

October 1, 2013

**STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING A CERTIFICATE OF
APPROPRIATENESS FOR STEINWAY HALL, AT 109-113 WEST 57TH STREET, NEW YORK, AN
INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK**

Good day, Chairman Tierney and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy has reviewed the proposal for a new building that will be partly on the site of Steinway Hall.

We appreciate that the owner's commitment to maintaining the integrity of Steinway Hall has led to this plan, in which a setback base allows more of the landmark to be visible than the as-of-right building would. The proposed restorative work to the historic building will be a benefit. We do not oppose demolition of the rear yard building. We find that the creation of an opening from the landmarked interior rotunda to the new building, and the general outlines of this component, to be acceptable, although at the time of our review, not all of the details were set.

The new tower itself raises many questions. It has little relationship to the landmark, with the two structures just modestly overlapping, but the formal question of its appropriateness does remain. We cannot report enthusiasm for the 1300-foot height next to Steinway Hall and a discussion of the design was lost in our dismay over the height. We trust that the Commission will evaluate the materials and details to determine their appropriateness and hope that there will be a rendering showing the tower from other perspectives, such as Central Park.

We do not object to tall towers, but we are concerned that this narrow, mid-block building will be an uncomfortable neighbor to Steinway Hall. With a floor plate so small in comparison to the height, it has proportions that recall sliver buildings prohibited in other areas of the City, leading to fears this will be one more startling and out-of scale tower along 57th Street.

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