



## AIA New York Chapter

The Founding Chapter of the American Institute of Architects

Chair Robert Tierney  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street  
New York NY 10007

October 21, 2008

Dear Chair Tierney,

We are writing in support of the redevelopment of Pier 17 in the South Street Seaport Historic District. The proposal that has been set forth will result in several positive outcomes.

The historic Tin Building would be restored and moved from its current position, where it is buried under the elevated highway and among retail buildings. Under the new plan, it would occupy the space at the end of the pier, adjacent to the water. The developer is committed to this expensive and complicated preservation solution because it makes sense: the building's new position would allow for unprecedented amounts of open space on the pier for public use, it would have new prominence as a historic building on New York's waterfront, and be restored as a functional space that recalls its days as a market before the current iteration of the Seaport.

The Seaport Historic District's historic buildings are primarily set back from the water, and this proposal would put several distinctly modern buildings at the water's edge. This should be seen as a positive for the district, as the water's edge is currently characterized by unremarkable mall architecture. SHoP Architects have put forward a site plan that combines contemporary designs with a base awareness of the site's history, including restored sightlines to the water, ample public space, and an urban street grid. Fulton Street and surrounding blocks will be maintained in their historic character, and New York will gain a waterfront that invites return visits from residents and tourists alike.

We want to urge the developer and architects to give pedestrians first priority when planning the streetscape of the hotel and residential buildings especially. We will also strongly support a site design that respects views both from and of the historic Brooklyn Bridge, and hope that this continues to be an element of the design.

Sincerely,

James McCullar, FAIA  
President

Fredric Bell, FAIA  
Executive Director