

**SOCIETY OF
ARCHITECTURAL
HISTORIANS**

20 November 2017

Ms. Meenakshi Srinivasan, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
Municipal Building
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor, North
New York, NY 10007
msrinivasan@lpc.nyc.gov

Re: Support for designation of Philip Johnson and John Burgee's AT&T Building, 550 Madison, Avenue, New York, as an individual landmark

Dear Ms. Srinivasan,

The Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) expresses strong support for the prompt calendaring and designation of the AT&T Building as an individual and interior landmark by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The AT&T Building, designed by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, was constructed between 1978 and 1984 and is rightly recognized as a landmark of postmodern American architecture. When completed, it joined Michael Graves' Portland Municipal Services Building in Portland Oregon (1980-82) as the most visible expressions of postmodern architecture in the United States. The building is significant not only for its iconic Chippendale-inspired pediment, but for the soaring seven-story lobby entered through a distinctive Palladian arch and arcade, which lobby is the subject of the proposed inappropriate alteration. This lobby is of particular significance; of 119 interior landmarks in New York, only eight were completed after 1950. Few publically accessible postmodern interiors survive, and this is undoubtedly one of the finest.

We strongly urge the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to move expeditiously towards Landmarks Commission listing of the AT&T Building, including designation as both an individual and an interior landmark. We believe that Johnson and Burge's design is of international significance, and the listing of both would insure the preservation of one of the most noteworthy postmodern buildings and interiors produced in the United States.

The Society of Architectural Historians expresses strong support for the prompt calendaring and designation of the AT&T Building and the interior lobby by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. The AT&T is an architectural landmark of national and international distinction, and is well deserving of this protection. We urge the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate AT&T Building and its lobby to insure that future generations are able to experience and enjoy both the interior and exterior of this monument of postmodern American architecture.

Sincerely,



Bryan Clark Green, Ph.D., LEED AP BD+C
Chair, Society of Architectural Historians Heritage Conservation Committee

cc: Ms. Kate Lemos McHale, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission; Ms. Tara Kelly, Municipal Art Society of New York; the Historic Districts Council; Ms. Erin M. Tobin, the Preservation League of New York State; Ms. Peg Breen, the New York Landmarks Conservancy; Ms. Kelly Carroll, Historic Districts Council; Ms. Pauline Saliga; Ms. Deborah Slaton; Mr. Kenneth Breisch, Ph.D.; Mr. David Fixler, FAIA; Mr. Jeffrey Cody, Ph.D.; Mr. Ken Oshima, Ph.D., Mr. Anthony Cohn, Members, SAH Heritage Conservation Committee