

February 19, 2019

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE N.Y.C. LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING A BINDING REPORT FOR THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY, 476 FIFTH AVENUE, AN INDIVIDUAL AND INTERIOR LANDMARK

Good day, Chair Carroll and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. We are pleased to support this proposal to modify entrances and window openings, modify the loading dock, perimeter wall, demolish a mechanical penthouse, relocate architectural features, construct a new plaza, and install light fixtures and inscriptions

As has been noted, the New York Public Library is one of the City's and perhaps the country's most significant landmarks. Therefore, any alteration, no matter the scope, is to be taken with extreme care and caution. We believe that this proposal accepts that responsibility and bears it well. We thank the NYPL for its extensive public engagement and the architects for this thorough proposal.

Each aspect of the proposal will improve the public's ability to use and enjoy this building, without significant changes. The plans to reset and regrade a section of the existing Fifth Avenue plaza will reuse existing materials and enhance accessibility. The design of the new 40th Street terrace takes inspiration from the landmark in configuration, materials, and detailing, yet it is fully contemporary and does not copy the historic building or pretend that it is from the early 20th century. Improvements to the loading dock will ease entry and limit potential damage caused by trucks navigating the existing narrow opening. Even the dock's mundane doors will see a respectful upgrade. Overall, this set of alterations will achieve much, yet leave a very light footprint.

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