

Sarah Carroll
Chair

August 18, 2023

The Honorable Christopher Marte
New York City Council
65 East Broadway
New York, NY 10002

Re: 60 Wall Street

Dear Council Member Marte:

Thank you for your letter of August 2 regarding 60 Wall Street. I appreciate your interest in preserving the exterior and interior of 60 Wall Street, and I would like to expand on LPC's consideration.

As you know, 60 Wall Street was completed in 1989 with the use of special permits granted by the City Planning Commission providing floor area bonuses in exchange for a suite of public benefits, among them the inclusion of a Privately Operated Public Space (POPS) at the ground floor with connections to the subway. Because the building sought to use air rights from a neighboring landmark, in 1984 LPC reviewed the exterior design and found the building's exterior design had a harmonious relationship with the designated landmark 55 Wall Street across the street. The resulting 55-story glass and granite office building was designed by Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates in the Postmodern style with distinctive massing, synthesizing abstracted classicizing forms with modern technology.

In April 2022, the owners applied to LPC to amend our 1984 approval finding the original design of the base of the building was harmonious with 55 Wall Street, to allow for changes to the exterior at the base of the building. The Commission considered the proposal at a public hearing on June 8, 2022 and took no action. Through the course of the review process, LPC, recognizing the potential architectural significance of the exterior of the building, required a more preservation-sensitive approach, resulting in proposed modifications that modernize the base while retaining the original design intent of Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo & Associates. This was important in retaining the integrity of the original exterior design.

During that process, LPC received two Requests for Evaluation ("RFE") for 60 Wall Street as an individual and interior landmark. In its review of the RFEs, LPC staff found and responded that the exterior of the building and interior POPS merit further study within the context of Postmodern commercial architecture and interiors. As with all sites found to merit study, further consideration is only possible within the context of the agency's priorities, which are determined by a variety of factors including our policy of designating resources equitably throughout the city's five boroughs.

In terms of the interior, which the LPC did not review in 1984, and which was not before the Commission in its recent review, LPC recognizes that the ground floor space, its architectural elements, public and transit benefits, and amenities (and subsequent alterations to them) were designed with the approval of the City Planning Commission in connection with the granting of floor area bonuses, and that these public spaces remain under the City Planning Commission's jurisdiction in perpetuity. The transit and other public benefits connected to this POPS create critically important infrastructure for the city and require flexibility to meet future needs, and rigorous coordination between the Department of City Planning and the applicant. To preserve and enhance the significant public benefits of the POPS in accordance with the original special permit, and in support of larger citywide priorities including economic revitalization, it may be necessary to alter the interior design of the POPS. The Commission recognizes the significant benefits to the city

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associated with upgrades to the interior POPS, currently under review by the City Planning Commission, and therefore will not prioritize further study of the interior space.

It is important to understand that the Landmarks Law requires that a building be at least 30 years old to be designated as an individual landmark and that 60 Wall Street reached this benchmark only a few years ago. Because Postmodern architecture has only recently reached the age of eligibility for consideration as landmarks, the Commission needs to fully understand the significance of the era and the relative merits of individual buildings. I also note that interior designations are extremely rare; of the nearly 38,000 designated buildings and sites in New York City, LPC has only designated 121 interior landmarks across all five boroughs.

I hope you can appreciate the need for the Commission to carefully consider the various factors involved. I thank you for your interest in historic preservation.

Sincerely,



Sarah Carroll