

June 25, 2013

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF TAMMANY HALL, 100-102 EAST 17TH STREET, MANHATTAN AS AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Tierney and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of The New York Landmarks Conservancy. We are pleased to join with public officials, preservationists, and local advocates in supporting designation of Tammany Hall, in particular Mr. Jack Taylor, who has kept the designation status of this building on the radar of the preservation community for many years.

This handsome building has both architectural and cultural significance, and is an anchor of its neighborhood. Set on the east side of Union Square, itself an icon of labor history and a significant public space, Tammany Hall is a fine example of Colonial Revival architecture often found in social service and institutional buildings of the era. With its red brick façade and white granite and limestone trim, Tammany was designed to evoke the “days of early American architecture,” according to the *Real Estate Record* of 1928. Not only was this an attractive style, but it would also recall the founding days of this country, a positive association for the political machine of the New York City Democratic Party, which faced accusations of corruption. The historic fabric is mostly intact, with some alterations at ground floor storefronts.

Tammany Hall has also had an important role in cultural history, starting as home to NYC Democratic Party from 1928 to 1943. Since then it has continued to be a center of the political and arts communities, housing first the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, later an Off-Broadway theatre, and now the New York Film Academy.

In 1985, the Conservancy wrote to then-Chair Gene Norman requesting that Tammany Hall be considered for designation. Nearly 30 years later, we hope that the Commission will act swiftly to designate this site, which represents such an important part of New York City’s history.

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