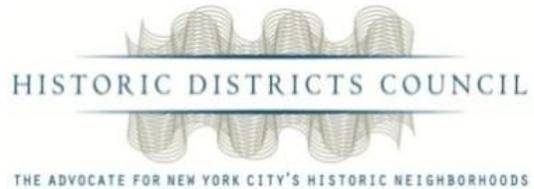




Greenwich Village
Society for Historic Preservation
232 East 11th Street
New York, New York 10003



April 10, 2013

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

Re: Proposed South Village Historic District Phase II

Dear Chair Tierney:

We write regarding the recently released draft proposed boundaries for Phase II of the proposed South Village Historic District. We were pleased to see that so many of the historically rich buildings and sites within this area which we have long urged be landmarked were included within the Commission's draft proposed boundaries. However, we would strongly urge you to consider expanding the boundaries to include some key sites which were left out:

1. **The blockfront of the north side of Houston Street between MacDougal and Sullivan Streets** -- this row of altered 4-story houses were all built in 1844 as part of the same development as the landmarked MacDougal Sullivan Gardens complex directly to its north. While not redeveloped in 1920 as part of the MacDougal Sullivan Gardens complex, these houses nevertheless have managed to survive 170 years, and bear a direct and tangible connection to the earliest phase of this neighborhood's urban development. While these houses are altered, none are more altered than other houses included elsewhere in the draft proposed boundaries for this district, or other buildings which were included in the first phase of the South Village designation and other districts the Commission has designated. As backdrop to the uniquely important MacDougal Sullivan Gardens complex, it would be especially important to ensure that these sites, of their own historic significance, come under landmarks regulation.
2. **NYU Law School Vanderbilt Hall, 40 Washington Square South** – Built in 1951 to the designs of Eggers and Higgins, this is a rare and noteworthy example of neo-colonial and contextual design from this era in New York. The use of red brick and the four-story scale of the structure relates well to the character of the surrounding South Village neighborhood and the remainder of the proposed district; the neo-colonial style clearly references the federal architecture found in houses across MacDougal Street from the building and throughout the Village. Like the low-rise brick wing of 2 Fifth Avenue on the north side of Washington Square Park, it is an important outgrowth of the fervent battles in the post-war era to try to preserve the scale and character of Washington Square Park, and one of the few examples on NYU's expansion during this time period executed in an aesthetically sensitive manner. We strongly urge the Commission to

include this site within the proposed district.

3. **NYU Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, 50 Washington Square South** – Built in 1972 to the designs of Philip Johnson and Richard Foster, this sleek modern building was a departure from the rest of the more controversial and grandiose red sandstone buildings these architects designed and NYU erected around Washington Square during this period. Johnson and Foster **collaborated** on other notable buildings, including the iconic “Glass House” in New Canaan, Ct., as well as the New York State Theater and the New York State Pavilion at the 1964/65 World’s Fair in Flushing Meadow. Johnson of course is considered one of the preeminent American architects of the 20th century. The Kevorkian Center manages to combine the abstraction and angularity of modern design with a materiality and scale appropriate for Greenwich Village, at the same time relating well to the adjacent landmarked Judson Memorial Church and Hall. Like Vanderbilt Hall, the Kevorkian Center is an important part of the story of the post-war development of Washington Square and the expansion of New York University, and the all-too-rare example of both done in a sensitive manner. We also strongly urge the Commission to include this site in the proposed district.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Andrew Berman, Executive Director
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation



Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director
Historic Districts Council

cc: City Council Speaker Christine Quinn
Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
City Councilmember Margaret Chin
Assemblymember Deborah Glick
State Senator Brad Hoylman
Community Board #2, Manhattan
Sean Sweeney, Chair, Community Board #2 Landmarks Committee
Preservation League of New York State
Municipal Art Society
New York Landmarks Conservancy
MacDougal Sullivan Gardens Association
South Village Neighbors
Jenifer Rajkumar