



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

Testimony the Landmarks Preservation Commission Regarding 823 Park Avenue on October 26th, 2004

LIZ KRUEGER July 12, 2010

Good afternoon. My name is Liz Krueger, and I am the State Senator for New York's twenty-sixth Senatorial District, one primarily comprising parts of Manhattan's Midtown and East Side. I would like to thank the Landmarks Preservation Commission for affording me the opportunity to speak at today's proceeding.

The Upper East Side Historic District has remained an island of heritage and grace in a sea of modernity and change. Much of the area's built environment is unique and distinguished because the vintage architectural styles and quaint streetscapes grow in scarcity and value as too many of their kind around Manhattan give way to luxury high-rises and renovations that are less about restoration and more about remuneration. Furthermore, because the character of the Upper East Side Historic District has been prudently preserved by the Landmarks Commission and accordingly saved from the encroachment of encumbering development, the neighborhood endures as a particularly hospitable place for its residents.

Given the significance and distinctiveness of the area, I ask that the Commission deny the application of 823 Park Avenue's owner to construct a roughly twenty-foot by twenty-foot twelve-story addition to the building in the rear yard. The pictures and model of the

proposed addition indicate that not only will it add bulk to the building in the rear, but that the massing of the proposed addition will irrevocably alter the light and air exposure currently enjoyed by 823 Park Avenue's neighbors. While the addition would be legally permissible given that it would fall within 100 feet of Park Avenue and would not violate any lot-coverage regulations, this is a proposal that failed to garner Community Board support and has inspired fervent protests among a large number of neighbors. In short, the rear-yard addition would erode the quality of life in the neighborhood too sharply and betray the feelings of far too many of the neighbors. I do not think it unreasonable to ask that the Commission heed these community concerns.

I also fear that were the Commission to approve this request, it would set a dangerous precedent for the Upper East Side Historic District. How many other property owners would cite the Commission's acquiescence in this matter as tacit if not explicit approval of similar measures? Not long from now, the Upper East Side could be exclusively filled with avenue-lining buildings fully built out to the property line, altering the quality of life for a great number of citizens in an intrusive and permanent fashion. The Commission should not allow for this possibility.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today and for taking the time to listen.