

Proposed South Village Historic District

There were two Public Hearings that the Committee held on this proposal, as well as two Committee discussions. At the first hearing on April 24, 2007, there were over 200 people in attendance, all of whom expressed support for the proposed South Village Historic District, including representatives from the offices of Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, and Assemblymember Deborah Glick. At the June 6, 2007 public hearing, there were 22 speakers during the Public Session. 1 opposed the proposal and 21 in favor including representatives from State Sen. Tom Duane and Council Member Alan Gerson's offices, and representatives from a number of local organizations. 52 people signed in on the attendance sheets.

Whereas, the study for the proposed South Village Historic District was started in 2003, involved the participation and input of many different community groups, and culminated in the report commissioned by the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and written by architectural historian and preservationist Andrew S. Dolkart; and

Whereas, the South Village area history dates back to 1644 and its architecture today is still exceptionally intact and clearly reflects the unified history and development of the neighborhood from an early 19th century rowhouse neighborhood for the merchant class into an archetypal immigrant neighborhood of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which was home to a significant community of African Americans, Irish, Germans, French, Portuguese and most notably Italian Americans, who are still an important component in the area; and

Whereas, a number of important public buildings in the area are also still intact such as St. Anthony of Padua Church, Our Lady of Pompeii Church, Judson Memorial Church, Bethlehem Chapel, Children's Aid Society, Greenwich House Pottery, Tony D'Apolito Recreation Center, Hudson Park Library, and City as School; and

Whereas, the neighborhood has a rich cultural history that includes the Italian immigrant heritage as well as the culture of the bohemians, beats, artists, folk musicians, and gay men and lesbians that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th century that is still palpable today; and

Whereas, a South Village Historic District would officially recognize and honor the area's immigrant, cultural, and social history and working-class architecture; and

Whereas, with the increasing pressure on many neighborhoods for development, this area is now under threat, and in fact has already lost some of its notable buildings such as the Tunnel Garage, the Poe House, and the Judson Houses.

Therefore, be it resolved that Community Board #2 joins with the many other community groups in our area to enthusiastically support the proposed South Village Historic District and to urge the Landmarks Preservation Commission to hold a public hearing and subsequently designate this proposed South Village Historic District as soon as possible

Vote: Unanimous