CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

630 9th Avenue, Suite 208
New York, NY 10036

tel: 212-736-4536
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

LESLIE BOGHOSIAN MURPHY
Chair

STACIE JOHNSON
District Manager

Executive Committee **Item #: 33**

October 18, 2026

Lisa Kersavage
Chair, Landmarks Preservation Commission
David N. Dinkins Municipal Building,
9th Floor North
1 Centre Street
New York, NY 10007

Re: Renewed Request for Evaluation – Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 229-231 West 14th Street

Dear Chair Kersavage:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4), at its regularly scheduled meeting on October 7, 2026, voted, by a vote of 37 in favor, 4 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote, to reiterate its support for the designation of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 229-231 West 14th Street, as an individual New York City landmark. In light of the Archdiocese of New York's recently announced intention to sell the building, the Board urges the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to reconsider the Request for Evaluation (RFE) and calendar the church for designation without delay.

MCB4 first went on record in support of designation in 2023, by a vote of 36 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 0 present but not eligible to vote. Circumstances have changed materially since then, and the building now faces an imminent risk of sale and loss.

Background

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, also known as Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, was the first Spanish-language Catholic church in New York City. It was established in the early 1900s in two

adjacent rowhouses built around 1850, when West 14th Street was one of the city's premier residential addresses; the houses had belonged to the Delmonico restaurant family.

By the turn of the 20th century, West 14th Street had become the center of "Little Spain," a largely working-class immigrant neighborhood extending roughly from Christopher Street to 23rd Street. The church served Spanish immigrants first, and its congregation grew over the next century to include Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Central American New Yorkers. The Spanish Baroque facade that survives today was added in 1921.

The church is one of the last architectural remnants of Little Spain. The parish it housed for a century still draws thousands of patrons each December for the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In 2023, the Archdiocese issued a decree of relegation, ending the building's use for worship. At parishioners' request, Village Preservation submitted an RFE to LPC. MCB4, local elected officials, and scholars of Hispanic and Latino history in New York supported the request. LPC declined to advance it, characterizing the church as not "particularly significant" to the Spanish-speaking community. The Board believes the documented history clearly contradicts that conclusion.

Current Threat

At a rally outside the church in August 2026, Council Member Carl Wilson announced that the Archdiocese had informed him of its intention to sell Our Lady of Guadalupe, along with other West Side properties including the Guardian Angel School, to help meet its financial obligations to survivors of clergy sexual abuse. The Board recognizes the importance of those obligations. However, if this building is sold without protection, it almost certainly won't survive.

Of the roughly 38,000 buildings and sites protected by landmark designation in New York City, only a handful are connected to Hispanic history, even though Hispanic New Yorkers make up nearly 30 percent of the city's population. LPC's own Equity Framework commits the agency to prioritizing designations that represent underrepresented communities. Our Lady of Guadalupe is precisely the kind of site that framework was meant to protect.

Recommendation

MCB4 reiterates its strong support for the individual landmark designation of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and urges the Commission to reconsider the RFE and calendar the building as soon as possible, before any sale proceeds.

The Board recognizes that designation alone cannot guarantee the building's future use. However, designation would preserve the building and require that it be kept in good repair, keeping open the possibility of a use that reconnects the public to its history. The Board would welcome a thoughtful, community-engaged adaptive reuse of the building that honors its role as the spiritual home of New York's first Spanish-speaking Catholic congregation.

The Board thanks Council Member Wilson for his leadership and joins him, local preservation organizations, and the many parishioners and New Yorkers who have called for this building's protection.

Sincerely,





Leslie Boghosian-Murphy
Chair
Manhattan Community Board 4

Greg Morris
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

Katy Stokes
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

cc: Hon. Carl Wilson, New York City Council
Archdiocese of New York
Andrew Berman, Village Preservation