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20 April 2007

Ms. Ellen Lipsey
Director
Boston Landmarks Commission
Environment Department Room 805
Boston City Hall
Boston, MA 02210

RE: BOSTON CITY HALL

Dear Ms. Lipsey:

On behalf of DOCOMOMO US, I am writing to oppose the proposed sale for the purpose of demolition of Boston City Hall and its replacement by commercial development. We request that you give a full review to proposals for preserving it. DOCOMOMO US is one of the chapters or Working Parties of DOCOMOMO International, the pioneer in modern movement preservation. In submitting this request, we are joining our voice to those of many locally and nationally prominent organizations, among them that of DOCOMOMO New England, our regional subchapter.

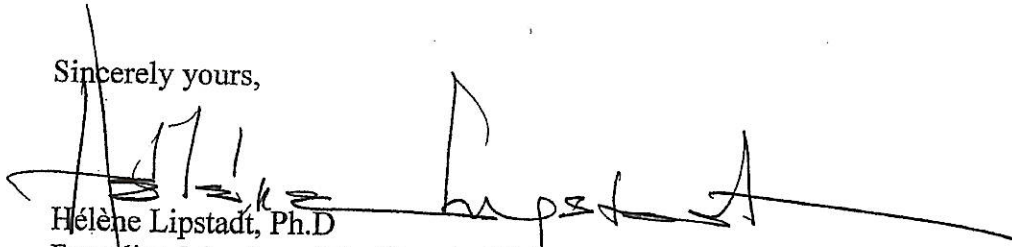
As a preservation organization devoted to the preservation of modern architecture, DOCOMOMO only advocates for buildings of established national significance, and only after comparison of the building with others of its type and era. There is no doubt that Boston City Hall is one of the most important of the many municipal and county buildings constructed in the 1960s. It is the product of an architectural competition that was considered a landmark event in its time, and is still admired today by historians of competitions [Cf. my *The Experimental Tradition: Essays on Competitions in Architecture* (New York: Architectural League of New York, 1989), pp. 95-99, 160-161], especially p. 99, where I wrote, "The Boston City Hall competition of 1961 restored the competition process to respect as a successful means of selecting an architect." It was emulated by other designers worldwide who recognized it as the paradigm for the new typology of a modern city hall and *the solution* to the problem of rendering modern architecture monumental and representative of municipal government. For that reason, we have devoted a prominent place on the DOCOMOMO US webpage to the imminent threat to Boston City Hall, cf. http://www.docomomo-us.org/about/building_watch_boston_city_hall_up_for_sale, posted 18 December 2006.

It is therefore with real surprise and consternation that we have learned that a city that is internationally admired for its historic urban texture and visited for that reason would consider the amputation of the building that links past and present in its unbroken chain of distinctive historic civic buildings that distinguishes Boston's civic center from those of most American cities. City Hall's removal will permanently break this chain, scar this

Center and, most importantly, undo the great good that Boston accomplished by adding references to the presence to the Freedom Trail such as the Holocaust Memorial.

While we recognize that Boston City Hall is not without faults with regard to the current needs of municipal government, we believe that these deficiencies can be corrected and the neighboring plaza can be used to create buildings that will continue Boston's tradition of integrating old and new in it civic center in a contextual manner.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hélène Lipstadt', written over a horizontal line.

Hélène Lipstadt, Ph.D

Founding Member of the Board of Directors of DOCOMOMO US
Secretary of the Board