



Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation

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September 12, 2016

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

Re: 69 Gansevoort Street, Manhattan

Dear Chair Srinivasan,

I write to express my extreme concern regarding the recent renovation of 69 Gansevoort Street, aka R&L Restaurant, located in the Gansevoort Market Historic District.

Renovations of the front façade of this building were recently permitted at staff level by the Landmarks Preservation Commission by CNE#18-5205. Given the historic and architectural significance of the original storefront, as noted in the [Gansevoort Market Historic District designation report](#), and that significant changes were made to the character of the storefront, this renovation should not have been approved at staff level, but rather should have been subject to the certificate of appropriateness process, requiring a full public hearing and review by the Commission.

Of further concern, while the distinctive Moderne signage and brickwork on the façade were restored, some aspects of the storefront renovation do not conform with the approved work as outlined in the CNE. According to the CNE, the columns and bulkhead at the front storefront façade are to be covered in corrugated metal. While the columns have not yet been revealed (see attached), the bulkhead is a cream-colored wood with detailing quite different from the original modern façade. The doors have been replaced with new ones of a similar color, style, and material to the bulkhead, which is also discordant with the original design, and the window opening has been lowered in a manner inconsistent with the original Moderne design for a luncheonette.

69 Gansevoort Street is a key feature of the Gansevoort Market Historic District, and deserves a higher level of scrutiny, and a higher standard for restoration and contemplated changes, than it received. While adaptive re-use of historic structures typically requires some alterations, such alterations should be reviewed by the Commission. And with such a distinctive façade as this, changes should be kept to a minimum and only include those absolutely necessary for the preservation and continued productive use of the building.

I therefore urge that an inspection of 69 Gansevoort Street be made immediately, all work be required to conform to permits which were issued, and the Commission work with the owner to see that distinctive Moderne

features of the storefront which were allowed to be replaced are restored to a condition similar to the original.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Berman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: City Councilmember Corey Johnson
Community Board #2, Manhattan

