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NATIONAL TRUST  
for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

June 16, 2003

BY FACSIMILE 212-720-3219

Hon. Amanda M. Burden, Chair  
New York City Planning Commission  
22 Reade Street  
New York, NY 10007

Re: 2 Columbus Circle

Dear Chairman Burden:

I am writing on behalf of the National Trust for Historic Preservation with respect to the hearing being conducted on June 18 concerning 2 Columbus Circle. The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private, non-profit organization chartered by Congress in 1949 to lead the private historic preservation movement in this country. With almost 250,000 members nationwide, including over 22,000 in the State of New York, the National Trust provides leadership, education, and advocacy to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities.

We understand that the purpose of the hearing is to discuss the transfer of 2 Columbus Circle to the Museum of Arts and Design, but not to evaluate any design changes planned for the building. While we applaud the vision of the City in seeking an appropriate reuse for this historic building, we would respectfully submit that to so dispose of a building before determining its historic and architectural significance is premature. We have written to Robert Tierney, Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, urging him to hold a public hearing to make such a determination (a copy of that letter is enclosed) but to our knowledge no such meeting is planned. To transfer a potential landmark building to a private owner, without protections or restrictions, could have very unfortunate consequences. As we said in our letter to Chairman Tierney, "the fabric of our culture is composed of many elements from many time periods, and each element contributes to our understanding of our country's growth and development. To lose the façade of 2 Columbus Circle to inappropriate development would be unfortunate for the City of New York as well as admirers of architectural innovation nationwide."

*Protecting the Irreplaceable*



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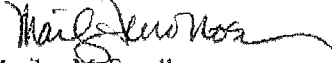
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Therefore, we would urge you to encourage a Landmarks determination for 2 Columbus Circle before you make your ultimate decision on its transfer from City ownership.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.

Very truly yours,

  
Marilyn M. Fenollosa  
Senior Program Officer and Regional Attorney

Enclosure

Cc: The Honorable Robert B. Tierney  
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