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

June 23, 2023

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

RE: 51-53 East 73rd Street (Upper East Side Historic District) *James Ramsey, RAAD Studio, Architect.*
Application is for restoration of low portion of front facade to its historic 1885 condition, renovation of rear facade and penthouse addition.

Dear Chair Carroll,

At the Full Board meeting of Community Board 8 Manhattan held on June 21, 2023, the board approved the following resolution by a vote of 40 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 not voting for cause.

WHEREAS 51-53 East 73rd Street is a Queen Anne-style building designed by John G. Prague as two individual houses and constructed in 1885-1886 as part of a row of houses;

WHEREAS 51-53 East 73rd Street is being transformed from a small apartment building into a single family home;

WHEREAS the applicant plans to remove the unsympathetic 2-story brick base and replace with painted brownstone; the parlor level and garden level openings will mimic those of the original historic design;

WHEREAS window restoration will include restoring the historic transoms and the historic one over one glazing beneath the restored transoms;

WHEREAS the applicant's intent is to restore the original detailing as much as possible, including doors and windows and the detailing and roughness of the different kinds of masonry;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes to restore a reconstructed front stoop and areaway;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes, with the reconstruction of the front stoop and areaway, to extend into the public way by approximately 5' 7"; a revocable consent from DOT will be required;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes to ask the New York City Parks Department for permission to remove two tree beds at the sidewalk in front of 51-53 East 73rd Street;

WHEREAS the applicant proposes that in order to maintain a minimum sidewalk distance from the restored stoop of approximately 8' requires the loss of two tree beds;

WHEREAS at the rear elevation, the applicant plans to remove the existing “L”-shaped extension that protrudes onto the rear yard; the new rear yard will be 30’ deep x 35’ wide;

WHEREAS at the rear elevation, the applicant proposes a mostly glass design of steel-framed windows; the glass will be reflective and present as pale gray/brown at the ground level and the basement level;

WHEREAS at the rear yard, the applicant proposes a pallet of native plants to reintroduce nature back into the built environment;

WHEREAS at the roof, the applicant proposes a rooftop addition that presents as a penthouse; the addition will be set back 22 1/2’ from the front cornice; the penthouse will measure 23’ x 17 1/2’ with a stairwell bulkhead 21’ x 12’;

WHEREAS the height of the penthouse is approximately 64’ off the sidewalk; the penthouse will have a height of 9 1/2’;

WHEREAS the applicant is removing bulk from the back of the roof; the studio/penthouse will be pulled back 30’ from the rear roofline;

WHEREAS the studio/penthouse is not visible from the public way;

WHEREAS by restoring the stoop with the resulting intrusion into the public way, as part of the restoration of the front elevation, two tree beds will be lost as a result of sidewalk minimum clearance requirements;

WHEREAS the Landmarks Committee of Community Board 8 cannot sanction the loss of two tree beds; the stoop does not have to be restored — a more appropriate entrance would be at the ground level resulting in a wider sidewalk that would allow for the two tree beds;

WHEREAS the applicant is proposing a painted white building; a painted white building is not historically correct — the two houses now being joined together were originally made of brownstone; the brownstone should be restored;

WHEREAS in addition, a more contextual approach would indicate that there were formerly two houses at 51-53 East 74th Street so that the historic streetscape is replicated; the applicant is creating a false front or Disneyfication of two town houses and ignoring the architectural character of the original two houses;

WHEREAS at the rear elevation, the reflective glazing at the ground and first floors, especially the 30’ wide by 19’ high glazing set into the masonry at the 1st floor, is jarring and presents as a light box; all the glazing at the rear should be clear glass;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this application is disapproved as presented.

Please advise us of any action taken on this matter.

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 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