

March 2007 Resolutions

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: Proposed Manhattan Avenue Historic District, 104th-106th Streets.

Full Board Vote: 32 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, the buildings within the proposed Manhattan Avenue Historic District were first developed in 1885; and

WHEREAS, the development of this area appears to be one of the first clusters of permanent housing above West 98th Street; and

WHEREAS, the Towers Nursing Home, already a designated landmark, seems to have been the catalyst for the development of the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, the rowhouses on Manhattan Avenue and the surrounding streets that have been proposed for designation exhibit an outstanding aesthetic and are among the last surviving Romanesque and Queen Ann styles on the Upper West Side; and

WHEREAS, very few buildings on the Upper West Side have been protected through landmark status above West 96th Street; and

WHEREAS, the members of the community and the Parks and Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan itself have been advocating designation of this area for many years;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** the proposed designation of the Manhattan Avenue area as a Historic District as defined by the Landmarks Preservation Commission in a map dated December 6, 2006.

Committee: 6-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: New-York Historical Society, 2 West 77th Street (Central Park West.)

Full Board Vote: 40 In favor 2 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, the New-York Historical Society is a "Triple Landmark": it is an Individual Landmark and is also within both the Upper West Side Central Park West Historic District and the Central Park West -- 76th Street Historic District; and

WHEREAS, in its July 19, 1966 designation report the Landmarks Preservation Commission described the Historical Society building as "austerely classical in feeling, and displaying great dignity in its composition", further described its Central Park West façade as "containing a colonnaded central section, which, though treated with great discipline, is nobly ornamental", and concluded that the "pedimented heroic size main portal on Central Park West makes a very grand entrance to the building"; and

WHEREAS, in the designation report, the LPC found that the Historical Society "has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City" and that the Historical Society building "is a distinguished example of Roman Eclectic architecture, designed in the best classical tradition, that it contains much excellent architectural detail and that this imposing structure has great dignity and grandeur"; and

WHEREAS, the Historical Society forms a composition with one of New York's greatest Individual Landmarks, the American Museum of Natural History; and

WHEREAS, the Historical Society is in the process of developing plans ("Phase 2") for a mixed-use museum/residential building on its site fronting 76th Street, which would replace its existing library stack building, which may be as high as 280 feet; and

WHEREAS, such plans may also include a new, possibly all-glass, story over the landmark building, which, like the tower, would be visible from all surrounding public ways, and such Phase 2 plans appear likely to result in another LPC application in the very near future; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan, believes that the proposed changes to the Central Park West and 77th Street facades of the Historical Society that comprise the present application must be considered within the context of the very substantial additional changes to the Historical Society's profile that are likely to be proposed soon in Phase 2; and

WHEREAS, the Committee is concerned that if the inappropriate elements of this proposal are approved, they will be used to bootstrap arguments that the Phase 2 design is appropriate; and

WHEREAS, numerous other institutions within Community Board 7/ Manhattan's boundaries are similarly landmarked, and similarly have unused development rights, and the Committee is very concerned that no undesirable precedent be set with this application, either with regard to the design itself or to the bifurcated consideration of major streetscape changes; and

WHEREAS, in this application the Historical Society is proposing façade changes that are "modern/contemporary" in design and materials (most notably the tri-partite rectangular doors at the Central Park West façade, the use of bronze and glass for the walls and railings of the entrance ramps on both facades, and the proposed informational "kiosks"), an approach that the Committee believes is **inappropriate** for this magnificent classical building – regardless of whether a modernist approach might be appropriate in a different landmark context; and

WHEREAS, at the proposed Central Park West entrance, the great pair of bronze doors would be removed, as would the elegant ornamental bronze decoration over the doors within the masonry frame; and

WHEREAS, the Committee does not believe that the proposal to apply the door panels as immovable decorative artifacts flanking the new contemporary triple door element would in any way make up for removing the doors from their original, functioning, position; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Central Park West entry, by making two new door openings of equivalent size and emphasis to the original door opening, would seriously abrogate the hierarchy of the grand pedimented entry that (as described by LPC in the designation report) forms the single most notable element of this great classical façade; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that in the proposed design the grand pedimented door surround -- stripped of its bronze doors and trim, with a modern rectangular glass and rectilinear metal door inserted in its denuded opening, and flanked by new glass and metal doors in a tri-partite modern idiom – reads more like a Post-Modern pastiche element imposed on the façade than as the noble unifying element it has always been; and

WHEREAS, the applicant proposes to remove the four historic torches (two on each façade) and "preserve" them by storing them in the Historical Society's basement; and

WHEREAS, the applicant did not present to the Committee any material samples or similar means for the Committee to evaluate important details about,

most notably (1) the proposed windows (glass and framing elements), (2) the high-tech “kiosks” and (3) the bronze and glass ramp walls and railings; and

WHEREAS, the Committee is sympathetic to the Historical Society’s desires to reorganize and maximize the utility of its internal exhibition and other space, to meet standards for emergency egress and handicapped accessibility and to appear more “transparent” and “inviting” to the public; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that changes to the Historical Society’s façades made to meet such desires should be minimally invasive to the historic fabric and grand classical design of the building; that they should be made to the full extent possible in the same classical idiom as the existing building, including the use of masonry where possible; and should involve the removal of a minimum of historic fabric; and

WHEREAS, although the Committee is generally receptive to the removal of the 1930’s glass block windows in the central bay of the Central Park West façade and the lowering and enlargement of the first floor windows on the 77th Street façade, it is not able to judge the appropriateness of the proposed replacement windows because it has not had the opportunity to see samples of either the glass elements or the metal framing elements of either set of windows; and

WHEREAS, the Committee appreciates that the proposed informational “kiosks” are free-standing, and would not directly impinge on the building fabric, but has reservations about their size, placement and operation as affecting the visual experience of regarding the building itself, and is not able to judge the appropriateness of the kiosks because it has not had the opportunity to view samples or images of similar kiosks; and

WHEREAS, the Committee is concerned about the additional encroachment of over one foot eastward onto the narrow Central Park West sidewalk by a substantially widened set of entrance stairs, and is also concerned about the extreme north-south length of the proposed ramp, and is not convinced that a less intrusive and more compact design might not be designed for those features; and

WHEREAS, the Committee is concerned that replacing the interior handicapped lift at the 77th Street entrance with an external lift of several more feet in height is likely to be problematic functionally; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the present ramp and stairs at 77th Street, enclosed in a masonry wall, while of quite recent construction, are nevertheless appropriate to the historic building, and questions the utility of removing this functional and appropriate entrance for the sake of gaining very limited same-grade interior space at the 77th Street rotunda area; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that several elements of the proposed design are **inappropriate** to this important classical landmark: most notably (1) the removal of the great bronze doors in the entrance on Central Park West, as well as the bronze grill that is above the doors and within the door frame; (2) the tri-partite glass and metal rectilinear doors in contemporary idiom at Central Park West, with the flanking doors being of the same size as the central door, and of far greater size and prominence than the window openings that they replace; (3) the use of bronze and glass, rather than masonry, for the walls and railings of the new ramps on each of the affected facades; and (4) the removal of the four historic torches; and

WHEREAS, although the Committee appreciates that the Historical Society met with it on several occasions prior to the Committee’s formal meeting to consider this application, presented elements of its proposal and heard comments from Committee members, the Committee nevertheless regrets that in response to such meetings the Historical Society neither produced sample materials nor, most

importantly, a proposed design that the Committee considers appropriate to this major classical landmark; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the exterior changes to its classical façade proposed by the Historical Society are unnecessary overkill with respect to the functional aims that drive this proposal, apparently motivated at least in part by the **inappropriate** decision to seek to “modernize” the façade rather than to make minimally intrusive changes, and to respect above all the very features for which it was designated a landmark,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **disapproves** the proposal by the New-York Historical Society for changes to its Central Park West and 77th Street facades, urges the Landmarks Preservation Commission similarly to **disapprove** the application, and further urges the LPC (should it not **disapprove** this application) to withhold action on this application so that it may consider these changes together with the additional very substantial changes anticipated with Phase 2 as part of a unified scheme with very major streetscape impact.

Committee: 6-1-0-0. Public Members: 2-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: 209 Columbus Avenue (West 69th-70th Streets.)

Full Board Vote: 41 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, the only representative of the applicant to appear at the meeting of the Parks and Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan was a representative of the sign vendor, who was prepared to present only the proposed signage; and

WHEREAS, the proposed renovation clearly involves the moving (centering) of the commercial door as well as substantial changes to the fenestration, among other façade changes; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the proposed signage should not be considered without a consideration of the entire proposed design for the façade;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **disapproves without prejudice** the proposed signage at 209 Columbus Avenue, dba Papyrus.

Committee: 6-1-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: 26 West 76th Street (Central Park West-Columbus Avenue.)

Full Board Vote: 41 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, this building was built as a one-of-a-kind row house, that is, not part of a contiguous group of houses built at the same time with harmonious components (a “terrace”); and

WHEREAS, this building was of a transitional design, sharing design elements of earlier houses to the west with high, asymmetrical stoops and of later Beaux Arts style houses to the east with low, centered entries; and

WHEREAS, the proposed iron work on the ground and first floors of the façade is rather fussy, but appears to be consistent with original ironwork on the higher floors, which the applicant proposes to restore; and

WHEREAS, the presenting architect, on behalf of the applicant owner, agreed to the request of the Parks and Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan, to alter the two flanking ground floor service doors as shown on plans L11 and L13 dated January 8, 2007 to increase the width of the rails and stiles, to

elaborate transitional moldings between the rails and stiles and the center panels of those doors, and to paint those doors the same black that is proposed for all other exterior wood trim on the front façade; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the other elements of the proposed façade changes and the proposed changes to the rear-yard elevation are reasonably appropriate to the building's historic fabric and to the Historic District;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** the application to alter the façade and construct a new rear-yard addition at 26 West 76th Street, subject to the changes to the design for the front service doors described above.

Committee: 6-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: 101 West 77th Street (Columbus-Amsterdam Avenues.)

Full Board Vote: 41 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, the location for the proposed new door at Columbus Avenue is an indented blind arch, and the location for the new door at West 77th Street is also in an indented arch, containing a window of historical interest; and

WHEREAS, both proposed doors are flat, unornamented metal panels, with no moldings or other decorative features, and with vertical bar opening hardware rather than doorknobs; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the applicant has made no effort whatsoever to design and propose doors that recognize or harmonize with any of the design features of this building, or of the Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the proposed door at West 77th Street would involve the removal of the small window of historical interest in that arched opening; and

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **disapproves** the proposed doors at the Columbus Avenue and West 77th Street facades of 101 West 77th Street.

Committee: 6-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: 176-182 West 82nd Street (Amsterdam-Columbus Avenues.)

Full Board Vote: 41 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, the proposed project will involve the removal of unsightly fire escapes, which offers some tradeoff to the intrusiveness of the proposed rooftop addition; and

WHEREAS, the applicant agreed to the request of the Parks and Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/Manhattan to install dark green or burgundy "eyelid" awnings in the archways of the two central doors on West 82nd Street that will remain as functioning doors, rather than the oversized rectangular "marquee" awning shown in its proposal; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the proposed new rooftop addition is reasonably appropriate to the historic character of the building and of the Historic District,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** the proposed rooftop addition and changes to the façade at 176-182 West 82nd Street, subject to the change in the awning design described above; **but**

The Board **urges** the applicant to propose to the Landmarks Preservation Commission that the secondary facades of the rooftop addition be matching brown common brick rather than stucco; and the Committee **urges** that the railing to be installed on the new seventh floor bulkhead facing 82nd Street (not shown on the drawings) be painted dark brown to blend with the façade brick of the rooftop addition, and to match the metal cap on that façade, rather than black or some other color.

Committee: 4-1-1-0. Public Member: 0-1-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Parks & Preservation

Re: 101 West 87th Street (Amsterdam Avenue.)

Full Board Vote: 41 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

WHEREAS, the existing building is a modern apartment house of no architectural distinction; and

WHEREAS, the applicant has solicited and been responsive to the suggestions of the Parks and Preservation Committee of Community Board 7/ Manhattan for design and bulk elements of its proposed additions to the building; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the two-story addition at the Columbus/ West 87th Street corner will actually enhance the appropriateness of the building's design to that of the Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the Committee believes that the other proposed additions are reasonably appropriate to the Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the buildings to the east and west of the proposed infill townhouse are of substantially varied architecture, with no obvious individual architectural features to be emulated in the new townhouse façade;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/ Manhattan **approves** the proposed two-story addition on Columbus and West 87th Street, **approves** the proposed two-story addition and penthouse on West 87th Street, and **approves** the proposed infill townhouse on West 88th Street, all part of the building at 101 West 87th Street; **but**

The Board **urges** the applicant to reconsider certain elements of the townhouse façade, to include more detailing on the ground (entrance) floor to relieve the flat appearance and a more traditional type of fenestration (i.e. double-hung) above.

Committee: 6-0-0-0. Public Member: 1-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Transportation

Re: 355 Amsterdam Avenue (West 77th Street.)

Full Board Vote: 39 In favor 2 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** the assignment of Consent application DCA# 1246104 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by DLS Chicken Corp., d/b/a Chirping Chicken, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 8 tables and 32 seats.

Committee: 6-1-0-0. Board Member: 1-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Transportation

Re: Farmers market on West 97th Street between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenue.

Full Board Vote: 40 In favor 1 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** application #M7-024 to the Mayor's Office of Street Activity Permits to conduct a farmers market on Fridays on the north side of West 97th Street between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues.

Committee: 7-0-0-0. Board Members: 1-1-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Transportation

Re: 971 Columbus Avenue (West 108th Street.)

Full Board Vote: 41 In favor 0 Against 0 Abstention 0 Present

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** renewal application # B01760 to NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission by New Special, Inc., at 971 Columbus Avenue for a For-Hire base station license.

Committee: 6-1-0-0. Board Members: 2-0-0-0.

Date: March 6, 2007

Committee of Origin: Land Use

Re: 35/75 West End Avenue (West 63rd Street.)

Full Board Vote: 36 In favor 0 Against 1 Abstention 0 Present

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan **approves** the application to the Board of Standards & Appeals by Crunch Fitness to extend the special permit for a physical culture establishment within portions of the basement and first floor of 35/75 West End Avenue for ten years.

Committee: 3-0-0-0.