



Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation

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Testimony of the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Regarding the City Council Hearing on the Landmarking of
THE FORMER VAN TASSELL & KEARNEY AUCTION MART
126-128 East 13th Street
Borough of Manhattan
August 20, 2012

Handwritten signature: LARRY FORD

I would like to thank the subcommittee for the opportunity to testify before you today. The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation strongly supports upholding the designation of the former Van Tassell & Kearney Auction Mart as a New York City Landmark.

This former horse auction mart is as admired for its unassuming monumentality as it is for its rich and incredible history. The building's elegant proportions, materials, grand arch and central hall speak to the building's origins as a place of business for the city's elite at the turn of the last century. By all accounts, this is one of the last surviving horse auction marts in the city, a once-common building type that fell out of favor with the rise of the automobile. During World War II, it served as an assembly line training center for women and from 1978 to 2005 it served as the studio of renowned artist Frank Stella.

It is perhaps this unusual history that makes this building most remarkable. How many structures in New York can conjure up images of the Vanderbilts purchasing polo ponies, Rosie the Riveter fighting the war on the home front, and Frank Stella creating masterpieces of 20th century art? In fact, the building's transformation from auction mart for the city's leisure class to training ground for the city's working class to cradle of the city's artistic class perhaps mirrors the city and this neighborhood's evolution better than any other single building. 128 East 13th Street's progression from a place where horses, then manufactured goods, and then great works of art were produced perfectly captures the arc of downtown's development. It should be preserved and honored for its remarkable contributions to our city's history and development by upholding its landmark designation.

Thank you.

**TESTIMONY OF THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION BEFORE THE
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING, AND
MARITIME USES ON THE DESIGNATION OF THE VAN TASSELL & KEARNEY
AUCTION MART, MANHATTAN**

August 20, 2012

Good morning, Councilmembers. My name is Kate Daly, Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Van Tassell & Kearney Auction Mart, Manhattan.

On September 7, 2006, the Landmarks Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation. Twenty-four people spoke in favor of designation, including Council member Rosie Mendez and representatives of Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, State Senator Tom Duane, State Assembly member Deborah Glick, and several local community and preservation groups. There were no speakers in opposition. On May 15, 2012, the Commission voted to designate the Van Tassell & Kearney Auction Mart an individual landmark.

The former Van Tassell & Kearney auction mart is a three-story Beaux-Arts-style building on East 13th Street between Third and Fourth Avenues. Built in 1903-04, the handsome structure is one of the last remaining buildings in New York City erected for staging horse auctions. Designed by architects Jardine, Kent & Jardine, the red brick façade terminates in a rounded cornice echoing the shape of the central window, and is enlivened by four bull's eye windows and limestone trim. Originally general auctioneers, after 1904, "high class" show horses and ponies dominated the weekly auctions. Many prominent citizens, including members of the Vanderbilt family, did business with Van Tassell & Kearney. By 1920, the firm was primarily involved in automobile sales. The building was leased first to a candy manufacturer, and then to a vocational institute that trained women for the defense industry during World War II. In 1978, the structure was acquired by artist Frank Stella, who used it as his studio until 2005. Significant in terms of architectural design and specialized purpose, the former Van Tassell & Kearney auction mart recalls an era when the city was a leading auction center and horse sales were a common activity.

The Commission urges you to affirm the designation.

**TESTIMONY OF THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION BEFORE THE
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING, AND
MARITIME USES ON THE DESIGNATION OF THE SEARS ROEBUCK & CO.
DEPARTMENT STORE, BROOKLYN**

August 20, 2012

Good morning, Councilmembers. My name is Kate Daly, Executive Director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Sears Roebuck & Co. Department Store in Brooklyn.

On March 22, 2011, the Landmarks Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation. One person spoke in favor of designation, a representative from the Historic Districts Council. On March 27, 2012, a second hearing was held; representatives of Sears Holding Corporation and the owner of the property expressed support for the designation and asked that the Commission exclude the rear parking lot, which was encompassed in the large tax lot. On May 15, 2012, the Commission voted to designate the Sears Roebuck & Co. Department Store an individual landmark.

The Flatbush branch of Sears Roebuck & Co. is an impressive late example of the Art Deco style. Located at the intersection of Bedford Avenue and Beverly Road, this three-story retail structure was designed by Chicago architects Nimmons, Carr & Wright in association with Alton L. Craft of New York City. Founded as a catalogue company in the 1890s, Sears Roebuck & Co. began opening stores in 1925. By the late 1920s, Sears had settled on a restrained yet stylish corporate image enlivened by Art Deco details. Most Sears stores featured a highly-visible tower with prominent signage as well as panels or thin bands of abstract, two-dimensional relief that emphasized the placement of the original street entrances. Plans to erect a large department store in Brooklyn, designed for the motoring age, were announced in 1932. Eleanor Roosevelt addressed the audience at the November 1932 store opening. The building was significantly expanded in 1940, adding four seamless bays and additional square footage at the rear. Of the three Sears stores erected in the metropolitan region, the Flatbush branch is the only one that continues to operate.

The Commission urges you to affirm the designation.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
20125427SCA in favor in opposition
20125428SCA
20125429SCM Date: 8/20/2012

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Name: Kentucky on
Address: 3030 Thomson Ave
I represent: NYC Suburban Construction Authority
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK LU 660**

Appearance Card

C120177 REM

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition
Date: 8.20.12

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Name: Abdo Nahmod
Address: FDNY
I represent: Chief of EMS
Address: 9 Metropolitan Center

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 in favor in opposition
Date: 8.20.12

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Name: David Harner
Address: Chief of Staff to the
I represent: Deputy ~~Mayor~~
Address: Commissioner

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 20/25429 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 8/21/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mel Wymore

Address: 120 W 70

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK

P.S. 339Q

Appearance Card

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in favor in opposition

Date: 8/20/2012

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gregory P. Shaw

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave L.I.C. NY 11011

I represent: NYC School Construction Authority

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave L.I.C. NY 11011

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

P.S. 15
342M

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 8/20/2012

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gregory P. Shaw

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave L.I.C. NY 11011

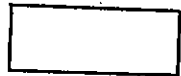
I represent: NYC School Construction Authority

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave L.I.C. NY 11011

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

PS, 892 Q

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 8/20/2012

Name: GREGORY P. SHAW (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave L.I.C. NY 11101

I represent: NYC School Construction Authority

Address: 30-30 Thomson Ave L.I.C. NY 11101

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Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. PS342 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 8/20/12

Name: MARK DILLER (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 250 W 37

I represent: COMMUNITY BOARD 7

Address: 250 W 37

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 657 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KATE DALY

Address: 1 Centre St. 9th fl, NYC 10007

I represent: LPC

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 658 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 8/20/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kate Daly

Address: LPC, 1 Centre St., 9th fl, NYC 10007

I represent: LPC

Address: _____

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

L.V. #658

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 8/20/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Amanda Davis

Address: 232 E. 11th St NYC

I represent: Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

Address: same

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