



**Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation**

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April 24, 2008

Hon. Robert Tierney
Chair, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th floor
New York, NY 10007

**Re: Possibility of demolition of the Provincetown Playhouse, 133-39
MacDougal Street, in the proposed South Village Historic District**

Dear Chair Tierney:

I write to alert you to the disturbing news that NYU, the current owner of the Provincetown Playhouse and Apartments at 133-139 MacDougal Street, is considering plans to demolish this historic building. As you know, the Provincetown Playhouse is an icon in the history of American theater, and a revered site within Greenwich Village known throughout the world. Its loss would be a tragic blow not only to the heritage of Greenwich Village, but New York City as a whole.

The site is located within the South Village Historic District proposed for designation by the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and supported by a broad array of elected officials, preservationists, community leaders, and historians. The Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation was extremely grateful for the Commission's commitment to begin consideration of designation of the proposed South Village Historic District with a survey of the west of 6th Avenue, which I understand should now be underway.

However, with this recent announcement about the potential fate of the Provincetown Playhouse and Apartments, I must urge you to consider the area of the proposed district which includes this building as soon as possible, or take other action to prevent the demolition of this critical piece of New York's history. As you know, the Playhouse has served as an incubator and launching pad for some of America's most important playwrights, including David Mamet, Sam Shepherd, Edward Albee, and John Guare, and served as the home for many years of Eugene O'Neill, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and the Provincetown Players. It would be a terrible blemish upon historic preservation in New York City if this singularly important site in the history of American theater and culture in the 20th century were allowed to be demolished.

As you know, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation has compiled extensive research and documentation on the history of this and all other buildings in the South Village. We would be only too happy to share any of it with the Commission and its staff to aid in its swift consideration of these endangered sites for designation.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman
Executive Director

Cc: City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
Congressman Jerrold Nadler
State Senator Thomas Duane
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
City Councilmember Tony Avella
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Preservation League of New York State
Municipal Art Society
New York Landmarks Conservancy
Historic Districts Council
Historic South Village Preservation Project Advisory Board