

# Court stays razing of townhouse

By ROBERTA B. GRATZ

A community group obtained a court order today to prevent demolition of a building opposite the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The building is included in a proposed historic district scheduled for designation next month by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Demolition of 1008 Fifth Av., a former townhouse built at the turn of the century, was to begin this week. It is part of a three-lot building parcel off the corner of East 82d St. on which a new 22-story apartment house is planned. Construction is scheduled to begin this spring.

Two weeks ago, the Landmarks Commission announced it would hold a hearing March 8 to consider designating a Metropolitan Museum historic district along Fifth Av. from 78th to 86th Sts. and touching Madison Av. in an irregular pattern.

## ASK INJUNCTION

The Neighborhood Assn. to Preserve Fifth Avenue Mansions is seeking an injunction against demolition of the building until after the commission acts.

Supreme Court Justice Oliver Sutton today temporarily barred the demolition and set a hearing on the case for Thursday.

The newest community move follows more than four years of effort to preserve the historical and architectural integrity of the area.

Local residents and political leaders have long tried to get the commission to protect the blocks immediately facing the museum. Appeals for designation and a court battle to force it have brought no results.

Preservationists are now concerned, says Anthony Olivieri, lawyer for the Neighborhood Assn., "that nothing should interfere with a fair hearing for the historic district proposal."

By blocking demolition until after landmarks designation, the community group hopes to guarantee the power of design review by the Landmarks Commission, says Olivieri, so that any new building would be compatible with the surrounding area.