



Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

October 31, 2022

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
David N. Dinkins Municipal Building
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: Resolution supporting United Palace Illuminated Attraction Box Project

Dear Chair Carroll:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, October 25, 2022, Community Board 12, Manhattan, passed the following resolution with a vote of 31 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, supporting the Illuminated Attraction Box project proposed for the United Palace and recommending its approval by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Whereas: The United Palace, is a free-standing structure that occupies an entire city block, bounded by West 175th and 176th Streets, Broadway, and Wadsworth Avenue (the "Building"). Built in 1932 as the Loew's 175th Street Theater, it is the fifth and last of the Loew's Wonder Theaters, the theater chain's extravagant flagship theaters constructed in the 1920's and 1930's. Designed by the noted theater architect, Thomas Lamb, the Loew's 175th Street Theater is perhaps his most extravagant. It is an excellent and rare example that demonstrates the influence of non-western architecture in America – a contrast to the Classical, Gothic, Tudor, or other western styles often reflected in American buildings. Mr. Lamb turned to Asian prototypes for the architectural design. The Building's brick facades feature terra-cotta surfaces with ornament typical of the architecture of India, adding a lively contrast to the brick surfaces. The NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission ("LPC") designated the Building as an individual NYC landmark on December 13, 2016, and

Whereas: The Building is owned by the United Palace of Spiritual Arts (the "Owner"), which purchased it in 1969, and has used it as a church, and also more recently as a theater for movies and for live cultural and community events, and a filming location. The United Palace of Cultural Arts, a non-profit affiliate of the Owner, operates from the Building, as does the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance ("NoMAA"), which leases space from the Owner and maintains a gallery on premises; and

Whereas: The Owner proposes to convert six of the 20 existing poster display boxes on the façades of the Building to illuminated displays, including four digital displays and two static displays (the "Project"). The conversion to digital displays will facilitate timelier and more cost-effective updating of information on programs and events. The scope of work for the Project includes reframing and painting the display boxes, installing two 65-inch and two 75-inch Samsung digital monitors, plywood backing, plexiglass covers with locking mechanisms, weatherstripping, power, and video cables, and custom-designed displays. Project costs are estimated at \$12,000; and

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Whereas: Four of the display boxes included in the Project are located on the Broadway façade of the Building and two are located at the corner of Broadway and West 175th Street. The Project will restore and modernize six of the Building's original poster display boxes, enhance the ability of the Owner, the United Palace of Cultural Arts, and NoMAA to display and update information on programs and events. One of the digital display boxes will be dedicated for use by NoMAA and three will be dedicated for use by the Owner and the United Palace of Cultural Arts. The two static displays will provide images and information, in English and Spanish, on the history of the United Palace; and

Whereas: A representative of the Owner attended the October 12, 2022, meeting of the Land Use Committee to present the Project and request a resolution supporting the Project from Community Board 12-Manhattan. By virtue of the Building's landmark designation, the Project requires LPC review and approval. The approach taken in connection with the Project respects the Building's architectural design and is sensitive to its status as an individually landmarked structure. LPC is scheduled to review the Project at a public hearing in November 2022; now, therefore, be it

Resolved: Community Board 12-Manhattan supports the Illuminated Attraction Box project proposed for the United Palace and recommends its approval by the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Sincerely,



Eleazar Bueno
Chairperson

cc:

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor	Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President	Hon. Alfred Taylor, Assembly Member
Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate	Hon. Manny De Los Santos, Assembly Member
Hon. Brad Lander, Comptroller	Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Council Member
Hon. Adriano Espaillat, Congressman	Hon. Shaun Abreu, Council Member
Hon. Cordell Cleare, State Senator	