Manhattan's Lower East Side, on land that was once part of the vast country estates of James Delancey. George Sutton had established himself in the early 19th century as a captain sailing the coastal trade route between New York City and Charleston, South Carolina. He eventually became shipmaster in the New York and Charleston packet line, and later an agent and merchant working in the counting house on the East River waterfront. While it is unclear if Sutton himself ever owned slaves, his entire career was centered on shipping and selling the primary product of the nation's slave labor. The New York Charleston trade route was part of what has been called the Cotton Triangle. Sutton's main cargo on the trip north from Charleston would have been bales of cotton cultivated on southern plantations by an increasingly large workforce of African slaves. In subsequent decades, the Lower East Side experienced dramatic demographic changes that transformed the area into the densest urban

2 neighborhood on the planet, and made the Federal
3 style residence a rare survivor amongst a sea of
4 newer and much larger multi-family dwellings. The
5 design of the 143 Allen Street house is
6 characteristic of the Federal style in its high-
7 peaked roof with dormers, Flemish bond brickwork,
8 and brownstone window lintels and sills on the
9 second story. Despite alterations to the basement
10 and parlor floor for commercial use in the 1910's,
11 the residence is among the relatively rare
12 surviving and intact Manhattan townhouses of the
13 Federal style in the period, and is one of only a
14 handful still extant on the Lower East Side. The
15 Commission urges you to affirm this designation.

16 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very
17 much, we appreciate the work that the Commission
18 is doing to preserve these Federal style
19 townhouses that remain in Manhattan, especially in
20 a place like the Lower East Side, with the great
21 diversity of architecture that's certainly worth
22 preserving. These ... Council Member Chin is not
23 here, but she is in support of the project. Are
24 there any questions or comments from any members
25 of the Committee? All right, seeing none, I'll

2 thank you for your testimony, and we'll close the
3 public hearing on this item as well, and we'll
4 move to a vote. We'll be voting on all three
5 items that we had the hearings on today, Land Use
6 #58, #88, and #89. And the Chair recommends a
7 vote of aye.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK: Christian Hylton,
9 Council Committee. Chair Lander?

10 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
12 Palma?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER PALMA: Aye.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
15 Arroyo?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Yes.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
18 Mendez?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

20 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
21 Halloran?

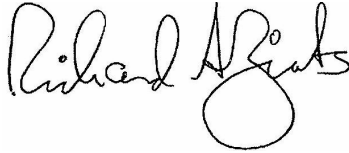
22 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Despite
23 being improperly seated on the left, I vote aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of five
25 in the affirmative, none in the negative, no

1 S/C ON LANDMARKS, PUB SITING & MARITIME USES 14
2 abstentions, LU 58, 88, and 89 are approved and
3 referred to the full Land Use Committee.
4 CHAIRPERSON LANDER: Thanks very
5 much, and this hearing is adjourned. We may leave
6 the record open for a few minutes and I will see
7 you on the 12th.
8 COMMITTEE CLERK: Subcommittee on
9 Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Use for May
10 4th, 2010 is now closed.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Richard A. Ziats, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.



Signature _____

Date May 10, 2010