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**The City of New York**  
**Community Board 8 Manhattan**

June 19, 2020

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

**RE: 680 Park Avenue (NW corner of East 68<sup>th</sup> Street and Park Avenue) — Upper East Side Historic District** — *Ivan Brice, Ivan Brice Architecture* — A neo-Federal building designed by McKim Meade & White Architects originally constructed in 1909-1911. Application is for replacement of stonework.

Dear Chair Carroll,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on June 17, 2020, the board unanimously **APPROVED** the following resolution by a vote of 46 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting for cause.

**WHEREAS** 680 Park Avenue, also known as the Percy R. Pyne House, is a neo-Federal townhouse designed by McKim Mead and White and constructed 1909-1911;

**WHEREAS** the building was occupied by the Soviet Mission to the United Nations from 1948-1963;

**WHEREAS** today the Americas Society uses the building as its New York City headquarters;

**WHEREAS** together with the buildings at 684 Park Avenue and 690 Park Avenue, 680 Park Avenue forms one of the last intact architectural ensembles on Park Avenue;

**WHEREAS** the building was designated as a New York City landmark in 1970;

**WHEREAS** the applicant is proposing a comprehensive restoration of the building including slate roof replacement and facade repair;

**WHEREAS** all restoration work has been approved at the staff level of the Landmarks Preservation Commission except for stone work replacement;

**WHEREAS** over the years the stonework has badly deteriorated; facade elements have cracks and severe deterioration (including balusters, scroll brackets, lintels and at the building entrance portico, dentals, capitals on existing columns) — elements that are so badly eroded that decorative detailing has been erased;

**WHEREAS** most of the stonework work repair and replacement will take place at the top of 680 Park Avenue;

**WHEREAS** the most severe deterioration presents at the underside of the cornice at the modillion brackets [NB: A modillion bracket is an ornamental and functional bracket that is placed horizontally instead of vertically. Typically modillions are placed at the roofline and are regularly spaced and present as a support projecting from a wall — as to hold a shelf.];

**WHEREAS** while almost every one of the modillion brackets will need to be repaired, approximately 15% will need to be partially replaced;

**WHEREAS** the modillions cannot be removed since they are set under and 20” into the walls of 680 Park Avenue; removal would completely destabilize the building;

**WHEREAS** in most instances where the modillions have been damaged, they will be repaired;

**WHEREAS** where the original shape and form of the modillion has been so badly damaged that all detail on the projecting scroll of the modillion has been lost — in these instances part of the modillion will be replaced;

**WHEREAS** the applicant’s proposal for partial replacement of the modillions that cannot be repaired represents an effort to try to preserve to the greatest extent possible, the historic fabric of 680 Park Avenue;

**WHEREAS** since the modillions cannot be removed to their full depth, the applicant proposes to remove each badly damaged modillion to a depth of 6” into the outside wall, drill into the marble behind and set a cast stone replacement element in front of the remaining marble modillion;

**WHEREAS** the intent is to replace the cantilevered element in a structurally sound way without removing the parapet;

**WHEREAS** when the cast stone replacement element is fabricated, a rod would be threaded through the cast stone; the rod would extend out so that it could be fitted into a hole drilled into the marble section of the original modillion that remains as part of the original historic fabric (The full piece of each replacement element with the rod/anchor through it would be fabricated at the factory.);

**WHEREAS** cast stone must be used as the replacement material since if marble were used, it would splinter on drilling the holes and the color cannot be matched; the existing marble modillions will never be “white white” again; the cast stone replacement elements can be fabricated to match the color of the cleaned marble;

**WHEREAS** since the applicant cannot duplicate the original marble stone construction; the applicant has presented a unique and aesthetically pleasing solution for the restoration of the most badly damaged modillions;

**WHEREAS** a “cathedral stone” product will be used as the replacement cast stone and will present as having the same physical characteristics as marble;

**WHEREAS** this application is before the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 8M only for the use of cast stone as a replacement material; the restoration of the modillions is not an in-kind marble replacement;

**WHEREAS** the architect’s intent in using the cast stone as the replacement material is to bring back, as authentically as possible, the original detail of 680 Park Avenue;

**WHEREAS** the applicant is to be commended for his lucid and compelling presentation of a very complicated and ultimately effective solution for the deteriorated modillions that cannot be repaired;

**WHEREAS** the applicant’s proposal is contextual and appropriate for the INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK, 680 Park Avenue;

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

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

Sincerely,

*Alida Camp*

Alida Camp  
Chair

*David Helpern and Jane Parshall*

David Helpern and Jane Parshall  
Co-Chairs, Landmarks Committee

cc: Honorable Bill de Blasio, Mayor of the City of New York  
Honorable Carolyn Maloney, 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Representative  
Honorable Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District  
Honorable Dan Quart, NYS Assembly Member, 73<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District  
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Honorable Ben Kallos, NYC Council Member, 5<sup>th</sup> Council District  
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4<sup>th</sup> Council District