



Testimony from the Municipal Art Society of New York (MAS) to the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) regarding the New-York Historical Society

June 8, 2021

MAS supports the expansion and renovation of the New-York Historical Society Museum and Library, originally designed by York and Sawyer in 1902, later expanded by Walker and Gillette in 1938.

The MAS Preservation Committee finds the design for the expansion by Robert AM Stern Architects to be both respectful and appropriate. The use of contemporaneous materials (such as buff brick and copper), the contextual size and scale, and the reduced visual bulk of the stack tower creates a cohesive addition to the landmark. Moreover, the design of the new addition honors the intention of the original architects, as York and Sawyer designed the building with the intent that it could be seamlessly expanded.

Furthermore, this addition will allow for the collections of the Library to be stored on site, create a new space for a LGBTQ+ Museum, and provide more facilities for students and visitors which are ADA compliant. Because the New-York Historical Society Museum and Library is an important cultural resource in the City of New York, the expansion and renovation of the museum are both necessary and important.

Given the poignancy of the expansion and the sensitive approach to its design, MAS respectfully encourages the Commission to approve the proposed addition to the New-York Historical Society.