



**Greenwich  
Village  
Society for  
Historic  
Preservation**

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November 7, 2013

Hon. Bill de Blasio  
Mayor-elect, City of New York  
32 Court Street, Suite 902  
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Dear Mayor-elect de Blasio:

Congratulations on your historic election as mayor of New York City. You are taking the reins of our city at a critical juncture, as we face a great many challenges and opportunities ahead. I and the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation look forward to working with you in your new role.

One of your first tasks will be to appoint members to and heads of various city agencies and commissions. The Landmarks Preservation Commission, while one of the smallest of all city agencies, has a profound effect upon our how our city looks, feels, and functions. In considering your appointments to that agency, I urge you to consider the following:

**Appoint a chairperson with a background in historic preservation.**

I strongly urge you to ensure that the next chairperson of the Landmarks Preservation Commission has a background in historic preservation. This will not only communicate an important message about your priorities for the agency, but on a practical level will ensure that the Chair, who sets the agency's priorities and communicates its agenda, will be well-versed and deeply steeped in the issues which the Commission must grapple with and consider on a regular basis.

**Appoint a structural engineer to the Commission.**

As mayor, you will appoint all 11 members of the Commission, which by law must include at least three architects, a historian, a city planner or landscape architect, a realtor and at least one resident of each of the five boroughs. These are prudent requirements, and they would be augmented with the addition of another professional: a structural engineer.

We have seen a number of instances recently where historic buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and earlier have been damaged by construction work performed without adequate protections to both the property being worked on and its neighbors. The resulting costs and anguish could be avoided if a structural engineer's analysis became a routine part of Commission reviews.

I appreciate your consideration of these common sense, no-cost ideas. If implemented, their good effects will be felt citywide.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman  
Executive Director

Cc: Manhattan Borough President-elect Gale Brewer  
City Councilmember Rosie Mendez  
City Councilmember Margaret Chin  
City Councilmember-elect Corey Johnson  
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Four Borough Neighborhood Preservation Alliance