



## Community Board 12 - Manhattan

### Washington Heights & Inwood

530 West 166<sup>th</sup> St. 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10032

Phone: (212) 568-8500, Fax: (212) 740-8197

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George Fernández Jr. - Chairman  
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

April 25, 2014

Hon. Robert B. Tierney  
Chair  
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Municipal Building  
1 Centre Street 9th Floor, North  
New York, N.Y. 10007

**RE:** Supporting some of the proposed renovations to  
434 West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street – Jumel Terrace Historic District

Dear Chairman Tierney:

Please be advised that at the General Meeting of Manhattan Community Board 12 held on Tuesday, April 22, 2014 a resolution passed with a majority vote of (37) In Favor, (1), Opposed, and (0) Abstain supporting the proposed renovations to 434 West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street, including the roof deck and modifications to the fenestration at garden level of the rear façade, but opposing the bulkhead as it is presently designed.

**Whereas:** 434 West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street (the "Property") is located on the south side of West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street, between Jumel Terrace and St. Nicholas Avenue, within the Jumel Terrace Historic District. Alterations to the buildings located within historic districts must be reviewed and approved by the Landmarks Preservation Commission ("LPC"). The new owners of the Property propose to undertake various renovations. The interior renovations can be reviewed and approved by LPC staff. The renovations consisting of a roof deck, a new bulkhead enclosing a stair and landing leading from the top floor to the roof, and modifications to the fenestration at the garden level of the rear façade (the "Exterior Renovations") must be reviewed and approved by the LPC at a public hearing (the "Public Hearing"); and

**Whereas:** The Public Hearing to consider the Exterior Renovations was initially scheduled for Tuesday, March 18, 2014, which was prior to General Meeting of Manhattan Community Board 12 ("CB12-M"), scheduled for March 25, 2014. Therefore, the resolution adopted CB12's Land Use Committee ("Land Use" or the "Committee") on March 5, 2014 supporting the Exterior Renovations was referred to the Executive Committee, which adopted it on March 11, 2014 on behalf of CB12-M to facilitate providing comments to LPC in time for the Public Hearing; and

**Whereas:**

At the March 5<sup>th</sup> Land Use meeting Richard Goodstein and Michael Hanson of NC2 Architecture LLP presented the Exterior Renovations. The roof deck and the modifications to the fenestration of the rear façade are not visible from any public street or thoroughfare. The bulkhead is not visible from West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street, the primary street onto which the Property faces. The bulkhead can be seen from West 161<sup>st</sup> Street and St. Nicholas and Amsterdam Avenues and from portions of Jumel Terrace, between Sylvan Terrace and West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street, as well as from the Morris-Jumel Mansion and from Roger Morris Park, albeit the Committee was informed that for LPC review purposes a park is not considered a public street or thoroughfare. The vantage points from which the bulkhead is visible do not impact the primary street façade of the Property or any properties in the historic district; and

**Whereas:**

The LPC review process does not require the applicants for alteration projects to historically designated buildings to outreach to owners and residents of neighboring buildings, but the Committee believes that is important for neighbors to be consulted and briefed on changes to buildings and structures within historic districts. Therefore, the resolution that it passed and that was adopted by the Executive Committee recommended that LPC encourage outreach to neighboring buildings in the historic district before it considers approval of the project; and

**Whereas:**

At its April 2, 2014 meeting the Committee heard from neighboring residents to the Property and stakeholders of the historic district that they are concerned about the appearance and visibility of the proposed bulkhead. In addition, at the Public Hearing, which was rescheduled to March 25<sup>th</sup>, residents of the historic district and other stakeholders also expressed their concerns to LPC. LPC's Commissioners also expressed a variety of concerns about the appropriateness of the size, design and visibility of the bulkhead, in particular its visibility from the Morris-Jumel Mansion, and left the record open for additional comments for 30 days; now, therefore,

**Be It**

**Resolved:**

Community Board 12-Manhattan supports the roof deck and modifications to the fenestration at garden level of the rear façade proposed as renovations to 434 West 162<sup>nd</sup> Street, but does not support the bulkhead as it is currently designed and recommends that the Landmarks Preservation Commission require the applicant to explore design options to reduce the size and profile of the bulkhead so that it is not visible, including from the public surrounding thoroughfares, the Morris-Jumel Mansion and the grounds of the mansion, i.e.: Roger Morris Park.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



George Fernandez Jr.  
Chair

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor

Hon. Gail Brewer, Manhattan Borough President

Hon. Letitia James, Public Advocate

Hon. Scott Stringer, Comptroller

Hon. Charles B. Rangel, Congressman

Warshaw Burstein LLP, Legal Counsel

Hon. Adriano Espaillat, NY State Senator

Hon. Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member

Hon. Gabriela Rosa, Assembly Member

Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member

Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member





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1 Centre Street 9th Floor, North  
New York, N.Y. 10007

**RE: American Academy of Arts & Letters  
Terrace Accessibility Project**

Dear Chairman Tierney:

Please be advised that at the General Meeting of Manhattan Community Board 12 held on Tuesday, April 22, 2014 a resolution was passed by a majority vote of (38) In Favor, (0), Opposed, and (0) Abstain supporting the American Academy of Arts and Letters Terrace Accessibility Project, and calling upon the American Academy of Arts and Letters to expand the scope of the Project to make the entrance to the North Building ADA-compliant so that the auditorium housed therein will be accessible to people with disabilities who would like to attend events there.

**Whereas:** The American Academy of Arts and Letters (the "Academy") occupies three buildings within the Audubon Terrace Historic District (the "Historic District"). The Historic District is located between West 155<sup>th</sup> and West 156<sup>th</sup> Streets west of Broadway, and was designated as a New York City Historic District by the Landmarks Preservation Commission ("LPC") in 1979. The buildings occupied by the Academy include the original south building (the "South Building"), located at West 155<sup>th</sup> Street and built in 1921, the north building (the "North Building") located at West 156<sup>th</sup> Street and built in 1928, and the building that formerly housed the American Numismatic Society (the "East Building"), located adjacent to the South Building, built in 1907 and purchased by the Academy in 2005; and

**Whereas:** The South Building has two entrances located at West 155<sup>th</sup> Street. The artist/garage entrance, i.e.: the westernmost entrance is accessible and leads to the elevator stop at the basement level of the building. The elevator provides an accessible means to reach the upper floor/main gallery level of the South Building. The South Building is accessibly connected to the East Building by a glass-enclosed link constructed circa 2007. The North Building does not have an accessible entrance or an accessible means of moving between it and the South or East Buildings. The Academy proposes to undertake the Terrace Accessibility Project (the "Project") in order to make the entrances to the North and South Buildings from Audubon Terrace compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"). The Project must be reviewed and approved by LPC, and

**Whereas:** The scope of work for the Project involves moving forward the existing granite treads, borders and bases of the staircases on the Terrace for each building – retaining their existing configuration, inserting new ADA-compliant granite ramps with scored surfaces for traction, providing new granite landings at each building to match the level of the entry vestibules, restoring and reinstalling four original lampposts, and installing new continuous bronze handrails; and

**Whereas:** James Czajka, the Academy's architect, attended the April 2, 2014 meeting of the Land Use Committee to present the Project. Unfortunately the Project does not provide for any modification to the entrance to the North Building located on West 156<sup>th</sup> Street. Now, therefore

**Be It**

**Resolved:** Community Board 12-Manhattan enthusiastically supports the American Academy of Arts and Letters Terrace Accessibility Project; and be it further

**Resolved:** Community Board 12-Manhattan calls upon the American Academy of Arts and Letters to expand the scope of the Project to make the entrance to the North Building ADA-compliant so that the auditorium housed therein will be accessible to people with disabilities who would like to attend events there.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of this resolution.

Sincerely,



George Hernandez, Jr.  
Chair

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor  
Hon. Gail Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Letitia James, Public Advocate  
Hon. Scott Stringer, Comptroller  
Hon. Charles B. Rangel, Congressman  
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, NY State Senator  
Hon. Herman D. Farrell, Jr., Assembly Member  
Hon. Gabriela Rosa, Assembly Member  
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member