

State of New York)
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County of New York)

ANDREW S. DOLKART, having been duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. I am a tenured, Professor of Historic Preservation at the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, where I teach classes in American architecture, the architecture and development of New York City, and Historic Preservation studios. I submit this affidavit in connection with the effort to reverse a determination by the Landmarks Preservation Commission (“LPC” or “Commission”) to authorize a real estate developer to inappropriately add stories to two important low-rise market buildings in the Gansevoort Market Historic District on Gansevoort Street between Greenwich and Washington Streets.

My Background

2. I hold a Bachelor’s of Arts from Colgate University (1973) and a Masters in Historic Preservation from Columbia University (1977). In addition to my tenured position at Columbia. I was Director of the Historic Preservation program there from 2008 until June 2016 -- a position previously held by James Marston Fitch, Robert A.M. Stern, and Paul Spencer Byard.

3. I have been active in historic preservation in New York City for more than 40 years, including as a staff member at the LPC, where I authored many of the Commission’s designation reports. I am also the author of the first edition of the Commission’s current *Guide to New York City Landmarks*.

4. I have also worked extensively with neighborhood groups on preservation efforts, and completed scores of National Register nominations, historic resource surveys for environmental reviews, and urban cultural resource inventories. I have also written extensively about the

architecture and development of New York City, focusing in particular on the city's everyday, vernacular building types and how they influenced the character of neighborhoods. My books include *Morningside Heights: A History of Its Architecture and Development*, which won the American Association of Publishers award for best academic book in architecture and planning; the award-winning *Biography of a Tenement House in New York City: An Architectural History of 97 Orchard Street*; and *The Row House Reborn: Architecture and Neighborhoods in New York City 1908-1929*, which won several prizes, including the Society of Architectural Historians prestigious Antoinette Forrester Downing Award. I have written walking tour guides to Harlem, the Upper East Side, and Lower Manhattan, as well as short books on Gramercy Park, Tribeca, and City and Suburban Homes.

5. I have also contributed essays to books on the history of Green-Wood Cemetery ("Architecture at Green-Wood," in *Green-Wood at 175: Looking Back/Looking Forward*) and Woodlawn Cemetery ("Designing Woodlawn: Buildings and Landscapes," in *Sylvan Cemetery: Architecture, Art & Landscape at Woodlawn*) in the Bronx, and co-curated the exhibition *Saving Place: Fifty Years of New York City Landmarks*, also contributing an essay to the exhibit's catalogue ("Designating New York City Landmarks"), an exhibition that celebrated the 50th anniversary of the creation of the LPC.

6. My current research project involves a study of garment lofts and the development of New York City's Garment District. Two of my articles on this subject have already been published – "The Fabric of New York City's Garment District: Architecture and Development in an Urban Cultural Landscape," published in the journal *Buildings and Landscapes* (Spring 2011) and "From Rag Trade to Riches: Abraham E. Lefcourt Builds the Garment District," in the book

Chosen Capitol: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism. I also curated an exhibition about the Garment District's skyscraper lofts at the Skyscraper Museum.

7. I am a board member of several local preservation groups, have been interviewed for many documentaries, have been quoted extensively in the media, and am well-known for my architectural walking tours of New York City.

8. In 2014, I received the Historic District Council's Landmarks Lion award. In 2015, I co-founded the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, which is developing a website and database of places in New York City associated with LGBT history and people.

The Gansevoort Market Historic District

9. The Gansevoort Market Historic District was designated in 2003. A review of the Designation Report issued by the LPC makes clear the Commission's desire to preserve the period of rapid market industrialization during the early part of the 20th century. This is most evident in the name chosen for the historic district. It is not the Gansevoort Historic District, but the Gansevoort **Market** Historic District. While the history discussed in the LPC designation report includes the early periods of development in the area, it is clear that the reason why the commissioners chose to designate this area in 2003 was its history and character as a market district. While there are a few row houses in the district, this is not a row house district, as are Greenwich Village and Chelsea. While there are a few tenements in the district, it is also clear that this was not designated for the importance of tenements, as were the East Village/Lower East Side Historic District and Greenwich Village Historic District Extension II. Indeed, most of the row houses and tenements in the Gansevoort Market Historic District were later converted into market buildings, as noted in the LPC designation report; as altered, they support the character defining market features of the district. To quote the Designation Report:

Typically, commercial redevelopments of neighborhoods in New York City involved the demolition of earlier buildings for structures housing new uses. However, one of the district's unique qualities is that earlier buildings were retained and altered to market uses.

(Designation report at p. 300)

It is significant that the legal findings in the designation report support the market history of the district, and specifically note the importance of earlier buildings “adapted for market use (p. 299). The findings state clearly that “one of the district’s unique qualities is that earlier buildings were retained and altered to market uses” (p. 300). Thus, it would be inappropriate to disregard this important element of the district and add stories on top of low-scale market buildings created as a result of these “unique” alterations.

The Work Authorized by the LPC


10. A determination by the LPC to permit a developer to demolish or alter the market buildings of the Gansevoort Market Historic District into larger edifices based upon their prior construction as tenement buildings would stand the Designation Report on its head and would destroy key character defining elements for which the historic district was designated. The LPC designated the district as the “Gansevoort Market Historic District” and focused on these market buildings, in particular, precisely because they were converted *into* market buildings *from* tenements – not the other way around. Thus, a determination that permits a real estate developer to convert the market buildings into larger commercial structures to match the prior size and scale of earlier, 19th Century residential tenement buildings effectively ignores the findings that the Commission made about the significance of the district in the first instance. The idea that tenements once on the site, but that have no bearing on the key features and history of the district, would be used as a model for adding to market buildings is in opposition to what the designation report finds as key to the history and character of the area.

11. A key feature of this historic district is the low-rise market buildings. If the LPC's determination is not overturned, two important examples of those low-rise market buildings, 60-68 Gansevoort and 70-74 Gansevoort, would be increased to heights of approximately 60 and 100 feet, respectively, overwhelming the remaining market buildings in the area and completely changing the complexion of the neighborhood.

Conclusion

12. The LPC's decision deals a serious blow to the character of the Gansevoort Market Historic District and renders a key streetscape virtually unrecognizable. Indeed, several of the buildings to be altered were chosen by the Commission to illustrate the cover of its designation report! Clearly, the Commission of 2003 found these two-story market buildings to be of major importance to the district. The 2003 decision needs to be respected so that the proposed additions to market buildings do not become a precedent for the wholesale loss of the low-scale character of the Gansevoort Market. I respectfully urge that the Court reverse the LPC's decision.


Andrew S. Dolkart

Sworn before me this 3rd
day of October, 2016.
November 15

Notary
License # 02BA4936126
Expires 8/11/2018
New York County