



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North New York NY 10007 TEL: 212-669-7700 FAX: 212-669-7960
www.nyc.gov/landmarks



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CONTACT: Lisi de Bourbon
212-669-7938

FIVE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED TO THE NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

City Council Confirms Appointment of New Commissioner and Reappointment of Four Others

Landmarks Preservation Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney today announced that the City Council unanimously approved the appointment of one new member – Diana Chapin – to the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the reappointment of four current commissioners – Pablo Vengoechea, Stephen F. Byrns, Joan Gerner and Christopher Moore. The City Council confirmed all five today on a 47-0 vote.

“New York City is fortunate that these five distinguished and independent professionals are willing to dedicate their time, expertise and wisdom to serve as the chief stewards of the City’s historic treasures for no compensation other than the reward of knowing these buildings will be protected for generations to come,” said Chairman Tierney. “I am extremely pleased that the Council appreciates their diverse talents, outstanding qualifications, and demonstrated commitment to preserving the unique buildings and neighborhoods that make New York City the greatest city in the world.”

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is responsible for protecting and preserving New York City’s architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to more than 23,000 buildings and sites in all five boroughs and oversees most exterior alterations made to them. Under the law that created LPC, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough. There are 11 commissioners, all of whom are appointed by the Mayor for staggered three- year terms.

Diana Chapin is the Executive Director of the Queens Library Foundation, and a founding member of the Historic House Trust, which works with the City’s Parks Department to protect and preserve historic houses. She has served as the First Deputy Commissioner of the City’s Department of Environmental Protection and as Deputy Commissioner for Planning and Capital Projects for the Parks Department, where she regularly reviewed landscape and architectural projects. She also served as Queens Borough Commissioner and oversaw Community Relations at Parks. She was also a Deputy Commissioner at the Buildings Department.

Ms. Chapin earned a bachelor’s degree in English at the University of Michigan, and a master’s degree and Ph. D. in medieval literature at Cornell University. She’s also a member of the Municipal Art Society and The New York Landmarks Conservancy, and lives in a landmark building in an historic district in

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Queens. She replaces the Rev. Thomas F. Pike of Manhattan, who served for 16 years on the Commission.

Pablo Vengoechea, LPC's Vice Chairman, was first appointed to the Commission in 1995 and serves as the panel's Staten Island representative. An architect and professor of urban planning at Hunter College, Mr. Vengoechea serves as the planner on the Commission. He is the founding principal of Zone Architecture, a Staten Island-based architecture firm, and is the former director of the City's Planning Department's Staten Island office. He started his career as an architect in Argentina after earning a bachelor's degree in architecture at Pratt Institute. He also holds a master's degree in architecture from Columbia University. He lives in a historic district on Staten Island.

Stephen F. Byrns is the Commission's Bronx representative, and was appointed to the Commission in 2004. He is an architect and founding partner of BKSK Architects LLP, whose projects include large-scale new buildings and residential lofts across the City as well as the Hall of Science in Queens, the Queens Botanical Garden and the Brooklyn Heights Synagogue. He received a bachelor's degree in history at Princeton University, and a master's degree in architecture at Columbia University. He is a member of the board of directors of Wave Hill, the New York City Opera and the Riverdale Nature Preservancy.

Joan Gerner, the Queens representative on the Commission, is a trained architect, construction manager and historic preservationist. She is a senior vice president at Bovis Lend Lease LMB, Inc., one of the world's leading project management and construction companies, and is the founder of the firm's preservation division. She has 29 years of senior-level experience managing renovation, restoration and new construction for such projects as the revitalization of Grand Central Terminal and the Women's Memorial in Arlington, Va. Her experience also includes work on the restoration of the Thurgood Marshall Courthouse, the Brooklyn Museum of Art and The Smithsonian Institution. Ms. Gerner received two degrees in architecture at the City University of New York and a master's degree in historic preservation at Columbia University. She lives in a historic district in Queens, and has served on the Commission since 1995.

Christopher Moore, who serves as the Commission's historian, was first appointed to the panel in 1995. He is curator and research historian for the New Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. A specialist in African American history, he wrote and co-produced the *History Channel's* award-winning television special *The African Burial Ground: An American Discovery*. He is featured in Annenberg Media's nationally acclaimed *Teaching Multicultural Literature* program, "Langston Hughes and Christopher Moore," and *New Jack City: Harlem Walking Tour with Christopher Moore* (Warner Brothers), directed by Mario Van Peebles, and he is a consultant to *PBS History Detectives* and *PBS African American Lives*, produced by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. A former journalist and news editor for ABC Radio and National Black Network News, Mr. Moore served as the original project historian for Hudson River Park in Manhattan. He lives in Brooklyn.

