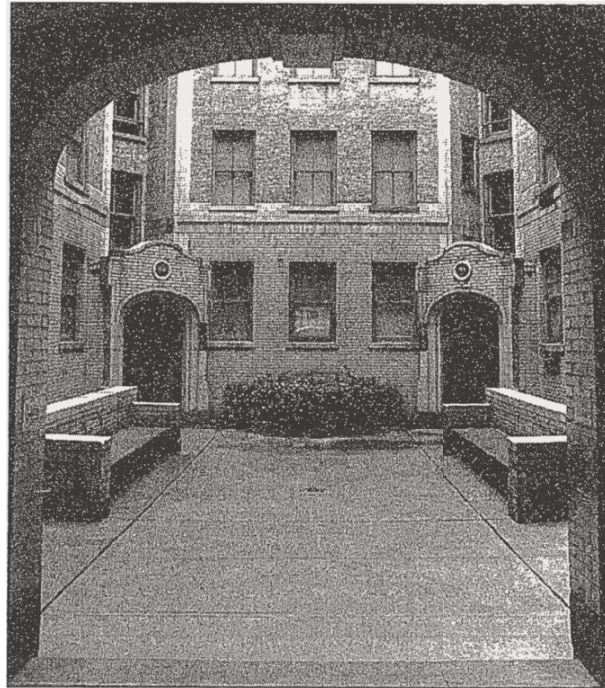


# What Does It Take To Make a Landmark

All of this is significant, today because the City and Suburban Homes, which has gone on housing people well for the better part of a century, is now threatened. An island of working-class people in the midst of the very gentrified Upper East Side, it may well give way to yet another luxury tower containing yet more luxury apartments. The structures were purchased in 1985 for \$43 million by Peter Kalikow, the real-estate developer, who announced plans to evict all of the tenants and replace the old buildings with four 40-story towers; the immensity of the public outcry against that proposal led Mr. Kalikow to put forth a reduced plan

**An island of working-class people on the East Side may have to make way for yet another luxury tower.**

Although the City and Suburban Homes' somewhat similar neighbor, the Cherokee Apartments, has been a landmark for several years, the City and Suburban Homes is not, at first glance, a typical city landmark. The buildings are not beautiful by conventional standards (although there is some decorative detail on them, they are a good bit less ornate than the Cherokee Apartments, and their beige brick makes them look plain, even banal, from the street). Whether it is a matter of unintentional discrimination against the city or a more innocent tendency to think of landmarks in terms of the fantasies and dreams about the city that they can inspire, New York has tended to favor elaborate buildings for landmark status, either public structures or buildings designed for the rich. If you think of landmarks only as celebrations of the city's romantic imagery, there is not much that is romantic



*The courtyard of the City and Suburban Homes on East 79th Street*

But no view could be more shortsighted, or more limiting of what landmark status should signify. These structures, which were designed by several architectural firms of which the best known are Harde & Short and Percy Griffith, represent the city's best intentions — a commitment on the part of the

And today, if New York needs anything, it

is some reminders that are for the public good. For this one way in which the Suburban — in both the city's — in the century, the problem could terms of the quality of housing in the slums, appalling new buildings constructed standards that have been called human news, now, housing, civilized — the problem is to build environments, and to build environments altogether.

Today, with only tiny amounts of assisted housing being constructed in some ways that have slid a little back to the era before City of Boston Houses was even built, the free market do what it wishes means building housing and letting others struggle to obtain it. And where better to seek work than on the site of the City of Boston Houses on the Upper East Side? Indeed that the City and Suburban Housing Corp. was a philanthropic testament to the conditions created because the free market on its own could not satisfy, might well be altered if those very same market forces were to haunt it nearly a century

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