

DOCOMOMO US New York/Tri-State ~ Historic Districts Council ~ Municipal Art Society
National Trust for Historic Preservation ~ New York Landmarks Conservancy
Preservation League of New York State ~ World Monuments Fund

July 11, 2005

The Honorable Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor of the City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

As you know, the façade of Two Columbus Circle, a very important work by modernist architect Edward Durell Stone, is in danger of being demolished.

Such an outcome, in the view of many in the preservation community, would be a serious blow to the architectural richness, diversity and history of New York City.

Unquestionably, there are divergent views regarding this 41-year-old building. Many consider it a modernist masterpiece. Others disagree, however, much has changed in the decade since Two Columbus Circle's future has become a subject of such intense debate. An increasing number of experts, as well as members of the public, have developed a deeper appreciation of modernist architecture in general, Edward Durell Stone in particular, and Two Columbus Circle specifically.

We hope you will agree that the best way to consider the future of this structure is through a fair and open hearing conducted by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission. We regret that the debate over this controversy has become so prolonged and embittered. We believe it would be beneficial for all parties if the Commission would act to resolve this matter once and for all by granting an immediate hearing for Two Columbus Circle to consider it for landmark status. Your support in this effort is, of course, key.

You may be aware that the leading state, national and international preservation organizations have included Two Columbus Circle on their lists of buildings warranting protection: Preservation League of New York State, National Trust for Historic Preservation and World Monuments Fund. The other four groups that have signed this letter – Municipal Art Society, New York Landmarks Conservancy, Historic Districts Council and DOCOMOMO – are all on the record strongly endorsing a public hearing.

You may also be aware that New York State Commissioner of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Bernadette Castro issued a letter dated July 5, 2005, stating that 2 Columbus Circle appears to meet the eligibility criteria for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. A copy of her letter is enclosed.

In addition, *The New York Times* editorial board, as well as that paper's current and former architecture critics (Nicolai Ouroussoff and Herbert Muschamp, respectively), Yale School of Architecture Dean Robert A. M. Stern, and countless others have urged Landmarks to hold a hearing. Each new development in this debate provides stronger justification for holding a designation hearing.

We come together to ask that you encourage a public process in order to address the fate of Two Columbus Circle, allowing its merits to be aired in the manner originally contemplated by New York City's groundbreaking 1965 Landmarks Law.

We respectfully request a meeting with you to discuss this issue at your earliest convenience. We will contact your office to arrange a date.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on this most important matter.

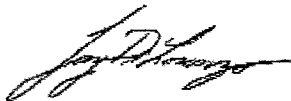
Sincerely,



Bonnie Burnham, President
World Monuments Fund



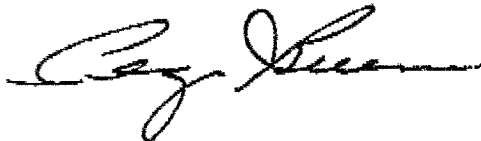
Richard Moe, President
National Trust for Historic Preservation



Jay DiLorenzo, President
Preservation League of New York State



Kent Barwick, President
Municipal Art Society



Peg Breen, President
New York Landmarks Conservancy



Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director
Historic Districts Council



Nina Rappaport, Co-Chair
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cc: Deputy Mayor Patricia Harris
Landmarks Preservation Commission Chair Robert B. Tierney