



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD No. 4

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.ManhattanCB4.org

WALTER MANKOFF
Chair

ANTHONY M. BORELLI
District Manager

March 4, 2005

Hon. Robert Tierney, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: 441 West 24th Street

Dear Chair Tierney,

Manhattan Community Board No. 4 thanks you for the opportunity to comment on this application to alter the steps under the stoop and add a handrail in one of a striking row of individually designated transitional Greek Revival/Italianate houses.

The proposed alteration would make the under-stoop staircase, which has become the most-used entrance to the building, safer and more convenient by reducing the height of some of the historic brownstone steps leading down, which are effectively invisible.. This will require lengthening the staircase slightly by adding new steps and providing a new handrail, which is to be set on the basement wall behind the steps. The handrail will be based on the present historic handrail on the stoop. The row is so deeply set back from the street that the projection of the steps beyond the side of the stoop resulting from the change will be minimally visible, but the addition of a handrail partly covering a basement window will be a visible change.

The applicant proposes to move the present light-colored air conditioner in the window to the basement window farther from the stoop and repair the window, as well as to approximate the original appearance of the masonry basement by covering it with a brownstone mix. These changes will make the relatively light handrail relatively inconspicuous and improve the general look of this part of the building. The alternative of placing the handrail on the outer side of the staircase, found in some other examples of the frequent alterations of this kind, is less secure and at least as conspicuous.

The Board has no objection to this application, which has many precedents including similar alterations in this row, makes inconspicuous changes to adapt the building to modern circumstances, and will not have a negative effect on the appearance or significant features of the landmark.

Sincerely,

Walter Mankoff
Chair