



*Testimony for Certificate of Appropriateness hearing for
101 East 63rd Street – Upper East Side Historic District, Manhattan*

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

My name is Amanda Davis and I am the project manager of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project, an award-winning and nationally recognized cultural heritage initiative founded by historic preservationists in 2015 to document historic places connected to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community in the city's five boroughs.

The Project has concerns over the proposed modification to the entrance of 101 East 63rd Street, which we include on our website for its multiple layers of significance to LGBTQ history. In 1966, real estate lawyer Alexander Hirsch and his partner Lewis Turner commissioned renowned architect Paul Rudolph, a gay man, to remodel their residence and design a new strikingly modernist façade. The house is perhaps best associated with Halston, a gay man and America's first superstar fashion designer, who lived here from 1974 to 1989.

Rudolph's work here is significant as one of only three residences that he designed in Manhattan. We agree with the Paul Rudolph Foundation that the proposed change will remove Rudolph's original design intention to recess and obscure the residential entrance from the street. This is a character-defining feature of many of Rudolph's designs that should be preserved as part of his overall design concept for 101 East 63rd Street. There are also only a handful of modernist style houses in New York City that are designated individual landmarks; the East 63rd Street house would undoubtedly be eligible for individual landmark status as an important work of architecture by a master architect and a rare example of Rudolph's residential designs in New York City.

The NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project asks that the Landmarks Preservation Commission reject this proposed change, so that the design intentions of one of America's foremost 20th century architects remain as he envisioned it.