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The City of New York Manhattan Community Board 8

May 28, 2013

Hon. Robert B. Tierney, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: 1236 Madison Avenue aka 12-22 East 89th Street [Saint David's School] – Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District

Dear Chair Tierney:

At the Landmarks Committee meeting on Monday, May 20, 2013, the following committee recommendation was adopted regarding **1236 Madison Avenue aka 12-22 East 89th Street [Saint David's School] – Expanded Carnegie Hill Historic District** – *Platt Byard Dovell White Architects, LLP* – 12-16 East 89th Street are Neo-Federal style townhouses designed by Delano & Aldrich and built in 1920-22. 18-22 East 89th Street aka 1239 Madison Avenue (Graham House) is a Romanesque Revival style apartment hotel building designed by Thomas Graham and built in 1891-93. Application of Saint David's School to restore and adaptively re-use Graham House by adding one floor along E. 89th Street, infilling an interior court and replacing the current rear portion of the building with a new rear portion that will increase its height and footprint in order to make room for various expanded school facilities.

WHEREAS 12-16 East 89th Street are adjacent Neo-Federal style townhouses designed by Delano & Aldrich, built in 1920-22, and presently occupied by the applicant, St. David's School;

WHEREAS 18-22 East 89th Street aka 1239 Madison Avenue (Graham House) is a Romanesque Revival style apartment hotel building designed by Thomas Graham, built in 1891-93, and adjacent to St. David's School;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes to restore the front of Graham House by rebuilding the existing chimneys as originally designed; patching a break in the cornice; removing existing fire escapes and patching the façade to the extent needed as a result of said removal; removing one of the front doors and patching as needed to match the existing façade; replacing three first floor front windows with three front doors; replacing the existing pair of main front doors with new wood doors to be painted black like the existing doors with "Saint David's School" to be carved in wood gold lettering above the doors; and replacing the concrete stairs leading to said doors with stone stairs, cheek walls, and posts, with the new set of stairs to be one step higher than the current set of stairs;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes to adaptively re-use Graham House by adding one floor along East 89th Street; extending an existing building by one story; infilling an interior rear court; and replacing the current rear portion of the building with a new 7 story rear portion which will end at the rear property line, 4' further than the current rear portion of the building.

WHEREAS the Committee now wishes to consider this application in two parts: A) the proposed restoration to the front of Graham House up to, but not including, the roof and B) the remainder of the application (adding one floor along East 89th Street to include a skylight made of translucent glass and translucent fencing material behind which will be rooftop equipment as well as an outdoor roof garden; extending an existing bulkhead by one story; the proposed infilling of the interior rear court; and replacing the current rear portion of the building with a new 7 story structure which will end at the rear property line, 4' further than the current rear portion of the building);

A) The proposed restoration to the front of Graham House up to, but not including, the roof:

WHEREAS the proposed restoration to the front of Graham House up to, but not including, the roof and rear extension, is in keeping with the original architecture of the building;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the proposed restoration to the front of Graham House up to, but not including, the roof, is in keeping with the original architecture of the building is therefore approved.

This recommendation was approved by a vote of 34 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

B) The remainder of the application (the proposed infilling of the interior rear court; replacing the current rear portion of the building with a new 7 story structure that will end at the rear property line, 4' further than the current rear portion of the building; adding one floor along East 89th Street to include a skylight made of translucent glass and translucent fencing material behind which will be rooftop equipment as well as an outdoor roof garden; and extending an existing bulkhead by one story which will be visible from the street).

WHEREAS the proposed infilling of the interior court, the proposed replacement of the current rear portion of building, the proposed addition of one floor along East 89th Street, and the proposed extension of the existing bullhead will result in a combined structure that will be too large, have too much glazing, and will employ materials that are incompatible with the original architecture of the buildings, and will therefore be contrary to the original design of the buildings and the character of the Historic District;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the remainder of the application as described above is disapproved.

This recommendation failed with a vote of 16 in favor, 14 opposed, and 3 abstentions. A substitute motion to approve this portion of the application also failed with a vote of 15 in favor, 14 opposed and 4 abstentions. Thus, Community Board 8 takes no position on the remainder of the application.

Sincerely,

N. Viest

Nicholas Viest
Chair

D. Helpem & D. Liston

David Helpem and David Liston
Co-Chairs, Landmarks Committee

cc: Hon. Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of the City of New York
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Liz Krueger, NYS Senate Member
Hon. Dan Quart, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Micah Kellner, NYS Assembly Member
Hon. Daniel Garodnick, NYC Council Member
Hon. Jessica Lappin, NYC Council Member