

THE NEW YORK
LANDMARKS
CONSERVANCY

June 14, 2013

Honorable Robert B. Tierney
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: New York Public Library Interiors

Dear Bob:

The recent controversial proposal for major alterations to the 42nd Street Building of the New York Public Library has focused attention on this magnificent building and specifically on its interior. It is surprising that so little of the interior has been landmarked. This is one of the most beautiful buildings in the country. It contains exquisite rooms and spaces made of the best materials and exhibiting the finest craftsmanship. It is universally loved and admired. I am certain that most visitors assume that all of the stunning interiors are protected by law. But as we know, they are not.

The Conservancy urges the Commission to complete the work of designating the building's outstanding interior, a task begun under your predecessors so many years ago.

All the public circulation spaces in the building should be protected. The entire progression of spaces and rooms from the main Fifth Avenue entry to the Rose Main Reading Room should be protected. All the special reading rooms, reference rooms, map room and Trustees room should be protected.

There is an inscription in the Trustees' Room that reads: "The City of New York has erected this Building for the free use of all the People". This marvelous gift must be preserved for the people.

It is the Landmarks Preservation Commission's obligation to safeguard outstanding public interiors like these. Although the library has been good stewards up to now, one never knows what the future will bring.

Following is a list of the spaces we believe should be designated.

Sincerely,



Peg Breen
President

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New York Public Library

The New York Landmarks Conservancy's List of proposed interior designations at the 42nd Street Building of the New York Public Library:

The Rose Main Reading Room (Room 315)
The Bill Blass Catalog Room (Room 316)
The Gottesman Exhibition Hall (Room 113)
The Dorot Jewish Division (Room 111)
The Milstein Genealogy room (Room 121)
The Wallace Periodicals Room (Room 108)
The Princess Firyal Map Room (Room 117)
The Celeste Bartos Forum (Room 80)
The Trustees' Room (Room 206)
The Edna B. Salomon Room (Room 316)
The Art and Architecture Room (Room 300)
The Brooke Astor Reading Room for Rare Books (Room 328)

In addition,
The South-North Gallery
The 42nd Street staircases and landings