



**THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY**

October 6, 2020

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR SAINT JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND PARISH, 2500 JEROME AVENUE, BRONX, AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK

Good day Chair Carroll and Commissioners. I am Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy. The Conservancy supports this application.

We recognize the difficult situation that many congregations at historic religious properties face, with extensive deferred maintenance and dwindling resources. This development will provide funding to restore and maintain this landmark. The Conservancy has a long history with Saint James. Our Sacred Sites Program provided grants for a conditions survey in 1999, and funds toward slate roof replacement and stained-glass restoration in the early 2000s. This congregation has been a good steward of the property and they have a valuable partner in the Episcopal Diocese Property Support Program.

Regarding the new construction, first, we do not oppose demolition of the 1960's fellowship hall. The replacement will be a major improvement. The new complex is appropriate because of the way it defers to and connects with the Church. The massing of the residential building has been set so the height of the entrance bay aligns with the Church roof and the building does not overwhelm the landmark. The location will eliminate some views of the Church from the street, but overall, the Church remains the focal point of the block, as it should be. At the arcade, the gate takes inspiration from the Gothic arch windows. The gray-brown palette and varied brick types recall the Church's stone façade. An ADA-compliant entrance from the new community center to the Church will be a substantial benefit. An attractive courtyard completes the composition.

We appreciate that the owner is planning to make investments in the City during this difficult time. This affordable and supportive housing will be a benefit to the neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the Conservancy's views.