



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1469-2000, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1469

Resolution calling upon the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate landmark status to the Edgar Allan Poe House and the Judson House and urging the property owners, New York University Law School, to respect the literary past and architectural integrity of Greenwich Village by halting existing plans to demolish the buildings.

By Council Members Freed, Marshall and Quinn; also Council Members Foster, O'Donovan and Pinkett

Whereas, The Edgar Allan Poe House at 85 West 3rd Street near Washington Square in Greenwich Village is the only surviving Manhattan residence of the prolific American writer; and

Whereas, The Poe House is one of the nation's best examples of an historic literary home, where the writer's residency is well-documented and the house itself, along with the surrounding buildings, has survived in its original context; and

Whereas, When Edgar Allan Poe lived at this residence, Washington Square was at the forefront of the American literary scene and during his brief but productive stay at what is now called the Poe House, Poe wrote several significant short stories, articles for literary magazines and some of his finest poems; and

Whereas, While living at the historic West 3rd residence, Edgar Allan Poe achieved the life-long goal of owning his own literary magazine, "The Broadway Journal" and many Poe scholars from around the world concede that the years the writer spent in Washington Square were among the most prolific in his career; and

Whereas, New York University Law School, which owns the Poe House has been making the claim that the house is architecturally insignificant and bears no resemblance to the original home Poe lived in; nothing, however, can be further from truth as the building has retained all of its original exterior walls, chimney and roofline as well as important interior features including the front entrance and the main staircase; and

Whereas, In addition to the historic and architectural significance of the Poe House and the neighboring Judson House, these buildings represent fine and irreplaceable examples of a certain Washington Square charm and distinctness that has made the area one of the most interesting in all of New York City; and

Whereas, Preserving the Poe House and the Judson House would greatly benefit the people of the community, the students of N.Y.U. who live and learn in the neighborhood and all New Yorkers and visitors who pass by these cultural treasures; and

Whereas, It would be a great tragedy for New York City, literary history and the living community of Washington Square and Greenwich Village if New York University Law School were to go through with their plans and demolish the Poe House and Judson House; designating these worthy institutions landmark status would guarantee their preservation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate landmark status to the Edgar Allan Poe House and the Judson House and urges the property owners, New York University Law School, to respect the literary past and architectural integrity of Greenwich Village by halting existing plans to demolish the buildings.

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