



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEAN-DANIEL NOLAND
Chair

ROBERT J. BENFATTO, JR., ESQ.
District Manager

July 24, 2008

Hon. Robert B Tierney
Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building, Ninth floor
One Center Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: 145 and 147 Eighth Avenue

Dear Chair Tierney,

Manhattan Community Board has been informed that the two Federal houses at 145 and 147 Eighth Avenue are being evaluated by the Landmarks Preservation Commission for consideration for designation as individual New York City landmarks. The Board wishes to reconfirm the support for designation of this striking pair of houses on the west side of Eighth Avenue that it has expressed before on at least one occasion.

The houses at 145 and 147 Eighth are a remarkable pair of Federal houses that are fully intact above their ground floors, which now consist of mirror-image designs of storefronts with doors to the upper floors. The intact brickwork, of the Flemish bond typical of the style, the fine second floor windows, the double dormers on the steeply pitched roof, and the rare central chimney on the line of the party wall and serving the two houses form an extraordinary survivor from the earliest period of development in Chelsea. The state of preservation of the upper part of the buildings is excellent, much better than that of some Federal houses that have recently been designated, even if the original ground floor has been lost.

We need not remind you of the importance both intrinsic and symbolic of Federal houses to New York City, which was the first capital of the federal republic established under the Constitution. Many of these houses have been defaced or utterly lost, and the pace of these losses has been considerably increased by recent development pressures. These pressures have been so strong in Chelsea that even under the protective zoning established under the Chelsea 197-a Plan, similar if less intact Federal buildings on Eighth Avenue near Nos. 145 and 147 have been demolished to provide sites for buildings only slightly larger than those they replaced. These losses have already diminished the character of this "Main Street of Chelsea", and the loss of this fine largely intact pair would be disastrous for the character of the Avenue and the community.

We urge you to take prompt action to calendar and designate these important and valuable buildings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Jean-Daniel Noland
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4