

THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY

September 14, 2011

The Honorable Brad Lander
Chair, Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Siting & Maritime Uses
250 Broadway, Suite 1776
New York, NY 10007

Re: Hardenbrook-Somarindyck House, 135 Bowery, Manhattan

Dear Council Member Lander:

I regret that Conservancy staff will not be able to attend the Landmarks Subcommittee's public hearing regarding designation of 135 Bowery on Thursday, September 15. Therefore, I am writing to inform you of the Landmarks Conservancy's support for this designation.

Over ten years ago, the Conservancy began a campaign to recognize and celebrate Federal-style row houses, rare survivors of New York City's early history. I'm happy to say that several we have advocated for are now designated landmarks, reflecting the understanding that these buildings represent the rich history of our City.

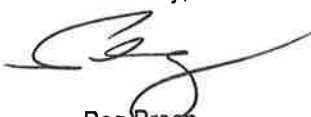
135 Bowery is equally deserving of that recognition. This 1817 Federal-style row house displays many of the characteristics typical of the era: its low height and volume are original, as is the Flemish bond brickwork and high peaked roof with two pedimented dormers and end chimney. The Landmarks Commission reports states that it is "... (A)mong the oldest of the relatively rare surviving and significantly intact Manhattan town houses of the Federal style and period..." Despite alterations, it clearly has the architectural merit required for landmark designation.

Furthermore, 135 Bowery tells a broader story of New York. The Bowery has been one of the City's most significant thoroughfares for over 350 years, representing every phase of its evolving history and culture. In 2010, the New York State Office of Historic Preservation determined that the Bowery, including #135, was eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

This building has a long association with the City's merchant classes. The Hardenbrook and Somarindyck families, who were involved in the 1792 Buttonwood Agreement, establishing the precursor to the New York Stock Exchange, owned the property from 1795 to 1944. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries it served as both a residence and several prominent businesses. It is an essential part of the Bowery, which continues to teem with the activity and energy that defines New York, and attracts new waves of residents and visitors.

The Conservancy is pleased to stand with community members and our preservation colleagues in strongly urging the Landmarks Subcommittee to affirm the LPC's designation of 135 Bowery as an individual landmark. This is a building both worthy of designation and deserving of the protection of the City's Landmarks Law. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Peg Green
President