

MULTI-BOROUGH

Art Deco Society
of New York

Brownstone Revival
Coalition

Committee for
Environmentally Sound
Development

DOCOMOMO US—New
York/Tri-State Chapter

Four Boroughs
Neighborhood
Preservation Alliance

Society for the Architecture
of the City

Women's City Club of New
York

BROOKLYN

East 78th Street Block
Association

Bay Ridge Conservancy
Senator Street
Historic District

MANHATTAN

Association of Neighbors
on the Upper East Side

Coalition for a
Livable West Side

Defenders of the Historic
Upper East Side

The Drive to Protect the
Ladies' Mile District

Gramercy Neighborhood
Associates

Greenwich Village Society
for Historic Preservation

Hamilton Heights- West
Harlem Community
Preservation Organization

Historic Neighborhood
Enhancement Alliance

LANDMARK WEST!

Manhattan-Ville
Heritage Society

Roosevelt Island
Historical Society

Stuyvesant Park
Neighborhood Association

Turtle Bay Association

Union Square
Community Coalition

West 45th Street Block
Association

QUEENS

Beachside Bungalow
Preservation Association

Douglastron Little Neck
Historical Society

Jackson Heights
Garden City Society

Richmond Hill
Historical Society

STATEN ISLAND

Preservation League of
Staten Island

Citizens for a Responsive Landmarks Law*

PHONE 212-496-8110 FAX 212-875-0209

LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE LANDMARK DESIGNATION PROCESS

CALL FOR SUPPORT

We urge you to support the “**Landmarks Hearing**” bill (Intro. 705), a bill to amend the administrative code of the City of New York to allow the Council to direct the Landmarks Preservation Commission to hold a public designation hearing.

The “Landmarks Hearing” bill will improve the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) process for scheduling public designation hearings on the individual buildings and historic districts that matter most to New Yorkers.

This bill is a direct outgrowth of extensive testimony provided to the City Council by preservationists at three oversight hearings on the administrative procedures of the LPC, which took place on October 20 and November 29, 2004, and May 16, 2005. These hearings were held in response to widespread concerns that, as our city commemorates forty years of strong landmarks activism since the passage of the historic 1965 Landmarks Law, in recent years **the LPC has fallen behind in its mission to protect the buildings and neighborhoods that matter most to New Yorkers.**

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

The “Landmarks Hearing” bill is intended to prevent the loss of sites of recognized historic, architectural and/or cultural significance without a public designation hearing. A designation hearing gives an opportunity for public testimony to be heard and formally considered by the full Landmarks Preservation Commission. At present, a decision *not* to send an item to such a public hearing is made administratively, without full transparency or public accountability.

This bill adds two new mechanisms to the Landmarks Law, by which potentially worthy sites would be scheduled by the Landmarks Preservation Commission for hearings to consider their designation as individual landmarks, interior landmarks, scenic landmarks, or historic districts.

The first would require the Landmarks Preservation Commission to hold a public hearing on the designation of an item within sixty (60) days of a majority vote by the City Council in favor of a hearing.

The second would require that the Landmarks Preservation Commission hold a public hearing on any item which has been listed or determined eligible for listing on the state register of historic places if any member of the public submits a request, in writing, to the Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission for that item to be heard.

In creating these two mechanisms for requiring public hearings for landmark or historic district designation, the bill would help to ensure that items that enjoy substantial public support, or meet the criteria for historic, architectural, and/or cultural significance outlined by the State Historic Preservation Office, can at least receive public hearings.

The bill does not require the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate any item. The aim is only to ensure a democratic process with full public discussion and review before a potential landmark is lost to demolition.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF INTRO. 705 AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The “Landmarks Hearing” bill (Intro. 705) will be presented before the City Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting and Maritime Uses, Committee on Land Use, and the full Council. It is hoped that, through the public hearing process at the City Council, the language of this bill can be refined and strengthened to reflect the legislative intent described above.

* The title of this growing coalition refers to “Citizens for a Sensible Landmarks Law,” the group that advocated for important improvements to the New York City Landmarks Law approved by the City Council in 1973.

list in formation