

**TESTIMONY OF THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION BEFORE THE
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS, PUBLIC SITING AND
MARITIME USES ON THE DESIGNATION OF
159 CHARLES STREET, MANHATTAN
May 15, 2007**

Good morning Councilmembers. My name is Diane Jackier, Director of External Affairs for the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of 159 Charles Street in Manhattan.

On November 14, 2006, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of 159 Charles Street. Fourteen people spoke in favor of designation, including representatives of City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, State Senator Thomas K. Duane, Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Community Board 2, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Greenwich Village Community Task Force, the Municipal Arts Society, the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Morton Street Block Association. One of the owners spoke in favor of designation but asked that the garage be excluded and expressed concerns about the need for downzoning the area. The Commission also received several letters of support, including a letter from Congressman Jerrold Nadler. On March 6, 2007, the Commission voted to designate 159 Charles Street a New York City landmark.

Constructed around 1838 for merchant Henry J. Wyckoff, 159 Charles Street is a rare surviving residential building of the early period of development of the far western section of Greenwich Village and, through its occupants has associations with some of the Far West Villages most significant businesses, the maritime trade and brewing industry. It is one of the few surviving Greek Revival style rowhouses in the Hudson River waterfront section of Manhattan, specifically the area west of the Greenwich Village Historic District between West 14th Street and Lower Manhattan.

Wyckoff, a prominent tea and wine merchant, built nine buildings on the former grounds of Newgate prison of which this is the only survivor. No. 159 Charles Street was initially leased to merchant James Hammond who operated a lumber business at Leroy and West Streets. In the

1880s the building was acquired by the neighboring Beadleston & Woerz brewery and was used to house brewery workers and in 1930s and 1940s served as the corporation's offices.

A three-story, three-bay-wide brick house with brownstone detailing, 159 Charles Street exhibits the simple forms and planar surfaces characteristic of the Greek Revival style. Its most notable feature is the handsome entry incorporating a stone surround with pilasters and a heavy entablature, tall wood pilasters framing a paneled doorway, sidelights, transom bar, and toplights. The house retains its brownstone base and original decorative wrought iron areaway fence ornamented with anthemion. The second and third story windows retain their historic molded wood surrounds and have historic six-over-six wood sashes. The house's historic bracketed metal cornice probably dates from the 1870s or 1880s.

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
354 WEST 11th STREET, MANHATTAN
May 15, 2007**

Good morning Councilmembers. My name is Diane Jackier, Director of External Affairs for the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of 354 West 11th Street in Manhattan.

On November 14, 2006, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation. Thirteen people spoke in favor including representatives of City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, State Senator Thomas K. Duane, Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Community Board 2, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Greenwich Village Community Task Force, the Municipal Arts Society, the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Morton Street Block Association. One of the owners spoke in opposition to designation. The Commission also received several letters of support, including a letter from Congressman Jerrold Nadler. On March 6, 2007, the Commission voted to designate the building a New York City landmark.

No. 354 West 11th Street is one of the best extant examples of the Greek Revival style rowhouses of the 1830s-40s located in the Hudson River waterfront section of Manhattan. The Greek Revival style characteristics of the house are its 3-story height; machine-pressed red brickwork laid in stretcher bond; stoop and areaway with wrought-ironwork; entrance with pilasters, entablature, sidelights, and transom; molded brownstone lintels; and flat roofline. The building was constructed c.1841-42, apparently for William B. Fash, a carver and "composition ornament" manufacturer, and his wife, Frances, who were foreclosed in 1843. The first long-term owners of the property, from 1866 to 1923, were the family of Friedrich C. Knubel, a German-born grocer, and his wife, Katherine (Anna) Knubel. Their son, Frederick Hermann Knubel, born the year they moved into the house, went on to study for the ministry and became the first president of the United Lutheran Church in America (1918-45). The house has continued to be used as a private residence for the past two centuries.

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 KELLER HOTEL, MANHATTAN
May 15, 2007**

Good morning Councilmembers. My name is Diane Jackier, Director of External Affairs for the Landmarks Preservation Commission. I am here today to testify on the Commission's designation of the Keller Hotel in Manhattan.

On November 14, 2006, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation. Fifteen people spoke in favor including the owner, and representatives of City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, State Senator Thomas K. Duane, Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Community Board 2, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation, the Greenwich Village Community Task Force, the Municipal Arts Society, the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society in America, the Historic Districts Council, the New York Landmarks Conservancy, and the Morton Street Block Association. The Commission also received several letters of support, including a letter from Congressman Jerrold Nadler. On March 6, 2007, the Commission voted to designate the building a New York City landmark.

The Renaissance Revival-style Keller Hotel was constructed in 1897-98 to the design of Julius Munckwitz, the Supervising Architect and Superintendent of Parks in New York City. Munckwitz also maintained a private architectural practice in Harlem. The building is an example of an elegant, restrained use of Renaissance-inspired ornament with string courses between each floor, an entrance portico with Corinthian columns and a simple cornice.

By the early nineteenth century, New York City developed as the largest port in the United States and in the early twentieth century, emerged as one of the busiest ports in the world. Hotels were built all along the waterfront to accommodate the sailors and dock workers that arrived in the City. Built by William Farrell, a prominent coal merchant, the Keller Hotel operated under several proprietors well into the early twentieth century. After the decline of the maritime industry, the building was converted into a single-room occupancy hotel. The building survives as a significant reminder of when the section of the Hudson River between Christopher and 23rd Streets was the heart of the busiest section of the Port of New York.

The Commission urges you to affirm the designation.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

SCOTT M. STRINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**Testimony of Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer
To the City Council re: Edwin L. B. Brooks House, 354 W. 11th Street, 159
Charles Street, and the Keller Hotel, 150 Barrow Street, 384-385 West Street,
May 15, 2007**

I would like to thank the City Council, especially Speaker Christine Quinn and Landmarks Subcommittee Chair Jessica Lappin, for the opportunity to testify today on the designation of 159 Charles Street, the Edwin Brooks House and the Keller Hotel as New York City Landmarks. These designations are an important step toward fulfilling the promise made to the Far West Village community by the LPC in June of 2005 to expand the Greenwich Village Historic District, create the Weehawken Historic District, and designate eight individual properties as New York City landmarks, three of which are being heard today.

These three buildings tell important tales of the development of the Far West Village. Built as part of a development of ten houses, 159 Charles Street is the last surviving structure built for Henry J. Wyckoff, a prominent local businessman. This building has had the good fortune of having responsible owners who should be commended for maintaining its current good condition. The neighboring structures have not been so lucky. Of the three rowhouses of which 159 Charles was once a part, one has been demolished and the other severely altered. This makes it all the more important to preserve this significant structure.

The Edwin L. B. Brooks House, located at 354 W. 11th Street, is a good surviving example of high style Greek Revival architecture and represents the early development of Greenwich Village in the first half of the 19th Century.

The Keller Hotel, at 150 Barrow Street, was originally built to house sailors and is a reminder of the West Village's significant maritime history. Once part of a string of hotels built to house sailors and maritime workers, it is now one of only a handful of Hudson River waterfront hotels that still remain. This structure has fallen on hard times in recent years. In order to ensure that the building does not suffer further disrepair, designation as a landmark is critical.

With development proceeding in the Far West Village at a rapid pace, it is imperative that we save important structures such as these to tell the story of Greenwich Village to future generations.

Thank you.

CHRISTINE C. QUINN
SPEAKER

DISTRICT OFFICE:
224 WEST 30TH STREET, SUITE 1206
NEW YORK, NY 10001
TEL: (212) 564-7757
FAX: (212) 564-7347



**THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE:
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK,
CITY HALL, NEW YORK, NY 10007
TEL: (212) 788-7210
FAX: (212) 788-7207
quinn@council.nyc.ny.us



MEMORANDUM

Date: May 14, 2007

Re: 354 West 11th Street, 159 Charles Street, and 150 Barrow Street (Keller Hotel)

For years the Speaker has worked with her fellow local elected officials, community leaders, advocates and residents of the Far West Village to preserve the low-rise historic nature of our community. These three sites - 354 West 11th Street, 159 Charles Street, and 150 Barrow Street (Keller Hotel) are being passed as historic landmarks in follow-up to a commitment made by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) in September 2005 in conjunction with the calendaring of the Weehawken Street Historic District and of the Greenwich Village Historic District Extension.

At that time the LPC committed to pursue eight additional sites as individual historic landmarks. This pledge was reiterated by the LPC when the two aforementioned historic district proposals were passed and approved by the New York City Council in July 2006. Today we get to celebrate the passage of the first three individual landmarks; we are one step further along in protecting the treasures of the Far West Village. The Speaker looks forward to the future designation of the remaining five individual sites that the community has tirelessly sought protections for.

The Speaker thanks the LPC and its dedicated staff for these three designations.