



**Greenwich
Village
Society for
Historic
Preservation**

252 East 11th Street
New York, New York 10005

(212) 475-9585
fax: (212) 475-9582
www.gvshp.org

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December 1, 2010

Hon. Robert Tierney, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: New Danger to Proposed South Village Historic District

Dear Chair Tierney:

I write to bring to your attention that the Children's Aid Society is seeking to sell the Coltoff Center, its properties on Sullivan Street in the proposed South Village Historic District.

As you know, lacking landmark protections, sale of these properties covering several lots in the heart of the South Village would likely lead to demolition of the buildings, some of which were designed by Calvert Vaux. New development under the current zoning would likely be unsympathetic to and out of context with its surroundings.

For these reasons, I urge you to move forward as quickly as possible with formal consideration of landmark designation of the remainder of the proposed South Village Historic District. The danger of not moving swiftly is not only the potential loss of these properties in the heart of the South Village and their replacement with out-of-context and out-of-scale new development. If the Children's Aid Society does in fact move ahead with sale of the properties, it would be much fairer and more helpful to all involved if the status of the properties as landmarked were clear from the beginning, rather than if it were to change after purchase, potentially leading to hardship cases or other resistance to the requirements of landmark designation.

As you know, preservationists and neighborhood advocates have pushed for designation of this area since the 1960's; GVSHP has been in conversation with the Commission about designation since 2002, and formally submitted a proposal for landmark designation in 2006. In 2009, when the Commission held a hearing on the first third of the proposed South Village Historic District, we were told that further action on the remainder of the proposed district would follow shortly after.

Too many buildings have already been lost or compromised in the South Village, and too much unsympathetic and inappropriate new development and alterations have already taken place. I hope the Commission will act before an even greater loss to this neighborhood's historic character happens here.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman
Executive Director