



May 30, 2006

The Honorable Robert Tierney
Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street
New York, New York 10007

Dear Chairman Tierney:

I am writing to ask that the Landmarks Preservation Commission reconsider its position on the eligibility of St. Saviour's Church in Maspeth, Queens for designation. We believe that new information on the integrity of the building warrants this reconsideration.

We understand that in part your determination was based on the fact that the church had lost much of its historic fabric in a fire in the 1970s. However, community members have shown us interior photographs that seem to indicate that historic fabric may be intact underneath later cladding.

St. Saviour's is of extraordinary historic and architectural significance. The church was designed by Richard Upjohn, the architect of Trinity Church in Manhattan, in the Gothic revival style. The church is a unique example of Upjohn's work as well as a model of his notion of a proper wooden country church. It was founded in 1846 by a small group of prominent residents, among them James Maurice, a United States Congressman who was committed to the well being and growth of the Maspeth Community and David Jones, the son-in-law of Dewitt Clinton.

In addition to the historical significance of the church building itself, the property on which it stands provides a glimpse of the prehistory of Queens. The hill is dotted with trees, many of which are over two hundred years old, forming a unique setting which is a rare remnant of Maspeth's original landscape.

We hope you will take another look at this significant building. If it is indeed true that much of the fabric is intact underneath the current cladding, it could be relatively easily restored and become one of the most significant landmarks in the city.

Sincerely,

Lisa Kersavage
Kress/RFR Fellow for Historic Preservation