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October 17, 2016

Andrew Berman
Executive Director
GVSHP
232 East 11th Street
New York, NY 10003

Simeon Bankoff
Executive Director
Historic Districts Council
232 East 11th Street
New York, NY 10003

Richard Moses
President
Lower East Side Preservation Initiative
232 East 11th Street
New York, NY 10003

Andrew Coamey
East Village Community Coalition
143 Avenue B – Simplex
New York, NY 10009

Dear Messrs. Berman, Bankoff, Moses, and Coamey,

I am writing in response to your Request for Evaluation (RFE) of 264 East 7th Street as an individual landmark, and 258-266 East 7th Street as a historic district. We have carefully reviewed whether these buildings may merit consideration for designation and found that 264 East 7th Street does not rise to the level of an individual landmark. We also found that the six properties at 258-266 East 7th Street do not rise to the level of a historic district, for the reasons described below. The LPC conducted additional research and the analysis on the architectural merit and the historic and cultural significance of the building individually, and the group as a historic district.

264 East 7th Street is one of a group of Greek Revival style row houses that includes 258-266 East 7th Street, built c. 1840-50. All of the buildings, including 264 East 7th, have moderate alterations, including painted or resurfaced facades, modified window and door surrounds, removed or modified cornices, and replacement ironwork. While such alterations themselves are not uncommon for buildings of this age, they are too extensive to consider 264 East 7th Street as an individual landmark based on its architectural merit.

The proposed district contains only six buildings, located on the midblock and on only one side of the street. These buildings are similar in age and style to those one would find in

the Greenwich Village Historic District, East Village Historic District and others. However, in those districts there is a much larger collection of buildings, and on both sides of the street, which creates the special sense of place needed for a historic district. Thus, there are too few contiguous buildings on the block to warrant recognition as a district. The LPC rarely designates small historic districts restricted to one side of the street; in the few cases in which it has been done it is for instances in which the buildings present a strong unity of design, such as found with the Hardenbergh/Rhineland Historic District.

The agency also assessed the historic and cultural significance of the buildings. Although the block on East 7th Street between Avenues C and D is historically associated with the Dry Dock District and local political life in the East Village, the buildings referenced in the RFE (258-266 East 7th Street) are not clearly representative of this history. This block has an interesting history associated with the Manhattan dockyards, however, many of the rowhouses most closely aligned with the significant figures of the Dry Dock District, including the master shipbuilders, have long been demolished and replaced by old law and new law tenements. Although the buildings from 258 to 266 East 7th are representative of the type associated with that time period, they lack a clear connection to residents associated with Dry Docks or shipping. In many cases, the addresses known to be associated with key figures, such as William Henry Webb's home at 247 East 7th street (razed to build the Jefferson Club), have been demolished.

In reference to the identity of the block as "Politicians Row," the importance of the street as a home to important local politicians may be significant, but is not tied to the specific buildings discussed within the RFE. We could not find that the rowhouses from 258-266 East 7th Street have any associations with a particular politician of that time period. The few buildings that were most closely associated with the district's twentieth century political history, such as the Jefferson Club have been highly altered (the Jefferson Club is now the Iglesia Cristiana Misionera Pentecostal Church) or lost.

In summary, given the buildings' alterations, the fragmentary nature of the proposed district, and the lack of a clear connection to important figures who are representative of the dockyards or political life of this area, we do not find that the six properties at 258-266 East 7th Street do not rise to the level of a historic district

I want to thank you for your interest in historic preservation and in the work of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Sincerely,



Lisa Kersavage