



**Landmarks Preservation  
Commission**

Robert B. Tierney  
Chair

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Mary Beth Betts  
Director of Research  
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Andrew Berman  
Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation  
232 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10005

1 Centre Street  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
New York, NY 10007

Re: 186 Spring Street and proposed South Village Historic District, Manhattan

212 669 7801 tel  
212 669 7818 fax

Dear Mr. Berman,

I write in response to your letter asking the Commission to reconsider 186 Spring Street and the proposed South Village Historic District.

As you know, after a careful evaluation and site visit, a senior staff committee of the Landmarks Preservation Commission initially determined that the building at 186 Spring Street did not rise to the level of an individual landmark due to extensive alterations.

We have carefully reviewed the additional research you subsequently submitted regarding residents of 186 Spring Street and their involvement in the early gay rights movement and New York's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered communities. After that review, the aforementioned staff committee concluded that although the events and figures associated with 186 Spring Street are historically significant, the building lacks the requisite architectural integrity to warrant recommending 186 Spring Street to the full Commission for consideration as an individual landmark.

Your initial submission was based on architectural merit, and expressed a concern that the destruction of this 19<sup>th</sup>-century building would undermine the streetscapes and architectural integrity of the South Village. I can assure you that while the demolition of a building in a potential historic district is a cause for concern, our experience has shown that changes involving only one, or a small number of buildings relative to the overall size of a large district, do not diminish the integrity of the neighborhood as a whole, or affect the district's eligibility for designation.

The Commission continues to work with elected officials, community leaders and advocacy groups to protect as many of New York City's historic neighborhoods as possible, not only in Greenwich Village, where the total number of buildings in multiple historic districts is now more than 2,300, but also in neighborhoods across all five boroughs. We are considering the proposed South Village Historic District within the context of all of these priorities.

Thank you for your interest in the Commission's work and in historic preservation.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Betts