

## Sutton Urges Landmark Designation for Soho

By ROBERTA GRATZ

Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton has called on the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate Soho in Lower Manhattan an historic district without further delay.

In a letter to Commission Chairman Goldstone, Sutton further urged that the designation follow the boundary lines originally drawn for the commission's public hearings on the Soho proposal in 1970. Those lines included the 26 blocks bounded by W. Broadway, Canal, Houston and Crosby.

"This is a matter in which I as president of the Borough of Manhattan am deeply interested and which has

widespread support within the community as well as many of the cultural, historic and other groups of the city," Sutton wrote.

### Meeting Tonight

Sutton timed his letter to coincide with the commission's monthly meeting tonight at which, Sutton said, "I understand an informal discussion of Soho will take place. I wanted the commission to have my views before tonight." The commission is expected to vote, designation approval tonight for two West Side districts—West 105 St. off Riverside Drive and West 76 St. off Central Park West.

Sutton's releasing his letter to the press marks the

first time he has publicly pressured the commission. A New York Post series in January brought to light widespread dissatisfaction with the commission's inaction and delays on designation proposals. It was pointed out at that time that 86 individual landmark proposals and seven historic

districts were still pending from the commission's 1970 hearings.

Goldstone has indicated that designation for Soho should be forthcoming by this summer but community groups have been saying that it should have come already. There is also widespread concern that the

boundaries will be considerably smaller than originally planned. Goldstone has indicated the commission will not release the district's boundaries until designation is officially approved by the full commission.

The Soho area takes its name for its location south of Houston St. and has the

largest remaining concentration in the country of cast iron architecture, one of the few original American contributions to architectural history. When finally designated, Soho will be the first historic district to be a primarily commercial area. The existing 13 historic districts, scattered around the city from Bedford-Stuyvesant to Long Island City, are all residential in character.