Valerie S. Mason
Chair

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The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan

March 26, 2024

Honorable Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building
One Center Street, 9th Floor
New York, New York 10007

RE: 15-17 East 77th Street (Upper East Side Historic District) – *Steven Harris Architects* – A Neo-Grec style building designed by John G. Prague and constructed in 1878. Application is for modifications to the front areaways, replacement of the front windows, excavation at cellar and rear yard, a new rooftop addition, and modifications and addition to the rear facades.

Dear Chair Carroll,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on March 20, 2024, the Board unanimously approved the following resolution by a vote of 38 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS the two buildings have been integrated into one residence;

WHREAS the combined buildings are 33'-4" wide;

WHEREAS the front façade will be restored to be historically accurate;

WHEREAS the façade restoration will be reviewed by staff at the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and does not require a public hearing;

WHEREAS the front façade, with its brownstone cladding and grey painted wood windows, was included in the presentation, it provided a context for the proposed alterations;

WHEREAS the two separate areaways are to become one large areaway;

WHEREAS the new areaway will have bluestone paving;

WHEREAS the approximate 3'-0" high fence at 15 East 77th Street and the 7'-7" high fence at 17 East 77th Street will be replaced with a new 6'-6" high decorative, painted steel fence with gates opposite the restored doorways;

WHEREAS the rear existing three-story extensions at 15 and 17 East 77th Street, which were built partially into what would have been the required rear yard, will be removed;

WHEREAS the house will be extended about 10'-2" to the rear across the full width of the combined buildings, to create an overall length of 70'-2" and leaving a 30-foot rear yard;

WHEREAS in conjunction with the expansion to the rear the cellar will be lowered and extended toward the rear;

WHEREAS the variation of styles and materials in the rear yards of the buildings on the block is so great that there is no organizing motif or materials touchstone;

WHEREAS the proposed rear façade of 15-17 East 77th Street is limestone, a traditional material for buildings in the Historic District;

WHEREAS the façade is built as a single plane of limestone blocks;

WHEREAS there are new limestone cornices at the existing height reflecting the original two buildings;

WHEREAS there is a rainwater leader down the center expressing the original two buildings;

WHEREAS the windows are multi-pane, white bronze;

WHEREAS there is a continuous balcony across the full width of the first floor of the house and a balcony on the second floor of the former 15 East 77th Street building;

WHEREAS there is a spiral stair leading from the ground level to the first-floor balcony;

WHEREAS the balconies are made of etched glass with a translucent coating set in steel beams with a light-colored bronze painted finish;

WHEREAS the balcony railings and spiral stair are made of steel with a light-colored bronze painted finish;

WHEREAS the ground floor, the basement level, has a window wall with two pairs of white bronze glass doors in the center;

WHEREAS the first floor has four pairs of white bronze French doors that open onto the balcony;

WHEREAS the second floor has two pairs of white bronze French doors that open onto the balcony at the #15 portion of the house and a bay window at the #17 portion of the house;

WHEREAS the third and fourth floor levels have four windows each that appear to be double hung but have a fixed lower portion and an awning above;

WHEREAS the existing roof will be demolished;

WHEREAS a new roof for the rear and middle portions of the house will be built higher and a new roof over the front portion of the house will be built slightly lower, behind the upper portion of the front wall, whose overall height is unchanged;

WHEREAS the new roof heights create a double height space in the rear and a new, partial fifth floor in the middle of the house;

WHEREAS a new painted steel and glass artist's skylight with zinc-coated copper cladding completes the rear façade;

WHEREAS the mechanical equipment is set on the rear of the roof on the eastern side, and the new elevator and stair bulkheads are in the approximate middle of the roof on the western side;

WHEREAS the new roof configuration creates a lower roof terrace in the front of the building and an upper roof terrace in the middle of the building;

WHEREAS each roof terrace will have stone paving on a pedestal system;

WHEREAS the existing neighbor's chimney and flues on the east side of the roof and close to the front wall are being raised to meet the Code requirement;

WHEREAS the neighbor's chimney and flues will be the only rooftop element to be visible from the street;

WHEREAS the chimney and flues will be only partially visible;

WHEREAS this project is appropriate and contextual within the historic district;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT this application is **APPROVED** as presented.

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

Sincerely,

Valerie S. Mason *David Helpern and Jane Parshall*

Valerie S. Mason
Chair

David Helpern and Jane Parshall
Co-Chairs, Landmarks Committee

cc: Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York
Honorable Eric Adams, Mayor of the City of New York
Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Honorable Jerry Nadler, 12th Congressional District Representative
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District
Honorable José M. Serrano, NYS Senator, 29th Senatorial District
Honorable Edward Gibbs, NYS Assembly Member 68th Assembly District
Honorable Alex Bores, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District
Honorable Julie Menin, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District
Honorable Diana Ayala, NYC Council Member, 8th Council District