



DANIEL O'DONNELL
Member of Assembly
69TH Assembly District

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TESTIMONY SUBMITTED TO THE NEW YORK CITY
LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

CONCERNING THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION
OF THE MANHATTAN AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

DANIEL O'DONNELL
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBER
69TH DISTRICT

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2007

Good morning. My name is Daniel O'Donnell and I am a member of the New York State Assembly, 69th District, representing residents of Morningside Heights, West Harlem, the Upper West Side, and Manhattan Valley, the neighborhood about which we are concerned today.

I testify today in strongest support of the designation of the Manhattan Avenue Historic District between West 104th and 106th Streets on Manhattan Avenue. The townhouses on these blocks were built from 1885 to 1890 in the Queen Anne and Romanesque Revival style and comprise a cohesive, as well as evocative, architectural area. They contain numerous whimsical design elements and are rich with detailed stone and brickwork, terra cotta, and ornamental iron gates and rails.

This late nineteenth century residential enclave beckons back to the late nineteenth century and recalls the area's origins. Like much of Manhattan Valley, these charming residences were built in response to the completion of the IRT Ninth Avenue elevated railway, serving 104th Street as early as 1880. Their early occupants were members of Manhattan's working and professional classes: an electrician, a stable owner, a jeweler.

The designation of the Manhattan Avenue Historic District would be an important early step in recognizing and protecting the significant architectural, cultural, and historic treasures of the neighborhoods north of West 96th Street. I fully support this designation and hope it represents only the beginning of many more landmark and historic district designations for these communities.

Thank you.