

# Landmarks Legislation

In the fifteen months since the staff of the Landmarks Preservation Commission was appointed, it has done a quietly competent job of assessing the city's past. Period by period, it has compiled lists of New York buildings for a comprehensive architectural history of the city.

But lists and history are only half of the commission's job. The other half—without which scholarly exercises are meaningless—is to recommend landmarks legislation to protect New York's architectural heritage. The commission's recommendations have been ready since last summer. It is time action was taken.

Approval by the City Planning Commission will only be the beginning of the long, hard process of adoption, which is sure to be opposed and obstructed by special interests no matter what fair measures are included for private compensation. In the battle ahead, delay is defeat, because the battle is being lost daily as the wrecking ball continues its uninhibited swing. Parking lots are no substitute for a city's patrimony, although they obviously have an edge on art and architecture in current practice.

The city has acknowledged that values of the past are real and irreplaceable by establishing the Landmarks Preservation Commission. This is mere lip service until protective legislation is passed.