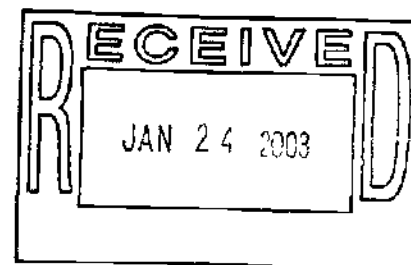


***Julius Rudel
101 Central Park West
New York, NY 10023***



January 21, 2003

Mr. Robert Tierney
Chairman
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street
9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney;

I am writing to you not only as a lifetime West Sider, but as someone who has spent a career in the arts in New York, a place where beauty is cherished.

It is with the utmost concern that I urge you to reject the proposal by Congregation Shearith Israel to build an apartment tower. Twenty years ago, a similar project was defeated by those who care about our city's beauty. Even if I were not directly affected by this horrific proposal I would speak out against it. In my travels around the world I am often struck by how many countries truly preserve the riches of their past and don't let the greed of over-construction ruin what is beautiful.

Should you fail to stop this heinous project from proceeding, I can easily foresee similar proposals by the other houses of worship that line Central Park West. By doing so you would be opening the door to more construction on 65th, 68th, 77th, and 96th streets, to mention just the four most obvious targets. It is a slippery slope. Would all that construction be 'preserving' or destroying New York's Landmarks?

For your reference I have enclosed a copy of my November letter to the LPC. I hope in your new capacity you will champion a true preservation movement.

I hope you will work to defeat the proposal.

Sincerely,

November 18, 2002

To the Members of The NYC Landmarks Preservation Committee;

Unfortunately conducting engagements outside of New York City prevent me from attending the Committee meeting. However, I do want to add my voice to the chorus of concerned New Yorkers urging you to reject the variances required for the construction of a mid-block high-rise apartment building on West 70th street.


As a more than fifty year resident of the upper West Side I have seen first hand what development, both positive and negative, can do to a neighborhood. This construction would be an outright assault on the heart of a wonderfully historic district of our city. During my career I have had the good fortune to travel to most of the capitals of the world. I am always struck by the pride those cities take in their past, their history, and how they truly preserve the wonderful flavor and special qualities of their historic areas. Cities like Vienna, Paris, Rome, and London treasure their historic districts and find a way to preserve those areas without succumbing to the pressures of developers.

It is ironic and somewhat sad, to read of the plans being circulated now to reconstitute the beautiful Pennsylvania Station, which was torn down during the 1960s for the development of an ugly albatross. Or, more personally to me, I recall the fight to save Carnegie Hall from the wrecker's ball. Had cooler heads not prevailed in that fight, one of New York's greatest musical treasures would have been pulled down and replaced by a high-rise, red, office building, no different than hundreds of others.

The challenge is to preserve the beauty that is our historic district and to fend off developers' 'visions' of what a neighborhood should look like. To give in and allow this project is to take the first steps down a slippery slope. How long will it be before the churches on Central Park West and 68th and 65th streets also request variance along these lines? Similar proposals were rejected twenty years ago and should be rejected again today.

I urge you to reject the variance requests and save the character of this neighborhood so its beauty can be enjoyed by generations to come. To fail to do so would mean your committee had failed in its mission to preserve. New York would become a far less beautiful place if your organization were to become known as The Landmarks Development Committee.

Sincerely,



104 Central Park West