From: Andrew Berman
To: gvshp@lists.mayfirst.org;
Subject: [GVSHP] Landmarks hearings on Silver Towers and Far West Village former factory on Tuesday; NYU Gets Approval to Move Ahead with Demolition Plan
Date: Friday, June 20, 2008 8:38:04 AM
Attachments: ATT00030.txt

PRESERVATION ALERT
from the ***Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation***
June 20, 2008
www.gvshp.org

Silver Towers (l.); Devoe Paint Factory (c.); Provincetown Playhouse and Apartments at 133-139 MacDougal St., with area NYU proposed to preserve highlighted (r.)

Dear friend:

I have important news to share with you regarding Silver Towers, landmarking in the Far West Village, and NYU's demolition plans for the Provincetown Playhouse & Apartments:

1) Silver Towers Landmarking: Next Tuesday, June 24th, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will hold a hearing on landmarking the I.M. Pei-designed Silver Towers complex, which was first proposed for landmark designation by GVSHP in 2003. The poured-in-place concrete towers, the modernist landscaping, and the central Picasso sculpture are considered icons of modern architecture. Designation is needed now more than ever, as NYU is proposing to build new 40-story towers in and around the complex, including on the landscaping and open green space. See www.gvshp.org/SilverTowers.htm for more information.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Write the Landmarks Preservation Commission in support of the proposed landmark designation -- go to www.gvshp.org/silvertowerssampleletter.htm for a sample letter you can use.
- Testify in support of designation -- go to the Landmarks Preservation Commission hearing on Tuesday, June 24th at the Municipal Building, One Centre Street (at Chambers Street), 9th floor (bring photo ID to enter), and go to www.gvshp.org/silvertowerssampleletter.htm for sample testimony you can use. It is recommended that you arrive by 1:30 pm, but the time may change -- check www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/calendar/06_24_08.pdf on Monday to confirm time or reply to this e-mail before the hearing to request time confirmation.

2) More Far West Village Landmarking Progress: Next Tuesday, June 24th, the Landmarks Preservation Commission will also hold a hearing on landmarking the former Devoe Paint Factory at 110-112 Horatio Street in the Far West Village. The last remnant of a large industrial complex in the Far West Village, the Devoe Paint Factory was part of both GVSHP's proposed Gansevoort Market Historic District and proposed Far West Village Historic District. While the Landmarks Preservation

Commission declined to include this building in both designations, the Commission did instead promise to designate this building along with seven other individual sites in the Far West Village as landmarks, three of which have already been designated.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Write the Landmarks Preservation Commission in support of the proposed landmark designation -- go to www.gvshp.org/devoeltr.htm for a sample letter you can use.
- Testify in support of designation -- go to the Landmarks Preservation Commission hearing on Tuesday, June 24th at the Municipal Building, One Centre Street (at Chambers Street), 9th floor (bring photo ID to enter), and go to www.gvshp.org/devoeltr.htm for sample testimony you can use. It is recommended that you arrive by 2:30 pm, but the time may change -- check www.nyc.gov/html/lpc/downloads/pdf/calendar/06_24_08.pdf on Monday to confirm time or reply to this e-mail before the hearing to confirm time.

3) NYU to Proceed With Demolition Plan for Provincetown Playhouse & Apartments with Community Board Approval: Last night Community Board #2 voted to approve NYU's plan for demolition of 133-139 MacDougal Street, the Provincetown Playhouse and Apartments; with this approval, it is expected that NYU will move ahead with its plan. Several weeks ago, after an enormous public outcry led by GVSHP, NYU did agree to preserve the four walls and entry facade of the theater portion of the building, although NYU originally claimed there was nothing worth preserving about the theater. But NYU has continued to refuse to preserve the remainder of the building, which has been called "the cornerstone of bohemia," "the heart of cultural life of the Village," and "the center of much of the resurgence and renaissance associated with Greenwich Village" by scholars and historians. Because of the historic significance of the building, and because NYU pledged to community groups, the Community Board, and elected officials to "prioritize re-use before new development" as part of the "planning principles" it agreed to, GVSHP felt it was critical that NYU be called upon to re-use rather than demolish this building. Many community groups, preservationists, theater advocates, historians and neighbors joined GVSHP in this call.

During last night's Community Board public hearing, speaker after speaker urged NYU's demolition plan NOT be approved and the ENTIRE building be preserved; only NYU and the Manhattan Borough President's Office spoke in favor of the current plan. At last month's Community Board #2 Institutions Committee public hearing on this issue, the majority of speakers strongly opposed the current NYU plan; at the hearing and press conference beforehand, opponents included Actor/NYU alumni John Leguizamo, playwrights Bill C. Davis and Richard Vetere, and Writer/Producer Tom Fontana. Yvette Eastman, the widow of Max Eastman, one of the original Provincetown Players, also attended the public hearing to show support for preserving the entire building.

Ironically, the approval of NYU's plan to demolish most of the building came just after the New York State Historic Preservation Office, in response to a request from GVSHP, declared that the entire building qualified for the State and National Register of Historic Places due to its historic significance. This finding was shared with the Community Board, along with other concerns that GVSHP had about the plan. On a positive note, the State's determination means that NYU cannot use State or Federal money for their plan without going through a historic preservation review and approval process, which would allow GVSHP and the public further opportunity to affect the plan.

Sincerely,

Andrew Berman, Executive Director
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

To join GVSHP or support our preservation efforts, go to www.gvshp.org/membership.htm