

Valerie S. Mason
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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan**

May 23, 2025

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

RE: 809 Madison Avenue (Upper East Side Historic District) – *Robert A.M. Stern Architects* – A Neo-Renaissance style building designed by F.B. & A. Ware and constructed in 1924-1925. Application is for the comprehensive restoration and redevelopment of the building, including side and rear yard extensions, rooftop addition and mechanical enclosure, modification of window openings, window replacement, and installation of a new entrance canopy.

Dear Chair Carroll,

WHEREAS 809 Madison Avenue is a neo-Renaissance style building; and

WHEREAS the two distinct scopes of work in the application to this neo-Renaissance style building require two parts for this resolution: Restoration and Enlargement;

THIS APPLICATION IS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS: Part A — The restoration, Part B — The enlargement.

Part A – The Restoration

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on May 21, 2025, the Board unanimously approved **Part A** of the following resolution by a vote of 40 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS the exterior of the original building is to be restored except for the penthouse, which will be replaced; and

WHEREAS the restoration will include cleaning, repointing, and repair of the limestone, brick, and terracotta façade; and

WHEREAS previous patching of the limestone and brick is visible; and

WHEREAS the patching of the limestone is less visible than the patching of the brick; and

WHEREAS the limestone can be matched more easily than the brick; and

WHEREAS the existing brick has a range of colors and a textured finish; and

WHEREAS the proposed brick for patching has a range of colors that are complementary to the existing but not a match; and

WHEREAS the proposed brick for patching has a smooth finish as opposed to the existing textured finish; and

WHEREAS patching with the proposed brick will be visible; and

WHEREAS existing brick for patching could be salvaged from the eastern wall which is to be demolished as part of the enlargement; and

WHEREAS the restoration will include replacing existing windows with high performance windows that emulate the character of the existing windows; and

WHEREAS some windows will be enlarged to meet the requirements of the new floor plans; and

WHEREAS existing six over six windows will be enlarged to match existing eight over eight windows; and

WHEREAS masonry between existing pairs of bathroom windows will be demolished, and bathroom windows will be combined with a new center window to create four over four outer windows and six over six central windows; and

WHEREAS base will be restored except for area of retail condominium to remove non-historic storefront and replace with replicas of original windows; and

WHEREAS applicant has observed that even with the new windows, the proportion of opening to solid is consistent with or less than similar buildings; and

WHEREAS the restoration will include repairing the entry door and recreating a fabric canopy; and

WHEREAS this restoration and adaptations to meet new plan requirements is contextual and appropriate within the historic district;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that **PART A** of this application is **APPROVED AS PRESENTED**.

Part B – The Enlargement

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on May 21, 2025, the Board approved **Part B** of the following resolution by a vote of 37 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention, and 0 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS the existing penthouse, elevator bulkhead, and water tower are to be removed from this twelve-story building; and

WHEREAS the building will be enlarged to the east and south by filling in existing courtyards; and

WHEREAS the infill to the south will rise the full 12 stories; and

WHEREAS the infill to the east will rise 11 stories with a covered terrace on the 12th floor; and

WHEREAS the eastern enlargement will have façades of complementary brick and

WHEREAS the eastern enlargement will have windows in the north and east façades that match the windows in the restoration; and

WHEREAS a two-story penthouse apartment with a mechanical floor above will be added to the top of the 12-story structure; and

WHEREAS the penthouse will be setback from the north and west facades; and

WHEREAS the mechanical penthouse will be setback from the penthouse; and

WHEREAS the two-story penthouse and mechanical floor will have west, north, and east facades of complementary brick; and

WHEREAS the two-story penthouse and mechanical penthouse above will be in line with the southern face of the southern enlargement; and

WHEREAS the southern façade will be of complementary brick with windows at the west and east ends, blind windows in the center, and openings with louvers the size of windows at the mechanical floor, all in scale with the west, north, and east facades of the building; and

WHEREAS the combination of the duplex apartment and the mechanical penthouse create a three-story penthouse; and

WHEREAS the proposed three-story penthouse visually overwhelms the 12-story building on which it sits; and

WHEREAS the applicant deserves credit for proposing that the south lot line will be made of an articulated brick façade; and

WHEREAS the eastern enlargement and penthouse are seen by the applicant as a frame for the original 12 stories; and

WHEREAS the penthouse portion of the frame is too large in contrast with the original one-story penthouse; and

WHEREAS the enlargement of the building is not contextual and appropriate within the historic district;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that **PART B** of this application is **DISAPPROVED**.

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

Sincerely,

Valerie S. Mason

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Chair

Anthony Cohn and David Helpern

Anthony Cohn and David Helpern
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