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March 22, 2018

Ms. Lorraine Grillo, Executive Director
NYC School Construction Authority
30-30 Thomson Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101

Dear Ms. Grillo,

Thank you for meeting with us last month, and subsequently sharing your design for PS 557, the former 18th Police Precinct House Station and Stable. Unfortunately, we were disappointed to find that the proposal does not integrate the new and the old structures in any meaningful way. We had hoped to see a design that drew inspiration from the grand architecture of a prior era and purpose. Instead, the proposed building is composed of two entirely disjointed parts, rather than a cohesive whole.

Designed by architect George Ingram between 1890 and 1892, both the historic station and stable structures are listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places and are individual New York City landmarks. As such, they warrant protection and preservation. And in the broader context of civic architecture, they deserve respect.

The new PS 557 building wraps around what will remain of the former 18th Precinct House Station. However, the new structure's materials, ornamentation, massing, and shape bear no relation to the remnants of the Romanesque Revival landmark. The entry to the school ignores the historic fabric and treats it as an inconvenience. We firmly believe that the precinct's façade must be incorporated into the design of the new building, otherwise the relationship the landmark once had to its surrounding community will be irreparably lost.

Additionally, the current plan requires the complete demolition of the stable building. Together, both buildings comprise a prominent architectural resource in a neighborhood with only three New York City landmarks. The loss of the stable building constitutes a severe negative impact on Sunset Park's historic and community character.

The proposed PS 557 design negates the importance of the 18th Precinct House Station and Stable landmark. We urge the SCA to find a more unified design solution for these important landmarks.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Goldstein
President