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Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chairman  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
1 Centre Street, 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
New York, N.Y. 10007

October 1, 2010

Re: Support for Landmark Designation of 326 and 328 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Manhattan

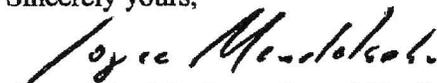
Dear Chairman Tierney,

I am writing to voice my deep support for landmark designation of 326 and 328 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street in the East Village/Lower East Side. Remarkably, these two Greek Revival-style row houses, dating to the 1830s, still retain their original configurations and details. The buildings encompass the history of the neighborhood as it transformed from a semi-rural area with ties to maritime industries on the East River waterfront to an enclave of immigrants from the German states and Jews from central and eastern Europe, and in the 1960s morphed into an offbeat, cultural and politically radical community.

Built as private dwellings, 326 and 328 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street were converted to tenements as tides of newcomers to America flowed into the neighborhood. Typically, immigrants settled in clusters with people from their home countries who spoke the same language and practiced similar customs and religious rituals. In the 1890s, Hungarian Jews formed a vibrant community in the northernmost portion of the Lower East Side, from Houston Street, between Avenue B and the East River where they organized self-help organizations, published ethnic periodicals and established synagogues. In the early twentieth century, a congregation of Hungarian Jews converted the buildings to a synagogue that operated until 1974. Afterward, the Uraian Philastry – an anarchist utopian community – acquired the properties and continues to occupy them.

I strongly urge the Commission to designate 326 and 328 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street -- buildings that have survived for more than a century-and-a-half and embody the complex history of the East Village/Lower East Side. Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely yours,



Joyce Mendelsohn, author of *The Lower East Side Remembered and Revisited*  
(2009, Columbia University Press)