



HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL

THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

October 8, 2021

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Sarah Carroll, Chair
New York City Landmarks
Preservation Commission
Once Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Melanie LaRocca, Commissioner
New York City Department of Buildings
280 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

Re: 44-54 Ninth Avenue/351-55 West 14th Streets, Manhattan

Dear Mayor de Blasio, Chair Carroll and Commissioner La Rocca,

The Historic Districts Council (HDC) was shocked to learn that the Department of Buildings has ordered, and the Landmarks Preservation Commission has agreed to, the demolition of nine landmarked houses at 44-54 Ninth Avenue/351-55 West 14th Streets, Manhattan. We understand that the basis for the demolition decision is that the buildings have been determined “unsafe.” We would like to know whether these allegedly unsafe conditions resulted from approved work. We are concerned that significant work was approved for buildings so old and fragile. The public needs to know how this situation was created and whether it was avoidable.

HDC asks that the Department of Buildings, working with the LPC, immediately take efforts to ensure that the owner properly and safely shores up the remaining structures **before** any additional damage is done. HDC urges a full investigation of what led to the damage of these landmarked buildings, who is responsible, and what further damage and demolition can be avoided.

We ask that the LPC and the DOB act expeditiously to ensure that these buildings can be shored up and saved.

Sincerely,

The Historic Districts Council
Executive Committee

John Bacon
Penelope Bateau
Hal Bromm
Chris Cirillo
Alison Greenberg
Christopher London

cc: City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
State Senator Brad Hoylman
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
Community Board 4, Manhattan
Community Board 2, Manhattan
Andrew Berman, Village Preservation
New York Landmarks Conservancy
Save Chelsea