



September 24, 2024

STATEMENT OF THE NEW YORK LANDMARKS CONSERVANCY BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR 510 FIFTH AVENUE - MANUFACTURERS TRUST COMPANY BUILDING - INDIVIDUAL AND INTERIOR LANDMARK

Good morning Chair Carroll and Commissioners. I'm Andrea Goldwyn, speaking on behalf of the New York Landmarks Conservancy.

The Manny Hanny Building, completed in 1954 to the designs of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill is a true masterpiece of the International Style, which changed the way that New Yorkers viewed architecture. In 2011 we supported designation of this building as an interior landmark, noting that the glass curtain walls and the public interiors were designed as one so that the interior and the exterior could be enjoyed simultaneously.

A few months later, we largely supported an application to alter the interior and exterior in conjunction with a new retail use. In the years since, we've seen some improvements – notably the return of the Bertioia sculptures – and some disappointments as signage and retail installations have cluttered the precise facades and diminished the experience of the building. Not every inch of the interior is included in the designation, but in true modernist fashion, every detail of the interior is an ornament that collectively defines the structure.

The application before you today presents an opportunity to re-establish the characteristics that define this landmark. Therefore, we hope that you will urge the project team to exercise more restraint: to reduce the size and amount of the LED signage at the façade and the escalator, to make retail displays and fixtures smaller and push them back away from the windows, to reconsider the video monitors in the undesignated portion that will block the designated vault, and, overall, to give this iconic architecture some space to breathe and let it speak for itself.

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