

**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

May 23, 2014

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON RULES, PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS REGARDING CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF MEENAKSHI SRINIVASAN AS CHAIR OF THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Good morning Chair Lander, Councilmembers, and Chair Srinivasan. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of The New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy is a private, not-for-profit organization, founded in 1973. Our mission is to preserve and protect historic resources throughout New York via advocacy, and technical and financial assistance.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission has thrived under all of its Chairs, including Robert Tierney and others who did not come from the preservation world, but have demonstrated their commitment to New York's architectural heritage and its important role in the City's economy and livability.

From what we understand of Chair Srinivasan's tenure at the Board of Standards and Appeals, she listens to all sides, makes informed, intelligent decisions, and has created an open process, all of which can only serve her and the LPC well as she takes the helm.

The Commission and the very concept of landmarking have faced a steady barrage of criticism from some quarters, especially in the last several years. Landmarking has proven to be an indispensable factor in the City's growth and development. While any agency can be improved, the new Chair is definitely not inheriting a broken process. This is a small agency with a substantial mission. We call for an increase in budget and staff to better enable it to perform its job. We hope that the Chair will stand against misguided attempts to weaken the law and subordinate preservation.

The Conservancy has always worked well with the LPC, and we anticipate continuing this strong relationship. There is much to look forward to next year in the 50th anniversary of the Landmarks Law, and we hope that the new Chair will help lead that celebration.

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