

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

February 21, 2012

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING ALTERATIONS TO THE PLAZA AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 1000 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

Good day, Chairman Tierney and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy's Public Policy Committee has reviewed this proposal, and would like to start by thanking the Museum and the project team for a thoughtful and thorough presentation.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one of the City's, if not the world's, finest institutions. It is also a magnificent landmarked building, and we applaud the Met for putting forth a proposal for the plaza that will better serve the building. This design will accommodate the masses of tourists and New Yorkers who visit every year, and it will re-direct the visitor's attention to the central Richard Morris Hunt building. While we support the overall concept and most of the components of this plan, our Committee members did want to raise several minor points.

At the time of our briefing earlier this month, the method for affixing the lighting in the new scheme has not been determined. We hope that the fixtures will be installed so that there is no damage to historic fabric. While we understand that the aerial hedge is based on an unrealized McKim drawing, we trust the Museum will ensure that the rows of precisely pruned trees do not obscure the building. Conversely, renderings show that the new, larger garage attendant's booth is shrouded by trees, and in this case, we hope that the proposed 12-month plantings are successful in keeping it hidden. Finally, we were pleased to hear that new pits will better nurture the new trees and that some of the existing London Plane trees will find new homes across the City.

Overall we found the improvements to the plaza to be an attractive reinvention of this busy public space, and look forward to its implementation and completion. Thank you for the opportunity to present the Conservancy's views.