

COUNCIL MEMBER CARL WILSON CALLS ON ARCHDIOCESE TO STOP THE SALE OF HISTORIC WEST SIDE PROPERTIES AND URGES LANDMARK PROTECTIONS

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COUNCIL MEMBER CARL WILSON CALLS ON ARCHDIOCESE TO STOP THE SALE OF HISTORIC WEST SIDE PROPERTIES AND URGES LANDMARK PROTECTIONS

As the Archdiocese of New York plans to put three historic buildings up on the market, Council Member Carl Wilson along with other advocates call on the Archdiocese to find alternate buildings to sell, and call on the Landmark Preservation Committee to designate landmarks protections.

CHELSEA, NY — Council Member **Carl Wilson** was joined by State Senator **Erik Bottcher**, Village Preservation Executive Director **Andrew Berman**, La Nacional Executive Director **Robert Sanfiz**, Co-Chair of Chelsea Land Use Committee on Community Board 4 **Katy Stokes**, and community activists on Wednesday afternoon in front of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church at 229 W 14th St to call on the Archdiocese of New York to stop the sale of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and the former Guardian Angel Roman Catholic Church school building. They called on the Archdiocese to identify other properties for sale as it works to meet its financial obligations to survivors of sexual abuse.

“Survivors deserve justice, accountability, and compensation. But the Archdiocese should not pay for its failures by selling irreplaceable pieces of our neighborhoods,” said Council Member **Carl Wilson**. “These are not simply assets on a balance sheet. They are places that tell the story of immigrants, working people, families, and generations of New Yorkers who built their lives here.”

Council Member Wilson also called on the Landmarks Preservation Commission to pursue landmark protections for Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Guardian Angel school building, as well as Guardian Angel Church, the Church of St. Michael, and the St. Michael convent, which are currently unprotected.

There was acknowledged that a sale and responsible reuse of the former St. Michael Academy at 425 West 33rd Street may be appropriate given the building's condition, but stressed the importance of protecting the adjacent historic church and convent.

"Our historic buildings tell the story of the generations of New Yorkers who came before us. These buildings are important pieces of that history, and I'm grateful to Council Member Carl Wilson for his leadership in bringing neighbors together to fight for their preservation," said State Senator **Erik Bottcher**. "At a time when our communities have so many pressing needs, it is deeply disappointing to see the Church move to dispose of these properties rather than explore ways to put them to new use serving the people of our community. These buildings have long been community assets, and they should have the opportunity to remain so. I stand with Council Member Wilson and our neighbors in calling on the Archdiocese to halt the sale and work with the community toward a future for these historic sites that continues their legacy of service."

"History and architecture are two of the most important aspects of our neighborhoods' characters. Our Lady of Guadalupe and the Guardian Angel Roman Catholic Church have precisely the kind of historic and architectural value that the landmarking process is designed to preserve. I urge the landmarks commission to designate these two buildings as landmarks," said civil rights lawyer, law professor, and community leader **David Siffert**, who recently won the Democratic Primary for State Assembly District 66.

"For the past three years, we've been fighting to get Our Lady of Guadalupe landmarked and saved from what seems like ever-more-certain destruction. That it's even a question that the city's very first Spanish language church deserves landmark status is mind-boggling. Mayor Mamdani should reverse the wrongheaded decision of his predecessor to turn his back on Our Lady of Guadalupe and all it represents, and heed the call of Council Member Wilson and thousands of New Yorkers to protect this critical piece of New York City history," said **Andrew Berman**, Executive Director of Village Preservation.

The Executive Director of La Nacional, **Robert Sanfiz**, said "before there was La Nacional, there was Guadalupe church. It was the spiritual anchor of this neighborhood. Losing this sanctuary would erase a priceless chapter of our living heritage."

"Our Lady of Guadalupe Church is of critical historic, cultural, and architectural significance... Our Lady of Guadalupe's continued cultural importance to the history of the Hispanic population in Chelsea, and the city as a whole, is undeniable," Co-Chair of Chelsea Land Use Committee on Community Board 4 **Katy Stokes**.

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