

November 29, 2016

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF THE SULLIVAN--THOMPSON HISTORIC DISTRICT

Good afternoon Chair Srinivasan and Commissioners. I am speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. We are pleased to join residents, elected officials, and advocates in support of the Sullivan – Thompson Historic District.

The blocks of the District form a vibrant collection of buildings from the 19th and early 20th centuries, in styles typical of those eras, such as Federal and Greek Revival row houses, and Italianate, Queen Anne, and Beaux-Arts tenements. While there have been some alterations and, unfortunately, some losses among the 157 properties, they are, in large part, the same scale, height, and volume as when built, with much historic fabric intact, including many historic storefronts. Sullivan -- Thompson, which is already within in the National Register South Village District, also contains institutions such as the stately Saint Anthony of Padua R.C. Church and its associated school.

Beyond architectural merit, this section of the South Village derives a special sense of place from the vast sweep of history that has taken place on its streets. It's collection of pre-Law, old-Law, and new-Law tenement buildings reflect an evolution in the City's housing policy. From early days as a base for merchants, to decades of welcoming immigrant communities, to serving as the home for the social movements and artistic communities, the Sullivan – Thompson District is part of the narrative of New York.

Like other sections of the South Village, the Sullivan – Thompson District will continue to grow and evolve as it has for 200 years; with landmark designation, new generations of residents, business owners, artists, immigrants, and visitors will be able to rediscover and use this community's rich architectural heritage.

Designation of this District will fill in one of the last unprotected areas in one of New York's most historic neighborhoods, one that has faced increased development pressure in recent years. We are pleased to see preservation and planning working together, and that as work moves forward on the nearby St. John's Terminal site, the City is also recognizing its vital historic resources with this designation.

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