



June 23, 2025

Chair Sarah Carroll  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
253 Broadway, 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

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Deputy Counsel John Weiss  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
253 Broadway, 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Urgent Concern Regarding Deterioration of the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center, 2-8 Seventh Avenue South, aka 1 Clarkson Street (Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II) – Request for Failure to Maintain Violation**

Dear Chair Carroll and Deputy Counsel Weiss,

I am writing to express urgent concern about the significant and ongoing deterioration at the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center building, located at 2-8 Seventh Avenue South (aka 1 Clarkson Street) within the Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II. This organization is deeply troubled by the years of neglect this important landmarked building has suffered with the City of New York as owner, and requests that the Landmarks Preservation Commission act swiftly to compel the Parks Department to undertake the necessary repairs to preserve and restore this building, before it is too late. **The time has come to issue a Failure to Maintain violation for this landmarked property.**

As you know, the bounds of the Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II were deliberately drawn to include the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center and adjacent Hudson Park Library when the district was designated in 2010. Since then, and especially during the past five years since this community asset was “temporarily” closed to the public, the Parks Department has let the recreation center building deteriorate to an alarming degree.

As clearly stated on LPC’s website, owners of landmarked properties are obligated to keep their building in a “state of good repair” — a duty the City has obviously failed to fulfill at the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center. We are calling on the LPC to pursue enforcement action to pressure the Parks Department to restore this building. The LPC would never let a privately-owned property reach such a state of neglect without taking action, and the City needs to be held to the same standards as any other landlord.

During a tour of the interior conditions at the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center on April 23, 2025, led by Parks Department engineers and facilitated by Council Member Erik Bottcher, I observed numerous deteriorating conditions throughout the historic building. Despite its landmark status, it was evident that this building has for years failed to receive proper maintenance. To be clear, none of the structural or superficial issues present at the recreation center appeared to be insurmountable, nor are they unique to this building. But they are issues that need to be addressed quickly and expertly to ensure that the damage to the historic building does not reach a point of no return.



*Temporary structural bracing in place at the interior*



*Damaged historic brickwork at exterior of Recreation Center  
Both photographs by Village Preservation staff, April 23, 2025*

At the site visit, Parks' Deputy Director of Engineering Benjamin Conable plainly stated that each identified problem — things like steel framing deterioration, for which there is currently bracing in place; water infiltration causing damage to historic masonry, and failing roofing; spalling brickwork, and so forth — could be repaired given the requisite funding and expertise to do so. The Parks Department must begin these necessary repairs for the at-risk landmarked building as soon as possible.

Appallingly, the Parks Department is now proposing to demolish the building, citing its deteriorated state (due to their own deferred maintenance) as a reason they should be allowed to do so. The demolition of the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center would set an unacceptable and dangerous precedent for the more than 38,000 landmarked buildings in New York City, signalling to owners that they can simply stop maintaining their historic building if they wish to receive permission to demolish it.

We are becoming increasingly concerned that this ongoing lack of maintenance could soon reach the point of Demolition by Neglect, which the Landmarks Law is expressly in place to prevent. It is shameful that a building owned by the City of New York itself has reached this point.

This issue is all the more urgent now because the City Council must indicate that they support earmarking budgetary funds for preserving and restoring the Tony Dapolito Recreation Center, and *not* for its demolition, before they adopt the fiscal year 2026 budget on June 30th. A violation for “Failure to Maintain” from the Landmarks Preservation Commission would be a clear indicator that the Parks Department has wrongfully neglected this historic landmark, and that restoration and preservation are the only acceptable path forward.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman  
Executive Director

Cc: Mayor Eric Adams  
Parks Commissioner Iris Rodriguez-Rosa  
State Senator Brian Kavanagh  
Congressman Dan Goldman  
Assemblymember Deborah Glick  
Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine  
City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams  
City Councilmember Erik Bottcher  
City Councilmember Justin Brannan  
City Councilmember Shekar Krishnan  
City Councilmember Kamillah Hanks  
Preservation League of New York State  
Municipal Art Society  
New York Landmarks Conservancy  
Historic Districts Council  
Friends of the Upper East Side  
Landmark West!  
Carnegie Hill Neighbors  
Save Harlem Now!  
The Coalition to Save the Public Recreation Center Downtown  
Manhattan Community Board 2