

WHEREAS, Community Board 7 / Manhattan (MCB7) is required to review landmark and land use applications serially/separately for a mixed-used building (community facility and residential) being proposed by Congregation Shearith Israel, adjacent to its landmark Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue structure and within the Central Park West Historic District – and therefore must review the application to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) for a Certificate of Appropriateness for building design/appearance **before** reviewing the applications to the NYC Board of Standards & Appeals (BSA) for variances that would make the proposed building's size and shape possible; and

WHEREAS, MCB7 recognizes the need of Congregation Shearith Israel for additional space for its educational and other programming and unique archives, and to provide ADA accessibility to its historic Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue structure; and

WHEREAS, LPC has instructed the applicant that the proposed building's location is a 'transition' site between avenue and midblock and therefore should be no higher than 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street to its immediate west; and

WHEREAS, the applicant's architects have worked diligently to follow LPC's guidance in reducing the height and bulk of the building from the 15-story building with 3 setback penthouses previously proposed to an 8-story building with 2 additional floors of setback penthouses; and

WHEREAS, the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street (northern) façade of the proposed building does not relate either to the landmark Synagogue, 18 West 70<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, nor to any other building in the vicinity; and

WHEREAS, the use of materials is inappropriate (especially the buff terra cotta overlaid on the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street façade); and

WHEREAS, the recessed glass wall and trip windows on the West 70<sup>th</sup> Street façade do not relate to the adjacent buildings or anything on the block or within the Central Park West Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the entrances to both the congregational/community and residential portions of the proposed building appear insignificant on the façade in relation to their function; and

WHEREAS, the southern elevation has been designed as the building's 'backside' with a brick façade, adding to the confusing and disjointed use of materials; and

WHEREAS, the applicant has not provided sightlines from the public way, Central Park, and the neighboring buildings;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7 / Manhattan **disapproves** the design presented for a Certificate of Appropriateness, principally based on the problems with the façade(s); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT MCB7 applauds the applicant's architects for their efforts to find a solution to a difficult architectural problem and finds the proposed building's height and bulk acceptable and its symmetry pleasing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT MCB7 urges the applicant's architects to revisit the design of the north and south elevations, ideally producing a building of consequence visible from all directions and with a consistent and harmonious use of materials on all elevations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT MCB7 urges the applicant's architects to review the entrances (including the service entrance) for placement, treatment, appearance, and scale, with particular consideration of the building's significance as a community structure; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT MCB7 requests that sightlines from the public way, Central Park, and the neighboring buildings be provided to it and all other interested parties; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT MCB7 once again objects to the bifurcated review process and urges all relevant City agencies to find a way to allow applicants to present a unified application for all land use, zoning, landmark, and other approvals required for a building, so that important issues of public policy, use, bulk, height, design, etc. can be considered in a coherent and holistic way.

*Joint Parks & Preservation and Land Use Committees: 10-0-0-0. Board Members: 2-0-0-0.*