

Russell Squire  
Chair

Will Brightbill  
District Manager



505 Park Avenue, Suite 620  
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106  
(212) 758-4340  
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)  
www.cb8m.com – Website  
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

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

July 25, 2022

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

**RE: 53 East 79th Street – The New York Society Library (Individual Landmark)** – *Larson Architecture Works PLLC* - An Italian Renaissance style townhouse designed by Trowbridge & Livingston, constructed in 1916-17 and retrofitted in 1937 for its current library use. - Application is for replacing two front windows at the cellar level with operable windows and for a horizontal extension at the cellar and first floor levels at the rear yard.

Dear Chair Carroll,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on July 20, 2022, the board unanimously approved the following resolution by a vote of 44 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 not voting for cause.

**WHEREAS** 53 East 79th Street, the John S. and Catherine C. Rogers House, is an Italian Renaissance-style townhouse designed by Trowbridge and Livingston and constructed in 1916-1917;

**WHEREAS** 53 East 79th Street was retrofitted in 1937 for its current use as The New York Society Library;

**WHEREAS** the applicant proposes to expand at the rear at the cellar and first floor levels to create more space or stacks for books;

**WHEREAS** the proposed extension or infill into the rear yard would be 10' wide x 42' long x 23' high;

**WHEREAS** while the existing rear yard is 12' wide, the Zoning Code does not allow for construction all the way to the rear property line;

**WHEREAS** the applicant also proposes to replace two windows at the sidewalk (cellar level) at the front elevation with operable hopper windows to match existing historic windows as closely as possible, the existing historic grilles will remain;

**WHEREAS** the two windows, now covered with plywood painted black, will provide light and air to the space behind the windows;

**WHEREAS** at the rear, the doughnut has already been compromised by rear extensions; the new Peter Pennoyer Architects-designed apartment building ("The Benson"), directly west of the proposed west-facing elevation of the extension, on Madison Avenue, has a blank concrete wall on its rear property line;

**WHEREAS** the extension is not visible from the public way;

**WHEREAS** The Society Library received Certificate of Appropriateness approval for a similar capital project in 2002, but did not, at that time, have funding in place to move forward.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that this application, for the two-story extension and the restoration of the two windows at the side walk at the front elevation, be **APPROVED** as presented.

Sincerely,

*Russell Squire*

Russell Squire  
Chair

*David Helpern and Jane Parshall*

David Helpern and Jane Parshall  
Co-Chairs, Landmarks Committee

cc: Honorable Eric Adams, Mayor of the City of New York  
Honorable Carolyn Maloney, 12th Congressional District Representative  
Honorable Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President  
Honorable Liz Krueger, NYS Senator, 28th Senatorial District  
Honorable José M. Serrano, NYS Senator, 29th Senatorial District  
Honorable Dan Quart, NYS Assembly Member, 73rd Assembly District  
Honorable Rebecca Seawright, NYS Assembly Member 76th Assembly District  
Honorable Julie Menin, NYC Council Member, 5th Council District  
Honorable Keith Powers, NYC Council Member, 4th Council District