



# NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY

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84th Assembly District

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November 13, 2002

Sherida Paulsen, Chair  
Landmarks Preservation Commission  
One Centre Street  
New York, NY 10007  
BY FAX AND BY MAIL

Re: Congregation Shearith Israel  
8 West 70th Street

Dear Ms. Paulsen:

We are writing to ask the Commission to postpone the hearing on Congregation Shearith Israel (The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue), scheduled for November 26

The Commission's schedule for the public hearing on this project means that Community Board 7 will not be able to participate in the hearing, because the Board will not be considering the proposal until its full board meeting on December 3. There are significant concerns about the proposal, including whether the development serves a preservation purpose and whether it would set bad precedent for zoning and development in historic districts. Shearith Israel has been working with the City on this project for two years, without any word to the community. It is wrong for it to now to seek to rush through the public review process. The community's voice must be heard.

Shearith Israel (CSI) has proposed to build a 14-story (159-foot) building on its property at 8 West 70th Street. The synagogue itself is a landmarked building, and is located within the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District. In order to proceed with this development, CSI must obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, as well as a waiver from the City Planning Commission or the Board of Standards and Appeals.

We urge you to postpone the date of this hearing until after December 3, so that the Commission will be able to consider the opinion of Community Board 7 in making its decision on this matter.

Very truly yours,

*Thomas K. Duane*  
Thomas K. Duane  
State Senator

*Richard N. Gottfried*  
Richard N. Gottfried  
Assembly Member

*Gale Brewer*  
Gale Brewer  
Councilmember

cc: Community Board 7  
Historic Districts Council  
Landmark West!  
Municipal Arts Society  
Congregation Shearith Israel  
Various local co-ops and residents