

October 27, 2015

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C.
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING A CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS FOR ALTERATIONS AT 2067 FIFTH AVENUE, ST. ANDREW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good day, Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am Ann Friedman speaking on behalf of the Landmarks Conservancy, regarding proposed alterations to 2067 Fifth Avenue, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

The Conservancy supports the proposed stairway alterations and accessible lift installation, and applauds St. Andrew's excellent stewardship of this landmark, from 1987, when we first began working with the church, through today. In the mid-2000's, the Conservancy helped fund the nearly \$1 million restoration of its polychrome slate roofs, along with Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone funds, a New York State restoration grant, and a congregational capital campaign. The church received a Lucy Moses Award in 2009 for the roof restoration, and over the last decade, the church has continued to work with preservation architect Dan Allen of CT&A, whose firm has designed the proposal before you today.

At the same time that the roof replacement was identified as a priority, the restoration of failing areaway walls was explored. Without safe and accessible egress, the basement undercroft cannot be legally occupied by outside users, an important potential source of operating income for the congregation. The Conservancy has pledged a grant of \$50,000 towards the restoration of the south areaway masonry and metal stairs, and the reconfiguration and reconstruction of the historic southeast stairway to accommodate the handicapped lift.

The present building, designed by Henry Congdon and constructed in 1872, was originally located on East 127th Street between Fourth (Park) and Lexington Avenues. In 1889, when the Park Avenue Railroad viaduct was constructed, this massive granite structure was moved to its present site, in an extraordinary feat of engineering, and enlarged, at which time it gained its present, excavated areaway. The building is a superb example of High Victorian Gothic church architecture, and the proposal takes this into account, by ensuring accessibility in the most minimal way, with the least disruption to historic fabric.

The proposed lift is carefully located within the areaway, and screened with railings designed to match the existing, historic ironwork. The lift itself is largely enclosed in glass, reducing its visibility to the greatest extent possible. The project will substantially increase public access to the church and undercroft, facilitating enhanced public use of this handsome landmark building. The Conservancy supports this important proposal, which the church has worked to plan, fund and implement for over a decade.

Thank you for this opportunity to express the Conservancy's views.