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May 2, 2014

Mayor Bill de Blasio
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Robert B. Tierney, Chair
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: Improved LPC Public Communications

Dear Mayor de Blasio and Chair Tierney,

I write to suggest some ways in which, based upon the experience of this organization and the constituency it serves, the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) could improve its communications with the public. Currently, it can be quite difficult for the public to participate in the public hearing/meeting process, or to attain information about Certificate of Appropriateness applications and the status of violations complaints. I believe this prevents more effective communication between the Commission and the public, and reduces the public's ability to participate in and understand the process.

However, these are problems which seemingly can be easily corrected in the following ways:

- (1) **Update the LPC's already existing Twitter feed on public hearing/meeting days to report when each item is presented.** This would allow members of the public to know if the LPC is ahead of or behind schedule in hearing applications, especially if they are most likely only there to testify on one or a few applications. The public does not need a Twitter account to see the feed.
- (2) **Have a page on the LPC website to track Certificate of Appropriateness applications.** This could include posting PDFs of the applications for the public to see, videos of the hearings/meetings, and any modifications requested by the commissioners at public hearings/meetings. Currently, only the decision ("approved with modifications" etc.) is listed on the updated agenda shortly after the hearing/meeting.
- (3) **Have a page on the LPC website to track reported violations.** This could include providing an estimated time frame of an LPC site visit to inspect the potential violation, and the LPC's determination once the visit is made (such as *not in violation* or *warning letter issued* with the date by which the owner needs to respond). If a violation is found, the page could provide the owner's response (such as *submitting an application to try to legalize the violation at a public hearing* or *agreeing to remove elements in violation*).

I hope the LPC will seriously consider implementing these suggestions, which I believe would increase the effectiveness of the Commission and its ability to serve and engage the public meaningfully.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman
Executive Director