

WHY WE'RE ASKING FOR \$1 MILLION FOR THE LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Goal

A broad coalition of groups with an interest in preservation is seeking a **\$1million increase** to the LPC's FY 2008 budget. This would allow the commission to restore staffing to its 1991 level and therefore effectively protect our City's valuable historic resources.

Why?

The LPC protects our City's historic fabric by regulating already designated landmarks and designating unprotected buildings and districts. At its current staffing levels, the commission cannot adequately do both. With development booming, the LPC is inundated with permit applications and must devote more and more of its scarce resources and staff time to the regulation of existing landmarks—at the cost of new landmark and historic district designations. Furthermore, it is critical that the LPC be able to issue permits efficiently, which requires adequate preservation staff.

The Commission therefore needs a \$1 million budget increase to hire a larger staff.

FACTS

In relation to the City's budget as a whole, **the LPC's spending is miniscule**—less than one one-hundredth of one percent of the City's expenditures. Even with a one million dollar increase, the LPC's budget will *remain* less than one one-hundredth of one percent of the City's expenditures.

Because of inadequate funding, **the LPC's staff is overburdened**. Although applications for permits have more than doubled since 1990, the LPC staff has been cut by almost one third. As a result, the commission's regulatory workload has skyrocketed.

The dedicated staff of the LPC has kept up with **the rising tide of permits**—at the cost of the designations needed to preserve the qualities that make New York special. **The number of sites that the LPC designates as landmarks each year has been trending down**, despite continued community demand for more designations.

As more buildings are designated, the number of permit applications will increase, thus further burdening the staff.

The FY 2007 budget of the LPC is \$4.3 million.

Last Year's Increase

Last year, City Council members Jessica Lappin, Tony Avella and Diana Reyna sponsored an increase of \$250,000 to the Landmarks Preservation Commission budget in FY 2007. This success has boosted the LPC's effectiveness considerably. The Commission used that money to hire five full-time staff members (on one-year contracts) dedicated to survey and research work that leads to designation. Because of the increase in staff, the Commission is on track to designate more than 1,000 historic buildings, a more than 2,000% increase of the number since FY 2005.

Unfortunately, the 2007 budget increase was a **one-time increase** and will not carry over to 2008.

PRESERVATION LOBBY DAY: MAY 9, 2007

On Preservation lobby day, constituents will be calling upon their Council Members with one unified message: that increasing the LPC budget appropriation by \$1million should be a top priority in their budget.