



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

# **Testimony Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission Regarding the Wilbraham, 1 West 30th Street on May 18th, 2004**

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Good afternoon. My name is Liz Krueger, and I am the State Senator for New York's twenty-sixth Senatorial District, one primarily comprising parts of Midtown and Manhattan's East Side. I would like to thank the Landmarks Preservation Commission for affording me the opportunity to speak at today's proceeding.

New York is a city rich in history, and this wealth of heritage is never more evident than when one admires the aesthetics of the City's streetscape and built environments. Truly, this is a beautiful city with architectural character. The Wilbraham is emblematic of this notable strength, a building that stands as a monument from a time now past but still valued.

The Wilbraham was initially erected between 1888 and 1890. Commissioned by the prominent jeweler William Moir, the building was designed by New York-based architects David and John Jardine in the Romanesque Revival style. This architectural modality was popular between 1840 and 1900 around the world, yet New York emerged as one of the cities in which the style was most apparent. Originally, the Romanesque Revival style was adopted by many churches, however by the latter half of the nineteenth century, it had been adapted to serve the purposes of those constructing all manner of buildings, including residences like the Wilbraham.

In fact, with its large rounded arches above the doorways and smaller, rounded arches above a plethora of the windows, the Wilbraham displays the defining characteristic of the Romanesque Revival movement. Additionally, the Wilbraham lends itself to preservation given its prominent beltcourses and corbel tables—two other distinguishing traits of the architectural style. Beyond the Romanesque Revival staples, the Wilbraham possesses significance stemming from the ornate and intricate masonry that generated still-engaging column capitals integrated into the building's façade.

Before, I referred to the Wilbraham as a monument; it truly is a landmark of its era. As a paragon of the architectural style in which it was created and as an agent of historical continuity—the Wilbraham is both an emblem of midtown's residential heritage and an anchor for a neighborhood enhanced by churches of a similar design style—the Wilbraham deserves recognition, and I urge the Commission to designate the building as a landmark.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today and for taking the time to listen.