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**Gale A. Brewer, Borough President**

April 5, 2017

**Testimony of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer on  
Application N 170298 HKM- Morningside Heights Historic District  
By the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC)**

Good morning Chair Lago and Commissioners.

I am Basha Gerhards, Deputy Director of Land Use, and I am here on behalf of Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer to express our support for the designation of the Morningside Heights Historic District located in Manhattan's Community Board 9. The designation of this district is appropriate and its designation does not conflict with the Zoning Resolution.

At the first introductory meeting in October 2014 between the Borough President and the newly appointed LPC Chair Meenakshi Srinivasan, we discussed the opportunities for preservation equity in the Borough of Manhattan and the hope that the designation work of the LPC would bring it north of 96<sup>th</sup> Street. Since that meeting, we are thankful for the Northern Manhattan designations of the Mount Morris Park Historic District Extension, the Uptown backlog properties including the remarkable Loew's Theater at 175<sup>th</sup> Street, the designation of the exceptional Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, and the hard work that brought us here today. As the current administration continues to explore zoning interventions for the creation of affordable housing in Northern Manhattan, neighborhood character matters and historic preservation efforts should be part of the planning process in those communities.

The carefully crafted Morningside Heights Historic District is significant for both historic and architectural merit. The boundaries encompass a cohesive collection of structures notable for their distinct development period. Most of the structures were completed within a ten year span as a direct result of the IRT expansion in 1904. In addition, while 97% of the district is residential in nature and use, its institutional buildings provide an added depth of architectural character and are an important part of the development story of this neighborhood.

Therefore, we recommend approval of the Morningside Heights Historic District.

I want to express appreciation to the Morningside Heights Historic District Committee, Manhattan Community Board 9, Councilmember Mark Levine, and Assemblymember Danny O'Donnell for their on-going advocacy for this designation, and I thank the City Planning Commission for your time and consideration on this matter.