



May 1, 2015

Hon. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: Landmarks Preservation Commission De-calendaring

Dear Commissioner Srinivasan,

On behalf of the AIA New York Chapter and our nearly 5,500 members in New York City, we would like to register our support for your effort to remedy the backlogged LPC calendar. Protecting our city's architectural heritage is a priority to the AIANY Historic Buildings Committee, which has carefully considered this issue and has the following procedural suggestions for addressing the backlog.

The Historic Districts Council, together with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, proposed a responsible procedure to review the buildings on the list and assure that buildings that merit designation receive it. The coalition called for:

- Items on the calendar for five or more years should be brought to a public hearing with public testimony, notified 60 days in advance of the hearing;
- Public notice should include address, block, lot, community district, and prior date(s) of public hearings. Where possible, it should also include the LPC's official statement of significance, record, or public support or opposition from original hearings;
- Items for consideration should be grouped geographically. Special attention should be paid to including all five boroughs;
- Public hearings for these items should occur during regularly scheduled LPC Public Hearings;
- At the session following the public hearing, the LPC should vote on whether to designate an item, keep an item on the calendar for one year for more study and decision, or issue a no action letter.

Potential landmarks should not remain in designation limbo for extended periods of time; however, we understand that being calendared does provide certain temporary protections. Removing sites from consideration could put them at risk of demolition or unsympathetic alteration. The process of hearings at which the public has an opportunity for input and the Commissioners achieve consensus through discussion is a proven and effective way to designate landmarks. We do not see why that process should not apply in the case of these buildings; however, if we do not clear up the clutter, it is impossible to keep momentum moving forward and focus on current issues.

In order to streamline this process, we suggest that all public and semi-public properties, or listed items that are open to the public, should be reviewed through a thorough review process with community and commission input. This modified list would include theaters, churches, and other civic spaces.



We look forward to working with you on this process and participate in the ongoing conversation about how to improve city's built environment.

Respectfully submitted,

Tomas Rossant, AIA, 2015 AIANY President

John Arbuckle, AIA, Assoc. AIA, Co-Chair, AIANY Historic Buildings Committee

Caterina Roiatti, AIA, NCARB, Co-Chair, AIANY Historic Buildings Committee

David Burney, FAIA, AIANY Interim Executive Director