



THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS



April 3, 2023

To: Adrienne Adams, Speaker of the City Council
Council Member Justin Brannan, Chair of the Committee on Finance
Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr., Chair of the Committee on Land Use

Re: NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission Budget Fiscal 2024

Dear Speaker Adams, Council Member Brannan, and Council Member Salamanca:

The undersigned preservation organizations request that the City Council restore the LPC budget and eliminate proposed cuts.

We reviewed the *Report on the Fiscal 2024 Preliminary Plan and the Fiscal 2023 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report for the Landmarks Preservation Commission* dated March 9, 2023. The plan seeks to eliminate three positions from the Landmarks Preservation Commission—two of which had just been restored through the City Council's extraordinary efforts last year. We firmly believe that eliminating staff will result in delayed applicant reviews, slower permit issuance, and fewer designations overall—a net detriment to the reputation and abilities of one of the city's smallest agencies. Sadly, these inefficiencies will disproportionately impact small businesses and property owners the most.

Insufficient staffing at the agency will lead to overwhelmed staff, the loss of institutional memory, and burn-out. Each application is unique and must consider many factors. Retaining dedicated, qualified staff with an understanding of the city's built environment is critical to the overall success of the agency and its mission to protect the City's architecturally, historically, and culturally significant buildings.

We are especially concerned about these proposed cuts in light of the unprecedented loss of more than a dozen designated landmarks over the past 18 months due to illegal construction, neglect, or neighboring construction. While the LPC is currently proposing changes in processes and interagency coordination to address these disasters, elimination of staff positions and budget lines will only set the LPC further back in their ability to proactively address this pressing issue.

This is a time for additional oversight, staffing, and collaboration—not less.

We hope you see the value in maintaining what we have: both physically in our built City and staffing-wise at this crucial agency.

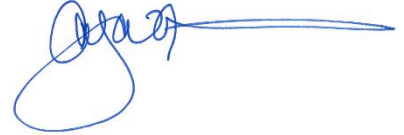
Thank You,



Frampton Tolbert
Executive Director
Historic Districts Council



Peg Breen
President
New York Landmarks Conservancy



Elizabeth Goldstein
President
Municipal Art Society



Andrew Berman
Executive Director
Village Preservation



Rachel Levy
Executive Director
Friends of the Upper East Side



Sean Khorsandi
Executive Director
Landmark West!



Lo van der Valk
President
Carnegie Hill Neighbors

CC: Chair Sarah Carroll, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission