



THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

PLEASE RESPOND TO:
☐ 494 8TH AVENUE, SUITE 503
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10001
PHONE (212) 268-1049
FAX (212) 564-1003

☐ ROOM 415
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
PHONE (518) 455-2451
FAX (518) 426-6846

☐ E-MAIL:
DUANE@SENATE.STATE.NY.US

THOMAS DUANE
SENATOR, 29TH DISTRICT

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
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JUDICIARY

RULES

January 16, 2004

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

Dear Chair Tierney:

I am writing to urge the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to consider designating the University Village/Silver Towers, located at 100 and 110 Bleeker Street and 505 LaGuardia Place. I am strongly urging you to including landscaping, outdoor sculpture and furniture, as well as the adjacent supermarket and Coles Sports and Recreation Center (Block 524) as New York City landmarks.

One of the era's most celebrated architects, I.M. Pei, designed the buildings in 1966. Their unusual superblock design truly represents an important moment in the evolution of Pei's work and modern design as a whole. The placement of these buildings within the surrounding landscaping and surrounding streets is both unique and marvelous. The buildings are an excellent example of cast-in-place architecture, a form that is rarely used anymore. These are stylish, visually-arresting buildings that carefully relate to the neighborhood around them.

I also believe that it is especially important not only to landmark the University Village/Silver Towers buildings-- but also to landmark the surrounding buildings, landscaping, outdoor sculpture and furniture. Included in Pei's design is a monumental sculpture reinterpreting Pablo Picasso's *Portrait of Sylvette*. The resulting *Sylvette* was created on the premises by Picasso's some-time collaborator Carl Nesjar. The sculpture is an important piece of work in its own right, as well as an integral part of Pei's design, deserving of protection. In order to preserve Pei's unique vision and the feel of the superblock design, it is imperative that the landscaping, outdoor furniture, pathways and the façades of the buildings are protected and preserved in the future. Furthermore, the two adjoining buildings should absolutely be included in the designation as "non-contributing"

structures. Although the two were built separately, and Pei designed neither, they support his intent both in their basic placement and horizontal orientation.

I urge you to consider the entirety of this unique and fantastic site (Block 524) for landmark designation. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please call my office at (212) 268-1049. Thank you in advance for considering my opinion on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas K. Duane". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas K. Duane
State Senator

ALAN JAY GERSON
COUNCIL MEMBER, 1ST DISTRICT
MANHATTAN

DISTRICT OFFICE
49-51 CHAMBERS STREET, SUITE 429
NEW YORK, NY 10007
(212) 788-7722
FAX (212) 788-7727

CITY HALL OFFICE
250 BROADWAY, ROOM 1845
NEW YORK, NY 10007
(212) 788-7259

gerson@council.nyc.nyu.us



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February 9, 2004

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

Re: 505 LaGuardia Place/University Village/Silver Towers Superblock

Dear Chair Tierney:

It is with great joy that I add my voice to the proponents of landmarking the Superblock containing 505 LaGuardia Place, University Village/Silver Towers, the Coles Sports and Recreation Center and the Morton Williams Supermarket. This unique and beautiful block is a classic example of modernist construction and set a new standard for high-rise development in Manhattan. Designed in 1966 by the incredible architect I.M. Pei, these towers are remarkable and their inter-relation to each other, as well as the low rise nature of the rest of the Superblock, is a prime example of the modernist movement. In fact, Fortune Magazine dubbed Silver Towers one of the "Ten Buildings that Climax an Era", a designation with which I find myself in complete agreement. Whereas other high-rise development was often tight and busy, these towers stand at right angles to each other and create a sense of space for the block and the surrounding area. The inclusion of Pablo Picasso's sculpture, Portrait of Sylvette, executed by Calr Nesjar, and the landscaping by James Freed, further imbue an overall sense of the block.

I urge the Landmarks Preservation Commission to complete your research into this superblock quickly and calendar this matter at the earliest possible opportunity. It is important that we ensure the integrity and preservation of this superblock as a prime example of modernist architecture.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Jay Gerson".

Alan Jay Gerson



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

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Social Services Committee

COMMITTEES
Children and Families
Higher Education
Environmental Conservation
Ways & Means

DEBORAH J. GLICK
Assemblymember 66th District
New York County

March 3, 2004

Robert Tierney
Chairman
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I am writing in support of the application for landmarks designation of Block 524 in Greenwich Village. Block 524 encompasses University Village/ Silver Towers, 100 and 110 Bleeker Street and 505 Laguardia Place, including landscaping, outdoor sculpture and furniture designed by world-renown architect I.M. Pei. The adjacent supermarket and Coles Sports Center are a part of this landmark as well as crucial compliments to Pei's design.

Block 524 is one of the few successful implementations of the modern superblock in New York City. Its design is uniquely fitted to the older neighborhood in which it is situated while conveying a modern sensibility and formal self-consciousness that is rare in Lower Manhattan architecture. I.M. Pei's uncommon ability to create a smooth transition between what would seem to be the opposing architectural themes of his design and that of the existing neighborhood is a chief element in distinguishing his work from other large-scale urban design plans. The use of open space and low-rise corners are integral to the overall sense of place and to the aesthetic connection with the neighboring blocks. The inclusion of community gardens and the Time Sculpture represent the artistic and community-centered nature of the Village neighborhood, as well as the aspirations of Pei's patron, New York University.

Block 524 is a wonderful example of how urban design can be a success when it takes into account the architectural themes of the existing built environment. Neither New Yorkers nor students of modern architecture should lose this unique work. I urge you to designate Block 524.

Sincerely,

Deborah J. Glick
Assemblymember