

January 22, 2008

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C. LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSAL FOR A NEW BUILDING AT 746-748 MADISON AVENUE IN THE UPPER EAST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT OF MANHATTAN**

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Commissioners.

I am Roger Lang, speaking on behalf of The New York Landmarks Conservancy.

The Landmarks Conservancy cannot support the proposal before you today in its present form. While we admire much about the architect's design, we have a more fundamental objection -- it is the development program the design seeks to achieve.

We object to the proposed demolition of the two-story building dating to 1917. This survivor deserves better than just a recycled storefront as mitigation. To be sure, the 1937 alterations were unfortunate; but they could just as readily be reconstructed instead of forgotten.

Moreover, we think the height of the proposal is excessive and inappropriate, notwithstanding the applicant's analytical justification.

If the Commission grants the premise of this application, then no low building in a historic district which contributes to that district and which is significantly underbuilt by zoning can survive to provide the charm and diversity we expect of such places.

Thank you for the opportunity to present The Landmarks Conservancy's views.