



**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the MINNIE E. YOUNG HOUSE
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Minnie E. Young House, at 19 East 54th Street, Borough of Manhattan, Block 1290, Lot 14. Designed by Architect Hiss & Weekes, this house was built in 1899-1900.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Minnie E. Young House. The hearing was duly advertised according to the provisions of law. At that hearing four people testified in favor of the proposed designation of the Minnie E. Young House, including a representative of the Manhattan Borough President's Office, representatives of the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, The Municipal Art Society of New York, and The Commission also received a letter in support of designation from State Senator Brad Hoylman. The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) submitted written testimony in opposition to designation.

The Minnie Young House is a distinguished Renaissance Revival style townhouse designed by the prominent architectural firm of Hiss & Weekes. One of the firm's earliest works, it was built in 1899-1900. Designed by classically-trained architects, the house reflects the upper class tastes and preferences of wealthy New Yorkers during the early 1900s. The house represents the period, prior to the construction of Grand Central Terminal, when the area around Fifth Avenue in East Midtown was a prestigious residential enclave.

The townhouse was erected in 1899-1900 for Minnie E. Young, widow of stockbroker Albert Young. Minnie Young was one of five siblings who had inherited a fortune from their uncle, American Tobacco Company founder and Richmond real estate developer Lewis Ginter. Her husband Albert was a partner in the successful brokerage house of Arents & Young with her brother George Arents, who also served as treasurer of the American Tobacco Company.

Paris-trained architect Philip Hiss (1857-1940) and H. Hobart Weekes (1867-1950), established their partnership in 1899 and practiced together until 1933. Their firm was particularly noted for its Italian Renaissance Revival style designs including the Gotham Hotel (now Peninsula Hotel) at Fifth Avenue and 54th Street (1902-05) and Belnord Apartments, 201-225 West 86th Street (1908-09), both designated New York City Landmarks.

The Young House features a 40-foot-wide granite facade with a monumental entrance portico, molded window enframements including pedimented window surrounds and balustrades at the second story, rusticated piers, recessed panels, elaborate belt courses and a boldly projecting stone cornice. Soon after

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its completion, architectural critic Russell Sturgis praised the Young House for the simplicity, fine proportions, and "general dignity" of its design.

By the 1910s this area in East Midtown rapidly changed from a prestigious residential enclave to a bustling business center. Reflecting those changing uses, in 1920 the Young Residence was converted for commercial use by architect Mott B. Schmidt for the fashionable dressmaking firm Lucille Ltd., headed by Lady Duff Gordon. Later occupants of the Minnie Young House were antiques and historic interiors dealer Arthur S. Vernay (1923-1940) and the national headquarters for the English Speaking Union (1940-1957). In 1962, 19 East 54th Street became headquarters of the Kenneth Beauty Salon, whose owner, Kenneth Battelle (April 19, 1927- May 12, 2013) was the first "star" hairdresser credited with creating Jacqueline Kennedy's signature bouffant hair style in the 1960s. In 1993 Bank Audi (USA), now Inter Audi Bank moved into the building, and at that time the fifth and sixth stories, which are setback, were enlarged.

Despite the modest roof top addition, today the Minnie E. Young House retains a high level of integrity, with the first floor window alterations reflecting the neighborhoods transition from residential to commercial helping to tell the story of the buildings continual use. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the MARTIN ERDMANN HOUSE
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Martin Erdmann House, 57-59 East 55th Street, Borough of Manhattan, Block 1291, Lot 127. The house was built in 1908-09 by Architects Taylor & Levi.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Martin Erdmann House (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Four spoke in favor of designation, including a representative of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer and representatives of the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Municipal Art Society. The Commission also received two letters in favor of designation, including one from Senator Brad Hoylman of the 27th Senatorial District of New York. The Real Estate Board of New York (REBNY) submitted written testimony opposed to the proposed designation.

The Martin Erdmann House is an outstanding example of a fashionable English Renaissance Revival town house that was built 1908-09 to the designs of the prominent New York City architectural firm of Taylor & Levi. It was designed in a period-revival style that reflected the upper class tastes of the wealthy art collector, Martin Erdmann, and as such, is a rare survivor of the time when the area around Fifth Avenue was an affluent residential neighborhood.

The five-story town house replaced two 1870s brownstone row houses that had formerly occupied the site. The town house features an American Basement plan, an all limestone facade, a ground-story arcade, multi-light Tudor-style windows with stone mullions, decorative relief panels, a steep front-facing gable, and multiple chimney pots. The Taylor & Levi firm is best remembered for designing high-style period revival buildings, including large estates in the New England area.

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The original owner and resident, Martin Erdmann, spent his career as a partner in the banking firm of Speyer & Company. After retiring from the financial business, he purchased the property in 1909 and filled the handsome town house with his extensive art and antique collections until his death in 1937. Later in 1943, the American Institute of Physics converted the building from residential use to offices for its headquarters.

Since 1957 the Friars Club has owned the town house for their social and business center.

Today, the building is home to the Friars Club, a social club for entertainment professionals, best known for their members who are renowned comedians and actors.

The Martin Erdmann House retains its distinctive domestic character and remains remarkably intact to its original design, despite minor alterations at the first floor. Its appealing turn-of-the-20th-century English Renaissance Revival architecture is a reminder of the days when East Midtown was a neighborhood of homes for New York's well-to-do families. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of 18 EAST 41ST STREET
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of 18 East 41st Street, Borough of Manhattan, Block 1275, Lot 61. Designed by George & Edward Blum and constructed from 1912-1914, it was the firm's first office building and the first skyscraper on the block.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of 18 East 41st Street and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance of law. Seven people testified in support of designation, including representatives of the owner, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Friends of Terra Cotta, Historic Districts Council, New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Municipal Art Society of New York. The Real Estate Board of New York submitted written testimony in opposition to designation. State Senator Brad Hoylman submitted testimony in support of designation.

18 East 41st Street is an early skyscraper with a striking white, beige and blue terra-cotta facade. Completed in 1914, it represents the first phase of commercial development in East Midtown, when various high-rise structures were built in the vicinity of Grand Central Terminal. It is an early work by George & Edward Blum, a firm celebrated for designing facades with unique and unusual ornamentation. Twenty-one stories tall, it precedes the 1916 zoning resolution and rises without setbacks. The alternation of thick and thin piers creates a strong vertical emphasis that recalls the pioneering skyscrapers of Louis Sullivan, while the sumptuous terra-cotta embellishment suggests the influence of both late medieval and modern sources, from Gothic cathedrals to contemporary European designs by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Josef Hoffmann.

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A superb example of an early 20th century office building, it was used in a 1914 article by architectural critic H. W. Frohne to illustrate “a new line of thought in exterior commercial architecture” and as “an artistic advance.” The base has been respectfully modified and the rest of the facade is mostly unchanged, particularly the ornate upper stories, which incorporate sculpted window frames in distinctive grid patterns, pointed arches, and angled projections.

The building attracted a varied group of tenants, from private clubs and publishers to doctors and architects who wanted to be close to the new train terminal. A five-room penthouse apartment was originally located on the roof. Designed to recall a bungalow-type residence, it was leased to the Broadway actor Donald Brian and movie director Dudley Murphy, as well as a speakeasy, which was closed by prohibition agents in 1932. A major work by George & Edward Blum, 18 East 41st Street is among East Midtown’s first and finest 20th century skyscrapers.

18 East 41st Street continues to serve as an office building. Despite modest changes to the lower floors and roof pediment, this visually striking structure remains one of the first and finest skyscrapers in East Midtown. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the HAMPTON SHOPS BUILDING
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Hampton Shops Building, 18-20 East 50th Street, Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1285, Lot 59. Hampton Shops was built in 1915-16 and designed by architects Rouse & Goldstone, with Joseph L. Steinam.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Hampton Shops Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. Four people spoke in support of designation, including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Historic Districts Council, New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Municipal Art Society of New York. The Real Estate Board of New York submitted written testimony in opposition to designation. State Senator Brad Hoylman submitted written testimony in support of designation.

The former Hampton Shops Building rises on the south side of East 50th Street, near Madison Avenue. Constructed in 1915-16, when this section of East Midtown was being transformed into a major commercial district, the architect was Rouse & Goldstone, as well as Joseph L. Steinam. Designed in the neo-Gothic or Perpendicular Gothic style, it has an 11-story tripartite facade clad with grey terra cotta resembling granite. This distinctive style was chosen because not only did it complement the St. Patrick's Cathedral complex, which the building faces, but it also evoked the kinds of traditional-style furniture that Hampton Shops sold. During the 1910s, many midtown skyscrapers were built on small lots – parcels that were once occupied by row houses. Designed before passage of the 1916 zoning ordinance, it has no setbacks, and, like the Woolworth Building and other neo-Gothic structures, cast ornamentation that enhances the facade's verticality. Various writers praised the design, calling it interesting, unique, and "a wide departure from the ordinary loft building."

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Henry Mannes founded the business in the early 1860s. Earlier known as the Grand Rapids Furniture Company, it was renamed Hampton Shops to distinguish his store from rival firms with similar names. Above the center entrance, various carvings identify the original owner. Small heraldic shields display the initials of Hampton Shops, as well as images of chairs and tables. A 1918 advertisement described the store as “a Gothic temple of art” where customers could explore showroom galleries with “interiors of old world charm that equal in authenticity the finest examples in Europe.” Antiques and modern reproductions were available for purchase, as well as paneled walls, molded ceilings, rugs, and “exclusive” draperies. In 1938, after 22 years at this location, Hampton Shops declared bankruptcy and the stock was sold at auction. In subsequent years, the building was subdivided and leased to businesses in the art and design field, including the industrial design firm George Nelson & Co. during 1956-62.

Aside from modifications to the base, this facade retains most of its original materials and ornament. An ambitious early 20th-century commercial design, it recalls the era when fashionable retailers began to replace private residences in midtown Manhattan. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the YALE CLUB of NEW YORK
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Yale Club of New York, at 50 Vanderbilt Avenue (aka 49-55 East 44th Street) in the Borough of Manhattan, Block 1279, Lot 28. Designed by Architect James Gamble Rogers and built from 1913-15.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Yale Club of New York City and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site. The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with provisions of law. Six people spoke in support of designation, including representatives of the Yale Club of New York City, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Historic Districts Council, New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Municipal Art Society of New York. The Real Estate Board of New York submitted written testimony in opposition to designation. State Senator Brad Hoylman submitted written testimony in support of designation.

The Yale Club of New York City is a Renaissance Revival-style skyscraper at the northwest corner of Vanderbilt Avenue and East 44th Street. For more than a century it has played an important role in East Midtown, serving the Yale community and providing a handsome and complementary backdrop to Grand Central Terminal. Constructed on property that was once owned by the New York Central Railroad, it stands directly above two levels of train tracks and platforms. This was the ideal location to build the Yale Club, opposite the new terminal, which serves New Haven, where Yale University is located, and at the east end of "clubhouse row." The architect was James Gamble Rogers, who graduated from Yale College in 1889 and attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris during the 1890s. Rogers, who settled in New York City in 1905, produced many significant institutional structures in the

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United States, including a large group of buildings for his alma mater, as well as at Columbia and New York Universities.

To make certain that the design would blend into "Terminal City" Rogers consulted regularly with the station's architect Warren & Wetmore, choosing complementary materials and ornament. The base of the 22-story tripartite clubhouse is faced with Indiana limestone, the middle floors tan face brick and the uppermost floors, where the main dining room is located, glazed terra cotta. An impressively-detailed stone and copper cornice crowns both street elevations. For the base, which contains the club's main lounge, library and grill room, Rogers may have drawn inspiration from the Palazzo Massimo alle Colonne in Rome, by architect-painter Baldassarre Peruzzi, which shares similar stonework and fenestration.

Today, the Yale Club remains the largest private clubhouse in New York City, welcoming not only Yale alumni but also alumni of Dartmouth College, the University of Virginia, and members of Delta Kappa Epsilon. Topped by a magnificent projecting cornice, this impressive structure stands as a potent reminder of how the creation of Terminal City transformed East Midtown in the first decades of the 20th century. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the PERSHING SQUARE BUILDING

January 24, 2017

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Pershing Square Building, 125 Park Avenue (aka 101-105 East 41st Street, 100-108 East 42nd Street, 117-123 Park Avenue, 127-131 Park Avenue), Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1296, Lot 1. Designed by architect John Sloan, in association with York & Sawyer, it was built from 1921-23.

On July 19, 2016 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Pershing Square Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 2). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. A representative of the owner expressed concerns about the designation and asked the Commission to delay its decision. Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick indicated his support for the worthiness of designation but noted transportation issues involved with the site that were under review by the MTA. There were eight speakers in support of the designation including representatives of Borough President Gale Brewer, Community Board 5, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, the Municipal Arts Society, and the Society for the Architecture of the City. Four speakers urged the Commission to delay taking an action on this item including representatives of the Riders Alliance, Straphangers Campaign; the Grand Central Partnership; the NYU/Wagner Rudin Center for Transportation; and the Association for a Better New York. Two speakers representing Stantec Consulting Services and the Real Estate Board of New York spoke in opposition to the designation. The Commission also received written submissions expressing support for designation from four individuals.

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The Lombard Revival style Pershing Square Building anchors a prominent corner directly across 42nd Street from Grand Central Terminal at Park Avenue. Designed by John Sloan, working with staff of York & Sawyer, the building is remarkable for the important role it played in the development of the city's mass transit system, its transitional role in the history of the city's building development, and its exceptional terra-cotta cladding. The Pershing Square Building is also noteworthy as an integral element of the redevelopment of the Grand Central Terminal area.

The Pershing Square Building and the Bowery Savings Bank (1921-23, and 1931-33, a designated New York City Landmark and Interior Landmark), adjacent to the east (designed by York & Sawyer), replaced the well-known Grand Union Hotel, which was acquired in 1914 by the Public Services Commission to create a new diagonal station linking the older portions of the IRT line running beneath Park Avenue with the new extension of the line beneath Lexington Avenue. In constructing the new station the Commission's engineers provided exceptionally strong foundations that could support the weight of a 25-story building so that the site could be marketed as a development parcel once the station was complete. Due to wartime shortages that slowed subway construction the site was not ready for development until 1920. At that time it was acquired by a syndicate headed by developer Henry Mandel who obtained financing from the Bowery Savings Bank in exchange for releasing a portion of the site to the bank for a new branch.

John Sloan, working for Mandel and the Pershing Square Building Corporation, created a design incorporating Renaissance and Romanesque elements that complemented William Louis Ayres of York & Sawyer's Romanesque Revival design for the Bowery Savings Bank. The two buildings shared a party wall (thought to be the tallest in the city) and interlocking framing. Later York & Sawyer were brought into the Pershing Square project, although Sloan remained in charge of the design. Because the Pershing Square Building utilized subway footings that were in place when the zoning ordinance was adopted in 1916 and was sold by the city as developable with a 25-story building, it received a variance from the setback requirements of the law and thus became the last tall building in New York erected without setbacks.

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Instead it had a large light court facing Park Avenue with tall slabs that rise straight up from the eighth story.

Faced with granite, multi-hued brick and colorful terra cotta, it features Northern Italian motifs including round-arched windows and tiled hipped roofs, suggesting old Lombardy. The bricks and terra cotta, fabricated by the Atlantic Terra Cotta Company, were designed to appear old and weathered, in order to create a more “artistic” design. This was the first tall office building to use textured brickwork and colored terra cotta, setting a precedent for the colorful designs of Ely Jacques Kahn and Ralph Walker later in the decade.

Integral to the construction of the East Midtown subway system, the Pershing Square Building was built with several subway entrances and direct access to Grand Central Terminal. With its multiple connections and access points, and its fine design and unique facade treatment, it continues to make a significant contribution to the visual variety and richness of East Midtown. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the GRAYBAR BUILDING

January 24, 2017

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Graybar Building at 420 Lexington Avenue (aka 420-30 Lexington Avenue), Borough of Manhattan, Block 1280, Lot 7501. The Graybar Building was designed by architects Sloan & Robertson, and built in 1925-27.

On July 19, 2016 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Graybar Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. A representative of the owner, S. L. Green Realty Corp., spoke in opposition to designation. Eight people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Community Board 5, Art Deco Society of New York, Historic Districts Council, Municipal Art Society of New York, New York Landmarks Conservancy, Society for the Preservation of the City. Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick and Historic Murray Hill submitted written testimony in favor of designation.

Completed in 1927, the Graybar Building was one of the last structures erected in "Terminal City," an East Midtown development on property above the railroad tracks owned by New York Central Railroad. An integral part of Grand Central Terminal, this 30-story office building incorporates multiple train platforms, as well as a broad public passageway that connects the station with Lexington Avenue.

The Graybar Building was designed by Sloan & Robertson, an architectural firm that specialized in speculative construction during the 1920s, and later public works. While the powerful stepped massing conforms to the 1916 zoning resolution that required structures to setback as they rise, the exotic

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decorative program blends Art Deco and Byzantine-style aesthetics, particularly the monumental stone reliefs that frame the three portals. These impressive robed figures clutch symbols of air, water, earth and fire, as well as objects that relate to the Graybar Electric Company, a major tenant. Founded in 1869, this was the company's corporate headquarters from 1927 to 1982. Of special interest are the rats that enliven the south portal, leading to the Graybar Passage, at 43rd Street. These animals appear on limestone reliefs above the gridded windows and seem to be climbing the metal struts that support the center marquee. John Sloan, the building's architect, recalled that rats were selected to strike a "maritime note" since New York City is "a great transportation centre and a great seaport."

The Graybar Building was fully leased upon its completion, encouraging subsequent commercial development on the terminal's east side and along Lexington Avenue. In addition to Graybar, prominent tenants included the J. Walter Thompson Company, Turner Construction Company, Young Men's Christian Association and Remington Rand, as well as the building's developer and architects. S.L. Green Realty Corporation acquired a long-term operating lease on the building in 1998. At that time, a sensitive and respectful restoration of this important structure was undertaken, including construction of a new entrance canopy and storefronts. In addition, at least one of the missing rats in the south portal was recreated.

The Graybar Building is exceptionally well preserved and its integral place in the transportation and development history of Terminal city makes it important to preserve. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of 400 MADISON AVENUE

January 24, 2017

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of 400 Madison Avenue, Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1283, Lot 17. It was designed by architect H. Craig Severance and built by George A. Fuller Company in 1928-29.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the 400 Madison Avenue Building and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 8). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Four people spoke in support of the proposed designation, including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, the Historic Districts Council, the Municipal Art Society, and the New York Landmarks Conservancy. State Senator Brad Hoylman submitted written testimony in support of the proposed designation. The Real Estate Board of New York submitted written testimony in opposition to the proposed designation. The Commission received three other written submissions, all in support of the proposed designation.

With its dramatic massing, intricate neo-Gothic detailing, and bright, expansive terra-cotta facade commanding a full Madison Avenue blockfront, the 400 Madison Avenue Building is one of East Midtown's most striking prewar skyscrapers. Designed by H. Craig Severance and constructed by the George A. Fuller Company—one of the nation's most experienced skyscraper builders—it was completed in 1929 as the area surrounding Grand Central Terminal was experiencing a boom in skyscraper construction and transformation into one of the country's leading financial centers. Sited on a narrow lot less than 45 feet deep, 400 Madison Avenue was described as "an unusual structure both in appearance

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and as a real estate renting proposition” and as a “distinct ornament” to Madison Avenue. Its unconventional footprint made for a remarkably efficient plan consisting of a small rear service core wrapped by a brightly illuminated “veneer” of offices, and it was notable in that essentially all of its offices had street frontages and commanded first-class rents. Although smaller than most East Midtown skyscrapers of its time, the building’s well-lit offices and prestigious Madison Avenue address made it attractive to “business or professional men desiring small but impressive offices.”

Like other “setback skyscrapers” of its era, the building’s massing, which includes a sheer 14-story rise from street level with multiple setbacks above, was guided by provisions in the city’s 1916 zoning resolution that required tall buildings to taper as they rose. Because Severance believed that skyscrapers should brighten their surroundings, he sheathed 400 Madison in cream-colored terra cotta that reflected sunlight to neighboring buildings and the streets below. Its abstracted neo-Gothic ornament, which includes tracery, grouped chimneys, and crockets on its lavishly decorated crown, reflects the emerging influence of the Art Deco style at the end of the 1920s.

Continuing in use as an office building, 400 Madison Avenue remains a well-preserved, visually engaging representative of East Midtown’s 1920s skyscraper boom. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the SHELTON HOTEL
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Shelton Hotel, 525 Lexington Avenue, Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1303, Lot 53.

On July 19, 2016 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Shelton Hotel and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 4). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. A representative of the owner spoke in favor of the designation acknowledging the building's architectural and cultural importance. There were five other speakers in support of the designation including representatives of Borough President Gale Brewer, Community Board 6, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Historic Districts Council, and the Municipal Arts Society. A representative of the Real Estate Board of New York spoke in opposition to the designation. A representative of Council Member Daniel Garodnick submitted written testimony in support of the designation. Two other individuals have also submitted emails in support of the designation.

Designed by architect Arthur Loomis Harmon and completed in 1923, the Shelton Hotel was one of the first "skyscraper" residential hotels. With its powerful massing it played an important role in the development of the skyscraper in New York City. Located on the east side of Lexington Avenue between 48th and 49th Streets, it is one of the premiere hotels constructed along the noted "hotel alley" stretch of Lexington Avenue, which was built as part of the redevelopment of this section of East Midtown that followed the opening of Grand Central Terminal and the Lexington Avenue subway line. Even while it was under construction the Shelton Hotel was recognized as the first successful embodiment of the massing requirements of the 1916 Zoning Law, notable for its soaring expression of height, powerful simple massing, striking silhouette, and exceptional handling of materials and details. The 31-story-plus-

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penthouse building is designed in the Lombard Revival style incorporating medieval and Renaissance details. Above a beautifully detailed limestone base, its facades are clad with multi-hued greyish-brown brick and terra cotta. There are three setbacks, stepping up to a central tower, and a picturesque hipped-roofed penthouse. Alternating flush and recessed bays topped with corbelled friezes emphasize the structure's verticality. Harmon battered the building's walls, increasing the incline at each setback to counter natural perspectival distortions, relieved the repetition of hotel rooms windows with recessed vertical panels that fostered shadows and contributed to the building's three-dimensionality, and suppressed horizontal lines to emphasize the structure's verticality. While the building is nominally Lombard Revival in style, Harmon deliberately avoided relying on any particular period for his details since he believed that "the masses of such modern buildings have no architectural precedence."

At the time it was built, the Shelton was considered the tallest hotel in the world at 31 stories. Articles lauding its design appeared in all of the major architectural journals and the popular press and it received awards from the Architectural League of New York and the American Institute of Architects. The Shelton inspired the design of numerous hotels and apartment houses in New York and throughout the country and it was an important precedent for future setback skyscrapers its monumental scale and simplified silhouettes helping to popularize, what skyscraper historian Carol Willis describes as "the aesthetic of simple, sculptural mass that became the benchmark of progressive design by the mid-twenties."

Originally built as a men's residence with 1,200 bedrooms plus library, lounge, and athletic facilities, the building opened its doors to women in 1924. A symbol of modern New York, it became a popular residence for theater people, including actor Humphrey Bogart, Group Theatre founder Harold Clurman, playwright Tennessee Williams and artists, most notably Georgia O'Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz who lived at Shelton from 1925 to 1936 and created important and influential work there. This hotel is currently the New York Marriott East Side. The Shelton Hotel is remarkably intact; it retains its iconic form and most of its original Lombard Revival ornament. Accordingly, the Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the HOTEL LEXINGTON

January 24, 2017

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Hotel Lexington, 511 Lexington Avenue, Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1302, Lot 51.

On July 19, 2016 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Hotel Lexington and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 6). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Eight people spoke in support of designation including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Manhattan Community Boards 5 and 6, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Art Deco Society, the Municipal Art Society and the Historic Districts Council. Two people, the representatives of the owner and the Real Estate Board of New York, spoke in opposition to designation. In addition, the Commission received a letter from Council Member Daniel Garodnick and two e-mails from individuals in support of the designation.

The Hotel Lexington (1928-29), at the southeast corner of Lexington Avenue and East 48th Street, is one of the premiere hotels constructed along the noted "hotel row" stretch of the avenue north of Grand Central Terminal. It was built as part of the redevelopment of this section of East Midtown that followed the opening of Grand Central Terminal and the Lexington Avenue subway line. Constructed after the passage of the 1916 zoning law, the tiered massing of the building represents the early evolution of skyscraper design. The Hotel Lexington is designed in a neo-Romanesque style, complexly massed with ornamented setbacks, clad in limestone, brick, and terra cotta, and features a differentiated base, continuous piers, and a distinguished skyline profile as it rises 27 stories including the pyramidal roofed towers.

Leonard Schultze and S. Fullerton Weaver, considered the preeminent American luxury hotel firm of the 1920s and early 1930s were commissioned to design the hotel. Schultze & Weaver, following their designs in the 1920s boom years in Florida, became known for their expertise in modern skyscraper hotels cloaked in traditional historic ornamental styles. The firm designed a number of New York City's most prestigious hotels, including the Sherry-Netherland (1926-27, with Buchman & Kahn), the Pierre (1929-30) and the Waldorf-Astoria (1929-31). The Lexington was one of the five major hotels, and today is one of only seven extant tall buildings by Schultze & Weaver in Manhattan.

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According to the New York Times, the Lexington Hotel Corporation, a subsidiary of the American Hotels Corporation, planned this as the largest in the parent firm's "large chain of firstclass hotels" in the United States and Canada. Constructed at \$6.5 million dollars by the Turner Construction Company, one of the world's leading building concerns, the hotel originally housed 801 rooms marketed as "modern luxury" at very moderate rates for out-of-town visitors.

The Hotel Lexington has attracted favorable notice from critics and historians since its completion. In 1929-30, the building was published in Architect, American Architect, Architecture & Building, and Architectural Forum, and "The Skyline" column in The New Yorker called it "a romantic addition" to Lexington Avenue. W. Parker Chase, in *New York: The Wonder City* (1932) called it a "sumptuous hostelry" and stated that the "location is ideal. Building gorgeous." More recently, the Lexington was one of the 14 hotels featured in the publication *Grand Hotels of the Jazz Age: The Architecture of Schultze & Weaver* (2005), in conjunction with the exhibition "In Pursuit of Pleasure: Schultze & Weaver and the American Hotel" at the Wolfsonian-Florida International University, which was based on its collection of the firm's plans, photographs, and documents. The Hotel Lexington was the location of the famous Hawaiian Room (1937-66), featuring Polynesian cuisine and the best in Hawaiian music and dance. In 1984, the base of the building, previously altered, was reconstructed according to a modified version of the original design.

The Hotel Lexington played an important role in the transformation of East Midtown into a prominent commercial center in the first half of the 20th century, and continues to play a vital role in New York City's hospitality industry. New York City's hospitality industry. The Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the BEVERLY HOTEL
January 24, 2017**

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Beverly Hotel, now the Benjamin, at 125 East 50th Street, Borough of Manhattan, Tax Map Block 1305, Lot 20.

On July 19, 2016 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Beverly Hotel (now The Benjamin Hotel) and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 5). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of the law. Six people spoke in support of designation including representatives of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer; Manhattan Community Boards 5 and 6, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, the Municipal Art Society and the Historic Districts Council. Three people spoke in opposition to designation including two representatives of the owners and the representative of the Real Estate Board of New York. In addition, the Commission received a letter from Council Member Daniel Garodnick and two e-mails from individuals in support of designation.

Located at the northeast corner of Lexington Avenue and East 50th Street and built in 1926-27, this 25-story (plus tower) hotel is one of the premiere hotels constructed along the noted "hotel alley" stretch of the avenue north of Grand Central Terminal. It was built as part of the redevelopment of this section of East Midtown that followed the opening of Grand Central Terminal and the Lexington Avenue subway line. Built after the passage of the 1916 zoning, the romantic tiered massing of the building represents the early evolution of skyscraper design.

The building was erected by the Lexington-Concord Corporation headed by Moses Ginsberg, a leading builder-developer of the period, best known for his Carlyle Hotel (1929-30). Designed as an apartment

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hotel, the Beverly Hotel was marketed to “sophisticated New Yorkers” and featured a number of amenities, notably its “many sunny outdoor terraces.”

Above a handsome two-story arcaded limestone base (largely reconstructed) the upper stories of grayish-brown brick terminate in a series of skillfully modeled setbacks that rise toward a lofty octagonal tower with wheel windows that is topped by a pavilion with tile roof and copper finial. The Beverly Hotel is richly ornamented with stylized Romanesque motifs and incorporates details such as pelican and owl sculptures and warrior-head corbels.

The hotel’s distinctive profile made it a favorite subject for American artists of the 1920s, including Georgia O’Keeffe, Alfred Stieglitz, and Charles Sheeler. Later historians have also recognized the building’s design. In *Mansions in the Clouds*, his monograph on Emery Roth, New York City’s preeminent apartment house designer of the interwar years, Steven Rutenbaum described the Beverly Hotel as “one of Roth’s most successful creations.”

In 1997, the Beverly Hotel was acquired by a company associated with the Denihan family and underwent extensive facade repairs and sensitive renovations in 1998-99, including the reconstruction of the base on Lexington Avenue to a modified version of its historic appearance. The present vertical illuminated sign, which replaced an earlier post-1940 sign, dates to that time.

Today renamed “The Benjamin” in honor of Benjamin Denihan, Sr., the former Beverly Hotel continues to play a vital role in New York City’s hospitality industry and is an important representative of the transformation of East Midtown into a prominent commercial center in the first half of the 20th century. The Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

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**Landmarks Preservation
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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES
REGARDING DESIGNATION of the CITICORP CENTER**

January 24, 2017

Good morning Chairs Koo, Greenfield and Committee Members. My name is Lauren George, Director of Intergovernmental and Community Affairs at the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Citicorp Center (now 601 Lexington Avenue) including Saint Peter's Church, (aka 601-635 Lexington Avenue, 139-153 East 53rd Street, 140-160 East 54th Street, 884-892 Third Avenue) Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1308, Lot 7501. Designed by Architects Hugh A. Stubbins and Emery Roth & Sons, and built from 1973-78.

On September 13, 2016, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of Citicorp Center (now 601 Lexington Avenue), including Saint Peter's Church, and the proposed designation of the related landmark site. The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with provisions of law. Four people spoke in support of designation, including representatives of Saint Peter's Church, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Municipal Art Society of New York. The principal owner, Boston Properties, and the Real Estate Board of New York submitted written testimony in support of designation.

The former Citicorp Center is a major example of late 20th century modern architecture. Designed by Hugh A. Stubbins & Associates, in association with Emery Roth & Sons, this early mixed-use complex contains three interlocking buildings: a 59-story office tower, a 6-story retail-and-office structure, and Saint Peter's Church.

Commissioned by First National City Bank (now Citibank), the 915-foot-tall office tower is one of New York City's most recognizable skyscrapers. Important for its slanted top, four "super" columns that rise over 100 feet and generous public spaces, it plays a major role on the Manhattan skyline. Each of the 24-foot-square columns is centered beneath one facade, using bold cantilevers to open up the corners of the site, where the church and plaza are located. Clad with aluminum and glass, the four silvery facades are exceptionally smooth, disguising eight tiers of V-shaped steel bracing designed by the noted structural engineer William Le Messurier. At the summit, the roof is cut off at a 45-degree angle. This conspicuous feature was initially conceived for terraced apartments but was later reoriented to face south and briefly considered as a platform for solar panels. Though the benefit of using solar panels proved unrealistic in the 1970s, other energy saving strategies were adopted. The bank claimed this pioneering effort at sustainable design used 42 percent less energy than comparable structures.

Stubbins, in consultation with architect Edward Larrabee Barnes, also designed Saint Peter's Church. This prismatic structure is faced with granite, rather than aluminum, to distinguish it from the neighboring office tower. Writers have compared the church's distinctive sculptural form to a "tent" and "hands held up in prayer." The project also made innovative use of zoning incentives that provided floor area bonuses for public space, including a spacious sunken plaza, as well as various interiors that are not part of the

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designation. Commonly referred to as privately-owned public space (POPS), the layout, design and maintenance of these amenities were reviewed and approved by the City Planning Commission. The plaza, which is partly tucked beneath the office tower, was planned to enhance connections to the 53rd Street subway station, a heavily-used transit hub that provides access to both north-south and east-west subway lines. These POPS remain under jurisdiction of the City Planning Commission, and, with its approval, have undergone alterations.

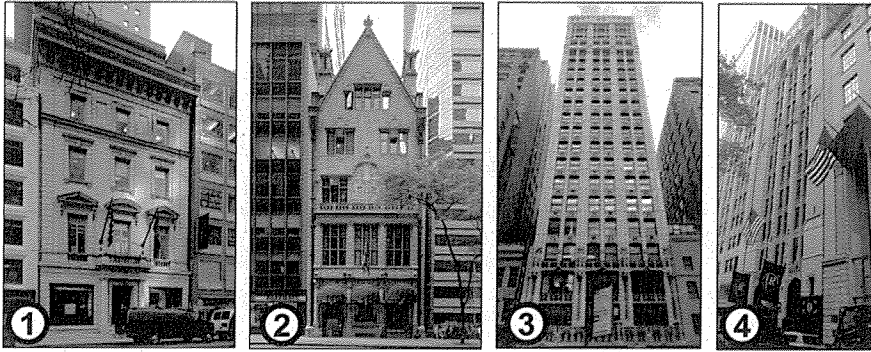
Completed in 1978, when very few large buildings were being erected in New York City, Citicorp Center received considerable attention from the press. In *The New York Times*, critic Ada Louise Huxtable called it a "suave blockbuster" and Paul Goldberger viewed it as "remarkably intelligent synthesis of a number of architectural themes." Reporter David Dunlap later described Saint Peter's Church as "New York's most architecturally successful postwar sanctuary." Boston Properties acquired a majority interest in Citicorp Center in 2001; the complex was renamed 601 Lexington Avenue in 2010.

Completed at a time when few large buildings were being erected in New York City, Citicorp Center received considerable attention from the press and architectural critics. In *The New York Times*, Ada Louise Huxtable called it a "suave blockbuster" and Paul Goldberger viewed it as "remarkably intelligent synthesis of a number of architectural themes." Author David Dunlap later described the church as "New York's most architecturally successful postwar sanctuary." Boston Properties acquired Citicorp Center in 2001; the complex was renamed 601 Lexington Avenue in 2010.

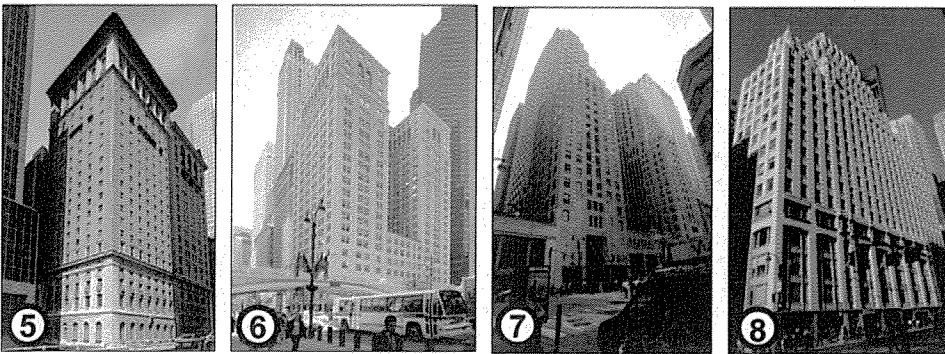
A standout representative of the Post-Grand Central era in this neighborhood, the building complements the landmarked Lever House and Seagram Building, which represent the International Style of architecture from the 1950s. The Landmarks Preservation Commission urges you to affirm the designation. Thank you.

Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair

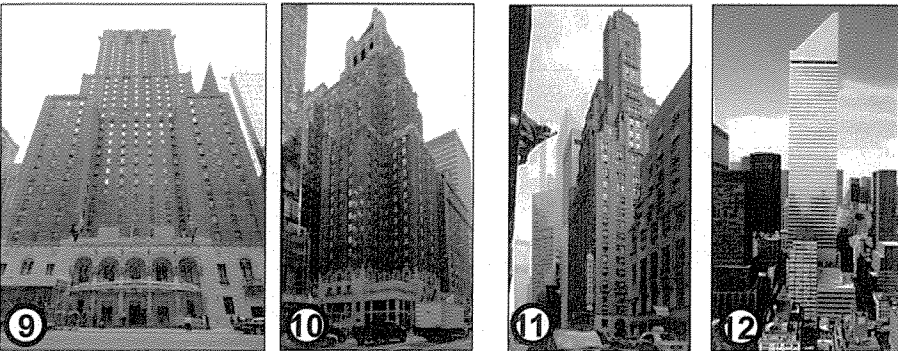
Greater East Midtown 2016 Designations: 12 Buildings



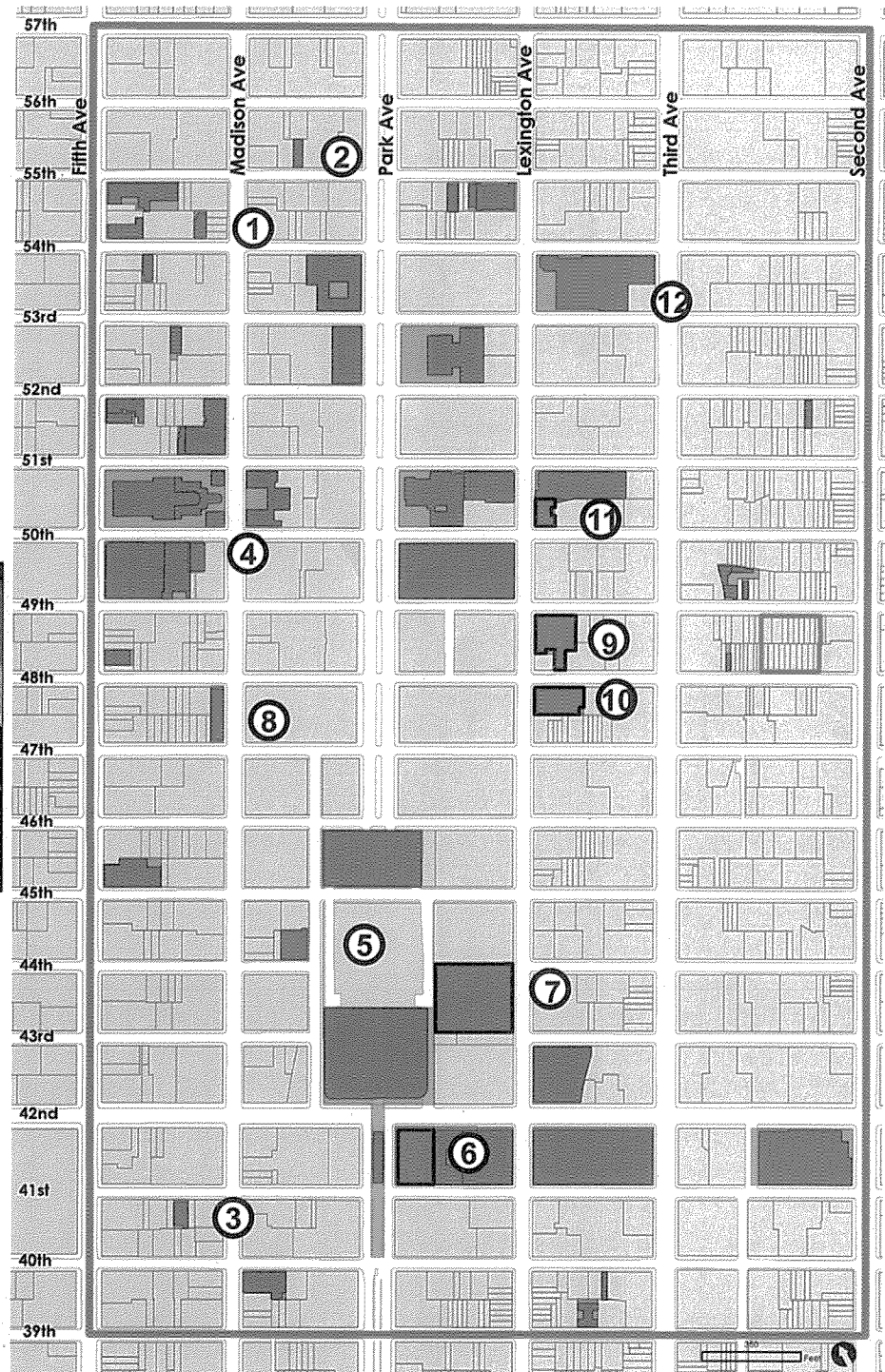
1 Minnie E. Young House 2 Martin Erdmann House 3 18 East 41st Street 4 Hampton Shops



5 Yale Club 6 Pershing Square Building 7 Graybar Building 8 400 Madison Avenue



9 The Shelton Hotel 10 Hotel Lexington 11 Beverly Hotel 12 601 Lexington Avenue



**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

January 24, 2017

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND MARITIME USES REGARDING THE DESIGNATION OF THE GRAYBAR BUILDING, BEVERLY HOTEL, PERSHING SQUARE BUILDING, SHELTON HOTEL, HOTEL LEXINGTON, 400 MADISON AVENUE BUILDING, MINNIE E. YOUNG HOUSE, MARTIN ERDMANN HOUSE, YALE CLUB, HAMPTON SHOPS BUILDING, 18 EAST 41ST STREET, AND CITICORP CENTER

Good day Chair Koo and Councilmembers. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking for the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is very pleased to support designation of the 12 landmarks being heard today. We thank parties involved in the Midtown East rezoning initiative, including the Mayor, Department of City Planning, Landmarks Commission, Borough President Brewer, and Council Member Garodnick, for their recognition of the significant historic architecture of the area.

We have statements on each building, which are attached, but will focus today's testimony on the Pershing Square and Graybar Buildings. They date to the Terminal City era, when the construction of Grand Central Terminal catalyzed commercial development.

The 1923 Pershing Square Building, with its "tapestry-like façade" and ornate decorative elements, is among the most beautiful sites in Midtown, and worthy of landmark designation for its history and architecture. The Romanesque Revival tower features round-arched windows and tiled hipped roofs, forming a lovely complement to Grand Central. One of the last tall buildings without setbacks, it rises straight up 24 stories, on top of footings that were built as part of the IRT subway line, built before the setback requirements were enacted in 1916. Since these footings could not support a set-backed building, the site received a variance and a unique place in New York architectural and planning history.

We understand that the owners have stated that this building should not be landmarked because it needs to be demolished so that the underground subway platforms can be improved. This argument simply does not hold; subways and their platforms need to be improved across the City, but we're not tearing down the apartment buildings, schools, hospitals, parks or streets that are over all of them. Furthermore, that connection to the infrastructure is part of this building's significance.

The 1927 Graybar Building is essential to Midtown East. It is one of the last remnants of Terminal City, the series of structures built to complement Grand Central Terminal. It is intertwined with the Terminal itself, built over the train tracks, with a concourse, the Passage, that provides direct access to trains and the station. Named for an original tenant, the Graybar Electrical Company, it is an emblem of New York's commercial growth in the era between the wars. Upon completion, it boasted one million square feet of office space – the largest office building in the world.

The owner has also testified against designation, as Graybar Passage is designated, and the building is already overbuilt, creating what they consider a de facto protection. But the proposed East Midtown rezoning will create a path for development of overbuilt sites, and given the current and future advances in engineering and construction methods, there would certainly be an opportunity to replace the Graybar while maintaining the landmarked Passage.

The rezoning proposal for East Midtown will substantially increase development pressures, especially in the areas closest to Grand Central Terminal, and we will likely face the loss of numerous masonry-clad buildings of the pre-war era. We remind you that it is the mix of old and new that keeps New York a dynamic, interesting, and unique city. The Pershing Square and Graybar are irreplaceable gems and an essential part of that mix. We urge you to affirm designation of these remarkable buildings.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY

July 19, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE GRAYBAR BUILDING, 420 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Alex Herrera speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Graybar Building.

The 1927 Graybar Building is essential to Midtown East. It is one of the last remnants of Terminal City, the series of structures built to complement Grand Central Terminal. It is intertwined with the Terminal itself, built over the train tracks, with a concourse that provides direct access to those tracks and the station.

Named for an original tenant, the Graybar Electrical Company, it is an emblem of New York's commercial growth in the era between the wars. Upon completion, it boasted one million square feet of office space – the largest office building in the world.

The 30-story Graybar is highly intact. The bulk of the building is composed of two brick-clad pavilions with multiple setbacks, above a two-story limestone base. The imposing massing of the pavilions rising above Lexington Avenue reflects the impressive interior capacity. At the base, stylized bas-relief figures symbolizing electricity and transportation frame the entrances. These are juxtaposed with some of the most delightful (or ironic) decorative elements on any Manhattan office building: metal rats climbing up ropes over the southern-most entrance.

Already eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the Graybar deserves landmark designation for its architecture, its history, and its place within Terminal City. As the rezoning plan for Midtown East moves forward, developers would do well to look back at the Graybar as fine example of how a building both fits into its surroundings and yet with quiet dignity and inventive design, stands apart from them.

As mentioned in the previous testimony, we appreciate the proactive role that the Commission has taken in analyzing Midtown East and bringing forward 12 buildings to be considered for designation, but we don't think the work is done. In 2013 The Conservancy, Historic Districts Council, and Municipal Art Society issued a joint list of buildings that we believed should be designated as landmarks. Today's five buildings were on that list, and several more have been calendared. We continue to request designation of the eight other significant properties. They include:

- Vanderbilt Concourse Building, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue
- Roosevelt Hotel, 45 East 45th Street
- Lincoln Building, 60 East 42nd Street
- Postum Building, 250 Park Avenue
- Hotel Intercontinental, 111 East 48th Street
- Chemists Club, 50-52 East 41st Street
- Girl Scouts of America, 830 Third Avenue
- Union Carbide Building, 270 Park Avenue

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
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July 19, 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE
BEVERLY HOTEL, 125 EAST 50TH STREET, NEW YORK, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Alex Herrera, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Beverly Hotel.

Built as the Hotel Beverly and now known as The Benjamin, this 28-story tower is part of Lexington Avenue's stretch of prominent pre-war hotels, built in the years after Grand Central Terminal and substantial transportation infrastructure were completed.

The Beverly was designed by Emery Roth and Sylvan Bien and built by Moses Ginsberg in 1927. Sylvan Bien worked with Warren & Wetmore and Emery Roth in the 1920s before he went on to design the Hotel Carlyle for Ginsberg in 1930. The design of the Hotel Beverly was considered to be one of the prolific Roth's best. Steven Ruttenbaum, in *Mansions in the Clouds: The Skyscraper Palazzi of Emery Roth* described the Beverly as "dramatically massed, with a fourteen-story base topped by a series of dramatic setbacks, reminiscent of an Italian hill town, culminating in a three-story octagonal tower."

The two-story base is built of limestone with Romanesque revival arches, corbel tables and fanciful keystones containing owls and pelicans. The upper levels are clad in grey brick, which blends with the limestone base. The buff color scheme was popular at the time; this light, delicate aesthetic was intended to differ from the heavier, darker look of Victorian-era buildings, which by the 1920s, was completely out of style. Stepped setbacks are set off by crenelated edges rising towards the Beverly's most impressive feature: the dramatic tower, with its rose windows, pilasters and Art-Deco stylized fenestrations. A red tiled roof with copper crown tops off this distinctive tower. The recent vertical "Benjamin" signage replaced a similar historic "Beverly" sign.

The Beverly quickly became an architectural icon on Manhattan's ever-growing skyline and served as inspiration for Georgia O'Keeffe's "New York, Night," completed in 1929, two years after the Beverly was opened. In "New York, Night," the artist depicts the nocturnal northern view from her apartment at the nearby Shelton Hotel.

The Beverly Hotel is an excellent example of the work of two prominent architects; it is one of the significant pre-war hotels along Lexington Avenue connected with the Terminal City-era development; and its intact historic architecture continues to delight and inspire New Yorkers.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY

July 19, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE PERSHING SQUARE BUILDING, 125 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Alex Herrera, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. We appreciate the work that the Commission has undertaken in analyzing the proposed Midtown East rezoning area and are pleased that landmarks are being recognized for their contributions within the planning process.

The Conservancy is happy to support this proposed designation. Rushing to or from Grand Central Terminal, one might not notice the 1923 Pershing Square Building tower, but with its "tapestry-like façade" and ornate decorative elements, this tower is among the most beautiful sites in Midtown, and worthy of landmark designation for its history and architecture.

This property represents the era when the construction of Grand Central and new transportation infrastructure catalyzed commercial development. Replacing the Grand Union Hotel, it was built in concert with its landmarked neighbor, the Bowery Savings Bank. The Pershing Square Building is one of the last tall buildings without setbacks. It rises straight up 24 stories, on top of footings that were built as part of the IRT subway line, before the 1916 setback requirements were enacted. Since these footings could not support a setback building, the site received a variance and a unique place in New York architectural and planning history.

Designation of the Pershing Square Building would rightly recognize the last unprotected lot on this extraordinary blockfront, which includes the landmarked Bowery Savings Bank, Chanin Building, and Pershing Square Viaduct. The architects were John Sloan, whose partnership with T. Markoe Robertson produced the Chanin, Graybar, and Fred F. French Buildings; and York & Sawyer, who designed the Bowery Savings Bank, New-York Historical Society, and Federal Reserve Bank of New York. In light of this company, the lack of designation seems like an oversight we hope this Commission will address.

Even without these qualities, the Pershing Square Building, which is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers, would be well-deserving of designation for its significant architecture. The Romanesque Revival tower features round-arched windows and tiled hipped roofs, forming a lovely complement to Grand Central Terminal. It is clad in granite, textured brick, and polychrome terra cotta, with extensive geometric decorations, and a series of stern angels staring down from the fifth story. In a 2010 column, Christopher Gray wrote that "(t)he Atlantic Terra Cotta Company supplied material for the building, and in 1923 its journal noted that Mr. Sloan worked to create the look of a hand-made structure, saying the clay was "purposely roughened for kiln burning to help out the rugged texture." Careful examination of the façade reveals a series of strong elements that together form an exceptional composition. Replacement windows and several contemporary storefronts do not detract from this striking façade.

The rezoning proposal for East Midtown will substantially increase development pressures, especially in the areas closest to Grand Central Terminal, and we will likely face the loss of numerous masonry-clad buildings of the pre-war era. We remind you that it is the mix of old and new that keeps New York a dynamic, interesting, and unique city. The Pershing Square Building is an irreplaceable gem and an essential part of that mix. We urge you to designate this remarkable building. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

July 19, 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE
SHELTON HOTEL, 525 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Alex Herrera, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Shelton Hotel, which we successfully submitted for eligibility on the State and National Registers in 2013.

The Shelton, now the Marriott East Side, is one of a group of hotels built in the 1920's near Grand Central Terminal, as transportation improvements spurred new development. Among the earliest skyscraper hotels, the 1,200-room, 34-story Shelton was the world's tallest hotel when it was finished.

Not only its height but its design made it stand out and become an instant sensation that thrilled the public when it opened in 1923. It rises in a stepped-back configuration with a red brick tower that rests on a massive two-story limestone base. The massing was the embodiment of the new 1916 zoning laws. Fiske Kimball proclaimed that "from the front, the building seems not only to have a tower, but to be a tower. In three great leaps of rhythmic height it rises, gathering in its forces for the final flight." The original business plan for the hotel was that it would only house bachelors; that idea quickly failed, and among early residents were artist Georgia O'Keefe and photographer Alfred Stieglitz.

Complementing the dynamic and powerful silhouette of its massing is exquisite limestone ornament throughout the tower, such as the Byzantine-inspired capitals, Venetian gothic windows with balconies, and grotesque gargoyles. These details allow the observer to enjoy the building from close-up as well as from a distance. The brick portion of the building is detailed with corbels and vertical paneling that emphasize the height of the facades. The base is enlivened with two-story arcades on both facades, and heavily ornamented in an original mixture of Romanesque and Byzantine styles. Owl-like gargoyles project several feet from the facade above the arcades. In 2000, a glass and steel canopy designed by Perkins Eastman was added to the Lexington Avenue main entrance; it does not detract from the building's historic appearance.

The Shelton is deserving of designation as the first hotel design to fully implement the 1916 zoning law, for its place in the development of Lexington Avenue's "hotel alley," and for architecture and rich ornamentation that continues to delight the public.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

July 19, 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE
HOTEL LEXINGTON, 511 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Alex Herrera, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Hotel Lexington, which we successfully submitted for eligibility on the State and National Registers in 2013.

The 700-room Radisson Lexington Hotel (originally the Lexington Hotel) was among the first generation of luxury high-rise residential hotels in Manhattan. It was built in 1928-29, designed by the notable architectural firm of Schultze and Weaver, and is an example of their work in pre-Depression era hotel designs.

Schultze and Weaver practiced together for nearly twenty years, starting in 1921. As the National Register eligibility report states, "Their partnership was a marriage of Schultze's training in the Beaux Art tradition, which allowed the firm to adapt easily to varying architectural styles and client needs; and Weaver's engineering ability, real estate background, and social capital, which brought in high-end clients looking to construct skyscraper hotels." High-profile work in Florida, California, and Cuba led them to New York, with the Lexington in 1928, and the Waldorf-Astoria in 1931.

Like the nearby Shelton Hotel, the Lexington caused a public sensation when it first opened, with its inventive and visually appealing synthesis of various animal and geometric motifs. An even bigger visual impact is created by the tapering, stepped body of the building, one of the tallest residential buildings in the world when it first opened. The 316-foot red brick tower rises in rhythmic steps and setbacks from an equally complex limestone base. The tower's massing is carefully modulated to give it a kinetic and sculptural quality.

What is eye-catching at street level is the extraordinary ornament lavished on the lower stories. Eagles, gargoyles, angels, and foliate carving enliven the facades. The upper stories are of brick and the bays are designed so as to emphasize the facade's verticality and height. The effect of vertical piers and vertical window bays play up the skyscraper nature of the design. The top of the building is crowned by a pyramidal roof that is nearly impossible to see except from other tall buildings. It is designed in a unique, an almost expressionistic manner with strange vertical gargoyles and blocky corner pavilions. While there have been some alterations, the historic form and many design elements are intact.

The Lexington Hotel is worthy of designation as one of the significant hotels of Midtown East's "hotel alley," for its association with Schultze and Weaver, and for its robust architecture.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

September 13, 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE
400 MADISON AVENUE BUILDING AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of 400 Madison Avenue.

At 400 Madison, H. Craig Severance designed a version of the commercial building that is a neo-Gothic masterwork. The 20-story tower, which dates to 1929, features white terra-cotta cladding, decorated with picturesque ornament such as crenellation and tracery elements. Original bronze and glass storefronts are intact; and a modest contemporary entrance canopy does not detract from the façade's historic appearance.

The building's interplay of piers and recessed spandrels emphasize its verticality and echo elements of the architect's 40 Wall skyscraper, completed the following year. Rising up across a full avenue block front, 400 Madison is topped with setback massing that embodies the principles of the City's 1916 zoning ordinance. It is one of the best survivors of an era of active commercial construction which followed the completion of Grand Central Terminal.

H. Craig Severance studied in France before starting a local practice. He partnered with William Van Alen from 1914 to the early 1920s, when he returned to his own firm and became one of New York's most successful architects of commercial buildings. But his career was not without controversy. His 40 Wall fought it out with Van Alen's Chrysler Building to be the city's tallest. (Before both lost to the Empire State Building.)

And writing about 400 Madison in 1929, the *New Yorker* commented in dismay over the "riot of battlements and machicolations that seem entirely unnecessary" before bemoaning "the unevenness of the stone jointing." Apparently Severance had sued the magazine three years earlier for libel, so maybe the critique was somewhat slanted. Today, it's hard to believe the uproar. The joints are no longer a standout issue, and the details that grace Madison Avenue are both elegant and very necessary, part of the overall composition of a building that certainly merits landmark designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

September 13, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE MINNIE E. YOUNG HOUSE, 19 EAST 54TH STREET, MANHATTAN, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Minnie E. Young House.

The firm Hiss & Weekes produced a Renaissance-revival design for this house, completed in 1900, that is a stylistic departure from the highly ornamental architecture more typical of the period. The façade's classical elements are simply yet gracefully arranged in stately proportions, and although it lacks the highly embellished decoration of Beaux-arts classicism, it is noteworthy that the house is constructed of granite, and not the more typical limestone, lending an element of luxury to an otherwise austere façade.

Built for Minnie E. Young, an heiress of the American Tobacco Company fortune, the townhouse is a surviving example of the wealthy residential neighborhood that once existed in Midtown East prior to the construction of Grand Central Terminal. Although it was successfully converted to commercial use in 1920, the exterior has retained most of its original architectural integrity, even surviving a fire in 1990 that caused substantial interior damage.

The Minnie Young house is worthy of landmark designation for its endurance as a timeless and fashionable work of architecture in an ever-changing neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

September 13, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE MARTIN ERDMANN HOUSE, 57 EAST 55TH STREET, MANHATTAN, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Martin Erdmann House.

Designed by Taylor & Levi and completed in 1909, the house is an outstanding example of the Jacobean revival style, a style rarely seen in New York's private residences of this period. Built for Martin Erdmann, a former partner in the banking firm of Speyer & Company, the townhouse is representative of the affluent residential neighborhood that existed in East Midtown prior to the construction of Grand Central Terminal. Although it was converted to office use in 1943 and later to its present use as the Friars Club, the Martin Erdmann house remains astonishingly intact.

Sandwiched between glass towers, this five-story limestone house, with its charming Tudor details, shows the broad swath and dynamism of Midtown East's architecture. The Martin Erdmann house warrants landmark designation for its attractive and unique design and its representation as an historic residence repurposed for a series of adaptive uses.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

September 13, 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE
YALE CLUB, 50 VANDERBILT AVENUE AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Yale Club.

The Club, which is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, is a grand building well deserving of landmark designation for its fine architecture and history. Founded in 1897, the Yale Club of New York had two other locations before moving to this site in 1915, which was selected for its proximity to the new Grand Central Terminal, which happens to provide service to New Haven. The structure, built over the railroad tracks, is said to have an underground connection to the station, allowing members direct access from the club.

James Gamble Rogers designed the stately clubhouse as a fine example of the Renaissance Revival style, evidenced in its classical massing, rusticated limestone base, monumental pilasters, the round-arched windows at the second and 21st floors, and the bracketed copper cornice. The building is largely intact, with some modernized storefronts along the 44th Street façade. Rogers, an alumnus of Yale and the Ecole des Beaux Arts, was responsible for transforming the Connecticut campus with a dominant Gothic revival style. The Club's dignified masonry facade suggests a sense of that solemnity and evokes a quality of academia. Rogers also designed buildings at Northwestern, Columbia, and NYU.

The Yale Club is one of the last links to Terminal City, the series of structures planned and designed to harmonize with Grand Central Terminal. According to the SHPO inventory form, "several characteristics of the building's design- including height, materials, and a well-defined cornice-were imposed on the architect as a result of the design regulations placed on properties above the tracks around Grand Central Terminal..." Other buildings of the Terminal City era include the adjacent Vanderbilt Concourse Building, neighboring Roosevelt Hotel and Postum Building, the Graybar, and the Hotel Intercontinental.

As some of these sites are certain to face extreme development pressures under the proposed Midtown East rezoning (which labels the Postum and Intercontinental as "projected" development sites,) it is critical that the LPC take the step of protecting one of the era's significant buildings with landmark designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
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September 13, 2016

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE
HAMPTON SHOPS BUILDING, 18-20 EAST 50th STREET AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of the Hampton Shops Building.

The Hampton Shops Building, which dates to 1915-16, is a fine example of structures built as the then-new Grand Central Terminal was influencing changes in Midtown East, and smaller residential buildings were making way for commercial development. It was however, completed before implementation of the City's 1916 zoning law and retains the massing of that era, rising up from the street without a break.

Rouse & Goldstone & Steiman designed this 11-story office building, which is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, in the neo-Gothic style. The base of the tripartite façade is divided into three pointed-arch openings at the ground floor which have been altered, but retain their distinctive shape. Vertical window bays and piers that run through the center section emphasize the building's height and massing. A triangular pediment with arched windows tops the tower. The façade is clad in a gray terra cotta that recalls granite, and features delicate decorative ornament, with tracery and heraldic elements, that is largely intact.

The tower was built for the Grand Rapids Furniture Company (which changed its name to Hampton Shops before this construction.) The company offered furniture in a variety of historic styles. While the neo-Gothic style is perhaps a complement to nearby St. Patrick's Cathedral, it is certainly an echo of the merchandise, offering an early form of branding. Advertisements throughout the 1920s emphasize that connection, as furniture recalling several different periods, from the Jacobean to the Tudor, to the "Latin tradition" is presented on pages with gothic lettering, photos of the building's details, and one that even frames a room in a pointed arch.

The Hampton Shops Building is well-deserving of designation for its fine architecture and its place in the evolution of commercial structures at the start of the Terminal City era of Midtown East.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
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September 13, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF 18 EAST 41ST STREET, MANHATTAN, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of 18 East 41st Street.

Commissioned by Judson S. Todd of the Holland Holding Company, the architectural firm of George and Edward Blum designed this 21-story "upscale" office building, which was advertised to potential tenants as having modern amenities such as "four high speed elevators" and "light on four sides." Its handsome exterior, largely intact, is a wonderful example of the Gothic revival style featuring splendid terra cotta ornamentation.

18 East 41st Street merits landmark designation as a rare example of the architects' commercial work and representative of the fashionable high rise buildings that were being erected contemporaneously with Grand Central Terminal prior to the 1916 zoning ordinance.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE NEW YORK
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September 13, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF 601 LEXINGTON AVENUE AND ST. PETER'S CHURCH, MANHATTAN, AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is pleased to support designation of 601 Lexington Avenue and St. Peter's Church, Manhattan.

Once known as the Citicorp Center, the former First National City Bank commissioned this urban complex to serve as their new corporate headquarters in the early 1970's. When it was completed in 1977, it was New York's only major new office tower that year. It featured many engineering and architectural innovations, such as double-decker elevators and a tuned mass damper employed to diminish the building's sway in the wind. The resulting 59-story tower was not only a new icon for Citicorp on the city's skyline, but would become a symbol of the resilience of the City during difficult financial times.

The complex also included a new building for St. Peter's Church. The low-rise structure was integrated into the site at a forty-five degree angle that sets off its bold angles and provides a dramatic contrast to both the orthogonal plan of the city streets and the powerful height of the office tower above. The new church, clad in dark gray granite, is punctuated by a skylight that cuts through the middle of the structure, a design which minimizes its mass while providing illumination to the sanctuary below.

These architectural elements are connected by the public plaza, atrium and a six-story office building. The buildings and their plan, taken as a whole, are worthy of landmark designation for an attractive cohesiveness of design and innovation, while each stands as a superior example of post-modern architecture constructed in the 1970s.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

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Name: Lauren George

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I represent: Commissioner

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